



Australian Government

AFTRS

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AFTRS Workplace Bullying Policy

Responsible Officer	Director, Corporate Services
Contact Officer	Head of Human Resources
Authorisation	Chief Executive Officer through AFTRS Executive
Effective Date	Initial June 2002 Reviewed 8 th September 2011 Reviewed 1 st January 2012
Associated Documents	AFTRS Code of Conduct AFTRS Enterprise Agreement 2011 AFTRS Workplace Anti-harassment Policy Human Resources Privacy Policy ICT User Policy <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988</i>

1. Policy Name

The AFTRS Workplace Bullying Policy.

2. Preamble – Background

AFTRS is committed to providing a safe and health working environment and recognise that bullying behaviours have an adverse impact on workers. In acknowledgement of this AFTRS first developed a Workplace Bullying Policy in 2002. This was formally recognised by including bullying as an unacceptable behaviour in the AFTRS Code of Conduct as negotiated in the AFTRS Union Collective Agreement 2007. The prohibition against bullying behaviour has remained in the Code of Conduct from that time.

3. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all employees and independent contractors.

4. Definitions

Workplace Bullying means unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace or in the course of employment which could reasonably be regarded as intimidating, insulting, offensive, demeaning, or abusive to others. It will usually be repeated inappropriate behaviour but can also consist of a single act. IT may include direct and indirect behaviour, and verbal or non-verbal behaviour. Either individuals or groups may bully and be bullied. Differences of opinion and normal, appropriate management practices including performance management are not Workplace Bullying.

Direct Workplace Bullying includes:

- persistent unwarranted criticisms;
- insults;
- belittling comments;
- patronising titles or nicknames;
- offensive or abusive language, and
- unwanted physical contact.

Indirect Workplace Bullying includes:

- undermining work performance;
- setting unrealistic deadlines or objectives;
- withholding information;
- refusing reasonable requests;
- taking credit for someone else's idea, and
- unreasonable administrative sanctions.

5. Policy Statement

AFTRS is committed to providing a working environment in which all workers are treated with dignity and respect, where bullying at work will not be tolerated, and where all workers can be productive without interference from harassment. Any complaint of workplace bullying will be dealt with promptly and fairly in accordance with the AFTRS misconduct handling procedures. Substantiated complaints will result in disciplinary action.

Workplace bullying is a breach of the universal right to be treated fairly and with dignity, a right that should form the basis for all working relationships. Bullying at work has major impacts on both individuals and the organisation. They include health and stress effects on staff and both direct and indirect costs for AFTRS.

AFTRS management and workers have responsibilities under health and safety laws to maintain a safe working environment and bullying behaviour puts at risk the health, safety and welfare of workers.

AFTRS encourage all workers to report workplace bullying and the Executive, managers and supervisors have a responsibility to ensure neither workers who make complaints, nor witnesses, are victimised.

6. Implementation and Guidelines

Informal Resolution

If you feel that you are being bullied consider telling the person to stop, that their behaviour is unacceptable and why you believe it is, and that you do not want them to do it again. You may do this face-to-face (and may choose to take a colleague with you) or to make the statement in writing.

If you feel unable to approach the person directly or in writing, ask a colleague, your manager, supervisor, the Head of Human Resources, the Manager, Student Services, a Harassment Contact Officer, union delegate etc. to speak with the person on your behalf. Brief them clearly about the circumstances, what

behaviours you find inappropriate, when and where it occurred, and why you consider it is unacceptable.

Formal Resolution

If the behaviour does not stop or you feel uncomfortable with an informal approach, bullying is a breach of the Code of Conduct so formal misconduct complaint mechanisms are available. Complaints will be investigated in a sympathetic and fair way and within the principles of natural justice.

Formal written complaints can be made to the Head of Human Resources, your supervisor or manager, the Director of Corporate Services, or the Chief Executive Officer. Investigations will be undertaken in accordance with the AFTRS Misconduct procedures.

Privacy

Complaints of workplace bullying will be investigated with as much privacy to all involved individuals as is possible. Information about the complaint will only be given on a “need to know” basis. It must be remembered that both the alleged bully and the alleged bullied worker have a right to confidentiality and a breach of this may result in disciplinary action for a breach of the Code of Conduct or an external defamation action.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer is responsible for initiating and determining formal misconduct proceedings as appropriate.

AFTRS Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of the workplace, exhibiting non-bullying behaviours, and ensuring appropriate policies and processes apply.

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- taking immediate action to stop workplace bullying if they observe it;
- ensuring staff are aware that workplace bullying will not be tolerated;
- responding promptly and fairly to any reported complaints in accordance with AFTRS misconduct procedures;
- mediating the complaint through informal procedures if requested;
- ensuring complainants are not victimised as a result of making a complaint, and
- ensuring they do not reward or engage in bullying behaviour themselves.

Workers are responsible for:

- complying with the AFTRS policy in relation to workplace bullying;
- treating others fairly and with respect at all times;
- not condoning workplace bullying;
- reporting instances of workplace bullying, and
- offering support to employees who are bullied.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed as required by changes to legislation, government policy, guidelines, or review of the Code of Conduct.