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1 OBJECTIVE: To ensure that the appellant receives an independent and unbiased decision for the appeal made against certification decision.

2 SCOPE: This procedure is applicable only for appeals made against the decision of certification

3 DEFINITIONS:

3.1 Appeal: Written communication challenging the decision with respect to organic product certification.

3.2 Appellant: The certified holder submitting the appeal

3.3 Appeal Committee: A Committee set up by the Board of Directors of IND-EXPO to address the appeal.

3.4 Complaint: Any unsatisfactory activity/function

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

4.1 Appeal form – QP-09-F-01

4.2 Appeals register

4.3 Acknowledgement form – QP-09-F-02

4.4 Terms and conditions for certification – PCS-D-TC-003

4.5 Terms and Reference of the Appeal Committee

4.6 Notification for rejection of appeal

4.7 Complaint Register

5. RESPONSIBILITY:

5.1 Board of Directors: Setting up the Appeals Committee

5.2 Appeals Committee (AC): Conducting an impartial investigation and giving the Judgment on the appeal.

5.3 Director: Registering the appeal and coordinating with the Appeals Committee until judgment is given. Reviewing the results of the investigation with regards to the complaint and ensure that the complaint is resolved effectively.

6. PROCEDURE

6.1 For any appeal received, a copy of the complaint or appeal shall be kept in the appeal file by registering the details.

6.2 The Certification Manager then reviews the appeal to ascertain whether the appeal is within the scope of certification and all evidences are available. If any thing is missing the Certification Manager shall obtain all such documents from the appellant.

6.3 If the appeal is found within the scope of certification the Certification Manager shall submit the recommendation to the Director.



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6.3 If the appeal is not within the scope of certification the Certification Manager shall submit the recommendation to the Director and the Director shall reject the appeal and notify the appellant accordingly.

6.5 The Board of Directors shall appoint an Appeals Committee comprising of at least three members to review the appeal. The constitution shall be as follows:

- Chairman
- One Representative from CNCI
- One Representative from NCE

6.6 The Appeals Committee shall not comprise of members who have any commercial interest with respect the appeal coverage or screened for any potential conflict of interest.

6.7 The Chairman and members of the Appeals Committee shall fix a date, time and a suitable venue and inform the Appellant giving a minimum of seven working days' notice, the composition of the relevant Appeals Committee, together with the date and other details.

6.8 The Appellant has the right to state his/her objections to the composition of the relevant Appeals Committee in writing to the Board of Directors with valid evidences.

6.9 The Board of Directors has the right to consider the reasons for objections and to decide whether it should be accepted or not and amend the composition of the Appeals Committee.

6.10. Prior to commencing any work related to appeal, the appeal committee shall sign the confidentiality and conflict of interest forms and hand over to the Director/CEO.

6.10 Appeals Committee sessions shall be conducted within 21 working days from then and both Appellant and the Appeals Committee have the right to avail them of assistance from witnesses, provided the names and addresses of the witnesses have been forwarded in writing to the Appeals Committee or to the Appellant.

6.11 The Appeal Committee shall review thoroughly the report submitted by the Director and any other relevant information may;

- a). Rule in favor of the appellant, promptly notifying the appellant and taking the appropriate actions;
- b). Rule against the appellant, notifying the appellant of this decision;
- c). Request additional information from the appellant or involved parties;
- d) Involve auditors or other experts, screening them for conflict of interest in coordination with the appellant;
- e). Take any other action that is necessary or appropriate

6.11 The members of the appeal committee shall judge in all fairness and decides on the appeal consensus.



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6.12 The judgment shall be signed by all members of the Appeals Committee.

6.13 The Appellant shall be informed of the decision in writing within seven days of the date of Judgment by the Director.

6.14 The Director/CEO shall determine cost of conducting the appeal.

6.15 If the Decision of the Appeal Committee is not in favor to the Appalment, the total cost of conducting the appeal shall require to be paid by the appalment.

6.16 The Decision of the appeal Committee is final and conclusive.

6.17 All details pertaining to appeals are maintained in the appeals register ensuring that appropriate correction and corrective action are taken.

6.18 All appeals shall be completed within two months from the date of receipt of the application.

6.19 Appeals procedure shall be made available as part of the public documents.

7 COMPLAINTS

7.1 IND-EXPO shall acknowledge the receipt of all types of complaints.

7.2 The complaints can be categorized broadly as follows;

- a) complaints, brought by operators or third parties concerning IND-EXPO performance
- b) concerning the compliance of certified operators.

7.3 All complaints received shall be investigated. Complaints shall be registered in the complaint register with supporting evidence.

7.4 Depending on the nature of the complaint, Director shall appoint a suitable officer considering the impartiality requirements having present no other direct or indirect conflict of interest

7.5 The Appointed officer will be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information (as far as possible).

7.6 In case of a complaint related to the use of prohibited substance. the certified operator in question may be subject to sampling and testing, if determined necessary.

7.7 The appointed officer shall prepare a complete report with the final decision and submit to the Director/CEO.



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7.8 Director/CEO shall be responsible for communicating the final decision to the appropriate authorities or persons of interest, applicant/certified operator and complainant in a way which does not prejudice the confidentiality of the party.

7.9 All records of complaints shall be maintained by the IND-EXPO.

7.10 Certified operators shall take appropriate action on complaints made to their own operations, keep a record of all complaints made and document all actions taken.

7.11 Said records shall be subject to review by IND-EXPO.