

Prevention of Harassment Policy Standard

CAG/STAN/D7

Issue Date:

1st January 2006

Authority:

Chief Executive, Serco Group

Applicability:

Serco Group covering all business divisions, operating companies and business units throughout the world

Executive Summary

This Policy Standard sets out the minimum requirements for handling concerns and complaints of harassment at work.

Bullying, harassment and victimisation will not be tolerated at any level in the organisation and effective action will be taken to address organisational factors that may lead to harassment at work, such as management style, unreasonable workloads etc. An employee found to be victimising another employee will be the subject of investigation and may face disciplinary action depending on the results of the investigation.

All business divisions within the Serco Group will establish and operate under procedures designed to effectively maintain a working environment free from any form of harassment.

I Introduction

Serco recognises that all of its employees have the right to a working environment free from any form of harassment and to be treated with dignity and respect. This Policy Standard sets out the minimum requirements for handling concerns and complaints of harassment at work. It details the minimum level of achievement necessary to meet Serco's commitment to its people as detailed in the Serco Management System

I.1 Definitions

Harassment is defined as “unreciprocated or unwanted conduct that is offensive to the recipient and which violates the dignity of men and women at work or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”. It is the recipient's definition of the conduct or behaviour that is unwanted or unacceptable and may include suggestive remarks, gestures or actions associated with, but not limited to, the following:

- race, ethnic origin, nationality, skin colour or language
- political convictions
- trade union beliefs
- national or social origin
- sex or sexual orientation
- gender and/or gender reassignment
- religious convictions
- disability, sensory impairment or learning difficulties
- age or youth
- real or suspected infection with HIV/AIDS

Harassment can take many forms which include but are not limited to:

- bullying
- the use of threatening, abusive or insulting words
- displaying any writing, sign or other visible representation which may include e. mail, photographs or graffiti which is threatening, abusive or insulting
- physical threats or assault
- unwanted gifts and practical jokes at another's expense
- unwanted physical conduct of a sexual nature such as unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or lewd comments
- brushing against another employee's body

- unwanted verbal conduct of a sexual nature such as unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity, offensive flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendoes
- non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature such as the display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects or written materials, leering, whistling or making sexually suggestive gestures
- open hostility in the workplace
- unfair allocation of work and responsibilities
- exclusion from normal workplace conversation or social events.

2 Objective and Commitment

In recognising that harassment takes place, the Serco Board is committed to creating a culture where all employees are treated with dignity and respect and which enhances the quality of working life, ensuring through policy, training and communication, that the working environment is free from harassment.

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at any level in the organisation and effective action will be taken to address organisational factors that may lead to harassment at work, such as management style, unreasonable workloads etc.

Serco will not tolerate victimisation in any form. An employee found to be victimising another employee will be the subject of investigation and may face disciplinary action depending on the results of the investigation.

3 Principles

3.1 All Employees

It is the duty of all employees to establish and maintain a workplace free from harassment by ensuring that they behave in an appropriate manner to others. Employees at all levels should discourage harassment, making it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable, reporting incidences of harassment that they may witness and supporting colleagues who suffer harassment.

3.2 Managers

Managers are responsible for taking positive action to provide a working environment free from harassment by monitoring the behaviour of the staff they manage and by supporting staff who suffer harassment.

Managers must ensure that their own behaviour is exemplary and must deal effectively with all concerns and complaints raised by their staff, immediately and in confidence, in accordance with policy guidelines.

4 Principles and Requirements

All business divisions within the Serco Group will establish and operate under procedures designed to effectively maintain a working environment free from any form of harassment. Such procedures will:

- be in writing
- specify to whom they apply
- be non-discriminatory
- provide for matters to be dealt with without undue delay
- provide for proceedings, witness statements and records to be kept confidential
- indicate the disciplinary actions that may be taken
- specify the levels of management that have the authority to take various forms of disciplinary action
- provide for employees to be informed of the complaints against them and where possible all relevant evidence before any hearing
- provide employees with the right to be accompanied
- ensure that disciplinary action is not taken until the case has been carefully investigated and the facts established
- ensure that employees are given an explanation for any penalty imposed

In order for prevention of harassment procedures to be effective it is essential that all employees are aware of them and understand them. All Serco supervisors, managers and employee representatives will be trained in their use.

Records will be kept detailing the nature of concerns or complaints of harassment and any related proceedings, management's response, and any action taken and the reasons for it. These records will be kept confidential in accordance with any relevant statutory requirements.

5 Responsibilities and Authority

The Policy Standard is issued under the authority of the Chief Executive, Serco Group plc. Responsibility for implementation of this policy standard is set out below.

- Responsibility for the achievement of this policy standard rests with the Executive Team.
- Divisional Chief Executives are responsible for implementing the policy standard, monitoring its implementation in the everyday activities of their division and report to their divisional board.

- Managers are responsible for implementing the policy standard, monitoring its implementation in the everyday activities of their operations and report to their contract board.
- The Group Human Resources department is responsible for reviewing the policy standard and ensuring that it is kept up to date with changes in legislation. It is also responsible for the development of guidance and training on the implementation of the policy standard and for providing appropriate reports to the Serco Group board.

6 Evidence of Compliance

To demonstrate compliance with this Policy Standard, the following documentation is to be available for audit:

- Serco Group plc
 - Prevention of Harassment Policy Standard (this document)
 - related policy statements and procedures
 - investigation reports
- Divisions/operating companies
 - prevention of harassment procedures
 - staff familiarisation with prevention of harassment procedures
 - investigation reports
- Business units/operating contracts/Projects
 - Staff familiarisation with prevention of harassment procedures

7 Guidance

The following documentation should be read in conjunction with this Policy Standard:

- Equal Opportunities Policy Standard (CAG/ STAN/D1)
- Ethics Policy Standard (CAG/STAN/AZ1)
- Discipline and Grievance (CAG/STAN/D4)
- Whistle-Blowing Procedure (CAG/STAN/D2)

Further guidance material is available from divisional human resources departments and on the Serco Human Resources and Corporate Assurance areas on the Our World intranet.