

VINCERT

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TITLE: APPEALS

INTRODUCTION

An appeal is the ultimate means by which a VINCERT client or other affected party can request the independent review of a VINCERT decision taken in the process of certification/registration. In addition the Complaint against the Managing Director shall be dealt as per this procedure.

The process may be initiated with regard to any decision made on behalf of VINCERT which cannot be resolved through other channels.

This procedure covers the overall Appeal procedure and reference must be made to the full Contract Terms and Scheme for Registration (B018 of current version) in all cases.

Appeal Handling Process

The Managing Director of VINCERT is responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeals handling process those are decided by the independent appeal panel. The persons engaged in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.

2.1 Communication

The VINCERT Applicant / Registered Clients are notified about the Appeal Procedure through its B018 during application process and also during closing meeting of the assessment.

2.2 Receipt

2.2.1 Appeal is required to be sent to Managing Director in writing citing the clear reason that the Appellant does not agree with which Recommendation of the VINCERT Assessment personnel or relevant Certification decision.

2.2.2 The MD must ensure that he has understood the contents and made a clear note in B057.

2.3 Acknowledgement

2.3.1 The Managing Director sends a formal acknowledgement to the Appellant within two working days. VINCERT does the backup if MD is away, in case if VINCERT was not the assessor or B14 Reviewer in that case. Else MD does through e mail to the Appellant. B057 is updated upon acknowledgement.

2.4 Allocation

2.4.1 Form B057 Appeal Progress Register is filled with the details.

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2.4.2 Managing Director will hear the Appeal himself and may include any other independent person who can be any other Assessor or Technical Expert or an Advisory member. B057 is updated with the allocation.

2.4.3 When Managing Director is not independent to the appeal subject, will forward the Appeal with full details to the nominee. (The nominee can be VINCERT). The Nominee in all the cases will be independent from the subject of Appeal.)

2.4.4 When MD & VINCERT are not independent to the appeal subject, MD will forward the Appeal with full details in B057 + written Appeal document to the Advisory Committee Chairperson. In such case MD will act as VINCERT secretariat to the Chairperson to facilitate him to appoint the nominee. (The nominee can be an Assessor or Technical Expert or any other Advisory Member or where decided by the chairperson an Appeal Panel may be formed). The Nominee(s) in all the cases will be independent from the subject of Appeal.) B057 will be updated with all allocations.

2.5 Actioning Appeal

The nominee contacts (verbal and onsite where needed) the Appellant to:

- walk through the appeal subject, validate and collect the Objective evidences
- discuss and advise of next step and time scale
- Investigates the subject (with all people against whom the appeal is raised) and reveal the truth with the Appellant and the subject. Where a visit to Appellant or Subject is required is made to complete the investigation. A written note is used for recording any facts gathered by the Nominee(s).
- Nominee to report to Chairperson of Advisory Committee in writing to close the appeal within the 30 days period. An extension may be granted by the Chairperson only based on circumstantial evidences.

2.6 Closure

- The Chairperson invites and forwards his final decision to the Managing Director for Actions.
- Managing Director completes B057 with the final decisions made and writes a formal closure to Appellant including how the corrections and corrective actions and demonstrating improvement in future.
- B057 Appeal Progress Register, Nominee(s) investigation facts, Chairperson's Decision Sheet and closure letter are filed in the Appeal file.
- Appeal root cause and corrective action details are recorded with in B057 and any changes in the Documented System of VINCERT is thoroughly assessed during Internal Audit and reviewed during Management Review for their effectiveness.

Finally MD will update the Progress on these issues to Chairperson through annual Advisory Committee Meetings including the VINCERT approach that Submission, investigation and decision on appeals have not resulted in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.