

1. Scope

This procedure defines how to manage complaints and appeals, received from customers and other external stakeholders related to all Eurofins Assurance Services, to ensure they are handled in a professional and timely manner. A review of appeal and complaint process is done during annual Management Review.

The content of this Complaints and Appeals Procedure is applied for LEAF, GLOBALG.A.P. standard and relevant modules which are publicly available for external stakeholders on Eurofins Assurance websites.

2. Common process for both complaints and appeals

2.1 Acknowledgement and Record

Upon receipt, complaints and appeals are acknowledged to sender within five working days, unless otherwise specified in the scheme. They shall be recorded in the Complaint Monitoring Form; the Recipient of the complaint is either the person who received it directly or the one who entered the information. They are assigned to the validator who will determine the severity and decide actions according to this rating (see corrective actions section for details).

For complaint and appeal received from a complainant or appellant, which is not a Eurofins Assurance client, due consideration shall be given whether it is appropriate to answer, taking into account potential liability. In such cases, content of the answer is coordinated with client.

This process is subject to requirements for confidentiality.

Eurofins Assurance retains the anonymity of the complainant in relation to the client, if this is requested by the complainant and shall treat anonymous complaints and expressions of dissatisfaction that are not substantiated as complaints as stakeholder comments and address these during the next audit.

2.2 Responsibility

Personnel who investigate complaints and appeals shall be different from those who carried out the audits and made certification decision, without discrimination against the appellant or complainant.

Mailbox for receiving complaint and appeal: fa.compliance@cpt.eurofinseu.com

Compliance department will review contents of complaint and appeal preliminary, then transfer to relevant personnel responsible (scheme manager, BUMA...) to continue informing to client and follow necessary steps

- If Scheme Manager was involved, then a person, internal and independent, shall be appointed
- If Scheme Manager was not involved; he or she can carry out the investigation.
- If an appeal concerns one scheme managed by a GCC, the investigation must be conducted by GCC, in cooperation with the head office and the relevant local country.

Unless otherwise specified in the scheme, Global compliance department is the default channel for receiving complaints and appeals.

In case of a critical risk (possible litigation, insurance declaration, court summons, loss of image, accreditation) the complaint is transferred to Regional or Legal Division

2.3 Resolution process

The resolution process includes the following steps:

- i. Investigation, including business impacts and analysis of the situation,
- ii. Structured response (root cause analysis, correction, corrective action), if the severity is rated high (see corrective actions)
- iii. Implementation of correction and corrective action,
- iv. Information to the client of findings and actions taken,
- v. Monitoring of results: check if the solution is implemented and effective,
- vi. Record and traceability of documents,
- vii. Follow up on sustainability of results and of resolution.

The timeframe for resolution is four weeks, unless otherwise specified in the scheme. However, this may be affected by responsiveness of the client or other third parties.

The closure timeframe for CAPA associated to high severity rating is 90 days, after which escalation process is started.

Complaint can be closed only after a final written response is provided to the complainant. Record of this communication shall be maintained.

For all complaints received from an Accreditation Body or a Scheme Owner, the effectiveness of corrective actions has to be verified at the next internal audit (not by sampling).

3. Complaint process

Complaint can be written (Formal Letter, Email, Website) or verbal (Phone Call, Feedback during sales visit or audit).

***GLOBALG.A.P. standard:** If certificate holder is facing a complaint regarding food safety (potentially involved in a foodborne outbreak), worker's well-being, environmental protection or animal welfare or is involved in a court trial or has been found by a court of law to have infringed a national or international law, and these actions can endanger the reputation and credibility of GLOBALG.A.P. and Eurofins Assurance, the certificate holder shall inform Eurofins within 24 hours

Emergency for GLOBALG.A.P. incidents:

Contact email address: anh.ha@cpt.eurofinsasia.com

Telephone: (84) 28 7100 8368

Mobile phone: (84) 938 196 346

Complaints are handled at contracting entity level. An audit may be initiated to proceed with investigation, and the client shall be notified with reasons for the audit.

Business Unit Manager is responsible overall for the effective management of the complaint and shall

- Consider customer feedback
- Take vital role for the corrective action

Quality Manager is the main person involved in the resolution of the complaint and shall

- Consider customer feedback and initiate corrective action for the complaint
- Record and maintain the customer complaint with full evidence of acknowledgment and also final response to the complainant
- Take vital role for the corrective action
- Communicate the action taken to complainant, if not previously involved in the subject of the complaint.
- Ensure the effectiveness and timely manner of customer complaint process

All sector specific databases shall be updated with necessary records in stipulated timeframe.

On case-by-case basis, Eurofins Assurance, the Complainant and the Client shall decide if information needs to be made public. There has to be formal authorization from Complainant and Client when the decision is to make the complaint public.

Any instances where failure to publicly disclose the complaint could affect other stakeholders, should be made public. Examples of these instances are complaints about:

- Defects that could have catastrophic consequences (injuries, death, etc.);
- Failures in environmental management systems that could cause severe damage to environment and stakeholders;
- Quality of food products; etc.

The decision on making the complaint public or not shall be recorded.

The timeframe for notification of Certification Program Owner in case of complaints related to the standard/ scheme system/ national or international law etc. based on the requirement in specific scheme, specifically Scheme Manager shall inform to GLOBALG.A.P. within 24 hours from the acknowledge of the event and 5 working days against Leaf

4. Appeal process

Appeals are dealt at the level where certification decision making was done (Critical Location, GCC).

Appeals are communicated to Business Unit Manager, and included in the preparation of Eurofins Assurance Impartiality meeting.

Revision	Date	Change	Prepared by	Approved by
2.1	10 May 2025	Change channel of receiving complaint and appeal	Anh Ha	Hanh Tran
2	2 May 2024	Periodic review	Hung Tu	Anh Ha
1	18 December 2020	First issuance	Anh Ha	Huy Nguyen