Complaints Management: Steps for performing common tasks

Things you need to know

- there are two types of users being Standard Users, who can all log a complaint, and Complaint Administrators, who can accept a complaint, manage it and close it.
- there are two main set-up functions being in Admin, which is available only to the Super Admin, and in Set-Up, available to all Complaint Administrators which includes the Super Admin
- the module has been populated with content so that a complaint can be logged immediately. The set-up content can of course be changed as well as added to
- all notifications are sent by email as well as listed on the Complaints tab, or the CAR or the PAR tab, of the Summary page
- the full user manual can be downloaded by logging to your isoTracker demo account and clicking on the Help button the top right

Admin: Creating users

To add a user:

- click **Admin** at the top right and choose **Manage Users**
- click **Create New User**
- enter a username and password, both with at least six alphanumeric characters (the password is case sensitive)
- enter the user's details, including first name, last name and email address (each user's email address MUST be unique and also must differ from the Super Admin's address)

To make that user a complaint administrator which means that they can accept, manage and close complaints:

- click **Complaints** in the Administrator box on the left and move it to the box on the right.
- click **Submit & New** at the bottom of the page.
- repeat to add additional users.

Admin: creating a database of Customers

To speed up complaint registration, you can load a pre-existing list of customers either individually or in bulk. To add a new customer:

- click on Admin at the top right and then on **Customers**
- choose **Add Customers**
- enter the customer's details, including entries in all mandatory fields
- click **Submit**.

You can customize the default fields for entering customer details using the Settings section. You can also reorder and deactivate certain fields by using the Add Fields section. Note that you can delete customers only if they haven't registered complaints. This list can be easily searched when logging a complaint.

The process for adding a supplier or an employee is similar.

Admin: creating database of Products

The products section has already been set-up with three (3) extra fields being Category (text box), Size (drop-down list) and Lot No (Blank Field). Note that a Blank Field can only be entered on the New Complaints page. You can change those fields if a complaint about a product has not been logged. If you find that you cannot change them then please email us with what you want and we will make the changes. To add a new product:

- click on **Admin** at the top right and then on **Products**
- choose **Add Products**
- enter the product's details in the relevant fields
- click **Submit**.

The process for adding a process is similar.

Admin: changing the name of the Complaints module

If you wish to change the name of the module from Complaints to another name, then do the following:

- click on **Admin** at the top right and then on **Modules**
- click on the pen icon on the left of the word **Complaints**
- enter in the text box that opens a new name for the module
- click on **Save**.

Log out of your isoTracker account and then log back in and see that all references to Complaints have been changed

Set-Up: Customizing the module

As previously mentioned the module has been populated with content. Below will explain the purpose of a selection of features in the Set-Up section.

To access Set-Up, click on the Complaints icon at the bottom and then choose Set-Up at the top. The selected features are:

- **Fields** > **Fixed Fields**: you can change the listed field names
- **Fields > New Fields:** there are currently two additional fields, being Risk and Cost, and additional fields can be added to this list up to a total of 10
- **Number:** additional numbering systems can be created
- **Responsibility > Assigned Users:** determine who can have the right to be assigned complaints and to manage them other than complaint administrators
- **Responsibility > Final Review Users:** determine who can have the right to close complaints
- **Type:** add to the list of complaint types which is a searchable field
- **Status:** change the name of the statuses to terms familiar to you
- **Severity Scale:** the scale is set as 1 to 3 but the upper end of the scale can be increased. Also determine which end of the scale is least severe and most severe

Logging a Complaint

To log a complaint:

- click the **Complaints** icon at the bottom and then click **New Complaints**
- select the default **Number** on the right
- in the From field select **Customer** from the **From** drop-down list, enter the search term "**ISO**" in the Quick Search box, and click **Find**
- on the search result click on Click Here to Select under the Select column. Make sure that the fields are listed on the boxes that appear below. You can also click on **or Add New Customer** and add the details of a new customer

- on the About drop-down list select **Product**, enter the search “**Produ**” in the Quick Search box, and click **Find**
- again, select the appropriate result by clicking on the relevant Click Here to Select link
- then in the **Type** drop down list select “Delivery Shortage” and in the Severity drop-down list select 2
- enter the details of the complaint in the Details text box
- in the Documents object click on the **Upload** button and attach 5 external documents
- wait for the documents to be uploaded and then click on **Submit** at the bottom of the page.

Accepting and assigning a logged Complaint

A notification and email will be sent to you to confirm that a complaint has been logged.

To accept and assign a complaint:

- click the **Summary** icon at the bottom of the page
- open the Complaints tab, then the **Logged Complaint** notification and click the relevant complaint number
- on the Properties page, scroll to the Notes section and select **Accepted** from the Status drop-down list
- keep Super Admin in the **Assign Administrator** drop-down list
- see that below is listed the complainants email address and then click the link **Choose Email** link which opens a listing of email templates for the current stage in the complaint workflow
- click on Click Here to Edit for the **Accepted 1** email template, make changes to it and then click **Submit**
- now click **Submit** at the bottom of the Notes object.

The page refreshes, changes status to Accepted and below the Documents object the following new objects appear:

- **Emails:** click on the maroon view icon to see the email that was just sent out to the complainant. Use this object to send further emails to the complainant by either selecting from pre-created templates or creating a new email from scratch
- **Investigation:** use to send Investigation notifications to internal users that require a reply
- **Non-Conformance Record:** create one or more Non-Conformances relating to this complaint
- **Root Cause:** create one or more Root Causes and associate them to a Non-Conformance
- **Corrective Action:** record the action required, implement it, check for effectiveness and then close it
- **Final Review:** send the complaint for final review which is a 2-step sign-off process

Note that these objects can be used in any order or not used at all with the complaint going directly to Final Review

Recording a Non-Conformance and a Root Cause

To record a Non-Conformance:

- click the **+** icon on the **Non-Conformance Record** object header.
- select **Minor** from the Importance drop down list
- enter the details of the Non-Conformance and click on **Submit** button. See that it is listed and assigned a number

To record a Root Cause:

- click on the **+** icon on the **Root Cause** object header.
- enter the details of the Root Cause, move to the right the number of the just recorded Non-Conformance in the **Related NCRs** section and click on **Submit** button. See that it is listed and assigned a unique number

You can add multiple Non-Conformances and/or Root Causes BUT make sure that each Non-Conformance is related to a Root Cause and vice versa

Recording the action required for a Corrective Action

Use the corrective action object to correct the Non-Conformance and associated Root Cause identified in this complaint:

- click on the **+** sign on the **Corrective Action** object header
- click on the Choose a Non-Conformance Record link, select a Non-Conformance in the pop-up and click on Submit
- click on the Choose a Root Cause link, select a Root Cause in the pop-up and click on Submit
- set a target date and time and enter the details of the action required
- click **Submit**.

The Corrective Action is recorded, assigned a unique number and will have the related Non-Conformances and Root Causes displayed above

Recording the action taken for a Corrective Action

To record the action taken for a corrective action:

- open the Action Taken section by the clicking on the **+** sign on the left
- select a Completion Date and enter a name in the Completed By text box
- enter the details of the action taken
- click **Submit**.

You can then record the effectiveness of the action taken by opening the **Effectiveness** section entering the relevant text and clicking on **Submit**. Then to close the corrective action remember to click on the big red **Close** button.

An alternative method for recording and closing a Corrective Action

There is another more cooperative means of recording, implementing and checking the effectiveness of a corrective action which involves sending notifications to users and then copying over their reply into the relevant sections:

- in the Corrective Action object, click the **+** sign next to **Send a Corrective Action Notification**
- select a user and click **Add**
- set the date and time by which a reply is required, and click **Done**
- enter the details of the corrective action in the Action Required text box
- click **Submit**.

A user who's been sent a corrective action notification can access it by opening the **CAR** tab on their **Summary** page, opening the **Complaints Notes** listing and clicking on the relevant number. Then click on the **Submit Reply** that appears above the relevant post, enter the details of the reply, select a completion date, attach documents if you wish and click on **Submit**.

The receiving user, most likely you, will receive a **Complaint Replies** notification on the **CAR** tab of your **Summary** page. Click on that link and view the details of the reply.

Above the reply will be an **Accept/Reject** button. Click on that button if you need more information, select **Rejected** in the Action drop-down list, type in your action required and select a new reply due date. On the other hand, if you are satisfied with the reply then you can select Accepted or do nothing.

The important thing to note however are the three buttons that are displayed next to the **Reply Sent** date:

- **Copy to AR:** to copy the contents of the reply to the **Action Required** section
- **Copy to AT:** to copy the contents of the reply to the **Action Taken** section long with the Date of Completion and the Completed By information
- **Copy to E:** to copy the contents of the reply to the **Effectiveness** section.

Multiple notifications can be sent to multiple users to cover all the steps of the resolution process. They can also be spaced out by selecting different Required Reply dates which are then followed up with reminders. Note that this alternative method is probably more complicated but it is more cooperative and inclusive.

Signing Off a Complaint

The closure of a complaint, also known as sign-off, is a two-step process with the first step being Final Review and the second step being the sign-off.

To send a complaint to **Final Review**:

- on the complaint's properties page scroll down to the Final Review object and click the **+** sign
- if a Corrective Action has not been closed then you will get a pop-up box telling you that the corrective action record was not closed. Click on the **Cancel** button
- open the corrective action object and click the red **Close** button (it changes to a big green Open button)
- return to the **Final Review** object and select the appropriate administrator from the **Send To** drop-down list…these have been identified on the Final Review Users tab of the Responsibility section in Set-Up
- enter your final review comment and click **Submit**.

The final reviewer will automatically receive an email and a **Final Review** notification will appear on the **Complaints** tab of their **Summary** page.

To perform a final review of a complaint:

- click the **Final Review** link and the relevant complaint number
- scroll down to the **Final Review** object and click the **View** icon
- select **Sign Off** from the Status drop-down list. If you did not close the Corrective Action when you sent the complaint to Final Review then you will get the same pop-up box as before. Follow the same instructions as described above
- enter a sign off comment and click **Submit**.

The signed off complaint is removed from the **Action Required** list but is still accessible from the **All Complaints** page which is available to all Complaint Administrators.

Reactivating a Complaint

Complaint Administrators and the Super Admin can choose to reactivate a signed off complaint, and view all objects associated with it. To do this:

- click the **All Complaints** icon and then the **Properties** icon in the Action column of the relevant complaint
- scroll down to the **Notes** object and open it by clicking on the green view icon
- select **Reactivate** from the Status drop-down list
- assign the reactivated complaint to a user in the Assign Administrator drop down list
- click **Submit**.

The assigned administrator will receive a **Reactivated Complaints** notification on the **Complaints** tab of their **Summary** page. The complaint is now reopened and can be operated as before by the assigned administrator, the Super Admin and other Complaint Administrators.