





**SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**  
**Appeal and Complaint**  
**Procedure**

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**1.PURPOSE**

To establish a method that includes TRB's policy and conclusion regarding the handling, evaluation, resolution of complaints, disputes and objections from suppliers or other interested parties regarding certification or any other related issue. Within this method, the working rules and duties of the complaint evaluation committee are also determined.

**2.SCOPE**

The preparation of this procedure is based on ISO 17065 Clause 7.13. The purpose of establishing the complaint evaluation committee is to help resolve complaints reaching TRB.

**3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1. The management representative is responsible for receiving all complaints from customers.
- 3.2. The " Advisory Committee " is responsible for evaluating the complaints and presenting them to the senior management.
- 3.3. Management Representative and General Manager are responsible for the evaluation of customer complaints at the Management Review meetings.
- 3.4. TRB takes responsibility for all decisions at all levels to handle the appeal

**4. DEFINITIONS**

- 4.1. Disagreement (Dispute): Lack of agreement in TRB's practices (Audit Team, Audit Date, etc.); is considered a disagreement.
- 4.2. Complaint : These are negative applications made by organizations or other interested parties about the performance, procedures, policies and all employees serving on behalf of TRB regarding the certification activities of the company, and the activities within the scope of the certificate related to the company it has certified.
- 4.3. Objection (Appeal): Requests for reconsideration of the decisions taken by TRB about the customer or related parties

**5. APPLICATION :**

**5.1 Duties of the Complaints review committee**

If the complaints received by TRB cannot be resolved by the management representative and senior management, the complaint or objection is taken to the complaint evaluation committee. The complaint evaluation committee convenes upon this and, in the light of the information and findings obtained by the senior management, determines the path to be followed to resolve the complaint or objection and ensures that the complaint is resolved. The appeal/complaint evaluation process includes:

- Giving a chance to formally present the problem of the person/organization who objected or complained
- The independent person or persons handling the objection/complaint in order to ensure the impartiality of the objection/complaint process
- Informing the General Manager and Management Representative in writing of the decision taken by the committee and its reasons

Depending on the complexity of the appeal/complaint, the grievance review committee may request an assessment by senior management by telephone, e-mail or a meeting.. Discussions and suggestions in the complaint evaluation committee will be recorded, signed by all members of the complaint evaluation committee and forwarded to the general manager.

**5.2 Committee membership**

Membership in the complaint evaluation committee takes place with the appointment of TRB senior management. Since the management representative is primarily authorized to resolve the complaints, they cannot

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be included in the committee, but a member or members from within the TRB or outside of the TRB can be elected, provided that they serve in a position not to be involved in the complaint or objection, or a person from outside the subject that caused the complaint can attend the meeting only to discuss that complaint or objection, can be included.

**5.3 Privacy**

Members must sign SMS-F-05- Confidentiality Agreement and SMS-F-08 Employee Contract immediately after being appointed to committee membership. Members should not communicate or negotiate with anyone other than other members any information regarding TRB matters or their customers. All information discussed at meetings should be treated confidentially and securely.

**5.4 Working and meeting rules**

The Committee only convenes upon request by TRB. If this meeting contains confidential information of the party making the complaint or objection, all members are obliged to maintain their impartiality and confidentiality. The operation of the meeting and other issues related to complaints and objections will be followed in accordance with SMS-PR-03 Appeal and Complaint Procedure. The meetings held will be recorded in writing, including the decision, and will be presented to the TRB senior management. It will be sufficient for this written record to be signed by all members attending the meeting, to be dated, to include the subject and decision, and it will not be expected to use a format. Decisions taken by the committee are conveyed to the TRB Senior Management. The senior management takes the final decision, taking into account all the results of the examination, objective evidence and the committee decision.

**5.5. Disputes**

**5.5.1 Receiving Dispute Applications**

Verbal or written requests received by TRB regarding TRB certification services or practices are recorded with the SMS-F-40 Client Complaint Form for processing and evaluation by the certification coordinator. At this stage, the certification coordinator should clarify the issue and reason for the dispute with the party applying for the dispute. After the dispute is registered, it is forwarded to the management representative for the determination of the necessary activities.

**5.5.2 Resolution of Disputes:**

In cases of disagreement, the request or justification of the customer or the relevant party on the point where no agreement can be reached is investigated by the management representative and the general manager.

If it is determined that the relevant party is justified in its justification, the dispute is resolved in a way that does not incur additional costs to the customer or the relevant party and this situation is notified to the relevant party in writing. In addition, if the general manager and/or management representative decides that TRB has made a mistake regarding the issue, it ensures that the situation is recorded in accordance with the SMS-PR-05 Corrective Preventive Actions Procedure . If it is determined that the related party is unfair in its justification, this situation is notified to the related party in writing.

Written notification of TRB regarding the disputes to the related party cannot exceed 1 week from the date of the dispute application.

**5.6. Complaints**

**5.6.1 Receiving and Evaluating Complaint Applications**

Verbal or written complaints received by TRB regarding TRB Certification services or practices are forwarded to management representatives for recording and evaluation. At this stage, the management representative communicates with the complainant personally and confirms the main reason for the complaint and in what situation it has arisen. TRB is personally responsible for collecting and verifying all information necessary to validate the complaint, keeping this information confidential, evaluating the complaint and making decisions regarding the complaint.

If the complaint is about the activities of a customer certified by TRB, it is stated to the complaining party that they should first contact this company and convey their complaints to this company, however, this complaint must be recorded by TRB. If the complaint is about the certified management system activities of the customer certified by TRB, the complaint is recorded by the certification coordinator and forwarded to the management representative as soon as possible. Certification Coordinator and ISMS Manager look at the customer's file and the findings in the

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audit reports, and the general manager is informed when a serious situation is encountered. After the general manager's examination, the company that is the subject of the complaint is contacted about the complaint and information is requested from the organization about the arrangements it has made or will make regarding the complaint. In case of approval of the complaining party, the name of the complaining party can also be reported to the company that is the subject of the complaint. According to the decision of the general manager, a short-term audit can be made to the customer. If such an audit is decided, the customer is informed at most 1 day in advance, in a way that does not allow him to change the situation that is the subject of the complaint. The client has no right to object to this audit and the audit team.

If it is determined that there is no need for an urgent and unplanned audit according to the findings obtained after the necessary examinations, and the corrective actions taken by the organization in the face of the complaint are found to be sufficient, it is checked whether the records regarding the customer complaint and all the complaints that are the subject during the audit of the organization are regularly kept on the normal surveillance audit date of the organization.

For verbal complaints, the validity of the complaint is first investigated by the management representative. If the complaint is valid and it is related to the certification activities for which TRB is responsible, it will be processed immediately. The management representative returns to the complainant and informs him that he must make a written notification in order for his complaint to be processed. Complaints not received in writing will not be processed. The result of the actions taken within one month at the latest from the date of the complaint is notified to the company in writing. The decisions taken by the complaint and objection evaluation committee are presented to the senior management and the final decision is taken by the TRB Senior Management, taking into account the committee's decision.

#### **5.6.2 Adjudication of General Complaints**

Complaints that reach TRB only in writing and related to certification activities for which TRB is responsible are processed. At the first stage, " SMS-F-40 Client Complaint Form " is filled by the Management Representative and sent to the certification coordinator together with the complaint letter. The basic principle is to solve the problem without wasting time in an objective and constructive way with the customer. Within 1 week of the complaints being processed, within the knowledge of the General Manager, the company is informed that the complaint has been evaluated and the process has been initiated, and research, analysis and evaluation work is initiated.

Complaints handling processes include:

- Deciding what kind of activities will be carried out,
- Follow-up and recording of the complaint, including the actions taken to address the complaint.,
- Outline the process for receiving the complaint, validation (verification), investigation,
- Ensuring appropriate correction and corrective action to be taken

The result of the actions taken within one month at the latest from the date of the complaint is notified to the company in writing. In case there is no mutual agreement regarding all the decisions taken by TRB, the place of solution is T.C. Ankara courts.

The Complaint and Objection Evaluation Committee consists of persons whose job description of SMS-JD-03- Appeal Complaint Assessment Committee has been determined, and it is a committee that includes at least 1 person who is knowledgeable in the activities to be carried out by TRB. Decisions taken in this committee are conveyed to the TRB Senior Management. The senior management makes the final decision, taking into account all the examination, objective evidence and the committee's decision.

#### **5.6.3 Disclosure of Complaint Subject and Resolution to the Public**

TRB, if requested by one of the parties to the complaint, together with the complainant and the certified customer causing the complaint, will inform the public whether the subject and solution of the complaint will be made public, and if so, at what level it will be disclosed on the official website at the level agreed by both parties.

### **5.7. Objections**

#### **5.7.1 Appeal Complaint Assessment Committee**

Objections are also examined by the Appeal Complaint Assessment Committee. In order for the " Appeal Complaint Assessment Committee " to convene, the objector must submit his reasoning in writing (with evidence, if possible) to the TRB. In this case, the committee will meet within 2 weeks at the latest from the notification..

In terms of the impartiality of the decisions, care is taken to ensure that the members are not part of the issue that causes the objection. The objector is informed of the date on which the issue will be discussed, the names

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and CVs of the persons in the committee for confirmation, and that they can attend the meeting as an observer if they request it. If the complainant objects to the selection of the committee members who will take a decision regarding his/her objection, he/she is requested to notify the reason in writing.

Complaints committee may request opinions from outside (consumer rights, non-governmental organizations, etc.) in case of need regarding the object of objection. At the same time, when deciding on the objection, the committee will also take into account the decisions taken against the objections made in similar situations before. In the committee, decisions are taken based on the absolute majority and the decision is presented to the senior management of TRB. The final and binding decision is the responsibility of TRB Senior Management.

According to the final decision, corrective/preventive action is initiated by the management representative and the process of the action is monitored and the results are informed to the certification coordinator, general manager and the customer in writing. For the corrective/preventive action initiated, the practices specified in the "Corrective Preventive Actions Procedure" are carried out. Customer requests, objections or complaints, for which corrective action has been taken and resulted, are processed in the relevant "SMS-F-40 Client Complaint Form". The decision is notified in writing to the appellant.

The corrective/preventive action performed may include the following measures.

- Return of the certificate as soon as possible
- Prevention of recurrence
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the corrective/preventive action measures taken

#### **5.7.2 Adjudication of Final Appeals**

In case there is no mutual agreement regarding all the decisions taken by TRB, the place of solution is T.C. Ankara courts.

In addition, the customer or interested party also has the right to directly refer the objection to the GSTC.. All information and documents related to customer complaints and their results are reviewed at Management Review meetings to identify improvement opportunities..

#### **5.8 Privacy**

- All complaints, objections and applications received by TRB are confidential and no information is given to third parties, except for conditions that must be made public.
- If deemed necessary, it is only allowed to be seen by the institution accrediting TRB. When it comes to informing the legal authorities, the relevant parties are definitely informed.
- All records, documents, responses and all relevant meeting records are kept in the management representative's complaints file. The complainant is informed about the reasons for the decisions taken at each stage of the appeal process and this information is recorded..
- All documents and records specified in this procedure are kept as quality records in accordance with the relevant procedure.
- Access to customers' complaint records is covered in TRB Certification Rules
- TRB announces information about complaint and objection processes to the public on the website [www.trb.com.tr](http://www.trb.com.tr).

#### **RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

SMS-F-05- Confidentiality Agreement  
SMS-PR-03 Appeal and Complaint Procedure  
SMS-F-40 Client Complaint Form  
SMS-PR-05 Corrective Preventive Actions Procedure  
SMS-JD-03- Appeal Complaint Assessment Committee

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