



Independent Communication Solutions

Policy

Equal Opportunities

Statement

Independent Communication Solutions Ltd is an equal opportunities employer and will therefore promote equality of opportunity in the recruitment, promotion, appraisal, training and development of its staff and otherwise treat them on the basis of their relative merits and abilities. The law requires that no job applicant, member of staff or customer will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex or marital status. Where the law does not prescribe, every effort will be made to avoid discrimination on grounds of disability, religion, political belief, socio-economic background, parental status, age (subject to normal retirement conventions) or sexual orientation.

Objective

- A To demonstrate our commitment to being an equal opportunity employer in order to attract, retain and motivate high calibre employees, sub-contractors and suppliers.
- B To ensure that the most effective use is made of the talents, qualifications, skills, experience and potential of all our employees, sub-contractors and suppliers.
- C To celebrate cultural diversity and encourage all employees, and others who work with us, to understand, support and act positively and creatively in the implementation of this policy.

Policy

- A We are an equal opportunity employer and follow the recommendations of the Race Relations Code of Practice.
- B We will not tolerate any form of discrimination and aim to ensure that no job applicant, employee, customer, sub-contractor or supplier is treated unfairly on the grounds of their race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or creed; having regard to the individuals aptitude, abilities and the requirements of the job.
- C We will not tolerate any form of abuse or harassment and aim to ensure that the workplace is free from intimidation including physical assault, verbal assault, slander, obscene gestures, isolation, exclusion, coercion (including pressure to discriminate against others) and intrusion.
- D We will take disciplinary action where there is evidence of discrimination, abuse or harassment.

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- E At all times there will be a senior manager appointed to be responsible for implementing Independent Communication Solutions equal opportunities policy. This is currently Mr Mark Edward Elen – Operations Manager.
- F We will communicate clearly to all staff the equal opportunities statement and policy, the relevant disciplinary and grievance procedures and the name and role of the senior manager responsible.
- G We will monitor all allegations of discrimination, including those which include a racial element, to ensure that they have been responded to adequately, fairly and according to this policy.
- H We will monitor recruitment, work allocation, discipline and dismissal proceedings to identify any racially uneven statistical patterns that require further investigation.
- I We will ensure that all managers and staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Independent Communication Solutions Equal Opportunities Policy.

Abuse or Harassment

This policy refers to the general term of "abuse or harassment" and in so doing encompasses the following:

- **Sexual Harassment:**

This is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of both men and women in the work environment.

Sexual harassment refers to behaviour which is unsolicited, repeated and personally offensive to the recipient and can also relate to unwanted sexual advances in a work related social environment such as an office party.

It is to be distinguished from mutual, acceptable, friendly or social behaviour which may occur during contacts between people at work.

- **Racial Harassment:**

This includes a wide range of abusive and / or threatening behaviour.

Racial harassment refers to any hostile act or expression based on race by a person of one racial or ethnic origin against another, or incitement to commit such an act.

- **Bullying:**

Bullying refers to abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair sanctions which make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable and which undermines their self-confidence and may cause them to suffer stress.

Procedure

Any employee, customer, sub-contractor or supplier who feels that they have been or are being unfairly treated, abused or harassed should raise the issue through the Independent Communication Solutions Grievance Procedure. All such complaints will be treated seriously, investigated thoroughly and will be dealt with speedily and in confidence.

Prior to initiating the Grievance Procedure, the party concerned may, if they so wish and if appropriate:

- Attempt to make clear to the person(s) responsible for the unfair treatment, abuse or harassment that their behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.
- Contact a director of Independent Communication Solutions to make known their complaint and seek advice.

Such an informal approach will be dealt with in total confidence, and the party concerned will not be obliged to take the complaint further if they do not wish to do so.

If the complaint is not resolved informally, or if the unfair treatment, abuse or harassment continues or resumes at a later date, a complaint may be raised under the Independent Communication Solutions Grievance Procedure.

All parties concerned should note that:

- Where the Grievance Procedure is used, they may, if they so wish be accompanied to any meeting by a colleague and / or union official or an outside friend.
- Discussions and investigations into complaints of unfair treatment, abuse or harassment will be handled with sensitivity and in confidence, with due regard for the rights of both the complainant and person(s) against whom the complaint has been made.
- If the Company's investigation reveals that a complaint is valid, prompt action will be taken to stop the unfair treatment, abuse or harassment and prevent a recurrence. Such action will not be to the detriment of the complainant.
- If the Company's investigation reveals that a complaint is not valid, the decision, and the reasons for that decision, will be communicated to both parties and all records of the complaint and investigation expunged. Such action will not be to the detriment of the complainant or the person(s) against whom the complaint has been made.
- Malicious complaints will be regarded as gross misconduct and disciplinary action will be taken forthwith.
- It is both unacceptable to us and illegal to victimise anyone who has made allegations of unfair treatment, abuse or harassment. Such victimisation will be regarded as gross misconduct and disciplinary action will be taken forthwith.
- Where appropriate, support and counselling may be provided for any of the parties involved; either internally or, if more appropriate, externally.

Signed,



**Alan Ogden,
Director.**

Date: 27th July 2005