

Quality Management System

Grievance Policy & Procedure

1.0 **Policy**

It is the policy of Maritime Asset Security & Training (MAST) Ltd to encourage employees with grievances relating to their employment to use the procedure below to seek satisfactory solutions. The organisation will try to resolve grievances as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of the individual(s) concerned. Where this is not possible, every effort will be made to explain the reasons for the decision.

If employees are not satisfied with the outcome, they have the right to pursue their grievance to the next stage. It is hoped that most grievances will be resolved during the informal discussion stage. Employees who have raised grievances will be treated fairly at all times before, during and after the grievance hearing(s).

2.0 **Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that the employee has an opportunity to raise formally with management any grievances relating to their job or complaints they have regarding MAST or any member of MAST. MAST's aim is to ensure that the appropriate level of MAST's management deals with an employee's grievance or complaint promptly and fairly.

It is essential to the proper working of this procedure that any employee raising a grievance should continue to work normally whilst the procedure is being followed.

At each stage of the procedure, an employee has the statutory right to reasonably request to be accompanied by a work colleague. If in the UK the employee could choose instead to be accompanied by a trade union official of his or her choice. The companion may address the hearing to put the employee's case, sum up his or her case or respond on the employee's behalf to any view expressed at the hearing. He or she may also confer with the employee during the hearing. The presence of the companion will not prevent anyone, including the employee, from making his or her contribution to the hearing, and specifically answering questions asked directly of that individual.

MAST will keep copies of documents generated as a result of this procedure and records of any action taken. All such records will be treated as confidential.

The procedure does not confer any contractual rights. The contents of this document may be subject to revision from time to time.

Any questions regarding the operation of this procedure should be directed to the Human Resources Department in the first instance.

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2.1 **Informal stage**

If an employee has a grievance about their employment they should initially discuss it informally with their immediate manager. The manager will give a response within five working days. See Notes 1–3 below for exceptions to this procedure.

2.2 **Stage 1**

If the employee feels the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily through informal discussion then they can raise it formally in writing, to their immediate manager who may also involve a member of the Human Resources Department. The employee must include a sufficient explanation of the basis for the grievance. Where a matter affects a group of employees, a spokesperson from amongst the group should raise the matter with the immediate supervisor/manager.

The employee will be invited to a meeting to consider the matter and to discuss any suggestions they have for how it may be resolved. This will normally take place within ten working days of the request being made or as soon as possible thereafter given the circumstances.

The supervisor/manager will then respond to the grievance in writing, normally within five working days of the meeting, this letter will also include details of the employee's right to appeal and raise their grievance at stage 2, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome.

It should be noted in some circumstances there may be a need to investigate the complaint, if investigation is likely to take longer than five days this will be confirmed to the employee.

2.3 **Stage 2**

If the matter is not resolved at stage 1, or the grievance concerns any of the listed reasons in section 4.0 point 2 the employee, or the spokesperson of a group may refer it in writing within five working days to the next level of management, who may also involve a member of the Human Resources Department. The employee or the spokesperson should set out the grounds for the complaint and the reasons for dissatisfaction with the Stage 1 response (if applicable).

The employee will be invited to a meeting to consider the matter and to discuss any suggestions they have for how it may be resolved. This will normally take place within ten working days of the request being made or as soon as possible thereafter given the circumstances.

The manager will then respond to the grievance in writing, normally within five working days of the meeting, this letter will also include details of the employee's right to appeal and raise their grievance at stage 3, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome.

It should be noted in some circumstances there may be a need to investigate the complaint, if investigation is likely to take longer than five days this will be confirmed to the employee.

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2.4 **Stage 3**

If the matter is not resolved at stage 2 the employee, or the spokesperson of a group may refer it in writing within five working days to the next level of management, who may involve a member of the Human Resources Department. The employee or the spokesperson should set out the grounds for the complaint and the reasons for dissatisfaction with the Stage 2 response.

The employee will be invited to a meeting to consider the matter and to discuss any suggestions they have for how it may be resolved. This will normally take place within ten working days of the request being made or as soon as possible thereafter given the circumstances.

The manager will then respond to the grievance in writing, normally within ten working days of the meeting. It should be noted that in some circumstances there may be a need to investigate the complaint, if investigation is likely to take longer than ten days this will be confirmed to the employee.

This is the last stage in the grievance procedure; any decision made under stage 3 will be final.

3.0 **Investigations**

The organisation is committed to ensuring that all grievances are investigated fully. This may involve carrying out interviews with the employee concerned and third parties such as witnesses, colleagues and managers, as well as analysing written records and information. The investigation report will be made available to all the parties concerned. The identity of witnesses will be kept confidential where necessary.

4.0 **Notes**

1. This procedure is for the use of MAST employees only.
2. An employee should raise a complaint directly with a senior manager if it:
 - concerns their immediate manager.
 - is of too personal or sensitive a nature to raise with their immediate manager.
 - concerns discrimination, bullying or harassment by their immediate manager.
 - is significantly serious and concerns an alleged wrongdoing, criminal offence by someone within the organisation or
 - is a breach of the Codes within which we operate, this includes but is not limited to the International Code of Conduct for Security Providers.
3. Where the grievance relates to a disciplinary decision MAST's disciplinary appeals procedure should be used.
4. Employees are encouraged to raise grievances and will not suffer any detriment from doing so. If, however a grievance is found to be malicious or to have been made in bad faith, the employee will be subject to the organisation's disciplinary procedure.
5. A member of the HR team or second management representative from another function may be invited to attend formal grievance meetings to act as a witness and note-taker.

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6. The timescales listed above will be adhered to wherever possible. Where there are good reasons, e.g. the need for further investigation or the lack of availability of witnesses or companions, each party can request that the other agrees to an extension of the permitted timescale.
7. The organisation reserves the right to seek assistance from external facilitators at any stage in the grievance procedure.
8. For senior managers/directors and employees during their first year of employment, the organisation reserves the right to speed up the decision making process and may choose to follow a shortened version of the above procedure.
9. This procedure only applies whilst individuals are employed by the company. If employment has ended and a grievance is then raised, the company will consider the grievance but will not normally follow the full procedure.