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| Disputes and Appeals Process | | | |
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Purpose

To describe the process for receiving, evaluating, and making decisions on disputes and/or appeals. This document is publicly available on D.I.C.'s website at: <http://www.D.I.C.dk>

Scope

This process is to be used by D.I.C. for clients who wish to dispute a nonconformity(ies) or a certification decision, including suspension, withdrawal and/or scope reduction. It also applies in the case of clients who are not satisfied with the results of the dispute process and wish to appeal the decision.

Definitions

Dispute: A difference in interpretation of a requirement which justifies formal documentation for further evaluation.

Appeal: A formal request for reconsideration of any dispute decision

Responsibility

- Disputes will be handled by the Program Manager and/or by an appropriate Certification Authority designee.
- Appeals will be managed by a panel of three (3) members appointed by the Regional Accreditations Manager.

1.0 Disputes

- 1.1 The client shall submit a dispute in writing to D.I.C. within 30 days of the decision.
- 1.2 Upon receipt of a dispute, D.I.C. will log the dispute. The Regional Accreditation Manager will acknowledge receipt of the dispute by formal correspondence with the client within 10 business days of receipt of the dispute, unless a decision is forwarded to the client within ten days of receipt of the dispute.
- 1.3 The Program Manager and/or an appropriate Certification Authority designee will perform the investigation, unless he/she was engaged in the audit and/or decision making process related to the dispute. In such a case, The Regional Accreditations Manager shall appoint other Certification Authority personnel to process the dispute.
- 1.4 Investigation may include a review of the client's documented dispute, related reports, and consultation with the audit team members as well as the client's management.
- 1.5 Submission, investigation, and decision on disputes shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.
- 1.6 The decision related to the outcome of the full and thorough investigation shall be documented and forwarded to the client within 30 working days of receipt of information related to the dispute. This communication will also inform the client of right to appeal the decision.

2.0 Appeals

- 2.1 Any client who wishes to exercise their right to appeal shall submit the appeal in writing to D.I.C. within 30 days of the dispute decision.
- 2.2 D.I.C. is responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals-handling process
- 2.3 Upon receipt of an appeal, D.I.C. will document the appeal. The Regional Accreditations Manager (RAM) will acknowledge receipt of the appeal by formal correspondence with the client.
- 2.4 Appeals are resolved through submission to a panel of three (3) members appointed by the RAM, with a subsequent mechanism for escalation if necessary.
 - 2.4.1 The personnel engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those that carried out the audits and made the certification decisions of those clients making the related appeal. The Appeals Panel members should have direct workplace experience and/or knowledge in



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- the company's sector industry, as supported by their resume. The panel may consist of Industry Experts if deemed necessary. The RAM may also be a member of the panel.
- 2.4.2 The members of the Appeals Panel are under obligation of confidentiality concerning anything that might come to their knowledge during their function, with regards to D.I.C., or the personnel or business situation of the appellant.
 - 2.4.3 The panel is responsible for investigating, validating, and documenting the resolution of the appeal. Members of the Appeals Panel will make judgment based on facts and evidence provided. The Appeals Panel may elect to hear oral testimony from both parties.
 - 2.5 The RAM will provide the appellant with progress reports (if necessary) and the outcome.
 - 2.6 The decision related to the outcome of the full and thorough investigation shall be documented and reviewed and approved by the RAM, who will forward it to the client within 30 working days of receipt of the appeal. This communication will also inform the client of the provisions for escalation. Fees incurred resulting from this escalation are recoverable from the appellant in the case of final rejection.
 - 2.7 Submission, investigation, and decision on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

3.0 Escalation process

- 3.1 The client can appeal the decision at a higher level. The appeal may be presented to a committee made of three members of the D.I.C. Global Leadership Team for consideration.
- 3.2 Global Leadership Team representatives are selected by the Global Accreditation Manager (GAM).
- 3.3 The GAM will provide the committee with all documentation pertaining to the appeal, including the results of previous investigations and decisions pertaining to said subject matter.
- 3.4 The GAM will provide the appellant with progress reports (if necessary) and the outcome.
- 3.5 The decision related to the outcome of the investigation shall be documented and forwarded to the client within 45 days of receipt of the appeal.
- 3.6 The decision of the committee shall be the final decision of D.I.C.

| Revision Log | | |
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