**PROCEDURE – HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

**(EGP-7.13A, Issue 2, 23.11.2020)**

**1. PURPOSE**

To define a procedure for complaintshandling.

**2. SCOPE**

This procedure is applicable to all certification activities of EKO- Guarantee. It describes the systematic and consistent recording, evaluation and making decisions on complaintspertaining to certification and all other activities including certificates, reports and other decisions taken by EKO- Guarantee.

EKO- Guarantee complaints handling process is publicly available on the website of EKO- Guarantee.

EKO Guarantee shall not use any Personnel to review or approve the resolution of a complaint

to ensure that there is no conflict of interest who have provided consultancy for a client, or been employed by a client within two years following the end of the consultancy or employment.

**3. RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical (Head) and CEO

**4. PROCEDURE**

**4.1** A Complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the service, lack of service, other than appeal, by any person or organization, to EKO- Guarantee related to its certification and inspection activities.

**4.2** EKO- Guarantee shall be responsible for all decisions at all levels of the complaints-handling process.

**4.3**EKO- Guarantee shall ensure that submissions, investigation and decision on complaints do not result in any discriminatory actions against the complainant.

**4.4**Upon receipt of a complaint, EKO- Guarantee confirms whether the complaint relates to certification and inspection activities that it is responsible for and, if so, deals with it. If the complaint relates to a certified operator, then examination of the complaint shall consider the effectiveness of the certified management system.

**4.5** Any valid complaint about a certified operator is also referred by EKO- Guarantee to the certified operator in question at an appropriate time.

**4.6**EKO- Guarantee process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints is subject to requirements for confidentiality, as it relates to the complainant and to the subject of the complaint. The process includes at least the following elements and methods:

1. An outline of the process for receiving, validating, investigating the complaint, and for deciding whatactions are to be taken in response to it;
2. Tracking and recording complaints, including actions undertaken in response to them; and
3. Ensuring that any appropriate correction and corrective action are taken.

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| S. No. | Process | Process details |
|  | Receiving complaint | EKO- Guarantee receives the complainant. A written or electronic acknowledgement is given to the complainant. Thecomplaint received is then recorded in the Complaints Register, and is passed on to Technical (Head)for review,evaluation and decision. |
|  | Evaluating complaint | Complaintis reviewed to ascertain its validity. If the complaint received is related to EKO- Guarantee certification activities, the complainant is informed that the complaint is under review. If not, the complainant will be communicated to that effect. |
|  | Investigating complaint | Technical (Head)with help of Inspectors will investigate the complaint and it may include the following:  a) Internal audit.  b) Unscheduled audit of client.  c) Interview with client or interested party.  d) Interview with auditor concerned.  e) Review of client file (and related job files) and related information.  Outcome of investigations will be submitted to Technical (Head) to determine whetherany action is required or not. |
|  | Taking decision/actions | Action required: a) EKO- Guarantee takes required corrective actions,  b) Client gets audit report if prepared and takes  corrective action listed, which are verified for  effectiveness of actions taken and respond to  complainant.  Action not required: Respond to client/interested party (when the complainant is found without merit). |

**4.7**EKO- Guarantee is responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.

* 1. EKO- Guarantee shall provide the complainant with progress reports and the outcome.

**4.9**EKO- Guarantee ensures that the decision to be communicated to the complainant is made by, or reviewedand approved by only individual(s) not previously involved in the subject of the complaint.

**4.10**EKO- Guarantee will give formal notice of the end of the complaints-handling process to the complainant, whenever possible.

**4.11**EKO- Guarantee will determine, together with client and complainant, whether and, if so to what extent, thesubject of the complaint and its resolution shall be made public.

**4.12**EKO- Guarantee will resolve the complaints within 90 days from the date of receipt of the complaint.

**4.13**EKO- Guarantee will provide the client with liberty to approach the Accreditation Board in case client is not satisfied or the complaint has not been resolved within 90 days from the date of its receipt.