

PROCEDURE FOR APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

This procedure sets out guidelines and the process how TQCPL handles, manages, evaluates Appeals and complaints while conducting validation and verification activities. It also describes how corrective actions are taken and decisions are made on appeals and complaints.

Prepared by: Quality Manager

Approved by: Director of Operations

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AMENDMENT RECORD

Date	Details of amendment	Revision Level
	First Issue	1.0

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1. General

- 1.1. The purpose of the procedure is to define how appeals and complaints are handled across TQCPL while conducting inspection activities.
- 1.2. Also, to define the step-by-step procedure to receive, evaluate and determine necessary corrective actions /training / improvement to quality management system giving full benefit to the complainant, who appealed against TQCPL decisions.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This procedure covers all complaints and appeals of inspection activities of TQCPL or personnel of TQCPL conducting inspection activities irrespective of the source.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. Complaints: A formal written or unwritten (verbal) dissatisfaction regarding the performance of TQCPL inspection activities or personnel handling inspections
- 3.2. from any source like Client, government bodies, individuals etc.
- 3.3. Appeals: A request from client/responsible party about a decision/recommendation and a review of the same to TQCPL.
- 3.4. Complainant:
 - 3.4.1. Client or organization where TQCPL has conducted inspection.
 - 3.4.2. An organization having a complaint about TQCPL activities related to inspection activities.
 - 3.4.3. An organization having a complaint about the conduct of TQCPL employees or sub-contractors.

4. Related Procedures, references

- 4.1. ISO 17020:2012
- 4.2. TQCPL Quality Manual
- 4.3. ISO 9001:2015

5. Responsibility

- 5.1. Director Operations shall be overall responsible for maintaining and implementing this procedure along with taking necessary corrective actions.
- 5.2. In addition, Director operations is also responsible for training program for the personnel and to amend policies or procedures to improve quality management system of TQCPL based on complaints and appeals received.

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5.3. Managing Director is the final decision maker in reviewing and resolving the complaints.

6. Process to receive and register complaints

6.1. TQCPL shall make its Complaints and Appeals procedure publicly on its website.

6.2. Director Operations or his/her designee shall be responsible to receive all complaints from various sources.

6.3. If a non-designee or an employee receives a complaint, he/she shall forward it to Director Operations.

6.4. Director Operations or his/her designee shall register the complaint on F-06.01 (Form: Registration /Resolution of complaints/appeals/

6.5. If the complaint is received orally it is the responsibility of the Director Operations or his/her designee to register the same on F-06.01.

6.6. Once the complaint is registered, Director Operations or designee will determine the validity or authenticity of the complaint by collecting the details associated with the complaint.

6.7. The following approach shall be used to resolve and decide the further course of action

6.7.1. The Director Operations or personnel designated by him/her will note down the sequence of events associated with the complaint.

6.7.2. The designee should be independent of the complaint registered.

6.7.3. Person who is involved in complaint will also narrate the events and same will be noted down.

6.7.4. The Director Operations shall compare both the sequences and objective evidences if any

6.7.5. The judgement and decision on further course of actions shall be decided based on the comparison and objective evidence obtained if any.

6.7.6. A report on the same along with further course of action (correction and necessary corrective action, amendment to procedures/policies) if required will be submitted to Managing Director.

6.7.7. The final decision shall be made by the Managing Director.

6.8. A root cause analysis shall be conducted by Director Operations and the same will be recorded in F-05.03 Non conformity report.

6.9. All corrections/corrective actions/preventive actions arising out of complaints shall also be recorded in F-05.04 Corrective /Preventive log for tracking and reviewing the status and results.

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- 6.10. This shall also become an agenda point during the next Management Review Meeting for necessary changes on policies if required.
- 6.11. Director Operations or designee is responsible for confirming the receipt of the complaint, the complaint handling process, the final report and decision and any other information deemed necessary to the complainant.
- 6.12. TQCPL shall maintain the confidentiality of the complainant and the subject of the complaint.

7. Appeal

- 7.1. The client/organization shall be allowed to have an appeal for the outcome of a complaint.
- 7.2. In such situations the client/organization shall give it in writing for appeal within 15 days of the outcome of the complaint.
- 7.3. Once the appeal request is received TQCPL will initiate necessary action by creating an appeal committee consisting of 2 who are not involved in the complaint under consideration. It can also have an external person or advocate if necessary, with the approval of TQCPL management.
- 7.4. The appellant shall inform his/her representative(s) and shall meet the appeal committee, having time and venue mutually agreed (tele/video conference is also allowed and acceptable based on the scenarios.)
- 7.5. An unbiased decision shall be taken based on the points put forth by the appellant.
- 7.6. If the decision of the Appeal committee is still not acceptable to Appellant, TQCPL is forced to allow the appellant to approach the respective accreditation body.
- 7.7. Registration and all the proceedings of the appeal committee is recorded in F-06.01(Complaint & Appeal Form)

8. Approach

- 8.1. TQCPL shall follow the below steps in handling complaints, appeals.
 - 8.1.1. TQCPL shall publicly make available, the procedure for complaints and appeals.
 - 8.1.2. TQCPL shall take responsibility for the decisions at all level of the Complaints. Dispute and Appeal process.
 - 8.1.3. TQCPL shall safeguard the confidentiality of the subject of the complaint, appeal, dispute and the complainant, appellant.
 - 8.1.4. TQCPL shall ensure that the persons engaged in handling complaint/appeal proceedings are different from the persons who carried out the inspection activities.

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8.1.5. TQCPL shall ensure the receipt of the complaint/appeal and the proceedings along with the outcome and decision to the complaint/appellant regularly.

9. Records

The records of this procedure shall be maintained as per Pro -05 Procedure for Quality Management Systems.