

BUREAU VERITAS HONG KONG	<b>RSPO Procedure 8</b>	<b>VERSION 7 02-2019</b>
	<b>Appeals, Grievances &amp; Complaints</b>	<b>Approved: Jiaming YANG</b>

## RSPO Appeals, Grievances & Complaints Management

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### 1 – Background

**1.1** This procedure details the mechanism for resolving formal grievances, complaints or appeals related to the performance of Bureau Veritas in the delivery of RSPO certification services.

### 2 – Formal complaints or Grievances

**2.1** Any interested stakeholder that has an interest or is directly affected can lodge a formal complaint or grievance with Bureau Veritas regarding its performance when delivering RSPO Certification, one of its employee or subcontractors or a certified operation within the framework of an RSPO certification process performed by Bureau Veritas Certification.

### 3 – Receiving and accepting a formal complaint or grievance

**3.1** A formal complaint or grievance will only be accepted when it is presented in writing and addressed to the Director or Manager of the relevant Bureau Veritas Certification National Office.

**3.2** Such complaint shall be addressed to Bureau Veritas Certification National Office within a reasonable time after a particular event, usually not exceeding 30 days unless fully justified.

- 3.3** A formal complaint or grievance shall:
- be in writing
  - signed by the complainant
  - specify the grounds on which the complaint is made
  - be accompanied by relevant documented evidence as required
  - whenever relevant, shall indicate any step taken to address the issue with the entity concerned before lodging a formal complaint

**3.4** Upon receipt of a letter of complaint or grievance, Bureau Veritas shall formally acknowledge reception. The Director or Manager of the relevant Bureau Veritas Certification National Office shall review and respond to all formal complaints or grievance within 30 days of receiving the complaint. The response can be in writing but also through other means, such as e-mails or phone calls, as long as records are maintained.

**3.5** A formal complaint or grievance shall only be investigated and responded to by a person who has not been directly involved in the certification process, usually the Director or Manager of the relevant Bureau Veritas National Office.

## **4 – Investigating a formal complaint or grievance**

**4.1** Depending on the complaint, dispute or issue raised, the Director or Manager of the relevant Bureau Veritas Certification National Office may decide to investigate the problem outlined.

**4.2** A complaint or grievance can be formally investigated through additional document review, office audit or field audit as required to verify the grounds for the complaint.

**4.3** Bureau Veritas National Office may also decide to consult with a wide range of relevant stakeholders to investigate and find the most appropriate solution to resolve the complaint.

## **5 – Bureau Veritas Impartiality Committee for RSPO**

**5.1** Bureau Veritas National Office may, whenever relevant, consult or refer the formal complaint to Bureau Veritas' Impartiality Committee for RSPO, such as complaints related to conflict of interest, Bureau Veritas' independence, etc.

**5.2** The Committee shall be informed of the complaint and of all the steps taken by Bureau Veritas to resolve the complaint as well as the response provided by the affected stakeholder.

**5.3** Bureau Veritas Impartiality Committee will review all the information provided and will make a proposal to the affected Bureau Veritas National Office on how to resolve the dispute.

**5.4** Bureau Veritas National Office shall report to the Committee on the outcome once the dispute has been resolved or of any action taken to resolve the dispute.

## **6 – Responding to a formal complaint or grievance**

- 6.1** Once the formal complaint has been investigated, the CER Director or CER

Manager from the relevant Bureau Veritas national Office shall respond to the complaint or grievance indicating whenever relevant and appropriate the preventive and/or corrective measures that will be implemented to address the issue raised.

**6.2** For all the formal complaints, grievance or disputes received, the relevant Bureau Veritas Certification National Office shall handle the complaint within 60 days of receiving the formal complaint.

**6.3** Whenever a complaint cannot be resolved within 60 days, Bureau Veritas shall inform the RSPO Secretariat, including information as to why the complaint cannot be resolved within an appropriate time frame.

## **7 – Referring a formal complaint to RSPO**

**7.1** A certified operation has the right to raise a formal complaint with RSPO or directly to the RSPO Executive Board, in line with RSPO Grievance Procedure, if it is not satisfied with Bureau Veritas Certification's final response.

## **8 – Recording a formal complaint or grievance**

**8.1** All formal complaints or grievances received shall be recorded together with all the steps taken to resolve the complaint and all communication with interested and/or directly affected parties. Records shall be kept in Bureau Veritas QESIS system.

## **9 – Appeals**

**9.1** An appeal may only be made by a client of Bureau Veritas for RSPO certification against a RSPO certification decision made by Bureau Veritas Certification.

**9.2** An appeal raised by a client of Bureau Veritas for RSPO certification against a RSPO certification decision made by Bureau Veritas Certification may only be related to:

- Refusal by Bureau Veritas Certification to proceed with an RSPO audit.
- Disagreement with a nonconformity raised by Bureau Veritas Certification during an RSPO audit.
- Changes in scope of RSPO certification proposed by Bureau Veritas Certification.
- A decision to reduce, suspend or terminate the RSPO certification of the certified operation.

**9.3** The grounds for an appeal are limited to:

- An appeal based on the fact that Bureau Veritas Certification has not followed its own procedures for RSPO certification or RSPO certification requirements; or
- An appeal based on the fact that Bureau Veritas Certification has incorrectly interpreted the RSPO certification requirements.

**9.4** Notifications of appeal shall be received by the Director or Manager of the relevant Bureau Veritas Certification National Office within 30 days of the relevant RSPO certification decision being received by the certified operation.

**9.5** The Director or Manager of the relevant Bureau Veritas Certification National Office shall review and respond to an appeal within 60 days of receiving the appeal. In its response, Bureau Veritas Certification shall clearly indicate whether the original decision is maintained or whether based on the elements presented in the appeal that the initial decision has been modified to take into account any new and relevant information provided.

**9.6** A certified operation has the right to raise an appeal with RSPO or directly to the RSPO Executive Board, in line with RSPO Grievance Procedure, if it is not satisfied with Bureau Veritas Certification's final response.