



APPEAL & COMPLIANTS Policy

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20 Aug, 2021

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a transparent, impartial, and fair process for handling complaints and appeals related to the certification activities of DAS Certification, in compliance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Any complaint received regarding the services, staff, auditors, or certified clients of DAS Certification.
- Any appeal made against a certification decision taken by DAS Certification.

3. Definitions

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, by any individual or organization regarding DAS Certification's activities, auditors, staff, or certified clients, where a response is expected.

Appeal: A formal request by a certified client or applicant for reconsideration of any decision made by DAS Certification regarding the certification status (granting, maintaining, renewing, suspending, or withdrawing certification).

4. Policy Statement

- DAS Certification ensures that all complaints and appeals are handled in a timely, transparent, impartial, and non-discriminatory manner.
- The process for handling complaints and appeals is free of charge to the complainant/appellant.
- All complaints and appeals will be acknowledged, investigated, and resolved with due diligence, ensuring confidentiality and independence throughout the process.
- DAS Certification ensures that decisions on appeals are made by personnel not involved in the original certification decision.

5. Complaints against DAS Certification:

Upon receipt of a written or verbal complaint via any mean, it shall be recorded on Form FMP05/01 Complaints/Appeals record and a file opened by MR/DMR. Any correspondence connected with the complaint shall be attached to this file. Complaints received will be analysed to determine the nature of the complaint and decide:

- Does the complaint relate to DAS Certification activities? If yes proceed to deal with the complaint.
- Does the complaint relate to DAS Certification certified client? If so an internal investigation will take place to determine the effectiveness of the DAS Certification certification process and what actions to take. The certified client will be informed of the complaint at an appropriate time for their consideration.

All verbal complaints will be requested in writing / email with any supporting documentation if necessary to the DAS Certification. All complaints will be acknowledged within 48 hours by email to the complainant by MR/DMR. Prior to a complaints panel being formulated DAS shall endeavor to obtain all necessary information (copy of reports, Team Leader responses in writing etc) to ensure the complaint can be sufficiently validated.

The complaints panel will be nominated by CEO, DAS Certification, consisting of 2 to 3 persons as required through email, they will jointly review the complaint and decide on the appropriate remedial action and the person(s) responsible for that action, which shall be recorded on Form FMP05/01. When the remedial action has been satisfactorily completed the MR shall sign the close out on Form FMP05/01.

The complainant shall be informed in writing of the outcome or the ongoing situation within one month of receipt of the complaint by MR or an Independent/Impartial resource via email.

Generally all complaints shall be satisfactorily closed-out within two months of receipt of the original complaint being received.

In addition to the above, an unscheduled audit may be carried out if the complaint concerns a Supplier or Contractor.

At meetings of Impartiality Committee MR will present his report and a full and frank discussion will take place regarding all complaints / appeals received and again recommend any necessary corrective & preventive actions if required by the committee.

MR will forward on to all concerned improvement instructions via briefing notes or revised / new operating procedures subsequent to the outcome of impartiality committee meeting or at any other time he feels it is necessary.

Submission, investigation and decision on complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant by not putting the same person for handling complaints who is guilty by the complainant.

6. Complaints against DAS Certified Clients

Complaints regarding registered clients may be received by DAS Certification from the public i.e. customers of a DAS Certification registered client or from other sources, DAS Certification shall register the complaint in the complaints/ appeals register Form FMP05/01 and acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the registered client of the complaint, the MR will decide if an unannounced audit is necessary or not.

If so a competent auditor(s) shall be sent to the registered client's premises and after advising the client of the reason and an audit on the scope of the complaint shall be conducted, recorded and reported to the MR for investigation, review and appropriate actions.

If not the registered client will be asked to provide sufficient evidence to DAS to enable investigation, review and appropriate actions to be taken. The complainant and registered client shall be advised of the decision and actions to be taken and on completion of the actions by MR.

During any audits the audit team shall review the DAS Certification Registered organisation/sites complaints register for compliance to requirements as;

- i. Complaints represent a source of information as to possible non-conformity. On receipt of a complaint the organisation should establish and where appropriate report on the root cause of the non-conformity, including any predetermining (or predisposing) factors within the management system.
- ii. Such investigation enables the planning of corrective action, which should include measures for;
 - notification of clients, public or appropriate authorities if required by regulation;
 - Restoring conformity as quickly as practicable;
 - Preventing recurrence;
 - Evaluating and mitigating any adverse environmental effects;
 - Assessing the effectiveness of the above measures.

The implementation of the corrective action should not be deemed to have been completed until the effectiveness of all the above has been demonstrated and verified and the necessary changes made in the procedures, documentation and records.

iii. Auditors should check that, where any such non-conformity or failure to meet the requirement is revealed, the organisation has conducted a root cause analysis of its own management system and taken appropriate corrective/preventive action and the complainant advised of the outcome by persons not previously involved in the complaint.

Any non-compliance shall incur a CAR.

7. Appeals Procedure:

Anyone has the right of appeal against any decision made by DAS Certification. The appeals process is independent of the certification process. The purpose of Appeals procedures is to assist DAS Certification with its aim to continually improve its working methods. All appeals will be thoroughly analyzed looking for the root cause of either individual or trends to ensure that appropriate Corrective and associated preventive actions are taken.

DAS with Impartiality committee members will strive to ensure that “customer perception” is always considered fact and the purpose of this procedure is to establish actual facts to enable an appropriate response to be made to the appellant and then appropriate action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

In the event of a Customer (organization/site) appealing against any decision made by the certification body, they shall be asked to send a letter / email with any supporting documentation to give formal written notice of their appeal.

Upon receipt of the written appeal it will be initially handled by that Person who is not Part of DAS Certification auditors and final approval will be made by impartiality committee.

(Note: The appellant must have given factual information giving grounds for appeal within the specified time scales agreed with DAS which will normally be one month or less depending on the severity of the complaint / appeal. Provided this criterion is met the appeal will be dealt with by the MR without delay).

In the case of an appeal relating to the actions of DAS Certification employee both the appellant and the relevant (Lead Auditor) shall be entitled to state their case in confidence. The CEO of DAS Certification will do only endorsement signature and the results recorded on form FMP05/01 signed as closed out by MR. The independent nominee as nominated by IC shall write to the appellant informing them of the appeal panel decision through email. If the appellant does not accept the decision then they may revoke the conditions of contract i.e., arbitration. All appeal information will be discussed at Management review meetings for review and to consider any other related corrective /preventive actions.

Submission, investigation and decision on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

Approved By, CEO
20-08-2021