



POLICIES | FIRST EDITION

IAF APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

Independent review, fair decisions
and effective resolution

STABLE RELEASE

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Complaint handling and independent appeals
Decision, remedy and follow-up procedures
Implementation records and references

International Automotive Federation

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Publication identity and use

Resolve complaints fairly and provide independent review of appealable decisions.

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Policy owner	Quality Manager and Appeals Committee
Approving authority	Competent Presidential Council authority under IAF-CON-001
Operational commencement	The actual approval reference and effective date are recorded in the controlled approval notice and IAF-RG-001.
Classification	Public core policy. Completed case records and operational details are classified according to their content.

How to apply this policy

Apply the numbered requirements to the relevant activity and use the annexes with the existing IAF forms. Record the responsible person, authority, evidence and dates for each decision. “Shall” states a requirement; “may” permits a justified choice within the stated authority.

Authority and document control

Mandatory law and the filed corporate instrument prevail, followed by the lawfully adopted Constitution and the applicable policies and programme rules. This policy supplements the IAF quality documentation. It does not amend constitutional offices, grant an external mandate or establish that operational appointments and systems are already in place.

The Constitution identifies 05 May 2025 as its designated effective date. This newly issued policy takes operational effect through its actual competent approval notice. The Secretariat maintains the master text, related instructions and revision history under IAF-PR-001.

Contents

The policy requirements and operating procedures are followed by implementation records and document references. Annex templates support the existing IAF forms and do not replace required competent decisions.

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Related policy series

IAF-POL-009 Whistleblowing Policy
IAF-POL-011 IAF Mark Usage Policy
IAF-POL-012 Data Protection and Privacy Policy
IAF-POL-013 Conflict of Interest Policy

1 Purpose scope and access

1.1 IAF shall receive complaints about its activities and provide an independent appeal against an appealable decision. The process shall be accessible to members, applicants, clients, assessed organizations, programme participants and other affected persons. Corporate Recognised status, sponsorship, office or payment shall not secure preferential treatment.

1.2 This policy applies to membership, committee processes, standards development, assessment and recognition, certification and accreditation schemes, marks, public registers, AutoSafe, AutoID, Academy activities, awards, events, partnerships and administrative services within IAF authority. The applicable programme rules identify the underlying technical criteria and the person entitled to a decision.

1.3 A complaint expresses dissatisfaction with conduct, service, delay, process, a public claim or another matter for which a response is expected. An appeal asks for review of a notified decision that affects the appellant. A report of suspected wrongdoing also follows IAF-POL-009. A privacy rights request follows IAF-POL-012 and its statutory clock.

1.4 A person need not use legal terminology or a prescribed form. The receiving office shall help identify the appropriate route and preserve the date of first receipt. Where the submission contains several issues, linked records shall identify the responsible route and explain any different rights or timescales.

1.5 This policy implements Constitution Article 24 and supplements IAF-PR-013 and IAF-PR-014. Constitutional rights and mandatory law prevail over service targets, contracts, web summaries and forms. It does not create a general membership power to elect or remove the Federation President or Presidential Council.

1.6 IAF shall provide reasonable language and accessibility support and accept an authorized representative. Identity or authority checks shall be proportionate to the information and remedy sought. A general complaint or public safety concern shall not be rejected solely because the complainant is not a member or declines unnecessary personal information.

2 Routes eligibility and boundaries

Submission	Responsible route and treatment
Service or conduct complaint	Quality Manager assigns an unconflicted case owner. A complaint against that office uses the independent alternative.
Challenge to a decision	Appeals Committee arranges an independent three-person case panel. Preserve the 30 calendar day filing right.
Wrongdoing or retaliation	Protected handling under IAF-POL-009, with linked complaint or appeal where applicable.
Privacy request or incident	Immediate referral under IAF-POL-012. Internal case handling shall not delay a statutory response or notification.
Concern about a scheme participant	IAF examines matters within its scheme, licence or membership authority; the provider may separately handle its own service complaint.

2.1 Appealable decisions include adverse membership or disciplinary decisions, scope or status decisions under a scheme, refusal or restriction of a licence, and other decisions for which the Constitution or published programme provides review. A decision notice shall identify the available route and filing period. Eligibility depends on the effect and applicable rules, not on support for management.

2.2 A complainant may challenge a complaint determination where it constitutes an appealable decision affecting them. A person who supplied information about another organization is not automatically entitled to that organization's confidential assessment evidence or to demand a particular sanction.

2.3 IAF may refer issues outside its authority to a competent organization with an appropriate basis for sharing information. Referral shall explain the limit of IAF responsibility and preserve evidence. It shall not claim that an external organization must accept IAF jurisdiction without a lawful mandate or agreement.

2.4 A case may continue alongside legal or regulatory proceedings unless a lawful restriction or a documented risk to those proceedings requires a limited pause. Record the basis, affected steps, review date and parties informed. Neither silence nor delay by another body automatically closes the IAF case.

3 Responsibilities and independence

3.1 The Secretariat maintains verified submission routes, provides procedural assistance and records receipt. The Quality Manager controls complaint administration and deadlines. A complaint investigator shall not investigate their own work or report through an implicated person for case decisions.

3.2 The Appeals Committee oversees competence, independence, case allocation and procedural consistency. Its constitutional elected composition is three to five persons under IAF-GUI-COM-001. Current Presidential Council members, paid IAF executives and materially conflicted persons are excluded from this oversight committee.

3.3 Each appeal shall be determined by exactly three independent persons. None shall have participated in the original evaluation, review or decision, have advised the applicant on the disputed work, or have an interest that could impair impartiality. The assignment record shall identify the competence needed, declarations and documented roster rotation.

3.4 Case experts from outside IAF may be appointed where the internal roster cannot provide independent competence. The appointment shall define the case mandate and safeguards. It does not create an unelected permanent committee seat. An implicated official shall not choose panel members, control evidence access, direct findings or condition remuneration on outcome.

3.5 Ordinary elected committee participation follows the Committee Guide and may include eligible Corporate representatives. Committee Chair and Bureau offices require authorized Corporate Recognised representatives. An appeal case panel is a temporary adjudicative assignment and shall be selected for independence and competence under Article 24; recognition status alone never establishes either.

3.6 The panel shall designate its case presiding member and obtain administrative support independent of the original decision function. Administrative staff may arrange records and meetings but shall not vote or draft findings at the direction of a party. Protected resources shall be available for external competence, accessibility and necessary evidence review.

4 Submission receipt and time limits

4.1 A submission should identify the affected activity, facts, relevant dates, requested remedy and supporting evidence. An appeal should attach or identify the notified decision and explain the alleged error. Missing information shall be requested promptly; it shall not justify disregarding a timely expression of intention to appeal.

Requirement	Controlling calendar rule
Complaint acknowledgement	Within 7 calendar days of receipt, where contact is available.
Complaint initial response	Within 30 calendar days of receipt, stating the route and planned action.
Complaint determination	Normally within 60 calendar days of receipt. Give reasons and a revised date for an extension.
Appeal filing	Within 30 calendar days of notification of the contested decision.
Appeal handling	Acknowledge within 7 calendar days; normally determine within 60 calendar days of receipt.
Progress communication	During an open case, updates at intervals no longer than 20 calendar days and whenever a material change affects the timetable.

4.2 Day one is the day after documented receipt or notification. Electronic submissions are timed by the published channel time zone and received no later than 23:59 on the last day. Applicable law controls any mandatory deadline rule. A proven IAF channel outage shall not defeat an otherwise timely submission through the published alternative.

4.3 Earlier quality-system targets expressed in business days remain additional internal aims only. They shall not replace the calendar-day obligations above or restart a clock when sufficient information becomes available. An extension shall identify the genuine reason, completed work, remaining steps and next communication date.

4.4 A late appeal shall be assessed under the Constitution, applicable law and any valid notified rule. Record the notification evidence and any justified request to accept late filing, including defective notice or inaccessible channels. Do not apply a previously unpublished time bar retrospectively. Any refusal shall be reasoned and identify remaining remedies.

5 Complaint investigation procedure

5.1 On receipt, create an IAF-FR-017 record and assess immediate safety, data, evidence preservation and retaliation risks. Screen conflicts before assigning an investigator or decision-maker. Send acknowledgement identifying the reference, safe contact route, process and expected dates.

5.2 The case owner shall define the issues, applicable criteria, evidence needed and IAF authority. Seek relevant documents and explanations from the complainant and affected function. Where the complaint concerns a third-party provider, obtain information within the applicable agreement or scheme and avoid unnecessary disclosure of the complainant's identity.

5.3 Investigation shall test the allegation and reasonable alternative explanations. Maintain an evidence index, provenance, interview notes and response record. The person concerned shall have a meaningful opportunity to answer adverse material. If member discipline is contemplated, allow at least 21 calendar days for the constitutional response.

5.4 The complaint decision shall be made or reviewed by an authorized person not involved in the subject matter. The outcome shall state the issues, evidence considered, findings, reasons, action and appeal route where available. An unresolved factual limitation shall be identified rather than concealed through an unsupported definitive conclusion.

5.5 Corrective action may address an individual service failure or a systemic cause. Register the owner, due date and effectiveness check under IAF-PR-017. A complaint finding does not itself authorize a technical certificate, rating or accreditation change; refer that action to the independent scheme decision function.

5.6 Send the reasoned outcome to the complainant and affected party to the extent appropriate, protecting confidential information. Record delivery, actual notification date and any linked appeal. Close the complaint after required communications while keeping unfinished corrective actions independently visible and owned.

6 Appeal preparation and hearing

6.1 The Appeals Committee administrator shall log the decision and filing dates, preserve the complete original file and confirm standing and scope. An original decision-maker may correct an obvious clerical error through controlled notice, but shall not pressure the appellant to withdraw or substitute an informal reconsideration for the independent appeal.

6.2 Appoint the three-person panel using the independent roster and disclose members' identities and relevant impartiality information to the parties. Allow a reasonable opportunity, normally seven calendar days, to raise a supported conflict objection. An unconflicted appointing authority shall resolve it with reasons before substantive determination.

6.3 The panel shall issue a case plan specifying issues, evidence exchange, response dates, any hearing and treatment of confidential material. Each party shall receive the material necessary to answer the case, with lawful redactions and meaningful summaries. Private substantive communications with one party shall be recorded and shared where fairness requires.

6.4 A written procedure is normally sufficient. The panel may hold a remote or in-person hearing where credibility, technical complexity or fairness warrants. Parties may use an authorized representative and reasonable accessibility support. The hearing record shall identify attendance, evidence, questions, responses and any procedural ruling.

6.5 New relevant evidence may be admitted with reasons and an opportunity for the other party to respond. If the evidence requires a new assessment beyond the panel's competence or mandate, the panel shall consider remitting the matter for independent evaluation rather than inventing an unsupported technical result.

6.6 An appeal does not automatically stay a decision. The panel may recommend or determine interim relief within its constitutional remit, considering safety, evidence, proportionality and prejudice. Member restrictions follow clause 7.4 and its 30-day control; technical restrictions follow their scheme. Record the authority, duration, review and reasons for any interim measure.

7 Appeal determination and implementation

7.1 All three appointed panel members shall participate in the determination. A conflicted or unavailable member shall be replaced through the independent appointment process before a final decision. The panel shall seek agreement and determine by majority; the presiding member has no casting vote. Record any dissent without disclosing restricted deliberations unnecessarily.

7.2 The panel shall assess the grounds against the applicable rules, evidence and procedural requirements. It shall identify material errors and their effect. Unless another applicable rule requires a different standard, disputed internal facts shall be determined on the balance of probabilities with evidence proportionate to seriousness.

7.3 The panel may affirm the decision, set it aside or remit the matter for reconsideration within its mandate. A remittal shall specify the error, corrective directions, independent responsible function and expected timetable. It shall not predetermine a technical conclusion that requires new evaluation or confer statutory powers that IAF does not hold.

7.4 The written determination shall identify the appeal, panel, jurisdiction, issues, procedure, evidence, findings, reasons, disposition, implementation owner and remaining remedies. It shall be issued to the parties through a verifiable channel. The case file shall preserve the actual notification date and any necessary public status instruction.

7.5 The competent function shall implement the determination promptly and confirm completion to the panel administrator. Register corrections, mark permissions and notices shall be synchronized through IAF-PR-011 and IAF-PR-012. A decision affecting one activity shall not automatically invalidate unrelated outputs, memberships or permissions.

7.6 The determination concludes the internal appeal unless the Constitution, applicable scheme or law provides another route. Material new evidence, proven procedural fraud or an unimplemented determination may justify a separately authorized review. A repeated submission without new grounds may receive a reasoned reference to the concluded case, without restricting lawful external rights.

8 Costs confidentiality and external remedies

8.1 Submitting a complaint or protected report shall not attract an intake fee. Any appeal fee permitted by an applicable instrument shall be published in the relevant controlled fee document before the chargeable service and shall state waiver and refund rules. This policy introduces no amount and no retrospective fee barrier. Member dues remain governed by the IAF Membership Fees document.

8.2 Case expenses and panel remuneration shall be approved through independent financial controls and shall not depend on the result. Sponsorship, corporate group size or a party's ability to fund expert work shall not determine the panel or access to essential evidence. Disputed costs shall be recorded separately from the merits.

8.3 Case information shall be shared only for a defined need and lawful purpose. Parties shall protect restricted material received through the process. Confidentiality shall not obstruct legal advice, protected reporting or a mandatory notification. Public notices shall be accurate and limited to the status or safety information justified by the decision.

8.4 IAF shall not retaliate against complainants, appellants, witnesses or representatives. Threats, pressure or misuse of membership and technical processes shall be referred under IAF-POL-009. Unreasonable conduct may be managed through proportionate communication arrangements without denying a valid case or disability-related accommodation.

8.5 Courts, competent authorities and other lawful remedies remain available. Arbitration requires a separate valid arbitration agreement identifying the applicable framework; membership or this policy alone is not consent. Where IAF is a party, appointment and administration shall be independent of IAF's disputed decision function.

8.6 Settlement is voluntary, lawful and within delegated authority. It shall not suppress a protected report, conceal an unsafe output, require an inaccurate public claim or purchase a favorable technical result. Record the agreed terms, approval and action owner, while continuing any mandatory safety or regulatory response.

9 Records performance and controlled release

9.1 Maintain intake, notification evidence, conflict declarations, appointment, plan, evidence index, submissions, hearing record, decision, communications, implementation and corrective-action links. Use IAF-FR-017 for complaints and IAF-FR-018 for appeals. IAF-RG-007 shall show a minimal case reference and milestones, with restricted evidence stored separately.

9.2 Apply IAF-POL-012 and IAF-RG-012. The quality system's proposed seven-year case period begins at final verified closure and requires a documented legal and necessity basis. Delete unnecessary identity details earlier, restrict legal holds to relevant material and record authorized disposal.

9.3 The Quality Manager monitors complaint timeliness and action effectiveness; the Appeals Committee monitors appeal independence, timetable and implementation. At least annually, report anonymized trends, overdue actions, repeated causes and resource needs. Small case counts shall not be published in a manner that identifies individuals.

9.4 The Secretariat shall maintain tested routes for ordinary submissions and a verified independent alternative where the usual recipient is implicated. The public notice shall state receipt rules, filing rights, availability of accessibility support and the controlled fee reference where relevant. Do not advertise an unimplemented channel.

9.5 Before release, align the operational instructions in IAF-QM-001, IAF-PR-013 and IAF-PR-014 with the constitutional calendar-day clocks and three-person panel rule. Record linked document changes through IAF-FR-001 and IAF-RG-001. The present policy supplements those documents and does not silently rewrite historical records.

9.6 The competent Presidential Council authority approves this policy through document control. Annual review and material changes in law, schemes or governance trigger reassessment. Actual approval and operational effective dates shall be recorded; new rules shall not retrospectively remove a right or shorten a filing period already running.

Annex A Complaint and appeal submission

Use these fields with IAF-FR-017 or IAF-FR-018. A submission is considered even if the person cannot provide every item. Provide a safe contact route for acknowledgement and outcome.

Field	Information to supply or record
Person and authority	Name or permitted anonymous reference; organization; representative authority if relevant; safe contact and accessibility needs.
Activity and decision	Programme, organization, certificate or case identifier; decision copy or description; date and method of notification.
Facts and grounds	What happened; relevant dates; rule, evidence or procedural error alleged; distinguish direct knowledge from inference.
Requested remedy	The action sought and why it falls within IAF authority. State any urgent interim measure requested.
Supporting material	Document list, witnesses and evidence locations; identify restricted or third-party information.
Related proceedings	Known internal, provider, regulatory or court matter relevant to coordination; do not require waiver of those routes.
Intake completion	Actual receipt timestamp, classification, standing, filing calculation, urgent triage and initial conflict check.
Assigned handling	Case owner or panel appointment record; acknowledgment date; response and determination targets; register reference.

Submission statement

“To the best of my knowledge, the information provided is accurate. I have identified material uncertainties and may supply further relevant information. I understand that IAF will use the information to handle this case and may share necessary material under its privacy and fair-process rules.” This statement is not a waiver of statutory rights.

Annex B Panel determination and closure record

Record block	Mandatory entries
Authority and composition	Case reference; contested decision; appeal standing; three panel members; competence; independence declarations; objections and resolution.
Procedure and fairness	Receipt and notification dates; issues; evidence exchange; hearing or written procedure; response opportunities; extensions and reasons.
Findings and reasons	Facts accepted or rejected; rule applied; material error and effect; limitations; assessment of each substantive appeal ground.
Disposition	Affirm, set aside or remit; scope of remedy; any interim measure; reasons and authority; majority and any recorded dissent.
Implementation	Responsible function; deadline; technical review needed; register or mark change; communication owner; verification evidence.
Notice and rights	Recipients; actual notification date and method; confidentiality limits; remaining internal or external remedies.
Closure and retention	Open linked actions; final verified closure; retention basis and trigger; hold status; disposal review owner.

Public channel schedule

The Secretariat shall record and verify the ordinary submission address or URL, the independent alternative, monitoring frequency, deputy, time zone, accessibility support and outage route. The current schedule shall be published with this policy; case documents remain restricted.

Timetable control

Record separate dates for complaint receipt, decision notification and appeal receipt. Do not treat a complaint response as notice of a different decision unless it clearly contains that decision and the relevant rights. Each extension shall preserve the original clock and show why the revised timetable remains fair.

Annex C Alignment and implementation checklist

Document or control	Required alignment
IAF-CON-001	Article 24 governs complaint and appeal rights; Article 7 governs member response and interim restrictions. Mandatory law and the filed corporate instrument prevail.
IAF-GUI-COM-001	Apply elected oversight composition, office eligibility, quorum and impartial appointment. Keep a temporary appeal panel distinct from permanent committee office.
Membership and Accreditation Guides	Use the relevant admission, recognition, scope, suspension and status rules; preserve distinct technical and membership decisions.
IAF-POL-009 / 012 / 013	Coordinate protected reporting, privacy deadlines, evidence access and conflicts without restarting clocks.
IAF-PR-010 to IAF-PR-014	Separate evaluation, review, decision, register change, complaint handling and appeal determination.
IAF-FR-017 / 018 / 020	Use case and corrective-action records; add the fields in Annexes A and B.
IAF-RG-001 / 007 / 012	Register this new policy, minimal case administration and a justified retention schedule.

Release record

New controlled entry: IAF-POL-010, Revision 01. Record the competent approval and actual effective date, tested channels, independent panel roster, conflicts control, published notices and any applicable fee reference. Update linked procedural instructions through IAF-PR-001 before they are used.

Authority of source material

The IAF Constitution, Membership Guide, Accreditation Scheme Guide, Committees Guide and quality documentation provide the internal authority and process references for this policy. It does not grant governmental, judicial or third-party accreditation authority and does not restrict mandatory external remedies.