
Statement of Business Ethics



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INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Business Ethics applies to Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) Member Councils representatives, staff, contractors and business associates dealing with Sydney Coastal Councils Group.

The SCCG is committed to conducting its business in a sound commercial and ethical manner and this Statement of Business Ethics sets out the standards the SCCG requires of its Member Council representatives, staff, contractors and business associates. Both SCCG staff and private sector employees must always be aware of the ethical standards its Member Councils demand when SCCG money is used either directly or indirectly.

The SCCG will demonstrate and practice a professional and ethical approach to all its business activities and all SCCG staff are required to conduct their activities in accordance with the SCCG host council Code of Conduct (City of Sydney) and observe a high standard of probity, ethical behaviour and integrity in their business dealings.

All individuals and organisations that deal with the SCCG are required to comply with these standards of ethical behaviour in their dealings with SCCG.

GEOFF WITHYCOMBE
Executive Officer

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

Our business dealings will be transparent and open to public scrutiny wherever possible. The way we deliver our services is driven first and foremost by the need to ensure and demonstrate our Member Councils receive the best possible value for their financial contributions. We are accountable for ensuring best value starts with the Executive Officer, but extends to the Secretariat and Member Council representatives at all levels.

In assessing the overall value for money being achieved, consideration is given to a range of factors, including environmental sustainability, not just achieving the lowest possible cost. We must also measure the true cost of our services and the value they provide to our Member Councils.

The SCCG will ensure that all its policies, procedures and practices related to tendering, contracting and the purchase of goods or services are consistent with best practice and of the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Staff will ensure that procurement will be conducted with honesty and fairness, that all prospective contractors and suppliers are afforded equal opportunity to tender/quote for all goods and services. Our staff are bound by:

- The Host Council's Code of Conduct
- The Local Government Act, 1993
- Delegated Authorities
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2000

Staff will always ensure that no opportunity exists for their interest, or those of people they have an association with, conflict with the proper performance of their duties. All Member Council representatives must be confident that all decisions made by the SCCG are impartial and in the best interests of the community.

Our Values

The SCCG's values are the underlying attitudes that consistently affect all of our actions and decision-making processes.

It is important that these values be consistent across the organisation and at all levels of the organisation. We should use the same set of values in internal processes within the organisation as we do with dealing with people external to the organisation, be they community representatives, private companies or government departments.

Our values are reflected in the following statement:

Openness

We communicate what services are available.

We value Member Council and Secretariat participation in decision making.

Equity

We provide equity of opportunity to Member Council Delegates and staff.

We provide a right of review, where possible, with regard to our decisions and practices.

Integrity

We value consistency in decision making.

We promote ethical practice.

We are mindful of our role of acting in the public interest.

Efficiency

We value innovation and creativity.

We aim for value for money, recognising the full costs of providing services

Service

We are customer focused.

We are flexible and receptive to change.

We anticipate needs and future trends.

We provide services in partnership with other organisations and the community.

Respect

We welcome the opinions of all.

We conduct all our dealings in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

WHAT WE WILL ASK OF YOU

The SCCG expects that its tenderers, contractors, suppliers and their employees and subcontractors will all be guided by the same policies, procedures and practices that bind the SCCG and its Secretariat to act in an ethical manner.

Where delivering a service involves working with the private sector, we work together to plan, manage and deliver the service using a partnership approach focussed on providing the best outcome for the customer. We trust and respect each other.

We require all private sector providers of goods and services to observe the following principles when doing business with the SCCG:

- Deliver value for money
- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information when required
- Declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of the conflict
- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with the SCCG
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent the disclosure of confidential SCCG information
- Refrain from engaging in any form of collusive practice, including offering SCCG employees inducements or incentives designed to improperly influence the conduct of their duties
- Refrain from discussing SCCG business or information in the media
- Assist SCCG to prevent unethical practices in our business relationships
- Co-operate with SCCG post separation employment guidelines.

A copy of this Statement of Business Ethics will be included in all tenders and quotation documentation relevant SCCG policies and will accompany any other relevant business documentation where the SCCG requires work to be undertaken on its behalf.

WHY SHOULD THE PRIVATE SECTOR COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE?

By complying with our Statement of Business Ethics, you will be able to advance your business objectives and interest in a fair and ethical manner. As all SCCG suppliers of goods and services are required to comply with this statement, compliance will not disadvantage you in any way.

Complying with the SCCG's principles will also prepare your business for dealing with the ethical requirements of other public sector agencies, should you choose to do business with them.

You should also be aware of the consequences of not complying with the SCCG's ethical requirements when doing business with us. Demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to:

- Termination of contracts
- Loss of future work
- Loss of reputation
- Investigation for corruption
- Matters being referred for criminal investigation.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

A Statement of Business Ethics will not be effective unless the organisation and its employees are committed to it. That will demand explicit commitment by the Secretariat and Member Council representatives, allocation of resources to educating employees and adoption of internal measures for ensuring compliance.

SCCG Member Councils rightly expect the Secretariat to be honest, reasonable and equitable in their dealings with them and to have the public interest at heart. SCCG'S adoption of its host council's Code of Conduct is a key mechanism to assist the SCCG to act honestly, ethically, responsibly and with accountability.

The Code of Conduct has been developed to assist the SCCG Secretariat to:

- Understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them
- Enable them to fulfill their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence
- Act in a way that enhances public confidence in the integrity of local government.

Particular situations in which industry and the SCCG should exercise care include:

Gifts, Benefits and Inducements

The SCCG Secretariat, must never request any gift or benefit for themselves or anyone else in connection with their work or accept any token gift that may give a perception that the person offering the gift is trying to influence you.

Token gifts do not have significant monetary value and may be accepted in appropriate circumstances. Token gifts include ties, scarves, coasters, tie pins, diaries, chocolates, flowers and small amounts of beverages, single bottles of reasonably priced alcohol, free or subsidized meals of a modest nature and refreshments, of a modest nature.

Staff accepting token gifts shall notify the SCCG Chairperson and Executive Officer as soon as practicable.

Unacceptable non-token gifts may include hospitality (such as free attendance at major sporting events or an invitation to lunch at a restaurant) and gifts (such as expensive pens, clothes or alcohol). Any offer of a non-token gift is to be immediately rejected.

Under no circumstances shall any amount of cash be accepted.

Confidentiality of Information

The SCCG deals with most requests for information under Section 12 of the Local Government Act, however occasionally will deal with an application under the Freedom Of Information Act. The SCCG is transparent in all its dealings and will only deal with a matter in confidential session at SCCG Meetings in accordance with Section 10 of the Local Government Act.

The SCCG recognizes that there is a potential for former employees, who may have had access to confidential or sensitive information during the course of their employment, to disclose or misuse that information for commercial or private purposes. To that end, the SCCG will take all lawful steps to ensure former employees do not disclose or misuse information acquired during the course of their employment once that employment ceases.

Use of SCCG Resources

SCCG resources include financial, material and human resources. They should only be used:

- For the benefit of SCCG Member Councils.
- Effectively, economically and carefully.

Other Employment or Business

The SCCG Secretariat shall not engage in outside employment or business that could conflict, or be seen to conflict, with their duties and can only engage in a second job or business if they have the approval of the Chairperson and Executive Officer. Prior to engaging in a second job or business Secretariat staff should provide a written request for approval to the Chairperson and Executive Officer for approval.

Any second job or business will be done in private time. It must not:

- Adversely affect normal work
- Lead to a conflict of interest
- Lead a fair person to think that a conflict of interest may arise
- Involve the use of SCCG's resources
- Involve the use of information obtained from the SCCG.

Discrimination and Harassment

SCCG staff shall not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of: race, sex, colour, nationality, religious conviction, ethno-religious background, marital status; age; pregnancy; physical, intellectual and / or psychiatric disability; sexual preference; transgender; association or political conviction.

Reporting Corruption and Maladministration

It is the responsibility of SCCG staff to act not only honestly, but also to report any instances of possible corruption, or maladministration to the Executive Officer.

Work Place Behaviour and Safety

Member Councils representatives, the public and work colleagues are to be treated with respect. empathy, and sensitivity.

SCCG staff acknowledge that their actions outside work are a reflection on the SCCG and how it is perceived by the community.

SCCG staff are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that they do not attend work, under the influence of drugs or alcohol or consume drugs or alcohol during working hours.

It is acknowledged that the SCCG and those that deal with it will ensure that workplace safety is of paramount importance and that all legislative and procedural safety requirements are complied with.

Supervisory Responsibility

The SCCG Secretariat is required to be responsible for fostering an ethical and equitable work environment. The Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that the staff they supervise are aware of the requirements of the host Member Council's Code of Conduct and are an effective role model for their staff.

MAKING CONTACT

If you are concerned about a possible breach of this statement, or about any conduct that could involve fraud, corrupt conduct, maladministration or serious and substantial waste of public funds, please contact the SCCG's Executive Officer on (02) 9246 7791

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I/we have read, understand and agree to comply with the requirements of SCCG's Statement of Business Ethics.

Signed :
Name :
Position/Company :