	Policy Relating to the Resolution of Complaints	Issue 01 Revision: 02 Date: 21 May 2014 Review by: N. Smith Approval: D. Parkes
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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a positive and open response to complaints received by the DCBC and to ensure both the accountability and integrity of the DCBC certification system.

Scope

This policy encompasses all complaints deemed to be of a more serious nature in relation to the integrity of the DCBC certification process. Complaints of a less serious nature may or may not be subject to the entire policy as written.

Responsibility


The Chief Executive Officer has the responsibility to ensure that complaints are investigated and addressed in a prompt and professional manner according to the policy below. The Chairman of the Board is to be responsible for the investigation of any appeals as requested by complainants or other stakeholders.

Policy

It is the policy of the DCBC that complaints relating to the integrity of the DCBC certification process will be handled within 45 business days of the receipt of all related information and/or evidence, according to the following policy:

I. Complaint

- 1) Introduction: Complaints relating to the application of DCBC policies and procedures may be initiated by any stakeholder, including employers of DCBC certified diving personnel, dive supervisors, and individual divers.
- 2) Making a Complaint: All complaints shall be made in writing (i.e. letter or email) to the CEO or the Chairman. Complaints received by the Chairman which do not explicitly refer to the CEO will be forwarded to the CEO for an initial response. Complaint documentation must include credible supporting information, which could be in the form of documents or personal statements, to back up the complaint – see Grounds for Complaints below. Individual directors may forward complaints brought to their attention by stakeholders to the CEO.
- 3) Grounds for Complaints: It is essential that all complaints are grounded in fact. The following guidance notes are provided to assist in ensuring that the complaint process remains reliable and unbiased:
 - a. The subject of a complaint may be general (e.g. relating to a specific DCBC policy or procedure) or specific (e.g. questioning whether a named individual has been certified correctly).
 - b. A person or persons having direct personal experience of the subject of the complaint will have sufficient standing to submit a complaint.


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- c. Complaints should provide as much corroborating information as possible. This may include documents or third party/witness statements.
 - d. Complaints involving perceived conflict of interest are not sufficiently credible without corroborating or supporting information.
 - e. Anecdotal evidence is considered to be questionable support of any complaint therefore credible supporting information must be provided.
 - f. Complainants must identify themselves (i.e. anonymous complaints will not be accepted) however the identity of the complainant will be kept confidential within the DCBC.
- 4) Acknowledgement: The CEO will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, in writing, to the complainant. If it is the CEO who receives the complaint he will advise the Chairman, in writing, of receipt of the complaint. All complaints and/or feedback of relevant nature will be recorded in the Customer Feedback Log (F-8.2.1-03).
- 5) Initial Review: The CEO will conduct an initial review of the complaint, including the file of any individual involved, in order to determine:
- a. That the basic documentation for certification is complete and verified; and,
 - b. Whether there are any grounds to proceed with a full investigation.
- 6) Registration: If there are grounds to proceed with the investigation, the complaint and any resulting actions will be registered within the DCBC Quality Management System according to Sections 8.3 (Control of Nonconforming Product) and/or 8.5 (Improvement).
- 7) Investigation: The CEO will proceed to fully evaluate the corroborating information provided and will request additional information as required to complete the investigation.
- 8) Initial Response: The CEO will advise the complainant in writing of the result of his initial review of the complaint, and send a copy to the Chairman. The CEO will also advise the complainant of the opportunity to contact the Chairman should the complainant wish to appeal the decision of the CEO.

II. Appeal Process

If the complainant decides to appeal the decision of the CEO, he or she must submit the appeal within 30 days of receiving the initial decision from DCBC. The complaint is then brought forward to the Chairman, who will adjudicate as follows:

- 1) The CEO will make all necessary information available to the Chairman who will review the complaint to confirm that DCBC policies and procedures were either adhered to or breached. If deemed necessary, the Chairman may involve one or more directors in the secondary review.

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- 2) If credible support for the appeal is not available then a full investigation will not proceed and the case will be deemed closed.
- 3) If there are any grounds for further investigation of the complaint, or any doubt as to the integrity of the certification process, the Chairman will advise the Board of Directors at large of the situation and implement a full investigation (secondary review).
- 4) The results of the secondary review will be deemed to be final and if necessary, will be registered within the DCBC Quality Management System according to Sections 8.3 (Control of Nonconforming Product) and/or 8.5 (Improvement).
- 5) The CEO, or Chairman if appropriate, will then advise the complainant of the result of the initial and/or secondary review and the matter will be deemed closed unless new supporting information is made available. If new credible information is forthcoming then a new complaint process will be initiated and the process started over again.