



2.17 Scouts ACT Policy – Whistleblower Protection Policy

Policy Title: Whistleblower Protection Policy

Policy Number: 2.17

Policy Owner: President Scouts ACT

Effective Date: 27 November 2025

Review Date: 27 November 2026

1. Purpose

1.1 This Policy provides Scouts ACT with a comprehensive Whistleblower Policy.

2. Scope

2.1 A whistleblower is defined as someone with inside knowledge of Scouts ACT who reports misconduct or dishonest or illegal activity that may have occurred within Scouting.

2.2 This whistleblower policy covers all forms of misconduct. Examples include:

- fraud,
- child abuse,
- corruption, bribery or blackmail,
- criminal offences,
- significant damage to the environment, or damage to Australia’s flora and fauna,
- breaches of ACT planning or land use responsibilities,
- failure to comply with a legal or regulatory obligation,
- miscarriage of justice,
- breaches of privacy legislation,
- endangering the health and safety of an individual, or breaching occupational health and safety standards, regulations or policies,
- any other breach of Territory or Commonwealth law, or
- concealment of any of the above.

2.3 This policy covers the activity of all people (including members, office holders, staff and contractors) in all units and sections of Scouts ACT, including Camp Cottermouth.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 This policy statement provides protection for whistleblowers within Scouts ACT. This whistleblower policy is designed to:

- support our values,
- ensure people can raise concerns without fear of suffering retribution, and
- provide a transparent and confidential process for dealing with concerns.

- 3.2 Scouts ACT will observe the following principles in implementing this whistleblower policy:
- all concerns raised will be treated fairly and properly;
 - Scouts ACT will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern;
 - any individual making a disclosure will retain their anonymity unless they agree otherwise;
 - Scouts ACT will ensure that any individual raising a concern is aware of who is handling the matter; and
 - Scouts ACT will ensure no one will be at risk of suffering any form of retribution as a result of raising a concern even if they are mistaken.
- 3.3 In investigating complaints raised by whistleblowers, Scouts ACT will comply with all requirements of all relevant legislation. Scouts ACT will also comply with the lawful directions of any law enforcement or regulatory agency.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 The responsibility for investigation and remediating matters raised by a whistleblower lies with:
- Chief Commissioner; or
 - President; or
 - in the event of the complaint involving both the Chief Commissioner and the President, any other member of the BEC; or
 - another person nominated by the BEC to hear whistleblower complaints, this person being a person of eminence within the Canberra community.
- 4.2 The Chief Commissioner, the President or other person responsible for the investigation of the whistleblower's complaint may delegate in writing all or part of their powers to another person or persons. This delegated person or persons may or may not be a member of Scouts ACT and may also be a member of the staff of Scouts ACT.

5. Procedures

- 5.1 In the first instance, most matters should be handled informally and at as close to the place and time that the purported offending behaviour occurred as is reasonable. This could be as simple as drawing people's attention to a potential breach of legislation or policy.
- 5.2 In some circumstances, such an informal approach would not be appropriate, such as matters involving serious breaches of law, child abuse or obvious ongoing or long-standing breach of law.
- 5.3 Should an informal approach not result in remediation, then there will be a need for a more formal process to be undertaken. The complaint should then be made to one of the following:
- Chief Commissioner; or
 - President; or

- in the event of the complaint involving both the Chief Commissioner and the President, any other member of the BEC; or
- another person nominated by the BEC to hear whistleblower complaints, this person being a person of eminence within the Canberra community.

5.4 The person unto whom the complaint is made shall investigate the complaint or shall delegate the task of investigation to another person who has appropriate knowledge or qualifications to deal with the matter. The person or person undertaking the investigation shall for the purposes of this policy be designated the Investigating Officer, and the Investigation should be undertaken in accordance with *Chief Commissioners' Directive 2.14.3*.

Confidential or Anonymous Whistleblower's complaints

5.5 There may be circumstances in which a person wishes to make an anonymous or a confidential complaint. There will be procedures in place that allow for such complaints, including an email address and a website dedicated to receiving whistleblower complaints. These complaints are to be investigated in a manner similar to any other complaint.

5.6 For confidential complaints, it is important that the confidentiality of the complainant should be maintained.

5.7 While confidential or anonymous complaints will be investigated in a manner similar to other complaints, it is the nature of anonymous complaints that the investigation may be constrained; for example, the complainant cannot be interviewed. Further, the result of any subsequent investigation cannot be directly provided to the complainant.

Training Module

5.8 Whistleblowing remains an area with negative connotations, and an area with poorly understood rights and responsibilities. To give effect to this policy, there will be a training module developed that allows persons to become aware of their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

6. Follow-up Procedures

6.1 After six months, the Investigating Officer shall prepare a brief report for the BEC outlining progress that has been made in implementing the changes recommended following the investigation of the complaint. The Investigating Officer may recommend that additional action be taken to further ameliorate the circumstances that led to the initial complaint.

6.2 After six months, the Investigating Officer shall contact the whistleblower, if not an anonymous complainant, and ask the whistleblower if they have suffered any detriment as a result of their whistleblowing, and if the whistleblower considers that their complaint was appropriately investigated.

6.3 A whistleblower may be caused detriment if they:

- are dismissed from employment or have their voluntary role changed or cancelled,
- are injured in their employment or voluntary role,
- have their position or duties altered to their disadvantage,

- if they are harassed or intimidated,
- if they are harmed or injured, including psychological harm,
- have their property or reputation damaged,
- suffer damage to their business or financial position, or
- experience any other damage.

6.4 If the whistleblower states that they have not suffered any detriment, the Investigating Officer shall prepare a brief report noting that the whistleblower states they have not suffered any detriment. This brief report is to be stored in perpetuity with the Report of the Investigating Officer. The matter will then be regarded as closed.

6.5 If the whistleblower states that they have suffered detriment, and the Investigating Officer is satisfied on balance that a prima facie case exists that they have suffered detriment, then the matter will be reopened and a further investigation commenced.

7. Compliance and Monitoring - Reporting on Use of Whistle-blower's policy

7.1 Each time a formal use of the Whistleblower Policy is made a brief situation report will be prepared by the Principal Administrative Officer for the BEC, and for the Governance and Risk Management Committee (GRC).

7.2 An annual summary of the use of the Whistleblower Policy will be prepared by the Executive Officer for inclusion in the Annual Report.

8. Review and Amendments

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the BEC, following advice from the Governance and Risk Management Committee (GRC).

9. References

Ho, S.S.M., Li, A.Y., Tam, K. and Zhang, F.F. (2015) CEO Gender, Ethical Leadership, and Accounting Conservatism. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 127 (2). pp. 351-370.

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Arroyo Pardo, P., Smaili, N., & Bensid, S. (2024). *Accounting Perspectives*, 23(2), 267-300. [Removing Barriers to Whistleblowing at Nonprofit Organizations through Employee Empowerment*](#)

Australian Securities & Investments Commission (2019) Regulatory Guide 270: Whistleblower policies. November 2019. [RG 270 Whistleblower policies | ASIC](#)

Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). [Corporations Act 2001 - Federal Register of Legislation](#)

DIRECTIVE (EU) 2019/1937 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law. [Directive \(EU\) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law](#)

Document Control

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