



## GUIDELINE

# Complaints and Appeals Procedures for Product Conformity Assessment Programs (PCA)

### BACKGROUND

SGS Product Conformity Assessment (PCA) is a solution designed to ensure that specific products meet the requirements of the technical regulations and standards set by a regulatory authority in the importing country.

Being the leader in providing specialized business solutions that improve quality, safety, productivity and reduce risk, we are constantly looking beyond customers' and society's expectations in order to deliver market leading services wherever they are needed.

The PCA programs maintain a complaints and appeals process which has the following objectives:

- To register and address complaints from clients of the PCA programs
- To register and address complaints about clients of SGS from members of the public. i.e. stakeholders
- To register and address complaints about the PCA programs
- To ensure that valid complaints and appeals are timely and appropriately dealt with.

### IMPORTANT NOTES

- SGS can only become involved in dealing with complaints and appeals where they relate to the requirements of the PCA programs.
- SGS will not respond to anonymous complaints and appeals and all communications must be in writing
- Full implementation of actions is completed in compliance with the relevant procedures within the PCA Management system.

### DEFINITIONS

**“Technical Discussions”** or disputes means a disagreement between SGS and the client regarding SGS's opinions/decisions made at various stages during the verification, inspection and certification process. Not covered in this procedure.



**“Complaint”** is an expression of dissatisfaction other than appeal, by any person or organization relating to the activities of the company, where a response is expected. It also addresses dissatisfaction against individuals and conduct of individuals of our organization. It may be a written or a verbal complaint.

**“Appeal”** is a request by the provider, the seller or the buyer of the inspected item for reconsideration of a decision we have made relating to that item. Therefore, any request for reconsideration of our technical decision received after the issuance of a Certificate will be considered an appeal.

**Note:**

For “Integrity Issues” our clients or any other stakeholders are encouraged to report any concerns or suspicion that the Code of Integrity is being violated calling the integrity helpline or directly filing the report through Report Integrity Violation. The investigation and record keeping of this type of cases is responsibility of Global Legal and Compliance based at the Head Office. If the client prefers to submit the case to the local office, it will be directly sent to the Managing Director of the SGS affiliate or to the person he delegates to be responsible of the integrity violations and record will be kept in a separate file under this premises.

## **HOW TO REGISTER A COMPLAINT OR APPEAL?**

You can register a complaint or appeal by completing the form available under the contact us feature in our website which will be submitted to our concerned department.

Or, you can contact SGS local office directly and submit your complaint. Here is our office directory.

## **THE COMPLAINTS AND APPEAL PROCEDURE**

- It is SGS policy that complaints and appeals shall be handled within a reasonable timescale and as transparently as possible, whilst fully respecting principles and requirements of confidentiality and impartiality and will not result in any discriminatory actions.
- Address the complaint or appeal to the local SGS office (please refer to definitions to differentiate a complaint from an appeal). To assist in this process, complaints and appeals must be substantiated with objective evidence as far as possible and accurate descriptions of locations, dates and people involved.

- The recipient of the complaint or appeal will acknowledge the receipt and will assure you that the matter will be investigated fairly and thoroughly.
- Acknowledgement is normally sent within one working day of reception.
- All those incidents are registered in a special log in our database where they are thoroughly investigated under the responsibility of the concerned office and the supervision of the department manager.
- The results of the investigation are then communicated to the client or any other stakeholder by the concerned office to which the complaint or appeal was addressed. This is normally done within the following thirty calendar days, provided that all the documentation and information needed for the investigation was received.
- In case you were not satisfied with our investigation's results, you will be asked to submit a request for reconsideration which will be investigated by another manager with higher level.