

***This policy should be read in conjunction with the PROTECTED DISCLOSURES ACT (Act 26/2000), Companies Act (Sect159) and the Afrimat Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy & Afrimat Code of Conduct policy***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Afrimat is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability.

An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and other stakeholders of Afrimat to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an Employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. Nevertheless, where an individual discovers information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within Afrimat then this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal, and there should be arrangements to enable this to be done independently of line management (although in relatively minor instances the line manager would be the appropriate person to be told). The Protected Disclosure Act, which came into effect in 2000, gives legal protection to Employees against being dismissed or penalised by their Employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. Afrimat has endorsed the provisions set out below so as to ensure that no Employees should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.

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 Afrimat nor should it be used to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under harassment, complaint, disciplinary or other procedures.

Employees (including independent contractors, consultants and temporary employment service staff), Customers and Suppliers are encouraged to provide information of any irregular activities, such as fraud, theft, corruption and or any other transgression of Afrimat policy/code of ethics.

## **2. SCOPE OF POLICY**

This policy is designed to enable Employees of Afrimat 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/theft/corruption
- 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

## **3. SAFEGUARDS**

### **3.1 Protection**

This policy is designed to offer protection to those Employees of Afrimat 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.

### 3.2 Confidentiality

Afrimat will treat all such disclosures 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.

### 3.3 Anonymous Allegations

This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less credible and may not be easy to investigate, but they may be considered at the discretion of Afrimat.

In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include: The seriousness of the issues that are raised.

- The credibility of the concern.
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.
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Employees who elect to report anonymously are requested to include as much detail as possible.

### 3.4 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. In making a disclosure the individual should exercise due care to ensure the accuracy of the information. 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.

## 4. PROCEDURES FOR MAKING A DISCLOSURE

Reporting as soon as you can, allows the Whistle Blowing process to be most effective. You can report to:

Website	<a href="https://afrimat.co.za/whistle-blowing">https://afrimat.co.za/whistle -blowing</a>
Email	<a href="mailto:Hotline01@afrimat.co.za">Hotline01@afrimat.co.za</a> or <a href="mailto:Hotline02@afrimat.co.za">Hotline02@afrimat.co.za</a>
Telephonically	Contact the Chief Audit Executive or General Manager: People

Provide as much information as possible to allow the report to be assessed and, if appropriate, investigated. This includes details such as:

- the nature of the misconduct
- dates, times and/or location
- persons involved
- why the conduct constitutes misconduct (if not readily apparent)
- any potential witnesses

- any supporting evidence (for example, documents or security footage) and where that evidence is located
- and any other information or documents relevant to the misconduct.

On receipt of a complaint of malpractice, the dedicated employee/s who receives and takes note of the complaint, will pass this information as soon as is reasonably possible, to the appropriate designated investigating officer as follows:

- Complaints of malpractice will be investigated, following consensus between Chief Audit Executive and GM- People on most suitable avenue and person to be used with assistance from the appropriate Director (If required) unless the complaint is against the Director or is in any way related to the actions of the Director. In such cases, the complaint will be shared with the Chief Executive for referral.
- In the case of a complaint, which is any way connected with but not against the Director, the Chief Executive will nominate a Senior Manager to act as the alternative investigating officer.
- Complaints against the Chief Executive should be passed to the Chairman who will nominate an appropriate investigating officer.
- The complainant has the right to bypass the Line Management structure and take their complaint direct to the Chairman. The Chairman has the right to refer the complaint back to Management if he/she feels that management without any conflict of interest can more appropriately investigate the complaint.

If there is evidence of criminal activity, then the investigating officer should inform the police. Afrimat will ensure that any internal investigation does not hinder a formal police investigation.

## 5. TIMESCALES

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.

The designated person handling the whistle blowing function, 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 designated person should keep the complainant informed, in writing, as to the progress of the investigation and as to when it is likely to be concluded.

All responses to the complainant should be in writing and sent to their original communicated address.

## 6. Investigating Procedure

The Chief Audit Executive will initiate the investigation and the investigating officer should follow these steps:

- Full details and clarifications of the complaint should be obtained.
- The investigating officer should inform the Employee against whom the complaint is made as soon as is practically possible or if required the Head of department of that employee to assist with the investigation. The Employee will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a Trade Union or other representative 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 should consider the involvement of the Police at this stage relating to matters where fraud and theft is involved and should consult with the Chief Audit Executive.
- A judgement concerning the complaint and validity of the complaint will be made by the investigating officer and the Chief Audit Executive. This judgement will be detailed in a written report containing the findings of the investigations and reasons for the judgement. The report will be passed to the Chief Executive or relevant Exco member.
- The Chief Executive or relevant Exco member will decide what action to take. If the complaint is shown to be justified, then they will invoke the disciplinary or other appropriate Afrimat procedures.
- The complainant should be kept informed of the progress of the investigations and, if appropriate, of the final outcome.
- Depending on the outcome of the investigation, the Afrimat Internal Audit team should review of the relevant procedures.

If the complainant is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with, they have the right to raise it in confidence with the Chief Executive, or one of the designated persons described above.

If the investigation finds the allegations unsubstantiated and all internal procedures have been exhausted, but the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, Afrimat recognises the lawful rights of Employees and ex-Employees to make disclosures to prescribed persons (such as and, Chairman of the Board or the CEO).

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