

THE RICE MARKETING BOARD FOR THE STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES



CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

2024-1

October 2024

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES

Background

The Rice Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales (“the Board”) operates under the authority of and in accordance with the *Rice Marketing Act 1983*. This Code of Conduct for Employees has been prepared based on the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW Government Boards and Committee Guidelines and the Public Service Commissioner Direction No 1 of 2015 under the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013 No 40*.

All employees of the Board must:

- Comply with the Ethical Framework for the public sector as set out in the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013 [NSW] No 40*;
- Comply with this code of conduct;
- Have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities; and
- Act for a proper purpose and without exceeding their powers.

Employees of the Board must also comply with a broad range of whole of government regulations and policies including those stipulated in legislation, regulations, Ministerial Memoranda, Department of Premier and Cabinet circulars, Treasury publications and Public Service Commission policy documents.

Application

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the Board.

Employees are those persons who are employed by the Board under s.15 of the *Rice Marketing Act 1983 [NSW]*, for the purpose of enabling the Board to exercise its function. Employees may include the roles of General Manager, Board Secretary and Administration Officer.

The Board also has a separate document titled “Code of Conduct for Board Members”.

Code of Conduct

All employees must act in good faith and in the best interests of the Board at all times. Employees must not engage in conduct likely to bring discredit upon the Board.

Ethical framework

The objectives of the ethical framework of the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013 [NSW]* are:

1. To recognise the role of the government sector in preserving public interest, defending public value and adding professional quality and value to the commitments of the Government of the day; and
2. To establish an ethical framework for a merit-based, apolitical and professional government sector that implements the decisions of the Government of the day.

Core values

Employees are at all times to:

- Consider people equally without prejudice or favour;
- Act professionally with honesty, consistency and impartiality;
- Take responsibility for situations, showing leadership and courage;
- Place the public interest over personal interest;
- Appreciate difference and welcome learning from others;
- Build relationships based on mutual respect;
- Uphold the law, institutions of government and democratic principles;
- Communicate intentions clearly and invite teamwork and collaboration;
- Provide apolitical and non-partisan advice;
- Provide services fairly with a focus on customer needs;
- Be flexible, innovative and reliable in service delivery;
- Engage with all sectors of the economy to develop and implement service solutions;
- Focus on quality while maximising service delivery;
- Recruit employees on merit;
- Take responsibility for decisions and actions;
- Provide transparency to enable public scrutiny;
- Observe standards for safety; and
- Be fiscally responsible and focus on efficient, effective and prudent use of resources.

Public Expenditure

Employees must ensure the efficient and responsible expenditure of public monies in accordance with legislation and Government policies and guidelines.

Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest, including personal gain at public expense, must be avoided. A conflict of interest exists when it is likely that an employee could be influenced by a personal or business interest. An employee has a duty to declare any private interest that may impinge on the effective conduct of their duties. The employee must as soon as practicable disclose full and accurate details of the interest or issue to the Chairman or a member of the Board's Governance, Nominations and

Remuneration Committee. An employee's interests include those of an associate or close relative. A Pecuniary Interest Declaration form must be used to disclose relevant interests.

Official Information

Employees must not disclose official information acquired as a consequence of their employment, other than as required by law, or when the employee has been given proper authority to do so.

Gifts and benefits

Employees should be aware that it is illegal to seek, offer or receive money or gifts in order to obtain a benefit or favour. Employees must not accept gifts or benefits that could place them under an actual or perceived financial or moral obligation to an organisation or individual. Gifts of hospitality of nominal value may be accepted in limited circumstances where the employee's position will not be compromised. All employees are required to register gifts and benefits received in line with the Board's Gifts and Benefits Policy.

Discrimination and harassment

The Board supports the values of Multiculturalism and Equity as underpinning our operations. All employees must not discriminate or harass colleagues or members of the public on the grounds of sex, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, ethno-religious identity, descent, age, disability, homosexuality, transsexuality, political conviction or carer's responsibilities. Such discrimination or harassment may constitute an offence under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*.

Social Media

Social media refers to social media sites, applications, tools and platforms that provide users with online infrastructure and resources to connect and communicate and exchange content or information online.

Activity on social media governed by this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- posts
- uploads
- live streams
- comments
- replies
- retweets or reposts
- liking
- reacting

Staff use of social media

- All social media usage by staff can become public, and may become subject to this policy regardless of whether it was intended to be private.
- Social media that directly or indirectly results in damage to the Board; brings the Board into disrepute; and/or impacts the safety, health and wellbeing of colleagues and stakeholders may be considered a breach of this policy. When in doubt, staff should seek guidance from their manager on how to comply with their obligations under this policy.

Staff should:

- follow the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform;
- treat stakeholders, colleagues and other public officials with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness;
- clearly separate private opinions from the Board's official position. A disclaimer should be used when expressing private views related to your work, and there can be no implication that the Board endorses any private opinions;
- only disclose and discuss publicly available information about the Board.
- only publish content that is accurate;

Staff should not:

- create, publish, search, or share social media that is, or might be perceived as threatening, harassing, bullying or discriminatory towards the Board or stakeholders;
- publish or share colleagues' personal information;
- publish or share private work-related contact information, e.g. phone numbers or similar information on social media.
- publish or share stakeholder related information including any material deemed private or personal information. This includes names, addresses, or photographs unless this is public information, ie on the RMB website;
- publish or share content that fails to meet reasonable community standards which could damage the reputation of the staff member or the Board.

Breaches and reporting

All suspected breaches are to be referred to the Chair in the first instance or another Board member if the Chair is unavailable or it is otherwise appropriate. A confidential investigation and consideration will be undertaken and a recommendation tabled with the Board where required.

An employee may be dismissed where they are found to have breached this Code of Conduct.

Disclosures concerning corrupt conduct should be made to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). For conduct to be corrupt under the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988* definition it has to be serious enough to involve a criminal offence, a disciplinary offence or be grounds for dismissal. A report must be made to ICAC as soon as you have a reasonable suspicion that corrupt conduct may have occurred or be occurring. Matters must be reported to ICAC regardless of any duty of secrecy or other restriction on disclosure. It is important that reports to the ICAC be made without advising the person(s) to whom the report relates and without publicity.

Employees may also report directly to the following investigative bodies:

- Disclosures concerning maladministration should be made to the NSW Ombudsman
- Disclosures concerning serious or substantial waste of public money should be made to the NSW Auditor General.

Review

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the Board at least every second year and when necessary to reflect any changes in circumstances. The attached declaration is to be signed by each employee after every amendment to the Code.

Further information

Further information concerning the Board's Code of Conduct for Employees policy, please contact:

The Secretary,
Rice Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales
Address: PO Box 151, LEETON NSW 2705
Telephone: (02) 6953 3200
E-mail : secretary@rmbnsw.org.au.

Document Approval and Control

a. Version

Reference	Details
File Name	2024-1 Code of Conduct Policy for Employees
File location	RMB Policies/202024-1 Code of Conduct Policy for Employees
Version	2024-1
Status	Final

b. Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Summary of Change	Author
2019-1	11/4/19	Minor amendments to legislation names; reference to Gifts and Benefits policy	GN&R Committee
2021-1	15/10/21	Minor amendments and addition of definition of "employee"	C Chiswell
2022-1	8/3/22	Amend definition of "employee"	C Chiswell
2022-2	29/9/22	Add General Manager	N Dunn
2023-1	21/07/23	Add section on use of Social Media	N Dunn
2024-1	1/11/2024	Add reference to regulations and Act amendments, remove review by GNR Committee, change reporting lines for breach.	N Dunn

c. Document Approval

Board/Committee Approval	Date
GN&R Committee	11/4/2019
Board	24/5/2019
GN&R Committee	8/3/2022
Board	17/3/2022
GN&R Committee	28/7/2023
Board	10/8/2023
Board	21/11/2024

EMPLOYEE'S CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION AND UNDERTAKING
RICE MARKETING BOARD FOR THE STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES

I, _____ (full name)

give the following undertaking:

I agree to abide by the attached Code of Conduct in carrying out my role as an employee of the Rice Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales, subject only to any over-riding legal duties I may have. I accept that any breach of the Code of Conduct will be treated by the Board as a serious matter and may result in the Board members being asked to consider my dismissal.

Dated:.....

Signature:.....