

# Australian Network in Belgium

## Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is written in English and French for understanding and communication purpose. Based on Belgium law, the French written Code of Conduct takes preference over the English version.

## INTRODUCTION

The association "Australian Network in Belgium" is an association that highly values its reputation with its members and anyone else. We strive to ensure that the association stakeholders understand our vision and messages.

The association policy, as a socially responsible association, is to conduct its operations in accordance with the highest ethical standards.

This guide is designed based on the Constitutions and By-Laws of the association to help Members, Directors, Delegates and staff to understand how to conduct both internally and externally. All Members, Delegates, Directors and staff of the association are to strictly abide by the following Code of Conduct both internally as well as externally, which is to;

1. Act in the best interests of, and fulfil their fiduciary obligations to the association.
2. Act honestly, fairly, ethically and with integrity.
3. Act in a professional, courteous and respectful manner and not take improper advantage of their position.
4. Comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations.
5. Act in good faith, responsibly, with due care, competence and diligence, without allowing their independent judgement to be subordinated.
6. Not use the position in the association for personal gain.
7. Not use any information or opportunity received by them in their capacity as Directors or Member in a manner that would be detrimental to the association interests.
8. Act in a manner to enhance and maintain the reputation of the association.
9. Disclose any personal interest that they may have regarding any matters that may come before the Board and abstain from discussion, voting or otherwise influencing a decision on any matter in which the concerned Director/Member/member of staff has or may have such an interest.
10. Abstain from discussion, voting or otherwise influencing a decision on any matters that may come before the Board in which they may have a conflict or potential conflict of interest.
11. Respect the confidentiality of information relating to the affairs of the association acquired in the course of their service as Directors, except when authorized or legally required to disclose such information.
12. Not use confidential information acquired in the course of their service as Directors or Member of the leadership team for their personal advantage or for the advantage of any other entity.
13. Threatening, aggressive or violent behaviour or language is not permitted and may lead to dismissal.
14. Discriminatory behaviour, language, or non-verbal language is not permitted.
15. Harassment or bullying of individuals, in any form, is not permitted.
16. Behaviour or actions that would in any way jeopardise the safety or well-being of others is not permitted.

17. Public disclosure of confidential information concerning the work of the association is not permitted.

18. Do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, national or regional origin, age or disability.

#### DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

Disciplinary Committee: Any complaints pertaining to a violation of the Code of Conduct shall be thoroughly and fairly evaluated by a Disciplinary Committee formed by the Chairman. The Disciplinary Committee shall be led by the Chairman and two Members of the Board of Directors whom the Chairman nominates. The Disciplinary Committee shall not consist of any person who is accused of violating Code of Conduct. In case the Chairman is accused of violating Code of Conduct; the Vice-Chairman shall form the Disciplinary Committee. Results of the evaluation shall be submitted to the Board of Directors for further actions.

#### VIOLATION OF CODE OF CONDUCT

Based on the evaluation of the Disciplinary Committee, the outcome of the complaint shall be determined by the Board of Directors. The individual may be asked to relinquish the position or even be asked to leave the association if found guilty depending on the severity of the violation.

#### *Code of Conduct: Press & Media*

#### WHO CAN BE SPOKESPERSON

All media inquiries are to be answered by the Chairman, Member of the Board of Directors, or any individuals nominated by the Chairman based on the guidelines of the Code of Conduct, the association constitution and By-Laws.

#### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WHEN A MEDIA REQUEST IS RECEIVED

Any request from the media for information needs to be flagged to the Board of Directors. Any individual is not at liberty to take the initiative in replying on behalf of the association without prior consent of the Board. As media are usually working on tight deadlines, make sure to forward us your request as soon as you receive it. Reply to the journalist that you have forwarded the request to the Board of Directors, which will get back in touch with the journalist as soon as possible. One may be approached directly at any event by a journalist. If this happens:

- Ask the journalist for his or her name and publication.
- Ask what is their specific query, topic of interest or question.
- Ask the journalist if they are working on a specific story and if so what is their deadline or is it a general inquiry.
- If you are speaking on behalf of the association at an event and the question relates to your association presentation, which has been approved by the Board prior to the event, you can answer the question, taking into account that you are representing the association. No private statements should be mixed with these. Private statements should then be made by someone not representing the association at the event.
- However, if you have any doubts, or if the topic is not one you are either qualified or authorized to speak about, tell the journalist that someone will contact them directly. Take a note of the journalist's telephone number and the subject they want to talk about and say that someone will contact them soon. This gives you time to inform the Board of Directors.

#### WHEN REPRESENTING YOUR PRIVATE COMPANY OR INTERESTS

Make it very clear that you are talking on behalf of YOUR Company or YOUR interests when talking to the media, and do not confuse them by mentioning your association role. You have two hats on, just make it clear with which hat you have on when talking to the press, and do not mix them.

#### BE CLEAR

You should never mix the role you perform in the association with the day-to-day job you have for your own. When talking on behalf of your own interests, always be clear that any statements made are on behalf of yourself. Never mix up a personal interview with standpoints on behalf of the association.

#### NO ABUSE OF YOUR ASSOCIATIONS POSITION

You should never abuse your position within the association to obtain advantage for your own company's point of views and your own company's visibility or personal interest. Mixing up both roles, and taking advantage of your association role may result in losing your position within the association. The association will always react to any false statements made in the press by any member, which may put your company or personal reputation in discredit with the media. We expect you to take your association role seriously, and respect the values put forward by the association.

When talking on behalf of the association, after having received approval from the Board, use your correct association title.

#### WHAT IF A FAULTY PUBLICATION APPEARS

In case a publication appears mixing up your statements with those of the association, notify the Board immediately. We expect you to send a rectification to the journalist involved, making clear that you were making statements on behalf of yourself. Apart from that, the association holds the right to contact the journalist to rectify the story and dissociate itself from the statements made by you in case they are detrimental to the vision and strategy of the association.

#### BE CAREFUL

Journalists are often looking for a scoop (a newsworthy story). Do not let them trick you into making statements which you do not feel comfortable with. It is better to refer them to the right person in the association than to say whatever comes up in your mind, with possibly disastrous results.

#### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The association representatives must avoid communication, business conduct, or other outside activities that create an actual or potential conflict of interest with our obligations or duties to the association by either declining to engage in conflicting behaviour, or by first seeking guidance from the appropriate the association persons, i.e. the Board of Directors. The association may not be used for personal gain.