

# Supplement 3 to EA-2/01, EA Rules of Procedure

## Complaint and Appeal Procedures

### ***PURPOSE***

Technical co-operation between EA members is a cornerstone of the EA programme to establish mutual confidence in the equivalence of accreditation schemes operated by national accreditation bodies in Europe.

This document describes the procedure to deal with the complaints received against EA itself or one of its member, or one of its MLA signatories.

*Authorship*

The publication has been written by the EA MAC Committee.

*Official language*

The text may be translated into other languages as required. The English language version remains the definitive version.

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*Further information*

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<http://www.european-accreditation.org/>

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## HOW TO DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS AND APPEAL

### Definitions:

**Appeal:** a request by an AB for reconsideration of any adverse decision made by the EA-GA related to its membership (or CoC) status of EA or a request for reconsideration of any adverse decision made by the EA-MAC related to its future or present signatory (also bilateral) status.

- *Note 1:* with respect to the membership status of EA adverse decisions include refusal to proceed with an application for full or associate membership and denial of membership.

- *Note 2:* with respect to the signatory status of the MLA adverse decisions include refusal to accept an application, refusal to proceed with an evaluation, complaint resolutions, corrective action requests, changes in the scope, decisions to deny, suspend or withdraw signatory status and any other action that otherwise impedes the attainment of the signatory status desired by the AB.

**Complaint:** any request for action, other than mentioned under appeal, relating to the operations of EA or any EA (associate) member Accreditation Body.

**Who can lodge an appeal?** Given the definition appeals can normally only be lodged by (potential) signatories to the MLA or by (potential) members to the MOU.

**Who can lodge a complaint?** Anybody can lodge a complaint concerning the EA, its (associate) member Accreditation Bodies, or its MLA signatories.

**Where to lodge a complaint/appeal?** All complaints and appeals must be addressed to the EA chairman at the EA secretariat.

- *Note:* if any EA member receives an appeal or complaint against EA this should be immediately forwarded to the EA secretariat.

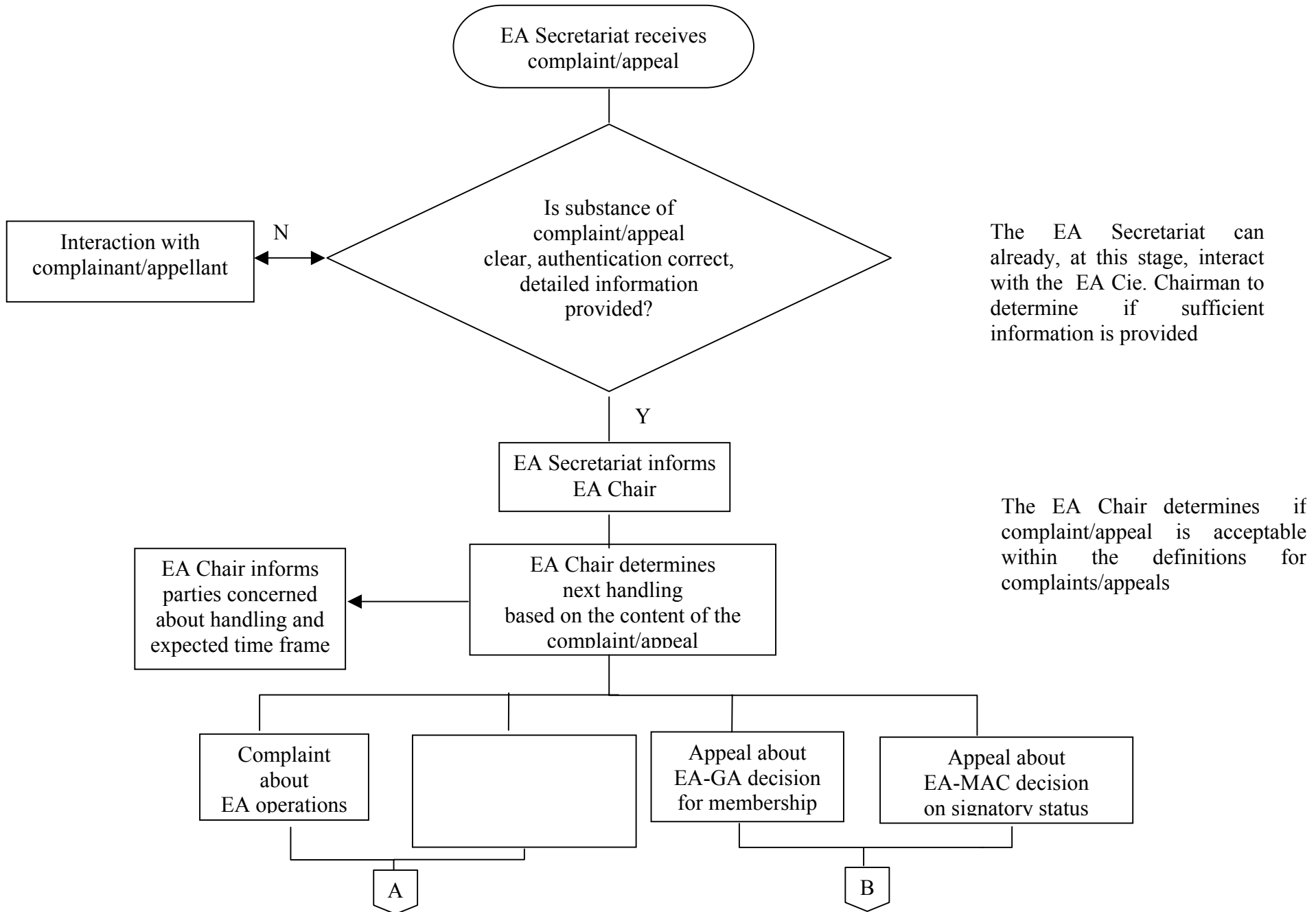
**Handling of an appeal:** considering the severity of an appeal this is handled directly by the EA chairman possibly in conjunction with the EAAB chairman. In case of an appeal against an EA-MAC decision, the EA-MAC is given the opportunity to reconsider the decision.

**Handling of a complaint:** a complaint is handled by the EA chairman where relevant with involvement of any EA Cie. chairman.

It is important in the handling of a complaint about an EA (associate) member Accreditation Body to first verify that the complainant has lodged the complaint to the Accreditation Body itself. Only when the Accreditation Body did not satisfactorily handle the complaint, EA will react to it.

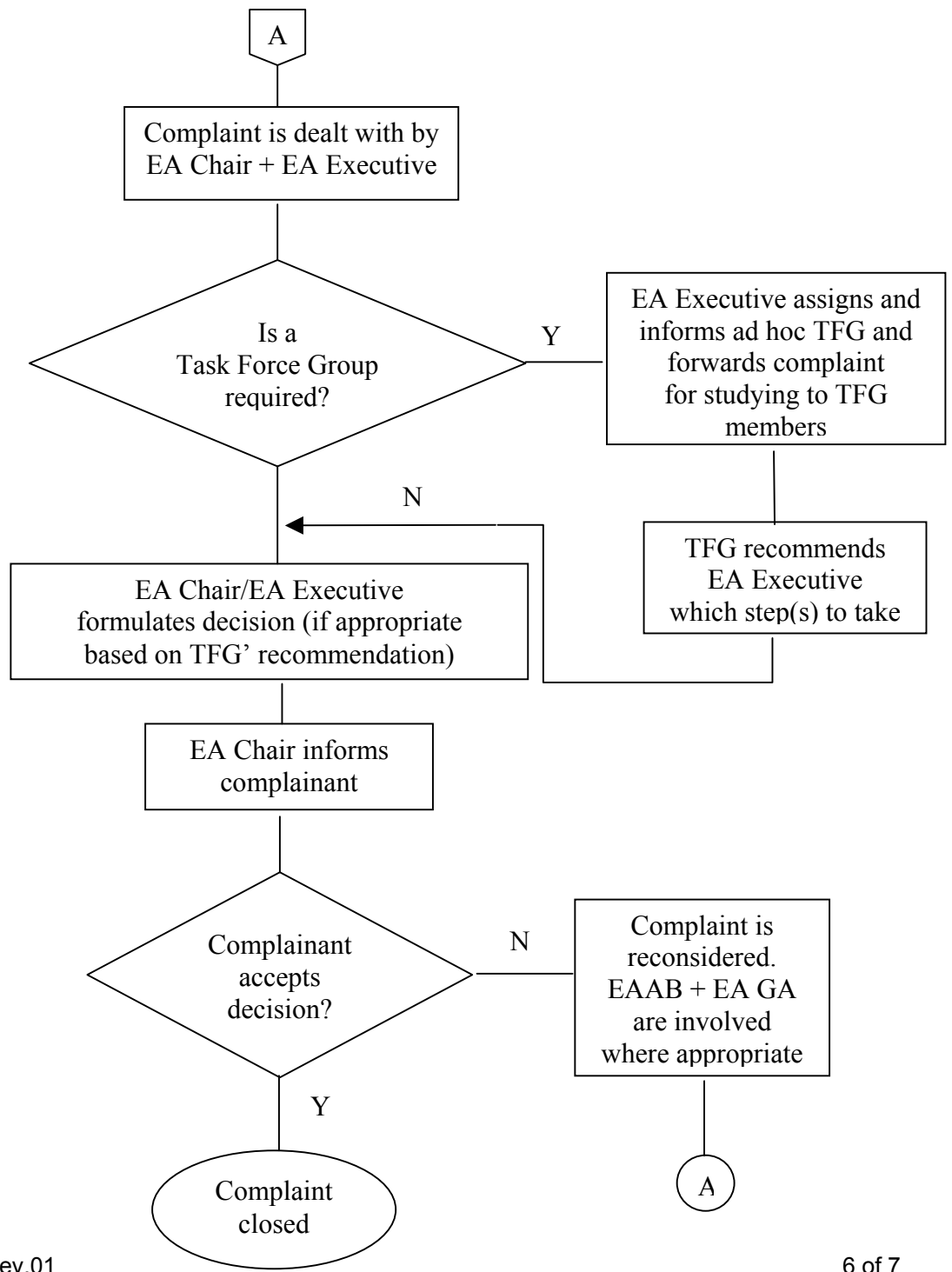
**Information to complainant/appellant:** As soon as a complaint/appeal is received the complainant/appellant will be informed about the way of handling and the expected time frame.

# EA FLOWCHART FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS



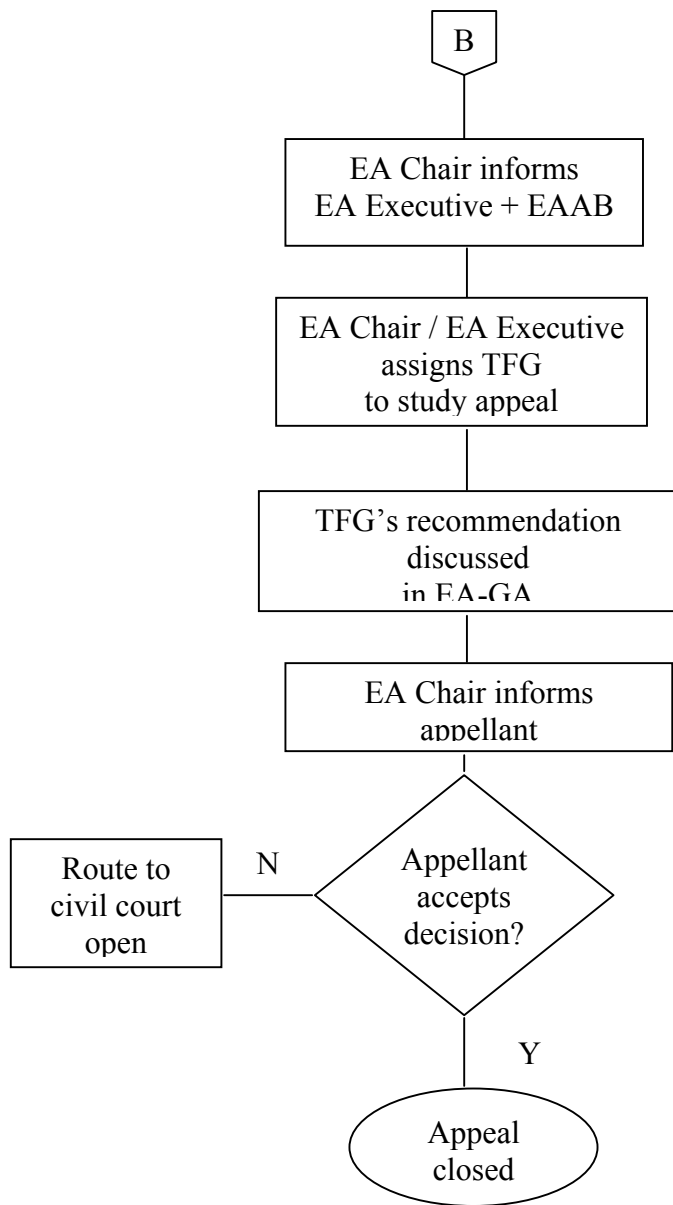
The EA Secretariat can already, at this stage, interact with the EA Cie. Chairman to determine if sufficient information is provided

The EA Chair determines if complaint/appeal is acceptable within the definitions for complaints/appeals



Where relevant any EA Cie.  
Chairman may be involved

Members of the specific TFG shall  
not have any interest in the case  
concerned, but have a good  
knowledge of EA and EA-MAC  
processes



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Members of the specific TFG shall not have any interest in the case concerned, but have a good knowledge of EA and EA-MAC processes