 **APPROVED BY:**

**Director of "National Accreditation Body” SNCO**

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**« 12 »**  \_\_\_**August\_**\_\_\_ 2024

Order N\_2-KH\_

**MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**PROCEDURE**

**HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS**

**PR-7.12**

**DEVELOPED BY:**

**Management system manager**

 **\_**Nazik Abgaryan**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(name, surname, signature)

Valid from \_\_\_12.08.2024\_\_\_\_

Yerevan 2024

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# Scope of application

The present procedure defines the procedure of handling complaints submitted by a person or an organization with respect to the activities of “National Accreditation Body” SNCO (hereinafter: ARMNAB) and a conformity assessment body (hereinafter: CAB).

The present procedure was developed in accordance with the requirements of point 7.12 of the GOST ISO/IEC 17011-2018 standard and EA – 1/17 S3 A document.

***2. Normative references***

Only the latest publications of the documents cited without a date shall be applicable. The following documents are referred to in this document:

GOST ISO/IEC 17011 - Conformity assessment. General requirements for bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies

PR-9.4 - Procedure on records management

PR-9.5-9.6 - Procedure on nonconformity control, corrective and improvement actions

PR-9.7 - Procedure on internal audit

PR-7 Accreditation procedure and general requirements

"Accreditation criteria, procedure and deadlines for accreditation, assessments of conformity assessment bodies" Annex to the order N 915-N of Minister of Economy of the RA, April 2, 2024

EA 1/17 S3 A - EA Procedure for the investigation and resolution of Complaints and Appeals

# 3. Terms and definitions

The following terms and definitions, including those from GOST ISO/IEC 17011, are used in this procedure:

**Complaint -** expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any person or organization, to an accreditation body, relating to the activities of that accreditation body or of an accredited conformity assessment body, where a response is expected.

***4. Responsible and authorized persons***

The ARMNAB director shall oversee the implementation of this procedure.

The management system manager shall be responsible for registering complaints and recording their discussion results in the electronic register according to the PR-7.12-01.

# 5. Procedure for complaints handling

# 5.1 Submitting complaints

5.1.1 Complaints shall be accepted in the written form, via fax, e-mail, and shall be registered in the respective register.

5.1.2 The accreditation body shall be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.

5.1.3 Complaints pertaining to the ARMNAB shall be handled within **1 month** since the day of their submission to the ARMNAB. In case of deviations from the stipulated timeframe, the complainer shall be notified about the delay and its reason.

# 5.1.4 Complaints pertaining to the CAB shall be investigated within 2 months. In case of deviations from the stipulated timeframe, the complainer shall be notified about the delay and its reason.

# 5.2 Complaints related to the ARMNAB’s activities

5.2.1 Complaints related to the activities of the ARMNAB shall be reviewed and handled by the deputy director and the Accreditation Department head.

5.2.2 The person to whom the complaint is addressed shall perform an analysis and present the result to the deputy director and to the Accreditation Department head.

5.2.3 In case nonconformities are discovered, the management system manager shall conduct an extraordinary internal audit in accordance with procedure PR-9.7 and shall assign the respective executor(s) to initiate corrective/improvement actions in accordance with procedure PR-9.5-9.6 to eliminate those nonconformities. The management system manager shall enter the results of complaints handling and corrective/improvements actions into the register. After the elimination of the nonconformities, a response shall be sent to the complainer about the final results of the complaints handling and analysis.

5.2.4 In order to ensure impartiality, the complaint shall be handled and the final decision shall be made or reviewed and approved by individual(s) that was (were) not involved in the activities connected with the given complaint.

5.2.5 The ARMNAB shall be responsible for the decisions made at all the levels of the complaints handling process.

# 5.3 Complaints related to CABs’ activities

Complaints related to the activities of CABs shall be reviewed and handled by the ARMNAB’s deputy director and Accreditation department head.

They shall figure out whether the complaint refers to the CAB’s activities and failure to fulfil accreditation requirements.

The ARMNAB shall send a letter to the CAB to perform analysis on the given complaint, taking into account the accreditation requirements. Within 10 working days, the accredited CAB shall present ways of clarifying the complaint, and the complaint handling results.

If the CAB’s standpoint and the presented clarification put into question the fulfilment of the accreditation requirements, the ARMNAB shall perform an extraordinary assessment. The ARMNAB shall give the CAB an advance notice about the extraordinary assessment.

The ARMNAB shall give formal notice of the end of the complaint handling process to the complainant.

Correspondence pertaining to the complaints analysis and the assessment reports shall be attached to the dossier of the CAB.

The results received from the CAB and/or assessment results are recorded by the ARMNAB management system manager in the "Register of Complaints and Appeals" in accordance with Annex PR-7.12-01.

# 6. Record-keeping

The records made in accordance with the present procedure shall be maintained for 3 years after making a decision on the complaint, subsequently they shall be archived for 5 years.

# 7. Annex

Annex PR-7.12-01 Complaints and appeals register templet

# Annex PR-7.12-01 Complaints and appeals register form

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Date, number of the received letter** | **Complainer’s/****appellant’s name and surname or organization name** | **To whom the complaint/appeal refers (ARMNAB, CAB)** | **Summary of the complaint/appeal** | **Name and surname of the person handling the complaint/appeal** | **Complaint handling result** | **Date, number of the response letter** |
| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** |
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**HISTORY OF AMENDMENTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Edition** | **Amendment** | **Amended points/words** | **Amended (previous) version** | **Signature of the person performing amendment** |
| **No** | **Approval date** | **No** | **Approval date** |
| 1 | 28.11.2015 | 1 | 17.07.2017  | 5.1.1 – add the word ‘oral’  | - |  |
| 5.2.1 – is responsible for handling complaints  | Complaints related to the activities of the ARMNAB shall be reviewed and handled |  |
| 5.3 – add the words ‘reviewed and’, ‘Within 10 working days’, ‘Based on the results received from the CAB, the ARMNAB’s’, (in accordance with points 49-53 of the RA Government decision № 1201-N of 6 September 2012’ | - |  |
| 2 | 16.12.2019 |  |  | The entire text | - |  |
| 3 | 12.08.2024 |  |  | The entire text | - |  |
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**DOCUMENT FAMILIARIZATION SHEET**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Full name** | **Position** | **Date** | **Signature** |
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