

**CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR STAFF OF THE INTERNATIONAL OIL
POLLUTION COMPENSATION FUNDS (IOPC FUNDS)**

1. Policy Statement

The International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds) expect their staff members to adhere to the highest standards of integrity and conduct. The Code of Conduct clarifies the standards of behaviour that are expected of the staff of the IOPC Funds in the performance of their duties. It provides guidance in areas where decisions of a personal or ethical nature might be required.

2. Applicability

All IOPC Fund staff including short term staff, contracted directly by the Organisation, through a Recruitment Agency or other contractual arrangement.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 The concept of integrity embraces the total behaviour of the staff member, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility. These qualities are as important as those of competence and efficiency.
- 3.2 Staff members should respect equally all persons without any distinction whatsoever, whether on the basis of race, gender, religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, marital status, sexual orientation, age, or any other distinguishing characteristic.
- 3.3 Staff members should respect different languages, cultures, customs and traditions. Any behaviour that is not acceptable in a particular cultural context should be avoided.
- 3.4 Working methods can be different in different cultures. Staff members should not be wedded to the attitudes, working methods or work habits of their own country or region.
- 3.5 Impartiality and independence of staff members is paramount. They must remain independent of any authority outside the IOPC Funds, and their conduct must reflect that independence.
- 3.6 Staff members should in their official capacity always conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best interest of the IOPC Funds. Also in their private capacity staff members should avoid behaviour which is contrary to the best interests of the IOPC Funds.

4. Working Relations

- 4.1 Managers and supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a harmonious workplace based on mutual respect. They should be open to all views and opinions and make sure that the merits of staff are properly recognised.
- 4.2 Managers need to support their staff, especially when they are subject to criticism from outside the Organisations arising from the carrying out of their duties, and are responsible for guiding and motivating their staff and promoting their development.
- 4.3 It would be improper for managers to solicit favours, gifts or loans from their staff; they must act impartially and free of intimidation and favouritism. No staff member should try to influence colleagues for personal reasons.
- 4.4 It is incumbent on managers and supervisors to communicate effectively with their staff and share information with them. Staff members have a reciprocal responsibility to provide all pertinent facts and information to their managers or supervisors and to abide by and defend any decisions taken, even when these do not accord with their personal views.
- 4.5 It is the duty of staff members to report any breach of the Funds' policies, rules and regulations to a higher officer, whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. A staff member who makes such a report in good faith has the right to be protected against reprisals or sanctions.
- 4.6 Harassment in any shape or form is not acceptable and must be avoided. Staff members should not engage in any form of harassment and must endeavour to avoid any suspicion of it.

5. Conflict of Interest and Outside Activities

- 5.1 Conflict of interest includes circumstances in which staff members, directly or indirectly, would appear to benefit improperly, or allow a third party to benefit improperly, from their association in the management or the holding of a financial interest in an enterprise that engages in any business or transaction with the Funds.
- 5.2 The primary obligation of staff members is to devote their energies to the work of the Funds. It is therefore improper for staff members to engage, without prior authorisation by the Director, in any outside activity, whether remunerated or not, that interferes with that obligation or is incompatible with their status or conflicts with the interests of the Funds.
- 5.3 Staff members should avoid assisting private bodies or persons in their dealings with the Funds where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. This is particularly important in procurement matters or when appointing persons to work for the Funds.

- 5.4 Staff members on leave, whether with or without pay, should bear in mind that they remain officials of the Funds and are still subject to the Organisations' rules. They may, therefore, only accept employment, paid or unpaid, during their leave with prior authorisation by the Director.
- 5.5 In view of the independence and impartiality which they must maintain, staff members, whilst retaining the right to vote, should not participate in political activities such as standing for or holding local or national political office. This does not, however, preclude participation in local non-partisan community or civic activities or membership of a political party. It is necessary for staff members to exercise discretion in their support for a political party or campaign, and they should not accept or solicit funds, write articles or make public speeches or make statements to the press on political issues. In case of doubt as to whether or not a certain activity is acceptable, the matter should be referred to the Director.

6. Gifts, Honours and Remuneration from Outside Sources

- 6.1 Staff members should not accept any gift, hospitality or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or not doing, anything in his or her official capacity, or showing favour or disfavour to any person in his/her official capacity.
- 6.2 To protect them from any appearance of impropriety, staff members must not accept, without authorisation from the Director, any honour, decoration, favour or economic benefit from any source external to the Funds, including governments and commercial firms.
- 6.3 Any gift or hospitality accepted by a staff member must be declared in writing to the Director.

7. Personal Conduct

The private life of staff members is their own concern. There can be situations, however, when the behaviour of a staff member in his or her private life can reflect on the Funds. Staff members must therefore bear in mind that their conduct and activities outside the workplace, even if unrelated to official duties, can compromise the image and the interests of the Funds.

8. Role of the Secretariat

- 8.1 The IOPC Funds are constituted by Member States and the joint Secretariat has the responsibility for administering the international regimes of liability and compensation for oil pollution damage. The Director is the legal representative and Chief Executive Officer of the Funds and is responsible for directing and controlling the work of the Secretariat. Accordingly, when submitting proposals or advocating positions before the governing bodies or outside the Funds, staff members are presenting the position of the Director, not that of an individual or unit.

8.2 In providing services to the governing bodies, staff members should serve only the interests of the Funds. It would not be appropriate for staff members to prepare for government or other official representatives any speeches, arguments or proposals on questions under discussion. It could, however, be quite appropriate to provide factual information, technical advice or assistance with tasks such as the preparation of draft resolutions or to make proposals for editorial or linguistic amendments to documents to be presented by delegations, if this furthers the effective functioning of the Funds or the governing bodies.

9. Relations with Member States

9.1 It is the duty of all staff members to maintain the best possible relations with governments of Member States and avoid any action which might impair this. It is unacceptable for staff members, either individually or collectively, to criticise or try to discredit a government.

9.2 Staff members are not representatives of their countries, nor do they have authority to act as liaison agents between the Funds and their governments. The Director may, however, request a staff member to undertake such duties, a unique role for which loyalty to the Funds and integrity are essential.

10 Relations with the Public

10.1 For an international organisation to function successfully, it must have the support of the public. All staff members therefore have a continuing responsibility to promote a better understanding of the objectives and work of the Funds. This requires them to be well informed and to provide information to the public within the scope of their authority.

10.2 There is a risk that on occasion staff members may be subject to criticism from outside the Funds; in keeping with their responsibility staff members should respond with tact and restraint. Staff members have the right to be defended by the Funds against criticism for actions taken in the fulfilment of their duties.

10.3 It would be improper for staff members to air personal grievances or criticise the Funds in public; such behaviour would not be conducive to a positive image of the staff member and would not be compatible with the spirit of the oath of loyalty.

11. Relations with the Media

11.1 Openness and transparency in relations with the media are effective means of communicating the Funds' message. The Director, the Deputy Director/Head, Finance and Administration Department, the Legal Counsel, the Head, Claims Department/Technical Adviser or the Head, External Relations and Conference Department and/or any other staff with delegated authority from them, may give press conferences and interviews and/or meet with individual journalists as appropriate. Other staff members are not permitted to disclose information to the media or give interviews unless specifically instructed to do so. If possible, the Director should be consulted in advance.

- 11.2 In major incidents it may be appropriate to engage a firm in the country concerned, specialised in media relations, to advise the Fund(s) in handling contacts with the media (eg. in drafting press releases, monitoring the press and organising interviews and other contacts with the media).

12. Use and Protection of Information

- 12.1 The disclosure of confidential information may seriously jeopardise the efficiency and credibility of the Funds. Staff members are responsible for exercising discretion in all matters of official business and must not divulge confidential information without prior authorisation. They must not use to private advantage, information which has not been made public and is known to them by virtue of their official position.
- 12.2 The Funds' policy and instructions regarding the use and protection of confidential information must be strictly respected. However, this does not affect established practices governing the exchange of information between the Secretariat and Member States which ensures the fullest participation of Member States in the activities of the Funds.

13. Security and Safety

While the Director must remain free to assign staff in accordance with the exigencies of the service, it is the responsibility of the Funds to make sure that the health, well being and lives of staff members will not be subject to undue risk, and staff members have the right to expect that measures will be taken to protect their safety and that of their family members. On the other hand, it is incumbent on staff members to respect all instructions issued to protect their safety.

José Maura
Director
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