

## **"WHISTLEBLOWING" POLICY**

(Making a Disclosure in the Company's Interest)

### **Introduction**

TMO Traffic Highways Ltd is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability within its company.

An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and other members of the Company to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. Nevertheless, where an individual discovers information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation then this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal, and there should be arrangements to enable this to be done independently of line management (although in relatively minor instances the line manager would be the appropriate person to be told).

The Employment Rights Act 1996 provides protection for workers who 'blow the whistle' where they reasonably believe that some form of illegality, injustice or breach of health and safety has occurred or is likely to occur. The disclosure has to be "in the public interest". We encourage you to use the procedure to raise any such concerns.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into effect in 1999, gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. The Company has endorsed the provisions set out below so as to ensure that no members of staff should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.

Bullying, harassment or any other detrimental treatment afforded to a colleague who has made a qualifying disclosure is unacceptable. Anyone found to have acted in such a manner will be subject to disciplinary action.

It should be emphasised that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. This policy sets out the employees of TMO Traffic Highways Ltd, right to confidentiality, anonymity and protection.

It is not designed to question financial or business decisions taken by the Company nor should it be used to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under harassment, complaint, disciplinary or other procedures. Once the "whistleblowing" procedures are in place, it is reasonable to expect staff to use them rather than air their complaints outside the Company.

### **Scope of Policy**

This policy is designed to enable employees of the Company to raise concerns internally and at a high level and to disclose information which the individual believes shows malpractice or impropriety. This policy is intended to cover concerns which are in the company interest and may at

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least initially be investigated separately but might then lead to the invocation of other procedures e.g. disciplinary.

#### QUALIFYING DISCLOSURES:

Certain disclosures are prescribed by law as “qualifying disclosures”. A “qualifying disclosure” means a disclosure of information that the employee genuinely and reasonably believes is in the public interest and shows that the Company has committed a “relevant failure” by:

- a) committing a criminal offence;
- b) failing to comply with a legal obligation;
- c) a miscarriage of justice;
- d) endangering the health and safety of an individual;
- e) environmental damage; or
- f) concealing any information relating to the above.

## Safeguards

### i. Protection

This policy is designed to offer protection to those employees of the Company who disclose such concerns provided the disclosure is made:

- in good faith
- in the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure that it tends to show malpractice or impropriety and if they make the disclosure to an appropriate person (see below). It is important to note that no protection from internal disciplinary procedures is offered to those who choose not to use the procedure. In an extreme case malicious or wild allegations could give rise to legal action on the part of the persons complained about.

### ii. Confidentiality

The Company will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and in a sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

### iii. Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less credible, but they may be considered at the discretion of the

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Company Directors.

In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

#### **iv. Untrue Allegations**

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, which is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against that individual. In making a disclosure the individual should exercise due care to ensure the accuracy of the information. If, however, an individual makes malicious or vexatious allegations, and particularly if he or she persists with making them, disciplinary action may be taken against that individual.

#### **Procedures for Making a Disclosure**

On receipt of a complaint of malpractice, the member of staff who receives and takes note of the complaint, must pass this information as soon as is reasonably possible, to the appropriate designated investigating officer as follows:

- Complaints of malpractice will be investigated by the appropriate Director unless the complaint is against the Director or is in any way related to the actions of the Director. In such cases, the complaint should be passed to another Director.
- In the case of a complaint, which is any way connected with but not against the Director, the Director will nominate a Senior Manager to act as the alternative investigating officer.
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- Mark Haysman – Commercial & Business Director – 07580312431 or in writing [mark.haysman@tmohighways.co.uk](mailto:mark.haysman@tmohighways.co.uk)
- Ben Green – Operations Director - 07866 111023 or in writing [ben.green@tmohighways.co.uk](mailto:ben.green@tmohighways.co.uk)
- Jo Balding – HR & Finance Director – 07866 111096 or in writing [jo.balding@tmohighways.co.uk](mailto:jo.balding@tmohighways.co.uk)

Should none of the above routes be suitable or acceptable to the complainant, then the complainant may approach one of the following independent points of contact under this procedure. They can advise the complainant on the implications of the legislation and the possible internal and external avenues of complaint open to them:

- The Health & Safety Executive - 0300 003 1647
- The Environment Agency 0114 282 5312
- The Citizens Advice Bureau - 0800 144 8848

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**If there is evidence of criminal activity then the investigating officer should inform the police. The Company will ensure that any internal investigation does not hinder a formal police investigation. At this point the person disclosing may need to be identified.**

## **Timescales**

Due to the varied nature of these sorts of complaints, which may involve internal investigators and / or the police, it is not possible to lay down precise timescales for such investigations. The investigating officer should ensure that the investigations are undertaken as quickly as possible without affecting the quality and depth of those investigations.

The investigating officer, should as soon as practically possible, send a written acknowledgement of the concern to the complainant and thereafter report back to them in writing the outcome of the investigation and on the action that is proposed. If the investigation is a prolonged one, the investigating officer should keep the complainant informed, in writing, as to the progress of the investigation and as to when it is likely to be concluded.

All responses to the complainant should be in writing and sent to their home address.

## **Investigating Procedure**

The investigating officer should follow these steps:

- Full details and clarifications of the complaint should be obtained.
- The investigating officer should inform the member of staff against whom the complaint is made as soon as is practically possible. The member of staff will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a trade union or other representative at any future interview or hearing held under the provision of these procedures.
- The investigating officer should consider the involvement of the Company auditors and the Police at this stage and should consult with the Director.
- The allegations should be fully investigated by the investigating officer with the assistance where appropriate, of other individuals / bodies.
- A judgement concerning the complaint and validity of the complaint will be made by the investigating officer. This judgement will be detailed in a written report containing the findings of the investigations and reasons for the judgement. The report will be passed to the Director as appropriate.
- The Director will decide what action to take. If the complaint is shown to be justified, then they will invoke the disciplinary or other appropriate Company procedures.
- The complainant should be kept informed of the progress of the investigations and, if appropriate, of the final outcome.
- If appropriate, a copy of the outcomes will be passed to the Company Auditors to enable a review of the procedures.

If the complainant is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with by the investigating officer, they have the right to raise it in confidence with companies HR advisor, contacts detailed within this document.

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If the investigation finds the allegations unsubstantiated and all internal procedures have been exhausted, but the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, the Company recognises the lawful rights of employees and ex-employees to make disclosures to prescribed persons (such as the Health and Safety Executive, the Audit Commission, or the utility regulators), or, where justified, elsewhere.

I have read and understood the above policy and agree to act within the constraints set out above

(print name) ..... (position) .....  
(signature) ..... (date) .....

Signed:



Printed Name: Ben Green  
Job Title Operations Director  
Date: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023  
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