

VLS Frequently Asked Questions

How do I raise a complaint against a product?

Complete a Case Registration Form which can be found at this link

<http://ukla-vls.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Case-Registration-Form-revised-2016-12-06-with-signature.pdf> Complete as many details as possible. Your details go in the Plaintiff section. In the

Named Party section fill in the details on the organisation whose product you wish to raise a complaint about. In the product details section complete the details relating to the product with which you are concerned.

Send the form with the deposit fee to VLS, details can be found at the bottom of the form.

Can I raise a complaint against a company?

VLS accepts complaints that are based on product specifications and performance characteristics. It is not possible under the VLS programme to raise a general complaint against a company, only specific complaints against products.

What complaints does VLS accept?

VLS will accept a complaint concerning a product which is on the market in the United Kingdom, or a product from an organisation based in the United Kingdom.

How should I phrase my complaint?

Make the complaint specific and detailed from a technical perspective.

The role of VLS is to verify a lubricant specification either against industry standards or against its own stated specification found in the Technical Data Sheet (TDS).

Complaints therefore should relate to the technical specification of a product and/or its physical characteristics.

However, if you believe that more than one aspect of a product fails to meet the required standard then mention all of them. The VLS Technical Review Panel (TRP) can only take a view on what has been actually raised in the complaint. Members of the TRP may believe that other features of the product are worth investigating but unless these have been mentioned in the original complaint they cannot be considered.

Similarly, if you suspect there is a problem with a product which is part of a range and you think the problem extends throughout all or part of the range, then mention this in your complaint. If you don't then only the specific product that is the subject of the complaint will be investigated.

How much will raising a complaint cost me?

Case handling charges are set out in the Case Handling Process of the website which can be found at the following link

<http://www.ukla-vls.org.uk/case-handling-process/>

Do I have to be a member of VLS to raise a complaint?

Although you do not need to be a member of VLS in order to raise a complaint, different pricing applies if you are a member of VLS.

For more details on case handling charges go to

<http://www.ukla-vls.org.uk/case-handling-process/>

I have been contacted by the VLS in relation to a complaint against one of my company's products, what do I do now?

Engage positively and constructively with VLS.

It is in your interests and those of your customers that the products you sell are what you say they are, and do what you say they do. The role of VLS is to seek an effective resolution to product complaints and ensure that lubricants are compliant with industry standards and the product's own stated specification. You will be given 28 days to engage in dialogue with VLS and to seek an effective solution to the complaint. During this time you should identify the cause of the issue, work with your relevant suppliers to redress the situation and work with your distributors to rectify the issue. VLS will spell out the specific nature of the complaint and also recommend a series of actions in order to bring the product into compliance.

I have agreed a set of actions with VLS concerning one of my products, what happens now?

The case will be referred anonymously back to the Supervisory Board along with details of the actions taken, the Technical Review Panel recommendation and any product test results. Once the Supervisory Board has decided on a case then you will be advised of the outcome and given seven days prior notice of publication.

How do I know if the complaint is genuine?

The VLS process is entirely independent and impartial.

VLS conducts its own desktop review prior to progressing with a case through the process. Once a complaint has been confirmed then the case is anonymised and the complaint is referred to an independent Technical Review Panel comprised of industry experts, for validation. At the same time product samples might be independently sourced and tested to verify a complaint and identify specific cause for concern.

After the Technical Review panel has reviewed a complaint then the VLS Secretariat will enter into constructive dialogue with the Named Party. Over the course of 28 days VLS will work with the Named Party to seek an effective solution to the complaint.

Actions that have been agreed between VLS and the Named Party are then referred to the Supervisory Board along with the Technical Review panel recommendation and details of the anonymised case. Once the Supervisory Board has decided on a case outcome, the Named Party is informed of the decision to publish the case details within seven days and the case is published to the website. Only at this point are case details posted to the website giving information on the company and the specific product concerned.

Throughout the process all cases are dealt with anonymously.