

# WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE

# GOVERNANCE

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## EMPLOYEES CODE OF CONDUCT

**WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE**

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**Reviewed by: Consortium Management Committee**

The Employees Code of Conduct covers the main standards of behavior the public expects, which the Group and its Member Boards require from their employees. The Code includes the Rules, which employees need to follow, and gives examples of inappropriate behavior which the Group and the Member Boards normally regard as gross misconduct.

## Employees Code of Conduct

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## **Employees Code of Conduct**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Employees Code of Conduct is set out below. It covers the main standards of behavior the Group and its Member Boards require from employees and includes the Group's Rules, which all employees need to follow.
- 1.2 The Group's Rules and the examples of misconduct are not exhaustive. All employees are under a duty to comply with the standards of behavior and performance required by the Board and the Consortium Management Committee (CMC); and to behave reasonably at all times.
- 1.3 A breach of the Group's Rules may result in disciplinary action. A single instance of gross misconduct may result in dismissal without notice. Examples of misconduct, which the Board and the Group normally regard as gross misconduct, are included in the Group's Rules shown below.

### **2. Group Rules**

#### **2.1 Attendance and Timekeeping**

- 2.1.1 Employees are required to comply with the Group's rules relating to notification of absence.
- 2.1.2 Employees are required to arrive at work promptly, ready to start work at their contracted starting times. Employees are required to remain at work until their contracted finishing times.
- 2.1.3 Employees must obtain management authorisation if for any reason they wish to arrive later or leave earlier than their agreed normal start and finish times.
- 2.1.4 The Board and the CMC reserve the right not to pay employees in respect of working time lost because of poor timekeeping.
- 2.1.5 Persistent poor timekeeping may result in disciplinary action.

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### 2.2 Standards and Conduct

- 2.2.1 Employees are required to maintain satisfactory standards of performance at work.
- 2.2.2 Employees are required to fully comply with all reasonable management instructions and to work within the decision making framework set out in the Board's Scheme of Delegation.
- 2.2.3 Employees are required to always follow the chain of command: employees shall never act on instructions that are given to them directly by individual Board members, landowners or other third parties, if the instruction contravenes or is likely to contravene a Board resolution or policy. Such requests shall always be discussed with the employee's line manager and then referred to the Chief Executive for a decision on how to proceed. If the employee is in any doubt as to whether a request contravenes a Board resolution or policy then they must discuss the request with their line manager and then refer the matter to the Chief Executive for a decision on how to proceed. Under no circumstances will the employee action any such request without prior written authorization from the Chief Executive. If the Chief Executive is unavailable and an urgent decision is required then the employee shall discuss the matter with the Board's Chairman. If the Chairman agrees that the matter is an emergency, then he/she will invoke the emergency procedures set out in the Board's Scheme of Delegation or, in the case of a Reserved Matter will call a Special Board Meeting to consider the request.
- 2.2.4 Employees are required to co-operate fully with the Board, with management and with their work colleagues in the Group. Employees must always maintain acceptable standards of politeness and professionalism.
- 2.2.5 Employees are required to take all necessary steps to safeguard the Board's and the Group's public image and preserve positive relationships with their customers, delivery partners and members of the public.
- 2.2.6 Employees must never deliberately take any action or behave in such a way that could damage or undermine the Board or the Group. For the avoidance of doubt an employee's allegiance to the Group is just as important as their allegiance to the employing Board. This applies to all employees.
- 2.2.7 Employees are required to ensure that they behave in a way that does not constitute unlawful discrimination.
- 2.2.8 Employees are required to fully comply with the Board's and the Group's operating policies, financial regulations, scheme of delegation, governance arrangements,

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procedures and this code of conduct.

- 2.2.9 Employees must never deliberately take any action or behave in such a way that, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, could damage or undermine the achievement of the Board's or the Group's aims and objectives.
- 2.2.10 Any queries received from the media must be referred immediately to the Chief Executive. Employees must not deal with queries from the media themselves.
- 2.2.11 Any request for a reference received with regard to another employee or a former employee (of the Board, the Group or another Member Board within the Group) shall always be referred to the Chief Executive. Employees must never provide any such written or verbal references themselves.

### 2.3 Gifts and Hospitality

- 2.3.1 The interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality in connection with your work for the Board, with an estimated value of at least £30 (or other amount as may be determined by the Board) must be declared to the Chief Executive and entered in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

### 2.4 Flexibility

- 2.4.1 Employees may be required to work additional hours at short notice, in accordance with the needs of the business.
- 2.4.2 Employees may be required from time to time to undertake duties outside their normal job remit.
- 2.4.3 Employees may be required from time to time to work at locations other than their normal place of work.

### 2.5 Conflicts of Interest

- 2.5.1 Employees must declare an interest in any of the Board's or Group's business, where there is a direct or indirect personal or prejudicial interest. Such interests are defined in the Members Code of Conduct.

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### **2.6 Confidentiality**

- 2.6.1 Employees are required to keep confidential, both during their employment and at any time after its termination, all information gained in the course of their employment about the Board's and the Group's business and that of the Group's customers or partners, except as required by law or in the proper course of their duties.
- 2.6.2 Employees are not permitted to engage in any activity outside their employment with the Board or the Group which could reasonably be interpreted as competing with the Board or the Group.
- 2.6.3 Employees are required to seek permission from the Chief Executive before taking on any other employment while employed by the Board or the Group.

### **2.7 Work Clothing and Personal Protective Equipment**

- 2.7.1 Employees are required to wear the appropriate clothing for the role in which they are employed.
- 2.7.2 Employees are required to wear or use any personal protective equipment as instructed by the Board or the Group.

### **2.8 Health and Safety**

#### **2.8.1 General**

Employees are required to:

- (a) observe and fully comply with the Board's health and safety procedures
- (b) ensure that safety equipment and clothing are always used in accordance with the Group's health and safety procedures
- (c) report all accidents, however small, in the Group's Accident Book and to the appropriate Health & Safety Officer
- (d) report near misses and hazards via the Near Miss and Hazard Alert Form.

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### 2.8.2 On Site Rules

Employees working on customer or partner sites are required to follow any site-specific rules and wear any protective masks, safety shoes and other clothing required on site at all times during their working hours.

### 2.8.3 Smoking

In order to provide a working environment which is pleasant and healthy, smoking is not permitted anywhere in the Group's buildings or vehicles.

## 2.9 Property and Equipment

- 2.9.1 Except for use on authorised Board, Group or partner business, employees are not permitted to make use of the Board's, Group's or its partners' telephone, fax, postal or other services.
- 2.9.2 Employees must not remove Board, Group or site property or equipment from Board, Group or site premises unless for use on authorised Board or Group business or with the permission of the Chief Executive.
- 2.9.3 Where an employee damages property belonging to the Board or the Group, either through misuse or carelessness, the Board and the Group reserve the right to make a deduction from the employee's pay in respect of the damaged property.
- 2.9.4 On termination of their employment employees must return all Board and Group property, such as keys, laptops, mobile telephones, Board or Group vehicles, documents or any other items belonging to the Board or Group. This list is not exhaustive.

## 2.10 Personal Searches and Personal Property

- 2.10.1 The Board or the Group may reasonably request to search employees' clothing, personal baggage or vehicles. An authorised member of management in the presence of an independent witness must conduct any such search. Should an employee refuse such a request, the Board or the Group will require the appropriate authorities to conduct the search on behalf of the Board or the Group. An employee's failure to

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co-operate with the Board or the Group in this respect may be treated as gross misconduct.

2.10.2 Employees are solely responsible for the safety of their personal possessions on Board or Group premises and should ensure that their personal possessions are kept in a safe place at all times.

2.10.3 Should an employee find an item of personal property on the premises he or she is required to inform management immediately.

### 2.11 Environment

2.11.1 In order to provide a cost-effective service, employees are requested to use the Board's and the Group's equipment, materials and services wisely. Employees should try to reduce wastage and the subsequent impact on the environment by ensuring that they close windows, avoid using unnecessary lighting or heating or leaving taps running, switch off equipment when it is not in use and handle all materials with care.

### 2.12 Changes in Personal Details

2.12.1 Employees must notify the Board and the Group of any change in personal details, including change of name, address, telephone number or next of kin. This will help the Board and the Group to maintain accurate personal details in compliance with the Data Protection Act and ensure it is able to contact the employee or another designated person in case of an emergency.

### 2.13 Gross Misconduct

2.13.1 Examples of behaviour which the Board and the Group treats as gross misconduct are set out below. Such behaviour may result in dismissal without notice. This list is not exhaustive:

- Assault, acts of violence or aggression
- Breach of confidentiality, including the unauthorised disclosure of Board or Group business to the media or any other party
- Bringing the Board or the Group into disrepute
- Falsification of records or other documents, including those relating to obtaining



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employment

- Gambling, bribery or corruption (please refer to the Bribery Policy)
- Possession or use of or being under the influence of alcohol on Board premises or during working hours
- Refusal to carry out reasonable management instructions or failure to work within the decision making framework set out in the Scheme of Delegation
- Serious breach of the health and safety policies and procedures
- Serious breach of environmental policies and procedures in accordance with ISO 14001 (including any internal office working environments and any external maintenance work)
- Serious breach of governance policies and procedures or any other process covered by ISO 9001
- Serious breach of the Board's Byelaws
- Serious or gross negligence
- Serious insubordination
- Sleeping during working hours
- Theft, dishonesty or fraud
- Unacceptable use of obscene or abusive language
- Unauthorised accessing or use of computer data
- Unauthorised copying of computer software
- Unlawful discrimination, including acts of indecency or harassment (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). Please refer to the Equal Opportunities Policy set out in the Employee Handbook
- Wilful damage to Board, Group, employee or ratepayers property
- Serious breach of the Employees Code of Conduct