



ABN 23 143 030 899

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1 **APPEALS**

1.1 **General**

The Client may appeal a certification decision of the AWI.

The AWI Appeals and Complaints Panel will investigate and as necessary hear the appeal and make a decision on the appeal based on the application of the Rules of Certification and/or the Scheme Rules.

The Appellant may attend the hearing of the appeal.

The AWI Scheme Manager will acknowledge the appeal within five working days of receipt of same.

Any member of the Appeals and Complaints Panel shall excuse themselves from participating in the process if they have had any prior involvement in the audit or the certification decision or if there is any conflict of interest for whatever reason.

The Scheme Manager will validate the appeal and ensure all necessary arrangements, i.e. notification to participants of venue and papers for the meeting are made available to enable the Appeals Panel to meet within 30 clear days of the original notification from the Client.

The appellant shall be given at least 7 clear days' notice of the time and venue of the meeting.

The Panel shall consider the Appeal from the Client, who may choose to attend, participate by teleconference, or simply submit a written and descriptive Appeal.

1.2 **Decision**

The decision of the majority of the Appeals Panel as declared by the Chairman shall be final.

The meeting will be properly minuted and the minutes circulated to all participants, including the appellant.

The Impartiality Panel will be advised to review the impartiality of the process if deemed necessary.

The results of any appeals will be a topic at the Management Review of the AWI Certification Governing Committee.

The results of the Appeal will be formally advised to the applicant by the Scheme Manager.

The appellant may withdraw the appeal at any time during the process.

If for any reason an appeal is withdrawn, AWI will not accept a future appeal on the same grounds.

2 **COMPLAINTS**

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2.1 General

There are several forms of complaints recognised under these Certification and Scheme Rules as follows:

- Complaints made to the AWI, normally by users of materials and/or products, about the performance of activities of Clients certified by the AWI;
- Complaints made to the AWI by its Clients, or other parties, regarding the performance of the AWI or any of its officers or Representatives;
- Misrepresentation of AWI certification;
- Complaints received by the Scheme Manager from an AWI Representative regarding bullying, harassing, intimidatory, or coercive conduct by a Client or their representative in the evaluation process, or in performing any other of the Representative's duties;
- Other matters that the AWI Appeals and Complaints Panel agree to accept as a formal complaint.

A complaint shall be deemed to have been received when:

- A written complaint has been submitted from the complainant and received by the AWI Scheme Manager;
- The nature of the complaint corresponds to one of the categories listed above; and
- The complainant has direct or first-hand access to the basis of the complaint.

All complaints shall be addressed as quickly as possible.

The Appeals and Complaints Panel will investigate, and as necessary, hear the complaint and make a decision on the complaint based on the application of the Rules of Certification and/or the Scheme Rules.

The complainant will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint and will be advised of the decision of the Appeals and Complaints Panel, which will be binding on all parties.

2.2 Complaints received by the AWI about Client performance

In the first instance, the AWI will endeavour to identify and provide the complaint to the relevant Client for resolution.

Where the complainant is dissatisfied with the response, or if the AWI is concerned about the Clients adherence to the Scheme Rules or Certification Requirements, the Scheme Manager may investigate the complaint further, including requesting any further information from the Client, undertaking any further evaluation activities or initiating inspection and auditing at the expense of the Certified Client.

2.3 Complaints about the AWI's services or personnel

Complaints received by the AWI concerning its certification services and personnel shall be investigated by the AWI Appeals and Complaints Panel in accordance with the AWI Management System.

2.4 Complaints about the misrepresentation of AWI Certification

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Complaints received by the AWI about misrepresentation of AWI Certification shall be investigated by the Certification Panel in accordance with the Management System.

2.5 Complaints of improper conduct towards a Representative

Complaints received by the Scheme Manager of alleged bullying, harassing, intimidatory, or coercive conduct towards an AWI Representative by or on behalf of a Client will be investigated by the Scheme Manager or their designate.

The Scheme Manager may require further information from the Client, which may include interviewing the Client's personnel about the conduct complained of.

If the Scheme Manager finds that the conduct complained of occurred, the AWI may refuse an application, or suspend or terminate a Certificate.

A Client, the subject of such a complaint, must assure the Certification Panel, to their reasonable satisfaction, that it will prevent any further improper conduct before the AWI will continue with its evaluation process, or reinstate a Certificate.

3 REVIEW OF APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

The Scheme Manager shall review the Register of Appeals and Complaints at the end of each year to analyse the causes, and identify trends that may require appropriate management action to be taken by the Scheme.

Any appeals and/or complaints received by the AWI and the appropriate action taken will be presented at the Management Review of the AWI Certification Governing Committee.

The Scheme Manager, Alan Nightingale can be contacted on 0422 870 005 or by email on alan@welding.org.au

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ATTACHMENT A Notification of Complaint Form

Notification of Complaint

Complainant: _____ Date: _____

Address of Complainant: _____

_____ Code: _____

Contact: Telephone _____ Email: _____

Nature of Complaint:

Name of investigator: _____ Date Assigned:

Findings:

Appeals Panel Recommendations:



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