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COMPLAINTS & APPEALS PROCEDURE

AUTHORISED BY:

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Revision	Date	Description of Revision	Issued By
NEW	09/07/21	New document; issued.	RWH
REV 1	15/09/22	Update; separation of complaints and appeals	RWH

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Complaints & Appeals

11.0 General

This procedure addresses how Southdown Welding Inspection receives, evaluates, and makes decisions on complaints and appeals.

ISO 17024:2012 defines the appeals and complaints as follows:

Appeal; a request by an applicant, candidate, or certified person for reconsideration of any decision made by the certification body related to their desired certification status.

Complaint; an expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal, by an individual or organisation to a certification body, relating to the activities of that body or a certified person, where a response is expected.

SWI ensures that the submission, investigation, and decision on complaints or appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant / appellant; all parties shall be treated fairly and equitably.

The complaint and appeals handling processes are subject to the requirements for confidentiality as it relates to the complainant /appellant and to the subject of the complaint / appeal.

This procedure shall be made publicly available without request, via the company website.

The Quality Manager shall ensure that all complaints or appeals are handled and processed in a constructive, impartial, and timely manner.

11.1 Appeals

Upon receiving an appeal it shall be passed immediately to the Quality Manager who shall validate the appeal via any suitable means.

Should the appeal be validated the Quality Manager shall investigate the appeal and determine the actions to be taken. The Quality Manager should take into account any previous or similar appeals.

The nature of the appeal, the validation, inspection, and actions determined as applicable shall be documented on form F05, the nonconformance form.

Appropriate corrections and corrective actions shall be identified and recorded on the NC form issued. For more information on corrective actions, CP04 should be referred to. Corrective actions shall be proportional to the magnitude of the appeal and to the risks of recurrence.

SWI accepts responsibility for all decisions at all levels of the appeals handling process given in this procedure. SWI ensures that the decision-making personnel engaged in the appeals handling process are different from those who were involved in the decision being appealed. As such, the following personnel are authorised to act as the Quality Managers deputy should the nature appeal require:

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- Certification / Inspection / Technical Manager'
- Deputy Quality Manager.

SWI assures that the submission, investigation, and actions on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

The Quality Manager, or designated deputy, shall acknowledge the receipt of the appeal and shall provide the appellant with progress reports and the outcome.

The Quality Manager, or designated deputy, shall give formal notice to the appellant at the end of the appeals handling process.

11.2 Complaints

Upon receiving a complaint it shall be passed immediately to the Quality Manager who shall validate the complaint via any suitable means.

Should the complaint be validated the Quality Manager shall investigate the complaint and determine the actions to be taken. The complaint shall be document on form F05.

Appropriate corrections and corrective actions shall be identified and recorded on the NC form issued. For more information on corrective actions, CP04 should be referred to. Corrective actions shall be proportional to the magnitude of the complaint and to the risks of recurrence. Any correction or corrective action deemed necessary shall be documented on the NC form (F05).

SWI shall, upon receiving a complaint, confirm whether the complaint relates to certification activities for which it is responsible and, if so, shall respond accordingly.

Whenever possible, the Quality Manager shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and shall provide the complainant with progress reports and the outcome. Additionally, whenever possible, the Quality Manager will give formal notice to the appellant at the end of the complaints handling process.

SWI accepts responsibility for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.

Should SWI receive a substantiated complaint about a certified person the complaint shall be referred by SWI to the certified person in question at an appropriate time. A complaint of this nature should be documented on form F05 as evidence of the outcome and communication.

The decision to be communicated to the complainant shall be made, reviewed, and approved by the Quality Manager. Should the complaint involve the Quality Manager, the designated deputies given in section 11.1 shall undertake this task.

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11.3 Records

Completed NC forms (F05) shall be retained in the quality system to demonstrate the investigation, actions, and resolution of complaints and appeals.