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## Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for dispute resolution external to organizations

*Management de la qualité — Satisfaction du client — Lignes  
directrices relatives à la résolution externe de conflits aux organismes*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Supporting technologies*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 10003:2007), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared with the previous edition are as follows:

- alignment with ISO 9000:2015;
- alignment with ISO 9001:2015;
- improved alignment with ISO 10001, ISO 10002 and ISO 10004.

## Introduction

### 0.1 General

This document provides guidance for organizations to plan, design, develop, operate, maintain and improve effective and efficient external dispute resolution for product- and service-related complaints. Dispute resolution gives an avenue of redress when organizations do not remedy a complaint internally. Most complaints can be resolved successfully within the organization, without the need for further time-consuming and more adversarial procedures.

NOTE 1 Organizations are encouraged to develop an effective and efficient internal complaints-handling process consistent with ISO 10002.

There are different methods for resolving disputes and different terms used to describe them. These methods are facilitative, advisory or determinative (see [Annex A](#)). Each method can be used by itself or the methods can be used in sequence.

This document can be used to:

- a) design a dispute-resolution process and decide when to offer dispute resolution to complainants;
- b) select a dispute-resolution provider (hereinafter referred to as “provider”; see [3.9](#)) that is able to meet an organization’s specific needs and expectations.

NOTE 2 Providers from the public and private sectors can take various forms around the world, including industry-sector specific associations, ombudsmen and multi-sector associations.

While this document is directed towards organizations, providers can also benefit from knowing what guidance is being given to organizations. Providers can also use the guidance in their dispute-resolution process.

Organizations are encouraged to plan, design, develop, operate, maintain and improve a dispute-resolution process in conjunction with a customer satisfaction code of conduct and internal complaints-handling process, and to integrate them with the organization’s quality or other management systems.

This document can assist individuals and organizations in evaluating the effectiveness, efficiency and fairness of an organization’s dispute-resolution process. Implementation of this document can:

- provide flexible dispute resolution that, in comparison with court-based processes, can be less expensive, easier and quicker, especially in disputes across borders;
- help to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty;
- provide a benchmark against which individuals and organizations can evaluate claims by organizations and providers that they operate in an effective, efficient and fair manner;
- help to inform potential users of dispute resolution about the conditions of access, cost and the legal consequences;
- enhance the ability of the organization to identify and eliminate causes of disputes;
- improve the way complaints and disputes are handled in the organization;
- provide additional information that can contribute to improvement of the organization’s products, services and processes;
- improve the organization’s reputation or avoid damage to it;
- improve domestic and international competitiveness;
- provide confidence of fair and consistent treatment of disputes throughout the global marketplace.

NOTE 3 External dispute resolution can be the subject of statutory and regulatory requirements.