1. **Scope:** IDFL recognizes that concerns and incidents may occur occasionally in certification activities. To properly receive, evaluate and make decisions regarding these issues, a consistent and thorough process for gathering and verifying all necessary information is vital.

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the handling of concerns, complaints, feedback, and appeals received from clients, Accreditation Bodies, Scheme Owners, and other interested parties, and to document and resolve all such issues in a timely and professional manner.

1. **Definitions:** 
   1. **Appeal:** A formal request made by an organization undergoing evaluation for reconsideration of any adverse decision made by IDFL related to its evaluation or certification status.
   2. **Complaint:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, of any person or organization relating to the activities of the certification body (i.e., employee behavior, processes/methodology, or work performed) or of a certified organization, where a response is expected.
   3. **Concerns:** A lesser expression of dissatisfaction or disagreement relating to the activities of the certification body that has not yet resulted in a formal Complaint or an Appeal.
   4. **Feedback:** An expression given in the form of information or criticism, either internal or external, given with the intent to improve business activities provided by IDFL.
2. **Roles and Responsibilities:**

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| **Roles** | **Responsibilities** |
| QA Director | Updates to procedure as required |
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1. **Procedure** 
   1. All incidents (complaints or appeals) must be reported in writing through the IDFL website feedback form [Audit Feedback - IDFL](https://idfl.com/contact/audit-feedback/) to the QA Director at IDFL Corporate.
   2. The reported incident must describe the following:
      * Date
      * Organization Name
      * Reporter Name (optional)
      * Contact Info (including email and phone)
      * Incident Type: Complaint or Appeal
      * Subject Matter / Description. The subject matter clearly and as detailed as possible (“who, what, where, when”).
      * Objective evidence to support the case.
   3. Time Limits:
      * Appeals must be submitted to IDFL within 30 calendar days after IDFL has made a decision.
      * Complaints must be received through the feedback form within 60 calendar days after the incident has occurred.
      * IDFL aims to provide formal notice of the outcome of the complaint/appeal within 30 calendar days. However, IDFL reserves the right to an additional 60 calendar days (90 calendar days total) to provide formal notice if deemed necessary.

***The reported incident must describe the subject matter clearly and as detailed as possible (“who, what, where, when”) and provide any objective evidence to support its case. If the incident is not sufficiently substantiated (e.g. not accompanied with relevant information, reasoning, supporting documents, or if the time limit is exceeded) the incident may be deemed inadmissible. The QMS Director shall inform the Complainant / Appellant and may allow for additional information to be submitted to further progress the incident processing.***

* + - Upon receiving the formal written report of the incident, the QA Director will acknowledge receipt of the incident within 24 hours, to the Complainant/Appellant, typically via email. However, depending on the gravity and seriousness of the incident, the QA Director at their discretion, and if applicable in conjunction with Scheme Managers/Regional Managers, may decide to personally (or remotely) meet with the Complainant/Appellant to further understand the incident.
  1. Based on the nature and risk assigned to the incident, the QA Director will form an Incident Team to manage the issue. The makeup of the Incident Team is based on the nature and risk level of the incident and may include the following:
     + A minimum of two personnel representing the department(s) impacted by the Issue.
     + For Accreditation or Scheme issues, the team shall include a member of the regional audit / certification team that has necessary qualifications related to the complaint and a member of the regional management team.
     + The team may also, where appropriate, include a member from the outside management team (i.e., from another region).

***Incident Team members shall not have been involved in the certification activities related to the complaint. To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, team members (including those acting in managerial capacity) who have provided consultancy for a client, or been employed by a client, shall not be used by the certification body to review, or approve the resolution of a complaint for that client within three years following the end of the consultancy or employment.***

* 1. After a thorough and comprehensive review of the case, a formal Incident Report will be forwarded by the QA Director to the Complainant/Appellant, issued on a company letterhead, including the following:
     + Date Complaint Received
     + Complaint Information
     + IDFL ID number, if applicable.
     + Project Number, if applicable.
     + Company Name
     + Description of Complaint
     + Decision/Outcome and Reason for Given Decision/Outcome
     + Investigation Method
     + Date Complaint Resolved
  2. On receipt of the report from the QA Director, the Complainant/ Appellant has ten calendar days to review the report and either accept the report’s conclusions; or request additional actions to be undertaken by IDFL to resolve the issue.

1. **Revision Log:**

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| **Revision Date** | **Activity** |
| 31 MAY 2024 | Clive Wilkie - Updated from Drop Box file IDFL-PPF-7.13 |
| 4 JUN 2024 | Bryan Mortensen – Approved update |
| 21 OCT 2024 | Eneli Andersen – Copied document into the new Format Template. |
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