

Complain and Appeal Committee 9.9

DOCUMENT No: FIRST PLUS-VVB AND SO

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Objective

To ensure that there is an organized follow-up to complaints and appeals related to validation/verification activities.

Scope

All validation/verification activities and scheme owner relevant things done by FIRST PLUS as VVB and SO.

Responsibilities

- Executive Director, Quality manager and technical manager.
- Members of appeal committee and complain committee.

Description of activities

1) Handling of appeals;

FIRSTPLUS AS VVB AND SO have a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on appeals (appeal committee).

The process for handling appeals includes at least the following:

- a) A description of the process for receiving, investigating, substantiating the appeal, and deciding what actions are to be taken in response;
- b) Tracking and recording the appeal, including the actions to resolve it;
- c) Ensure appropriate action is taken.

The VVB AND SO receiving the appeal and responsible for gathering all necessary information to determine whether the appeal is substantiated.

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FIRSTPLUS AS VVB AND SO acknowledge receipt of the appeal, and provide the appellant with the outcome and, if applicable, progress reports.

Already the description of the process for handling appeals available to any interested party.

FIRSTPLUS AS VVB AND SO responsible for +all decisions during the process for handling appeals.

The Investigation and decision on appeals not result in any discriminatory actions.

The decision on the appeal made by, or reviewed and approved by, individuals not involved in the decision which is the subject of the appeal in question.

Handling of complaints:

If a special verification becomes necessary because of a complaint by anyone involved in the verification/Validation, the procedure as described previous has to be followed. The following special features have to be taken into consideration:

- 1) The Head of CB decides if there is a conflict of interest or incorrect behavior of the verification team in connection with the complaint. In this, He takes the independence and the competence of the verifier into consideration.
- 2) If it emerges during the examination of the complaint that no conflict of interest or incorrect behavior has occurred, the steps described before are followed.

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- 3) If the examination of the complaint results in the conclusion that there is a conflict of interest or incorrect behavior on the part of a verifier, a new team has to be put together for the further processing. In contrast to the standard procedure, this team cannot be rejected by the client or the responsible party. Therefore particular care must be taken when putting together the team. If a possible conflict of interest affects the entire **FIRST PLUS-VVB AND SO** organization, it may be necessary to withdraw the certificate/report. In such a case, the legal department must be involved without fail.
- 4) If there has clearly been incorrect behavior on the part of verifier, the person named in Point 1 decides regarding possible measures in order to ensure that this incorrect behavior can be avoided in future. If this incorrect behavior is deliberate or due to gross negligence, this person informs the direct superior of the verifier in question. This direct superior decides if disciplinary measures should be applied, and if so, which.

FIRSTPLUS AS VVB AND SO have a documented process to receive, evaluate and resolve complaints.

The process for handling complaints shall include at least the following:

- a) The description of the process for receiving, substantiating, investigating the complaint, and deciding what actions are to be taken in response;
- b) Tracking and recording the complaint, including the actions undertaken to resolve it;
- c) Ensuring appropriate action is taken.

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The VVB AND SO receiving the complaint and responsible for gathering all necessary information to determine whether the complaint is substantiated.

Whenever possible, the VVB AND SO acknowledge receipt of the complaint, and provide the complainant with the outcome and, if applicable, progress reports.

The description of the process for handling complaints available to any interested party.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the body shall confirm whether the complaint relates to its V/V activities and, if so, shall resolve the complaint.

Investigation and resolution of complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions. The resolution of complaints made by, or reviewed and approved by, individuals not involved in the complaint in question. Where resources do not permit this, any alternative approach compromise impartiality.

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Appeals Committee

Members

The Appeals Committee is integrated by five (5) members:

- The Executive Director, in case he has not been involved in the conformity assessment process of the appellant organization;
- A member representing the affected sector;
- The Scheme Technical Referent in case he has not been involved in the conformity assessment process of the appellant organization. For schemes With no Technical Referent, a member of Integrity Team.
- An specialized assessor in the subject of the affected sector, who has not been involved with the appellant organization.

If required, the Committee could consult or summon a local Legal Advisor.

Competences and Decisions

- It is the responsibility of the Appeals Committee to mediate, in case of controversies, with decisions taken regarding the object of conformity assessment (e.g.: issuance of certificate, declarations, etc.), This includes appeals regarding FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO training activities (course/ exam approval).
- The decisions of the Appeals Committee will be final and will be taken by simple majority. In case of abstention that originates a tie, the vote issued by the specialized assessor will prevail.

Operating procedure

a) Meetings

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The Appeals Committee meets each time it is convened on the basis of formally established appeals and to the extent that a solution is not reached by applying the complaint resolution mechanisms.

b) Sessions

The Executive Director presides over it. In case he cannot attend, the specialized assessor presides.

Each member of the Appeals Committee has a vote in it and in the event of a tie, the specialized assessor decides.

The Appeals Committee is able to make decisions if at least three of its members are represented. Decide by simple majority, except in cases where the statutes prescribe another voting relationship.

c) Invitations

Invitations to meetings must be delivered in writing at least three calendar days in advance and the Executive Director is responsible for the invitations, which include the day's agenda.

d) Records

The decisions taken and the issues discussed in the session are written in a Minute of the Sessions. The Executive Director is responsible for the Minutes of Sessions and their file.

e) Information

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The Minutes of Sessions are distributed to all members of the Appeals Committee.

The decisions of the Appeals Committee are communicated in writing to the appellant.

A summary of the actions of the period is delivered to the Impartiality Committee each time a management review is carried out.

Management System monitoring

The Annual Internal Audit Program includes the management of the Appeals Committee, with regard to the application of the criteria of these regulations and the maintenance of records.

Related documents

Minute of Sessions of the Appeals Committee.

Complaints and Improper use Committee

Complaints are understood as to be complaints and / or claims received from interested parties related to FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO clients, which may arise doubts on the effectiveness of FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO conformity assessment process.

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Improper use is understood as to be inappropriate use, fraud, alteration or modification of the certification marks or verification/validation statements, infractions to the protection of intellectual property, as well as breaches of the specifications established in document General Terms & Conditions of FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO.

Members

The complaints and improper use committee is integrated by a representant nominated by the top management (through a written record), the management system leader, and a legal assessor if necessary.

Competences

It is the responsibility of the committee of complaints and improper use to treat the complaints and the misuse of the symbols and marks or similar that FIRST PLUS as VVB AND SO grants, as well as any reference to the activities of the same.

Operating procedure

a) Meetings

The complaints and improper use committee meets every time it receives any information concerning a complaint or an improper use, by any FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO member.

b) Sessions

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Each member of the committee for complaints and improper use has a vote in it. Each member has the right to vote.

The committee for complaints and improper use can make decisions if at least two of its members are represented. Decide by simple majority, except in cases where the statutes prescribe another voting relationship.

c) Invitations

Invitations to meetings must be delivered in writing at least one day in advance by the management system leader, including the agenda for the day.

d) Records

The decisions taken and the issues discussed in the session are written in a Minute of Sessions. The management system Leader is responsible for the Minutes of Sessions and their file.

e) Information

The minutes of sessions are distributed to all members of the committee for complaints and improper Use, and those responsible for implementing the measures and verifying them. A summary of the actions of the period is delivered to the impartiality committee each time a management review is done.

Management System Monitoring

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The Annual Internal Audit Program includes the assessment of the management of the Complaints and Improper use Committee regarding the application of this regulation and the maintenance of records.

Note1: If FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO Top management would not take into account the committee's recommendations, the committee has the right to take independent action (for example, inform authorities, accreditation bodies, stakeholders). When taking the appropriate action, the confidentiality requirements established in the codes of ethics must be respected.

Note2: The members of the top management, as well as all members of the above-mentioned committees, are committed not to accept functions, nor in an honorary manner, or to exercise activities that compete with the activities of FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO. Non-compliance can lead to exclusion or other sanction that is available. The top management decides on the exclusion or sanction.

Note3: The bodies must carry out their activities in an impartial manner. The members of the bodies must keep secret any business or confidential business matter that comes to their knowledge (also documents and operational forms such as checklists, etc.). The bodies must ensure the independence of the members related to the services provided to a client.

Related documents

Complaints form	FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO-CC01
Appeal form	FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO-AC01
Appeals record	FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO-AR01
Complaints record	FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO-CR01

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Complaint form

Complainant's data			
Name		Tel.	
Organization		Email	
Address		Date	
Complaint (Attach any information relevant to the subject of the complaint)			
Proposals from the complaint (Complainant's suggestion)			
The complainant Sig		Date	
The result of complain investigation			
Investigator of complaint name		Signature	
Position		Date	
Information for the complainant / what has been taken			
Executive Director name		Signature	
Date			

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Appeal form

Appellant's data			
Name		Tel.	
Organization		Email	
Address		Date	
The Appellant matter description (write the date of decision against which you appeal)			
Proposals from the appellant (Appellant's suggestion)			
Attached document (attach a photocopy of the decision against which you appeal)			
I am ready to pay the prescribed fees.			
Appellant name		Appellant Sig	
Date			
The application is accepted			
Prescribed fees of appeal (..... L.E) paid			
The application is submitted to the Appeal Committee.			
Quality manager		Executive Director	
Name		Name	
Signature		Signature	
Date		Date	
FIRST PLUS VVB AND SO AS SO decision reasons			
Attached document (attach a photocopy)			
Decision of the appeals committee			

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