

	APPEAL PROCEDURE	Doc no	P18.SC
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		Review Date	1/09/2025
		Approved	

Purpose

This procedure provides audited sites with a fair and transparent mechanism to **appeal audit findings, decisions, or outcomes.**

Scope

This applies to: All sites audited under the ACTs social compliance programme.

Principles

Fairness: All appeals are reviewed impartially.

Transparency: Appeals are documented, tracked, and communicated clearly.

Timeliness: Appeals are addressed within defined timeframes.

Procedure

Step 1: Submission of Appeal

The audited site may submit an appeal if they believe:

Findings are factually incorrect.

Evidence was not adequately considered.

Audit process was not followed correctly.

Appeals must be submitted **in writing within 7 working days** of the audit.

Appeals should be sent to ethicaltrade@africancertification.co.za.

Appeal must include:

Audit reference number.

Specific findings being appealed.

Supporting evidence or documents.

Step 2: Acknowledgement

ACT will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within **1 working days**.

Step 3: Review of Appeal

The appeal will be reviewed by a **Technical Reviewer** not involved in the original audit.

The review will include:

Examination of original audit evidence.

Consideration of additional evidence submitted by the site.

Verification against Scheme methodology.

If necessary, the site may be contacted for clarification or additional information.

Step 4: Decision

A decision will be made within **2 working days** of receiving the appeal.

Possible outcomes:

Appeal upheld: Findings corrected, amended, or withdrawn.

Appeal rejected: Original findings remain unchanged.

Partially upheld: Some findings amended, others retained.

Decision will be communicated in writing to the site, with reasons clearly stated.

Step 5: Escalation

If the site disagrees with the outcome, they may escalate the appeal through the **Scheme grievance process**.

ACT will cooperate fully with the scheme in any escalated review.

Step 6: Recordkeeping

All appeals will be logged in an **Appeals Register**.

Records will include:

Details of the appeal.

Actions taken.

Final decision and date.

Records will be retained for at least **5 years**.

5. Monitoring and Review

The Appeals Process will be reviewed **annually** or when Scheme grievance requirements change.

Lessons learned from appeals will be used to improve audit quality and procedures.