

## TRUSTED Mark<sup>®</sup> SCHEME

# Trust 210: Procedure for Appeals and Complaints

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In accordance with  
ISO/IEC 17067:2013

During the 'Trusted Mark' Scheme implementation and certification, there is a likelihood of discomfort, confusion, disagreement between any two parties (The Scheme Owner (henceforth referred as the Trusted Mark Secretariat, CB, Accreditation body, Retailer Client Organization and Consumer). Also there may be some confusion, misinterpretation w.r.t. 'Trusted Mark' Scheme documentation. It is imperative that such situations need to be resolved for smooth scheme implementation and certification.

This process details the process for handling appeals and complaints. For the sake of the treatment, appeals and complaints are commonly addressed as INCIDENTS. Anyone can report an incident to the Trusted Mark Secretariat.

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## Quality System Incidents

For the purposes of this document “Quality System Incidents” are defined as complaints, appeals, suggestions, observations and opportunities for improvement.

Quality System Incident data is entered into the Corrective Action System for proper treatment (Trust 211). This procedure describes the methodology by which the scheme owner collects and processes incident reports; and communicates the impact to concerned members.

The Trusted Mark Secretariat recognizes that incidents occur in daily operation that collectively have an impact on the ‘Trusted’ Scheme Management System. In order to properly analyze and address system issues, a consistent and thorough process for collection of information is vital.

The various types of incidents are detailed below for clarity in understanding.

## Complaints

Complaints are incidents of grievance or dissatisfaction with any service. Complaints may be raised by any of the interested party on other e.g. Consumer on retailer (client); retailer on CB; retailer on auditor; CB on accreditation body etc. The complaint may be written (paper format, email) or verbal with regard to internal service, operations or employee performance

## Suggestions

The Trusted Mark Secretariat recognizes that positive feedback is as important as negative. Suggestions are vital in identifying preventive action and system improvement. As with complaints, suggestions may be written or verbal.

## Appeals

The Trusted Mark Secretariat recognizes that the client / consumer may have some reservations or may not agree with the conduct of auditor, auditor impartiality / confidentiality, audit findings, certification committee decision and / or overall interaction with CB staff. Client / consumer is free to appeal against these and this is treated as an appeal.

## Observations

Observations are witnessed incidents of service/operational deficiency, malfunction and or failure. Observations are often made by individuals independent of the activity witnessed and therefore objective in nature. Observations also play important role in identification of preventive action and system improvement.

## Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunities for Improvement are incidents where the system has not failed, yet greater operational efficiency may be obtained in analyzing current practice. Opportunities for Improvement are often collected internally, but input from external sources is also beneficial.

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### Procedure to be followed

Where an incident is reported the following procedure will be followed.

The incident shall be recorded by The Trusted Mark Secretariat and receipt of incident shall be acknowledged. The Executive Director of the Trusted Board shall review the incident and determine its nature. If it is a complaint / appeal, it shall be sent to Mediation committee. If it is a suggestion / opportunity for improvement, it shall be sent to System Improvement Committee.

The incident (appeal / complaint) shall be placed to the Mediation committee. The committee Chairperson in consultation with Executive Director of the Trusted Board will appoint a team to investigate the incident. Care shall be taken that the investigating team does not have any conflict of interest with either parties and have necessary competence w.r.t. business sector and also operation of CB.

The investigating team shall analyze the incident, discuss with concerned person(s) and determine the outcome. The outcome shall be submitted to the Committee Chairperson. The Chairperson and Executive Director may agree with the outcome and make the decision on the incident. In case, they do not agree with the outcome, the case may be forwarded to fresh investigating team. If both the investigating teams conclude to the same outcome, it shall be binding on the Committee Chairperson to accept the outcome as the final decision. If there is a difference in the two outcomes, the matter shall be tabled to full committee. A vote may be taken to reach the final decision. Results of the appeal will be communicated to both the parties.

The investigation (incident report – Trust 211) for each individual incident shall be maintained by the Trusted Mark Secretariat. In case, any further corrective action is required post actions identified and taken based on Incident report. A copy of the investigation report shall be sent to both the parties. All incidents made shall be collated and analyzed on a yearly basis.