

**Indian Register Quality Systems**  
**(A Division of IRCLASS Systems and Solutions Private Limited)**  
**Validation and Verification**  
**Operational Procedures Manual and Programme Protocol Manual**  
**Issue No 1**

**III IRQS – VVOPM : 17 : 01**

Page 1 of 3  
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Developed By : Scheme Manager  
Approved By : Head-IRQS

**HANDLING OF APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of this VVOPM is to define how IRQS handles appeals and complaints
- 1.2. It defines processes for both appeals and complaints.

**2. Scope**

This VVOPM and the defined processes is applicable to all types of GHG services, programmes IRQS intended to operate (VCS, GS4SS)

**3. Reference**

- ISO 14065:2020
- ISO 17029:2019
- **ISO 14066:2023**
- **IAF MD 6 : 2023**
- III IRQS VVAM C09 Resource requirements.

**4. Process Owner**

Nominated representative & Divisional Head are defined as process owners of the VVOPMs including, Scheme Managers

**5. Responsibilities**

As defined in the respective paragraphs.

**6. Process measurement (ISO 17029:2019; ISO 14065:2020 – 9)**

**6.1. General**

- 6.1.1. Appeals and complaints brought to the notice of IRQS are promptly dealt with and remain confidential. Information about the client from sources other than the client are kept confidential. This procedure is applicable to decisions and issuance pertaining to GHG statement/opinion.
- 6.1.2. It is ensured that personnel including those acting in managerial capacity are not employed to investigate any appeal or complaint if they have been directly involved in the activities towards the Organization or any other party involved in the appeal or complaint in question within the certification cycle.
- 6.1.3. It is ensured that submission, investigation and decision on appeals and complaints shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant / complainant.
- 6.1.4. In situations where appeals or complaints cannot be resolved by Nominated Representative or the Divisional Head – IRQS, the same shall be referred to QSC vide Management Representative.
- 6.1.5. A summary of Request for information, appeals / complaints received, actions taken/completed is presented in the Management Review meeting. Actions as decided in the Management Review meeting are implemented for further effectiveness. IRQS take full responsibility of the decisions during appeals and complaints process.
- 6.1.6. IRQS makes sure that the process of handling appeals and complaints is available to any interested parties and also available publicly.
- 6.1.7. If any claim made by interested parties / consultant that if the services of IRQS are hired the process of certification will be faster and cost will be lesser is to be brought to the notice of IRQS management.

## 6.2. Appeals

- 6.2.1. "Appeal" means "any request for review that is conveyed in writing or uploaded through the web-link, against a decision made by IRQS taking into consideration the explanation provided by the client". This may be either during the course of validation/verification at the client's premises or any work /decisions pertaining to IRQS.
- 6.2.2. Appeal means "request by the provider of the object of conformity assessment to the conformity assessment body or accreditation body for reconsideration by that body of a decision it has made relating to that object., as per ISO 17000 cl. 6.4
- 6.2.3. Appeals can be due to:
- a) refusal of a Validation/verification by IRQS
  - b) Decisions made on response time missed by client/responsible party
  - c) Decisions not to issue validation/verification opinion by IRQS;
  - d) Notification by any third party/interested party against the GHG statement/opinion by IRQS.
- 6.2.4. Any appeal from client or interested parties seeking redressal when received is recorded and acknowledged by Divisional Head-IRQS or Quality Manager. The appeal should contain all available documentary evidence. Any such appeals referred to management are examined in fairness and reviewed by quality Manager and any other personnel as required either separately or jointly. The appellant may be asked to withdraw the appeal if found not relevant. Actions shall be initiated by Quality Manager for resolving the appeals within a stipulated period of 3 months.
- 6.2.5. Resolution of Appeal shall be handled in the following manner:
- 6.2.5.1. An attempt is made by the team leader to resolve the issue with the client
  - 6.2.5.2. If the appeal is not resolved, the matter is taken up to Technical Manager then Divisional Head –IRQS.
  - 6.2.5.3. In case the Management Representative is unable to resolve the appeal, the same shall be referred, with all information (including documentary evidence) to the Quality Sub Committee.
- 6.2.6. Quality Manager tracks and maintains a record of all appeals along with remedial actions pertaining to the GHG Services and keeps the appellant updated about the progress and outcome, which is documented on F-17.01 Appeals and complaints.
- 6.2.7. Quality Manager identifies problems requiring any actions to prevent recurrence of the above for corrective action (and preventive action if required) commensurate with the nature and risk involved. These include measures such as:
- 6.2.7.1. Restoring the decision on the opinion of the GHG statement/project
  - 6.2.7.2. Assessing the effectiveness of remedial/corrective actions taken.
- 6.2.8. A formal notice of conclusion of the appeal handling process shall be provided to the appellant including the receipt of acknowledgement.

## 6.3. Complaint

- 6.3.1. Normally complaints i.e. dissatisfaction expressed verbally or through writing or uploaded through the web-link by a person or by the Organization to IRQS. Whoever received the complaint, the same shall be passed Any complaint received by IRQS, whether it pertains to IRQS functions or related to the opinions issued by IRQS, would be treated in all seriousness, and investigated. These complaints are recorded by Divisional Head-IRQS or quality Manager, documented on F-17.01 Appeals and complaints, and the complainant would be informed of the receipt of complaint and advised on the investigation required within a reasonable time.
- 6.3.2. Quality Manager initiates actions for resolving & restoring conformity to opinion issued in case of complaints on decisions, and for closing the complaint within three months from the date of receipt of complaint unless delayed for a specific reason. The results and actions taken/completed are informed accordingly to the concerned parties.
- 6.3.3. For complaints received against Projects, quality Manager may decide to:
- 6.3.3.1. Advise the controlling office of IRQS for a reference to the client based on which a visit may be planned for ascertaining the actions taken and ensuring effectiveness of the opinion issued.
  - 6.3.3.2. Advise additional actions and document FARs to be taken during forth-coming verifications.
- 6.3.4. Any such complaints referred to management are examined in fairness and reviewed by Quality Manager and any other personnel as required either separately or jointly. The complainant may be asked to withdraw the

complaint if found not relevant. A complaint after the date on which it has been received, is to be dealt with, within three months.

- 6.3.5. Resolution of Complaint shall be handled in the following manner:
  - 6.3.5.1. An attempt is made by the team leader to resolve the issue with the client, which is recorded subsequently in the complaint log F-17.01.
  - 6.3.5.2. If the complaint is not resolved, the matter is taken up to quality Manager, who analyses and initiates correction, corrective action / preventive action in co-ordination with Technical Manager, Divisional Head – IRQS
  - 6.3.5.3. In case the group (QM, TM, Divisional Head-IRQS and NR) is unable to resolve the complaint, the same shall be referred, with all the information (including documentary evidence) to the Quality Sub Committee.
- 6.3.6. Quality Manager tracks and maintains a record of all complaints along with remedial actions pertaining to the certification system and keeps the complainant updated about the progress and outcome.
- 6.3.7. Quality Manager identifies actions to prevent recurrence of the above for corrective action (and preventive action if required) commensurate with the nature and risk involved. These include measures such as:
  - 6.3.7.1. Notification to appropriate authorities as required by regulation
  - 6.3.7.2. Restoring conformity to v/v opinion issued
  - 6.3.7.3. Preventing recurrence;
  - 6.3.7.4. Assessing the effectiveness of remedial/corrective actions taken
- 6.3.8. In case of complaints relevant to public interest, the client and the complainant shall be consulted and if felt necessary information about the complaint and its resolution will be made available for public viewing.
- 6.3.9. A formal notice of conclusion shall be provided to the complainant including the receipt of acknowledgement.

**6.4. Reference to quality Subcommittee (QSC)**

- 6.4.1. The Quality Sub-Committee meetings are convened as described in III IRQS VVOPM:03 Management of impartiality
- 6.4.2. A summary of appeals and complaints is reviewed, as part of routine agenda, in all QSC meetings for adequacy of actions taken and for any suggested improvements.
- 6.4.3. During the course resolution of any appeals and complaints if a decision is made to refer specially to QSC, this aspect will be specifically reviewed. If required a special session is convened.
- 6.4.4. At least three members of the Quality Subcommittee (Appeals committee) will have to be present when the appeal, or complaint is taken up and none of them would have any interest in the party making the appeal or complaint. In case an appellant submits to IRQS motivated objections in writing against a certain member, this member during the duration of appeal, shall be withdrawn in favour of a substitute, if the objection is judged to be valid.
- 6.4.5. The decision of the Quality Sub-committee shall be final and binding on both parties. The same shall be communicated to the concerned parties and decision implemented.

**7.0 Revision History:**

Rev. No.	Effective Date	Details
00	20-July-2023	First issue
01	30-May-2024	Updated at Clause No. 3