



**Documented Management System
Complaints, Non-conformances &
Corrective Action**

2.10

Issue 3

18th March 2016



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1. Document control

1.1 Control

Control of this document is in accordance with Documentation Control Procedure 2.11. The General Manager shall maintain a history of all amendments on a change register. The latest date and issue of this manual shall appear on the front cover and document reference and revision number is identified at the top of each page. The content and currency of this Policy document is the responsibility of the General Manager.

1.2 Circulation

A hard copy of this Document is held as a master copy back up and all staff can view this document in head office when required. An electronic copy is also available on the server.

1.3 Approval

Prior to the implementation of any documented process or operational procedure, the formal document will be subject to review to ensure that the commitments and process steps detailed are achievable and realistic, whilst linked to Policies and Objectives. Once reviewed and approved, the version history at 1.4 will be updated to signify the approval, and requisite authority of the approval.

1.4 Version history

Version	Author	Date released	Approved by	Date approved	Change overview
1	Tony Duff	01.05.2015	Tony Duff	01.05.2015	First Issue
2	Tony Duff	01.03.2016	Tony Duff	01.03.2016	Removal of requirement for specific agenda item for preventive action
3	Tony Duff	18.03.2016	Tony Duff	18.03.2016	Removal of Section 6 on Preventive Action

2. Introduction

This document sets out the procedure for managing complaints and non-conformities and the process of applying corrective actions. Where the processes following refer to the General Manager, it is suffice that this may be substituted by 'delegated authority or representative' as necessary.

3. Complaints

Complaints may fall into one of three categories:

1. Complaints against the service provided by System Certification Services
2. Complaints concerning a customer certified by System Certification Services
3. Complaints concerning a system or product certified by System Certification Services

The process by which System Certification Service's Customers make a complaint is set out in the Auditee Handbook 3.04. Customers are also informed therein that SCS may receive and investigate complaints against them relating to their certified systems or products.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the General Manager will be informed and will ensure that a Non-Conformance Record 5.52 is completed. The complaint will be given a sequential reference number. The complainant will be contacted for further information if required. To ensure a valid complaint, the General Manager shall confirm whether the complaint relates to certification activities. If the complaint relates to a certified client, then the examination of the complaint shall consider the effectiveness of the certified management system.

The General Manager will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 10 days, outlining the next steps to be taken. Where the complaint is against a customer, who's Management System is certified by System Certification Services, the customer will be informed and sent details of the complaint, subject to safeguarding the anonymity of the complainant.

All information relevant to the complaint shall be gathered and investigated; this can include audit reports and notes, statements from complainant and auditor, relevant documentation such as purchase orders, job specifications, and contracts. A review will be carried out of all documentation and a conclusion and subsequent corrective actions made, these conclusions and corrective actions shall be validated within SCS by discussing with other personnel and the Impartiality Committee if of a more serious nature before feeding back to relevant parties.

In the event of a serious complaint, and at the discretion of the General Manager, a summary of the complaint will be forwarded to members of the Impartiality Committee. Any Member wishing to input into the investigation of the complaint will contact the General Manager. If the General Manager has been involved with the audit or certification process, then another member of the Management Staff will replace him.

The General Manager will undertake an investigation of the complaint, consulting other personnel and parties as appropriate. If necessary, the General Manager may decide to convene a Complaints Panel to investigate the matter. A decision will be reached on the outcome of the complaint and subsequent action to be taken, and will be based upon relevant documentation, including:

- Relevant national / international standards and scheme specifications
- Relevant Guidance Documents
- The DMS Manual and associated policies and procedures of System Certification Services
- Other appropriate regulations

The complainant, and all interested parties will be informed of the outcome of the complaint, and subsequent actions to be undertaken. A summary of the complaint and subsequent corrective action will be included in the General Manager's Report to the Impartiality Committee.

The General Manager will ensure that the Non Non-Conformance Record 5.52 is updated to identify all appropriate actions, decisions and correspondence undertaken during the investigation of the complaint. Records relating to complaints will generally be held in the relevant customer file and referenced on the Non-Conformance Record 5.52.

A decision shall be made together with the client and the complainant, whether and, if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution shall be made public. If the decision is made to make the information public, this will be highlighted within the Non-conformance report.

4. Non-Conformance

Upon identification of a suspected non-conformance, the General Manager will be informed and will ensure that the Non-Conformance Record 5.52 is completed accordingly. Each non-conformance or customer complaint will be given a sequential reference number as taken from the non-conformance log.

In the event of a serious non-conformance, and at the discretion of the General Manager, a summary of the non-conformance will be forwarded to members of the Impartiality Committee. Any Member wishing to input into the investigation of the non-conformance will contact the General Manager.

The Non-Conformance Records will be reviewed at Management Review Meetings to ensure the completion and assess the effectiveness of corrective action undertaken. A summary of all non-conformances and corrective action will be included in the General Manager's Report to the Impartiality Committee.

If deemed necessary the personnel involved in the non-conformance shall not be allowed to perform any tasks whilst the investigation is being carried out and this shall be recorded on the non-conformance report. The integrity of other audits shall be evaluated.

The said personnel may subsequently not be allowed to perform tasks under that particular scope area or not used at all. This shall be recorded on the non-conformance form and the skills matrix updated as required.

At each Management Review meeting, an analysis will be undertaken of the following information in order to detect any trends in non-conformance:

- Non-Conformance / Customer Complaint Records
- The Appeals Register
- Internal Audit Reports
- Audits and surveillance visits from Accreditation Bodies
- Customer Feedback



The Management Review Meeting will consider the above analysis, along with any feedback or staff suggestions, to identify any potential non-conformity and their cause(s).

A record of any action agreed will be recorded in the Management Review Meeting minutes, along with timescales and responsibilities. The General Manager will be responsible for ensuring that actions are undertaken, completed and recorded.

Note: The Documented Management System and Contract Review process are preventive by their nature.

5. Corrective Action

The General Manager will review the non-conformance and determine the root cause and decide appropriate corrective action. In doing so he or she may consult with appropriate personnel or other relevant parties. Proposed corrective action will be recorded on the Non-Conformance Record 5.52. The General Manager is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the completion of corrective actions.

All decisions, actions and references to relevant records and correspondence will be recorded on the Non-Conformance Record. Once corrective actions have been satisfactorily completed, the General Manager or delegated representative will sign the form to verify that the non-conformance has been closed out.