

National Association  
of  
Racing Staff



**nars**

National Association of Racing Staff

**Whistle Blowing**

Date: 3/11/2015

Signed; George McGrath, Chief Executive

## Introduction

- a) NARS is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability.
- b) An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. Nevertheless, where an individual discovers information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within an organisation then this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal.
- c) The Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into effect in 1999, gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. NARS has endorsed the provisions set out below so as to ensure that no member of staff should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.
- d) It should be emphasised that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It is not designed to question financial or business decisions taken by NARS nor should it be used to reconsider any matters, which have already been addressed under the grievance disciplinary or other procedures.

## Scope of Policy

This policy is designed to enable employees of NARS to raise concerns internally and at a high level and to disclose information, which the individual believes shows malpractice or impropriety.

This policy is intended to cover concerns, which are in the public interest and may at least initially be investigated separately but might then lead to the invocation of other procedures e.g. disciplinary.

These concerns could include:

- Financial malpractice or impropriety or fraud
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or Statutes
- Dangers to Health & Safety or the environment
- Criminal activity
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Attempts to conceal any of these

## Safeguards

### i. Protection

a) This policy is designed to offer protection to those employees of NARS who disclose such concerns provided the disclosure is made:

- In good faith

• In the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure that it tends to show malpractice or impropriety and if they make the disclosure to an appropriate person (see below). It is important to note that no protection from internal disciplinary procedures is offered to those who choose not to use the procedure.

In an extreme case malicious or wild allegations could give rise to legal action on the part of the persons complained about.

#### ii. Confidentiality

NARS will treat all such disclosure in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the Individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the Investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

#### iii. Anonymous Allegations

People can contact NARS or the Chief Executive anonymously via phone or email.

a) This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make.

Concerns expressed anonymously are much less credible, but they may be considered at the discretion of NARS.

b) In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

#### iv. Untrue Allegations

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, which is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against that individual. If, however, an individual makes malicious or vexatious allegations, and particularly if he or she persists with making them, disciplinary action may be taken against that individual.

#### Procedures for Making a Disclosure

a) On receipt of a complaint of malpractice or impropriety, the member of staff who receives and takes note of the complaint, must pass this information as soon as is reasonably possible, to the appropriate designated investigating officer as follows:

- Complaints of malpractice and/or Impropriety will be investigated by the Chief Executive unless the complaint is against the Chief Executive or is any way related to the actions of the Chief Executive. In such cases, the complaint should be passed to the Office Manager. The Office Manager will appoint a Full Time Officer to carry out the investigation.

b) If there is evidence of criminal activity then the investigating officer should inform the police.

#### Timescales

a) Due to the varied nature of these sorts of complaints, which may involve internal investigators and / or the police, it is not possible to lay down precise timescales for such investigations.

The investigating officer should ensure that the investigations are undertaken as quickly as possible without affecting the quality and depth of those investigations.

b) The investigating officer, should as soon as practically possible, send a written acknowledgement of the concern to the complainant and thereafter report back to them in writing the outcome of the Investigation and on the action that is proposed. If the investigation is a prolonged one, the investigating officer should keep the complainant Informed, in writing, as to the progress of the investigation and as to when it is likely to be concluded.

c) All responses to the complainant should be in writing and sent to their home address.

## 20.6 Investigating Procedure

The investigating officer should follow these steps:

- Full details and clarifications of the complaint should be obtained.
  - The investigating officer should inform the member of staff against whom the complaint is made as soon as is practically possible. The member of staff will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague at any future interview or hearing held under the provision of these procedures.
  - The allegations should be fully investigated by the investigating officer with the assistance where appropriate, of other individuals / bodies.
  - The investigating officer will make a recommendation concerning the complaint and validity of the complaint. This recommendation will be detailed in a written report containing the findings of the investigations and reasons for the recommendation. The report will be passed to the Chief Executive
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- The Chief Executive will decide what action to take. If the complaint is shown to be justified, then they will invoke the disciplinary or other appropriate procedures.
  - The complainant should be kept informed of the progress of the investigations and, if appropriate, of the final outcome.
  - If the complainant is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with by the investigating officer, they have the right to raise it in confidence with the Chief Executive.
  - If the investigation finds the allegations unsubstantiated and all internal procedures have been exhausted, but the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, NARS recognises the lawful rights of employees and ex-employees to make disclosures to prescribed persons (such as the Health and Safety Executive, the Audit Commission, or the utility regulators), or, where justified, elsewhere.