

Introduction

This document details the process for handling Complaints and Appeals received by BRE America. The definition of these terms is as follows:

- A **Complaint** is any expression of dissatisfaction, doubt or disappointment made to or about BRE America, related to its products, services, staff or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
- An **Appeal** is a request by the provider of the object of conformity assessment (certification) to BRE America for reconsideration by them of a decision they have made relating to that object.

Complaints

All complaints should, preferably, be made in writing and addressed to

The Director of Operations
BRE America
1130 Fremont Blvd, Suite 105-332
Seaside, CA 93955-5700

All complaints will be investigated fairly and promptly. Records will be kept of all complaints, appeals and decisions.

Once BRE America has received the complaint, the complaint will be acknowledged in writing and the investigation will begin. Should further details be required from the Complainant, BRE America will request these and continue the investigation once the details have been received. Upon conclusion of the investigation, BRE America will inform the Complainant:

- of the proposed resolution where the complaint was found to be justified
- of the appeals procedure where the complaint was not found to be justified, if appropriate.

Where the complaint was determined to be justified, the Complainant will be advised of the proposed resolution. Should they accept, the resolution will be implemented and the matter considered closed. Should they reject, BRE America will review and either revise or uphold the decision. If BRE America determines a revision is warranted, we will inform the Complainant of the new proposal. If no revision is acceptable, the Complainant will be advised of the Appeals Procedure if appropriate.

Where the complaint was not determined to be justified, the Complainant will be informed and advised of the Appeals Procedure if appropriate.

Serious complaints against BRE America should be addressed to:

The Group Quality Manager
BRE Global Ltd,
Bucknalls Lane
WD25 9XX
United Kingdom

Appeals

An Appellant may appeal to BRE America by writing to The Director of Operations, clearly setting out the grounds for the appeal and enclosing a check for \$2,000 made payable to BRE America, LLC. This fee is to cover the costs of the appeal (refundable only where the Appeals Panel finds in favor of the Appellant).

The Director of Operations reviews the appeal and if the situation can be resolved to the satisfaction of the Appellant and BRE America within 14 working days of receipt, it does not progress beyond this point and the fee is refunded.

Should it not be resolved, the Director of Operations will inform the BRE America Board of Directors which will in turn inform the Chairman of the Governing Body. An Appeal Panel is constituted as and when an appeal is received and will consist of three members of the Governing Body:

- Who have not been directly involved in the decision under appeal, and
- Who have no direct interest in the decision.

The Chairman of the Governing Body will agree the composition of the Appeal Panel with BRE America. The Director of Operations shall provide secretarial services to the Appeal Panel but will have no voting rights.

The Appellant is given not less than 14 days' notice of the date set for the appeal, advised of the constitution of the Appeal Panel and invited to be present. The Appellant has the right to state objections to the constitution of the Appeal Panel within 2 working days of receipt of notice. In this case, the Chairman of the Governing Body will consider the objection and the membership of the Appeal Panel will be amended if necessary.

An Appeal Panel may uphold or quash the decision following a review of the circumstances surrounding the appeal. The Appellant will be informed of the Appeal Panel's decision. All correspondence associated with appeals must be sent by certified mail.