

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

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1. PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE 1
 2. PURPOSE 2
 3. COMMITMENT FOR REPORTING PUBLIC INTEREST INFORMATION..... 2
 4. PURPOSE OF THE INTERNAL PROCEDURES 2
 5. SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF INTERNAL PROCEDURES 3
 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 3
 7. MANAGING DISPUTES 3
 8. RELATED / SUPPORTING POLICIES 3

1. PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The Agricultural Produce Commission (the Commission) does not tolerate corrupt or other improper conduct.

The Commission is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003* (the PID Act) which recognises the value and importance of reporting as a means to identify and address wrongdoing.

The Commission strongly supports disclosures about corrupt or other improper conduct. Disclosures can be made by employees, committee members, producers or any persons dealing with the Commission or its producers' committees.

This policy will clarify the public interest disclosure (PID) process for all concerned.



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CHAIR

2. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the Commission's position on public interest disclosure, with particular reference to the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003* (the PID Act). Procedures for making PID's are contained within the accompanying 'APC Public Interest Disclosure Process' (the PIDP) (Appendix 1).

This policy should be read in conjunction with, and is additional to, any and all Commission policies and procedures which relate to public interest disclosure and codes of conduct and is not a replacement for them.

3. COMMITMENT FOR REPORTING PUBLIC INTEREST INFORMATION

The Commission will not countenance corrupt or other improper conduct, and is committed to the aims and objectives of the PID Act.

The PID Act recognises the value and importance of reporting as a means to identify and address wrongdoing. We strongly support PIDs being made by any person or organisation where it is believed that wrongdoing, with respect to the Agricultural Produce Commission or any of its producers' committees, has taken place.

The Commission does not tolerate any of its employees, committee members or subcontractors taking reprisal action against anyone who makes or proposes to make a public interest disclosure.

The Commission will take all reasonable steps to protect employees from any detrimental action in reprisal for the making of a public interest disclosure.

The Commission's commitment to effectively manage public interest disclosures extends to a proper authority, designated under s. 23(1)(a) of the PID Act.. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the person designated as the proper authority. The CEO will abide by the PID Code of conduct and integrity in performing their duties.

The Commission is also committed to responding to all disclosures thoroughly and impartially. We will treat all people in the disclosure process fairly, including those who may be the subject of a disclosure.

The Commission will provide as much information as possible to people considering making a PID. The APC PIDP is accessible to everyone. Copies are available from the CEO (PID Officer), on the intranet and on the APC website (apcwa.org.au).

While these procedures focus on public interest disclosures, we are committed to dealing with all reports of suspected wrongdoing. We encourage people to report, if they witness any such behaviour.

The Commission will consider each matter under the appropriate reporting pathway and make every attempt to protect staff members making reports from any reprisals.

4. PURPOSE OF THE INTERNAL PROCEDURES

Our Chief Executive Officer must prepare and publish these internal procedures under s. 23(1)(e) of the PID Act.

These procedures outline how we will meet our obligations under the PID Act. They cover the roles and responsibilities of the CEO, the person designated as the proper authority in accordance with s. 23(1)(a) and s. 5(3) (h) referred to in this document as the PID Officer, the discloser and the subject of the disclosure.

5. SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF INTERNAL PROCEDURES

These procedures apply to all people involved in the public interest disclosure process, including our CEO (the designated PID Officer), employees of the Commission, Commission and committee members and/or any person making a public interest disclosure and any subject(s) of a disclosure.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with:

- Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003
- Public Interest Disclosure Regulations 2003
- Don't be afraid to speak up
- Agricultural Produce Commission Act 1988
- APC Code of Conduct and Committee Procedural Manual.

The behaviour of all employees involved in the public interest disclosure process must accord with our Code of conduct at all times. A breach of the Code of conduct may result in disciplinary action.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the Commission and Commission staff -

- Will uphold and observe this policy's agreed principles.
- Will uphold and observe the spirit of the policy, which is to ensure an impartial and thorough process which delivers a clear and unbiased outcome.
- Will ensure that all participants, stakeholders and relevant bodies are aware of this policy and all other relevant and supporting legislation or policies which relate to public interest disclosure.

7. MANAGING DISPUTES

An efficient, fair and accessible dispute management process is important to ensure that concerns are addressed as well as to provide the Commission with the opportunity to improve processes.

- Complaints or disputes should be directed to:
 - the CEO in the first instance, and if a resolution is not found
 - to the Commission, and if a resolution is not found
 - to the Minister

8. RELATED / SUPPORTING POLICIES

The following are Commission policies or documents which relate to or support this policy:

- Agricultural Produce Commission Act 1988
- APC Code of Conduct and Committee Procedural Manual
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
- Public Interest Disclosure Lodgement Form