

1. WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

Purpose and scope

All organisations face the risk of things going wrong or of unknowingly harbouring malpractice. The Roe Group (**incorporating Roe Bros & Co Ltd, North West Steel Ltd, all subsidiaries and affiliated companies**) believes it has a duty to identify such situations and take the appropriate measures to remedy the situation.

The aim of this policy is to prevent malpractice – prevention is better than cure. The Company interprets ‘malpractice’ widely and this includes any illegal activity at the Company, including bribery, any activity that may cause the Company to breach its legal obligations, any activity that may cause the Company to endanger the health and safety of any person and any activity that damages the environment (this list is not exhaustive). This includes any attempt to wilfully conceal information which tends to show malpractice.

The Company wants you to raise any issues which concern you at work. You may be worried that by reporting such issues you will be opening yourself up to victimisation or detriment, or risking job security, however, all staff now enjoy statutory protection if they raise concerns in the right way.

If there is anything you think the Company should be aware of, please use the procedure outlined in this policy.

Whilst the Company is committed to ensuring that employees work in an environment in which they can raise concerns, that does not mean that any employee is entitled to commit an act or acts of misconduct, breach Company rules or damage the Company in any way to obtain information. If there is something an employee thinks the Company should know, they should use the correct procedure. Provided you are acting in good faith, it does not matter if you are mistaken.

Note: This policy is not the procedure for general grievances. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances then you should raise a grievance in the normal way. If you have concerns about malpractice within the Company then you should use this procedure.

Company guarantee

If you use this policy to raise a concern, the Company gives you its assurance that you will not suffer any form of retribution, victimisation or detriment. The Company will treat your concerns seriously. You will not be asked to prove anything, although you will be asked to give as much information as possible. If you ask for a matter to be treated in confidence, the Company will respect your request and only make disclosures with your consent. As far as possible, you will be given feedback on any investigation and the Company will be sensitive to any concerns you may have as a result of any steps taken under this procedure.

Procedure (non-contractual)

How to raise your concerns (internally)

If you are concerned about any form of malpractice, you should first raise the issue with your immediate Manager / Depot Manager either verbally or in writing.

If you feel you cannot tell you Manager / Depot Manager, for whatever reason, raise the issue, in writing, with HR.

How the Company will respond

After a concern has been raised, the Company will decide how to respond in a responsible and appropriate manner under this policy. Usually, this will involve making internal enquiries first but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation at a later stage, which may be formal or informal depending on the nature of the concern raised, which may involve external enquiries.

As far as possible the Company will keep you informed of the decision taken and the outcome of any enquiries / investigations carried out. However, the Company will not be able to inform you of any matters which would infringe the duty of confidentiality owed to others.

If you are not willing/able to make your identity known, please be aware that the company may be limited in the extent of the investigations it can make.

If in the course of any investigations your identity becomes known or is assumed to be known, you will be afforded the statutory protection given to any employee under the terms of this policy.

Raising your concern externally (in exceptional cases)

The main purpose of this policy is to give you the opportunity and protection you need to raise your concerns internally. The Company would expect that in almost all cases raising your concerns internally would be the most appropriate action for you to take.

However, if for whatever reason, you feel you cannot raise your concerns internally and you honestly and reasonably believe the information and any allegations are true, you should consider raising the matter with the appropriate regulator.

Caution: If you have good reasons for not using the internal or regulatory disclosure procedures described above, you may consider making wider disclosure by reporting the matter to the police or to the media, for example. However, whistle blowers who make wider disclosures of this type will only be protected (from victimisation and suffering detriment) in certain circumstances. The Company recommends that you take legal advice before following this course of action since we believe it will be in your own best interests to do so.

The identity of the appropriate regulator will depend on the nature of your concern. However, the regulator must be one of those prescribed by an order made by the Secretary of State for the purpose of the Employment Rights Act 1996 Section 43F. The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014 (as amended) lists the prescribed persons.

If you have good reasons for not using the internal disclosure procedures or the disclosure procedure described above, you may consider making wider disclosure by reporting the matter to the police or to the media, for example. However, whistleblowers who make wider disclosures of this type will only be protected in certain circumstances. The Company recommends that you take legal advice before following this course of action since we believe it will be in your own interests to do so.

Protection for whistle-blowers

You may be worried that by reporting your concerns you will be opening yourself up to victimisation or detriment, or risking your job security. However, all staff benefit from statutory protection if they raise concerns in the right way and do so with reasonable belief that raising the concern is in the public interest. This protection means that employees must not be dismissed or suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. As it will be in your own interests to do so we would encourage you in particular to ensure you have a reasonable belief that the disclosure you wish to make is in the public interest as this is one of the requirements that must be met in order to obtain the statutory protection mentioned earlier.

Staff must not threaten or retaliate against whistle-blowers in any way. This will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in those involved being dismissed without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

If you believe that you have suffered any detrimental treatment, you should inform HR immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.