



Purpose: The purpose of this procedure is based documented guidelines for managing complaints and Appeal made by our client organization and other interested parties.

Scope: This procedure covers Complaints received by ASPL stakeholders, ASPL or against ASPL’s staff related to its working and behavior.

Responsibility: Managing Director

Authority: This procedure is authorized by the Managing Director and can be amended only by him.

Sec.	Sub Sec.	Description
1.		An applicant, a certified company or any interested party may lodge a complaint. This procedure is also publicly available on ASPL website. ASPL gives utmost importance to complaint resolution, whether it is from our stakeholders or from elsewhere. Complaints may arise due to dissatisfaction from- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ASPL and its working b. ASPL’s Staff c. ASPL’s Stakeholders
2.		<p>Administration of Complaints</p> <p>Any complaint received by ASPL in writing or by e-mail or telephone in respect of its functions as a certification body or a company certified by it, shall be recorded in the complaint register within 8 working hours</p> <p>Acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint shall be provided to complainant with 2 working days from receipt of the complaint is reviewed by the Managing Director. If the complaint is found meaningful, it is investigated by the MD and conclusion is recorded in the complaint register within 3 months.</p> <p>If the complaint is related to the existing client-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Managing Director must ensure that the effectiveness of the certified management system is checked by competent auditor(s), who were not involved with the client previously. b. The Response has been sent to certified client within 14 days of receiving of complaint and recorded in the complaint register. The tracking and recording complaints, including actions undertaken in response to them is maintained.
3		Investigation
	3.1	The complaint is investigated to assess its meaningfulness. The Managing Director assigns responsibility of investigation to only those persons who are not involved in the complaint related activities. If the complaint is found frivolous, the conclusion is recorded in the Complaint record and the complaint is closed and the complainant is informed.
	3.2	If the received complaint is about audit team’s decision, it is transferred to appeals register and dealt with as per Quality Procedure for Appeal Management.
	3.3	If the complaint is about our assessment and certification process or staff behavior the same is looked after by the Managing Director/Director-Technical /Quality Manager . The involved personnel are not involved in investigation or resolution process.
	3.4	If the received complaint is about actual or perceived impartiality of our audit or certification process, the complaint is looked after by the Managing Director and the information is provided to the Impartiality committee . The Impartiality committee monitors the complaint resolution process.
	3.5	If the received complaint is about our registered and certified stakeholders, the complaint is looked after by the Managing Director, and it is followed up with the Client. Appropriate corrective action is taken. ASPL determine, together with the client and the complainant, whether and, if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution shall be made public <i>so no discrimination will occur</i> . Audit and certification process are reviewed to identify any weakness in our audit and certification process, and appropriate corrective or preventive action is taken.
4		If the complaint is found to be correct and of such magnitude that might affect our reputation as well as of ISO standard’s reputation, the client is issued verbal notice to justify or rectify its deficiency within 14 days. In case the dispute is not resolved, a written notice of suspension of certificate is issued stating all the facts and requesting resolution of issue within one month. When the deficiency is not eliminated within the agreed time, the suspension of the certificate is extended for 6 months or till next surveillance audit, whichever is earlier. If the deficiency is not removed by the due date, the certification is withdrawn and information is posted on the website. <i>The Complainant is kept updated about the action taken subsequent to their complaint. Relevant</i>



		<i>information is provided to the accreditation body.</i>
5	5.1	Resolution of Complaint All complaints are initially looked by the Managing Director or who assigns responsibilities of investigation and resolution to appropriate employees or empaneled personnel. Summary of action taken to resolve complaint, is recorded in the Complaint disposal register. The complainant is updated about action taken.
	5.2	After addressing the complaint, a formal notice of the end of the complaints-handling process is forwarded to the complainant.
	5.3	In case the client or the complainant, desires that the result of complaint investigation and action taken should be made public, ASPL makes the information available to the public to the extent that does not infringe any confidential information of the involved parties.
	5.4	In case the complaint closure takes more than the 3 months, the issue shall be brought to the notice of the Accreditation body, if applicable.
	5.5	In case the complainant is not satisfied with the result of the complaint handling process the issue will be brought to the knowledge of the impartiality committee. Complaints are not closed out within a timeframe as prescribed then agreed with the complainant shall be escalated to the ASPL's top management to ensure that the complaint receives the appropriate priority.
Reference:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ASPL-F-13-Complaint Record Register including Resolution ✓ ASPL Website 		

Appeal

Sec.	Sub Sec.	Description
6.0		
	6.1	An applicant, a certified company or any interested party may appeal against a decision of ASPL Auditors while doing the Audit or any other Concern. Written Appeals raised by Your Organization regarding dissatisfaction of our Audit Team/ assessment output is categorized as appeal. This Procedure is also publicly available on ASPL website.
	6.2	Appeal can also be made in writing to our office. When any appeal is received by ASPL, the issue is recorded in ASPL-F-15-Appeal Record Register within 8 hours by the MD. <i>Acknowledgement of the receipt of Appeal is forwarded to the appellant within 2 working days, promising appropriate action will be taken within one month. The information about the receipt of the appeal is forwarded to the chairman of the impartiality committee. Record of all appeal is maintained for 3 years. Appeal related papers are also retained in the concerned client file.</i>
	6.3	<i>Audit and certification related activities and decisions are performed by competent personnel/auditors. The MD is not involved in technical process (Audit and certification related process) therefore whenever any appeal against audit and certification decision is made by the client it is directly looked after by the MD without any discrimination.</i> <i><u>All the appeal that previously come to us is maintained and also MD compare if there is any similarity in current appeal with previous one & looks all the Correction and Corrective action of the last one.</u></i> On receipt of such an appeal, the Managing Director, shall investigate the issue personally and shall take appropriate action which may include re-audit by another audit team. If the appellant is not satisfied or the appeal is not resolved within one month, the issue is forwarded to the chairman of the impartial committee for further action.
7		
	7.1	The Chairman takes appropriate action to investigate and resolve the issue. The decision by the chairman is taken in consultation with other members of the impartiality committee. The committee may pass appropriate action to the MD.



		If the impartiality committee is not satisfied with the action taken by the MD the committee may highlight the issue before the appropriate regulatory authorities. The MD/ the Impartiality Committee also ensure that the persons engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who were involved in the activities which cause the genesis of the appeal.
	7.2	The impartiality committee shall try to resolve the issue within 2 months.
8		Update to Appellant
	8.1	The appellant is kept updated with progress in appeal handling process. All appeals are resolved or closed within 3 months of registration. The decision of the impartiality committee is final and further appeal is not entertained. A formal appeal closure report is sent to the appellant stating all the actions taken, and final decision of the appeal handling authority.
	8.2	Appeal summary and decision of the Managing Director/Impartiality Committee is properly recorded in the concerned Client's file.

***The stakeholders of a certification body typically include:**

1. Stakeholders: Organizations seeking certification for their products, services, or management systems.
2. Certified Organizations: Organizations that have already obtained certification.
3. Regulatory Authorities: Government agencies responsible for enforcing laws and regulations related to the certification body's scope.
4. Industry Associations: Trade associations and industry groups representing the sectors served by the certification body.
5. Accreditation Bodies: Organizations responsible for accrediting certification bodies, ensuring they meet international standards.
6. Auditors and Assessors: Individuals conducting audits and assessments for the certification body.
7. Employees and Contractors: Staff and contractors working for the certification body.
8. Suppliers and Partners: Organizations providing goods and services to the certification body.
9. Consumers and End-Users: Individuals and organizations using products or services certified by the certification body.
10. Government and Public Institutions: Entities relying on certification bodies for public policy, procurement, or regulatory purposes.

Reference:

- a. ISO 17021-1:2015

Records:

- a. Client file
- b. ASPL-F-15-Appeal Record Register including Resolution
- c. Record of MOM of the impartiality committee of ASPL