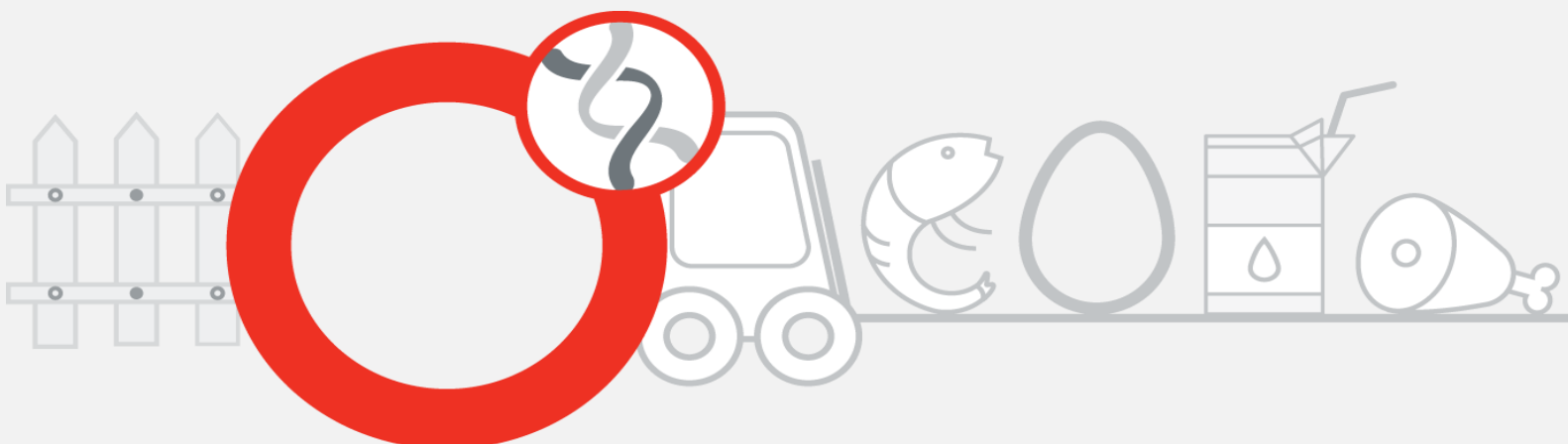

Safe Food Expectations of Behaviour

(In Respect to Code of Conduct)

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Approved by:

Safe Food Production QLD Board



Amendments

Date of Amendment	Section	Topic
01/07/2011	Title	Safe Food adopted the QLD Government 'Code of Conduct' and this document was renamed as follows: 'Expectations of Behaviour (in respect to Code of Conduct)'
23/03/2016	All	'Safe Food Production Queensland' updated to 'Safe Food Production QLD' 'SFPQ' updated to 'Safe Food'
17/4/2018	4.1, 6, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1 & 8.2	Minor editorial amendments.
17/4/2018	9	Amend 'Criminal Justice Commission' to 'Crime & Corruption Commission'.



Safe Food Expectations of Behaviour

April 2016

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1. Introduction

The Government and our clients expect Safe Food Production QLD (Safe Food) to deliver its services with integrity, professionalism and accountability. The Code of Conduct outlines how such an outcome is to be achieved.

Without limiting the category of employee, the Code applies to all (permanent, temporary and casual) Safe Food officers when engaged in Safe Food activities. Officers should familiarise themselves with the Code and ensure that its provisions are observed.

The Code applies at all times when performing official duties, including when staff are representing Safe Food at conferences, training events, on business trips and/or attending work-related social functions. An officer who fails to comply with the provisions of the Code may be subject to disciplinary action.

This Code of Conduct does not replace any other Code of Conduct lawfully approved for application to individual classes of officer within Safe Food and should be read in conjunction with any such Code.

2. Definitions

Benefit	Gift, gratuity, remuneration, fee, subsidy, consideration, free service and entertainment
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of Safe Food Production QLD
Code	Code of Conduct
Officer	Person working for Safe Food Production QLD
Restricted and Dangerous Drugs	Those substances listed in Schedules 4 and 8, respectively, of the <i>Poisons Regulations 1973</i>



3. Guiding Principles

The Code is based on the following principles, whereby an officer shall:

- always act fairly and equitably, including during interaction with the general public and other Safe Food employees.
- not allow personal interests or the interests of any associated person to conflict with the interests of Safe Food.
- be independent in judgment and act impartially and with fairness at all times.
- devote themselves to the effective and efficient achievement of Safe Food policies and objectives.
- provide conscientious, effective, efficient and service to Safe Food and all of whom they have official dealings, irrespective of their political allegiance and the political party in power.
- be guided by principles of fairness and equity, especially in circumstances where officers exercise a particular responsibility for the care or supervision of clients and other persons.
- use due care and diligence in fulfilling the functions of office and exercising the powers attached to that office.
- adhere to the highest standards of professional competence, integrity and honesty.
- use the powers of office for a proper purpose, in the best interests of Safe Food Queensland (Safe Food) and in the best interests of the industry as a whole.
- not use information acquired as an officer of Safe Food improperly.
- not engage in conduct likely to bring discredit upon Safe Food.
- comply with all legislative requirements (the spirit as well as the letter of the law of the land) and with the principles of this Code of Conduct.

4. Ethical Obligations

4.1 Respect for Persons

This obligation covers an officer's conduct in dealings with others, including members of the government, clients, the general public, colleagues and other public officials in any jurisdiction.

An officer shall respond to reasonable demands from the government, clients, the general public, colleagues, and others in a courteous and helpful manner. This is especially so where a person is unaware of their entitlements, is uncertain of what to ask for, or is ignorant of official procedures.

This obligation is also about always acting fairly with others and avoiding patronage and favouritism. Safe Food values the diverse background of its employees and strongly believes in the right of individuals to interact within a fair and safe workplace.

An officer shall treat their colleagues and clients with respect, tolerate the views of others and not allow personal beliefs to influence their judgments or decisions on work-related issues. Respecting others includes looking for a constructive solution when conflicts and tensions arise within an officer's work unit.



An officer shall not allow personal relationships, both inside and outside the work environment, to affect their work performance or that of other Safe Food employees.

An officer shall not use abusive, obscene or threatening language or behaviour towards others. Physical and/or verbal violence against any person, especially on a Safe Food premises or work-site, is a breach of the Code.

4.2 Procedural Fairness - Natural Justice

An officer shall observe the principles of procedural fairness (*natural justice*) when making decisions about people, including clients and colleagues. This is particularly important where the decision may have negative consequences for the people concerned, such as in disciplinary matters.

Briefly, procedural fairness requires an officer to:

- give the person concerned the opportunity to put forward their side of the case and have it considered before any decision is made
- not have any personal interest in the matter to be decided or any bias as to the outcome, and act in good faith throughout the process
- provide reasons for their decisions.

4.3 Discrimination

Discrimination in employment is when a person is treated less favourably than another because of a characteristic irrelevant to the capacity to do a job. Under the provisions of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, and federal human rights legislation, an officer shall not unlawfully discriminate against any client, colleague or member of the public, particularly on the basis of race, colour, sexuality, beliefs or other issues covered by the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*.

Safe Food is committed to providing a safe and equitable workplace for all officers free from discrimination and harassment. Safe Food rejects discrimination, considering it to be inappropriate workplace behaviour. All officers shall take all reasonable actions to prevent discrimination in the workplace as discrimination is a breach of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* and the Code.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

When undertaking supervisory or managerial duties, especially the appointment and selection of staff, an officer shall act in accordance with the *Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Act 1992* and the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*.

EEO strategies enhance career opportunities for all officers and eliminate discrimination in all employment matters (e.g. selection, performance, planning and review, training and development). They also establish a workplace where fairness, equity, openness and diversity are valued. EEO provides all officers with the opportunity to compete on merit for promotion and pursue careers of choice.

Every officer is to be encouraged to speak up if they encounter inequity in the workplace.



4.4 Workplace Harassment

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* also makes workplace harassment unlawful. Workplace harassment includes offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour towards an individual or group because of a real or perceived attribute such as race, marital status, sexuality or disability. Workplace harassment is a breach of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* and the Code. Every officer is to be encouraged to speak up if they encounter harassment in the workplace.

Sexual Harassment

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* makes sexual harassment unlawful. Sexual harassment is behaviour of a sexual nature and which is unwelcome. Sexual harassment is defined by the recipient and, as such, may vary from person to person.

Safe Food is committed to providing a safe and equitable workplace for all officers free from discrimination and harassment. Safe Food believes sexual harassment is inappropriate workplace behaviour. All officers shall take all reasonable actions to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace as sexual harassment is a breach of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* and the Code. Every officer is to be encouraged to speak up if they encounter sexual harassment in the workplace.

4.5 Confidentiality

Strict confidentiality is of utmost importance in dealing with discrimination, workplace harassment and sexual harassment complaints. Information shall only be divulged on a need to know basis. All officers who become aware of harassment have a duty to maintain confidentiality, a breach of which is a breach of the Code.

4.6 Victimisation or Reprisal

Officers are not to threaten, or act to the detriment of any person. To do so is victimisation or reprisal, both of which are unacceptable behaviour and a breach of the Code.



5. Officer Behaviour

Safe Food officers need to take responsibility for themselves, their life, attitudes and quality of life, and behave in the following manner in the workplace:

- implement the intent of Safe Food policy without fear or favour
- set a good examples through their own behaviour, especially in relation to complying with Safe Food goals and service standards
- regularly review the direction of their work function(s) to ensure they are consistent with Safe Food goals and service standards
- monitor their own behaviour as required
- ensure that EEO and WHS requirements are met
- maintain open, honest and thorough communication with all colleagues
- treat other officers fairly, equitably and consistently, and follow clearly defined and recognised criteria, processes and delegations when making decisions
- respect divergent thinking, different ideas and modes of operation
- avoid intimidating, hostile, offensive or distressing behaviour.

5.1 Managerial Behaviour

Managers and supervisors have a special responsibility to practise the following behaviours and to promote the adoption of such behaviours within their individual work unit:

- implement the intent of Safe Food policy without fear or favour
- set a good example for employees through their own behaviour, especially in relation to complying with the Code
- ensure officers understand the standard of performance expected of them and that their performance is objectively assessed against those standards
- provide appropriate development opportunities for all employees
- ensure officers are rewarded for ideas and suggestions that improve productivity
- regularly review the direction of their work function(s) to ensure they are consistent with Safe Food goals and service standards
- monitor their own behaviour as a manager or supervisor
- ensure that employees do not undertake workloads that place their well-being at risk
- ensure that EEO and WHS requirements are met.

5.2 Standard of Dress

Officers should conform to a standard of dress that is suitable for the type of work performed. It should be respectable, clean, and not compromising to the professional image of Safe Food.

An officer's personal presentation in the workplace or while on official duty shall be appropriate to the work, having regard to the function performed, workplace health and safety, cultural diversity, local community standards and climatic conditions.



5.3 Use of Alcohol and Drugs

Officers shall not:

- smoke while on duty in Safe Food vehicles or at workplaces provided by clients
- at any time, allow the consumption of alcohol, or restricted or dangerous drugs, to adversely affect their work performance or conduct
- consume alcohol while on duty except where related to the officer's official duties and subject to the CEO's approval and conditions.

5.4 Gambling

Unless otherwise authorised by the CEO, gambling on Safe Food premises or at workplaces provided by clients is not allowed and is a breach of the Code.

5.5 Lawful Directions

Officers shall obey any lawful direction given:

- by their supervisor
- in the absence of their supervisor, any person having the authority to give the direction.

Where on reasonable grounds an officer believes that a direction is improper or illegal, the officer:

- shall refer the grounds for objection to their supervisor or the person responsible for the direction.
- where instructed, proceed as originally directed and, if the officer continues to consider the direction improper or illegal, refer the objection to the CEO and shall confirm the objection in writing at the earliest opportunity.



6. Use of Official Resources

Safe Food facilities and other physical resources should be used for their proper purpose, treated with due care and properly maintained. Employees may occasionally use Safe Food property for activities which, while not strictly official, warrant support, e.g. Safe Food social club activities or meetings of professional associations relevant to Safe Food. An officer must obtain the approval of the CEO or nominee before use.

6.1 Care and Maintenance of Vehicles

It is an officer's responsibility to ensure that any Safe Food vehicle in their care is maintained in a condition that does not diminish its potential resale value or incur additional charges at the expiry of a lease. The officer to whom the vehicle is allocated is responsible for undertaking routine inspection of such things as oil, water, tyre pressure and general body condition, including keeping the exterior of the vehicle clean. Any faults or repairs are to be repaired as soon as possible.

It is the officer's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is regularly serviced and maintained in a roadworthy condition.

Safe Food vehicles are for official use, however when a family member of a Safe Food officer is travelling to the same destination as the officer or to a destination that does not cause the officer to substantially exceed the distance that would otherwise be travelled by the officer, the family member may be carried as a passenger. Examples include picking up a child from school on the way home from work, or dropping a partner at work on the way to work.

Note: Should these circumstances entail a significant alteration to the normal journey to and from the workplace, this may constitute a 'significant deviation' within the driver's control and jeopardise the officer's workers compensation entitlements. If the officer is unsure what might constitute a 'significant deviation', advice and approval should be sought from the officer's manager.

Vehicles must only be used in accordance with Safe Food policy on vehicle use.

6.2 Payment of Fines Incurred Whilst Using a Safe Food Vehicle

Fines incurred whilst using a Safe Food vehicle (e.g. parking, speeding, red light camera) will be the responsibility of the person in charge of the vehicle at the time of the fine being incurred.

Officers incurring such fines are required to pay the issuing authority (e.g. local council, Queensland Police Service) directly. It is not appropriate for such fines to be paid by Safe Food and for the officer to subsequently reimburse Safe Food.

Exceptions may apply in limited circumstances. For example, Safe Food may pay a parking fine on behalf of an officer if that officer parked legally in the first instance but overstayed the time limit due to being unavoidably detained at a work-related appointment. The final determination on whether a fine will be paid by Safe Food rests with the CEO.



7. Handling Conflicts of Interest

7.1 General Procedures

During the course of their duties, officers shall not give preference to any person, organisation or interest (whether pecuniary, commercial, political, religious or other) as a result of any private association with that person, organisation or interest.

An apparent conflict of interest exists when an officer's private or business interests could interfere, or benefit unduly, or be disadvantaged unduly, by the proper performance of their official duties.

An actual conflict of interest exists when a reasonable person, in possession of the relevant facts, would conclude that the official's private interests are likely to interfere, or benefit unduly, or be disadvantaged unduly by the proper performance of their official duties.

An officer must disclose all relevant details in writing to the CEO immediately upon becoming aware of a conflict of interest, whether actual or apparent (including any conflict of interest involving remuneration or employment external to Safe Food).

Such disclosure shall automatically be made by officers engaged in regulatory, inspectorial, personnel selection or other discretionary functions when dealing with relatives, close friends or business acquaintances.

On receipt of a disclosure from an officer, the CEO will determine the extent of any conflict of interest and direct the action required to resolve the conflict. Failure to comply with such direction may result in disciplinary action being commenced.

At any time, an officer who is unsure whether a conflict of interest exists should consult any relevant guidelines or, where appropriate, seek direction from the CEO.

7.2 Declaration of Business Interests

Members of the management team are required to disclose their own or family interests relating to meat and livestock industries to the CEO.

7.3 Outside Employment

Officers shall not undertake any additional employment if it:

- creates an apparent or actual conflict of interest; or
- is likely in any way to adversely affect the performance of an officer's official duties.



Examples of such additional employment include:

- owning a business (e.g. farm and selling livestock to an abattoir where the officer is stationed as a Meat Safety Officer)
- working until 2.00am in another job and then commencing work at Safe Food at 8.00am the same day
- doing private work or consultancy that is capable of being offered by Safe Food.

7.4 Accepting, Handling and Disposing of Gifts

Acceptance of Benefits

In short, the fundamental policy of Safe Food is that no officer may solicit or accept gifts from any member of the public concerned with any matter connected with the duties of the officer, or in which Safe Food is interested.

There are instances where the refusal of a gift may cause embarrassment (e.g. where a gift is offered by an official of a foreign government). In such cases, the procedure for accepting gifts as outlined below must be followed.

With respect to offers of hospitality, officers should refer to the relevant part of the Code.

Advance Notice

It may sometimes be known in advance that a gift will be offered and circumstances would make refusal inappropriate. In such circumstances, an officer should seek prior written approval to accept the gift from the CEO.

Provision of Advice

Officers shall inform the CEO in writing of any gifts they receive, outlining:

- the circumstances in which the gift was offered
- the name of the donor
- the donor's relationship with Safe Food or the officer
- any request to retain the gift.

The particulars of all gifts received and their disposal shall be entered on the Register of Gifts.

Retention of Gifts

It is the responsibility of the CEO to decide on the ultimate disposal of any gift. Where a gift is received it shall be immediately surrendered to the officer's supervisor. The gift shall be declared to the CEO and recorded in the Register of Gifts.

An officer may seek permission to retain a gift providing it is valued at less than \$50.00, entered into the Register of Gifts and has been given without any obligations attached.



The valuation of the gift will be based upon the wholesale price in Australia (or in the country of origin if the gift is from overseas). It is anticipated that permission will generally be given for the officer to retain the gift. Certain situations may preclude such an outcome, e.g. sensitive situation, regular presentation of small gifts.

Hospitality

Employees may occasionally in the course of their duties be invited to attend lunches, dinners, parties, cultural or sporting events, or similar occasions hosted by organisations or individuals with whom Safe Food conducts business.

Acceptance of such offers should not be a regular occurrence and should take place only when attendance assists with the efficient conduct of Safe Food business. Offers should not be accepted when it might be seen to influence the officer's duties (eg. when tenders are being evaluated).

A senior officer should approve the acceptance of all such offers.

Sponsored Travel

The offer of free or partially sponsored travel (including transport, accommodation or living expenses) shall be treated in the same way as any other gift and, generally speaking, should not be accepted.

There are circumstances when sponsored travel may be approved. These would include:

- government or international official agencies
- another government
- an educational institution
- a non-profit organisation
- broad-based industry groups
- a private organisation for an officer to present reports on research or policy
- industry familiarisation tours where there is no possible conflict of interest.

Advance approval to accept such offers shall be sought in writing from the CEO. The request for approval shall include all details of the proposal, including any Safe Food contribution.

Exemptions

These provisions do not apply to:

- the exchange of social gifts in an obvious family or personal relationship
- acceptance of morning or afternoon tea
- farewell or Christmas functions
- refreshments associated with industry-sponsored activities relevant to Safe Food
- where the officer pays to accept an invitation to attend a function essential for Safe Food business requirements.



Bribes

Officers shall immediately report any situation to their supervisor or the CEO where it is considered that a benefit (other than those provided as part of their terms and conditions of employment) is being offered in return for preferential treatment or to cause a conflict of interest.

No officer is to ever ask for, encourage or initiate a bribe of any sort, whether it is for himself or herself or anyone else.

Reporting Offer of Benefits

An officer shall immediately report to the CEO any circumstances where an offer of a benefit is made, regardless of whether it is accepted or not, if the officer feels that such circumstances involve an attempt to induce favoured treatment.

7.5 Influence to Secure Advantage

Officers must not:

- use the influence of any person to attain an appointment, promotion, advancement, transfer or any other advantage without applying due process, procedural fairness and demonstrating a lack of bias. This applies to an officer personally and to an officer acting on behalf of another person.
- use the influence of any person to improperly affect the outcome of any procedure made under legislation or Safe Food policy.
- manage their personal finances so as to come under pecuniary obligation to their subordinates.

7.6 Political Activity by Officers

Officers have the same right as any other citizen to freedom of political association. Any political activity by officers should be conducted in a private capacity and be clearly delineated from their professional activities.

Officers engaged in political activity (e.g. holding office in a party or membership of a party committee), should exercise care that a conflict of interest does not arise between official and party duties.



8. Official Information and Public Comment

8.1 Use of Official Information

Official and commercial information shall not be used by officers to improperly gain any kind of advantage for themselves, or for another person or organisation.

An officer shall not disclose official or commercial information to any person or agency unless:

- that information was generated by, or supplied to Safe Food, for the purpose of communicating it to other people or organisations, and has been released for circulation (e.g. drafts of legislation, guidelines, policies, Green Papers)
- the disclosure is permitted in the normal course of an officer's duties (eg. advisory material)
- an officer is authorised to release the information under a statute, regulation or code under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (e.g. information approved for release under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*)
- the rights of any person to exclusive use of the information have expired (e.g. at the conclusion of a consultancy contract)
- that information is approved to be released by the CEO.

Release of information generated from consultation processes, or extension and collaborative research must in particular be closely monitored. In deciding whether to release such information an officer must consider whether:

- undertakings were given to clients or collaborators regarding confidentiality and ownership of information
- an officer should also provide related information which would significantly affect the interpretation of the information being requested
- to provide interpretation with raw data when only data are requested
- the information is already public
- the release of the information has potential adverse consequences such as unnecessary alarm for industry or negative market reaction (e.g. information concerning exotic diseases).

Officers are not prohibited from disclosing official information, which would normally be given to any member of the public seeking that information, however official information of a confidential or privileged nature shall not be disclosed to unauthorised persons or organisations.



8.2 Intellectual Property and Copyright

Intellectual property is an invention, original work, results of scientific research, or product development or writings, which can be protected. Protection of intellectual property in Australia is governed by specific acts of parliament or common law, depending on the type of intellectual property involved.

The main types of intellectual property produced by Safe Food are:

- computer programs
- confidential information/trade secrets
- copyright/trademark
- scientific or technical knowledge or information
- designs.

The question of who is entitled to use intellectual property, and may benefit from any commercial exploitation of it, is determined by consideration of the circumstances in which the intellectual property was conceived, researched and developed.

In general, intellectual property produced by officers using Safe Food resources is the property of Safe Food. This includes intellectual property produced by a Safe Food employee working at a university, for example, even if the employee had been funded by a private sector organisation for the work. However, contractual arrangements may be in place that define ownership of the intellectual property generated.

Officers should obtain prior permission from the CEO before entering into any arrangement regarding the publication or disclosure of any articles, processes or materials which an officer has produced as part of an officer's official duties.

8.3 Plagiarism and Falsification of Results

Plagiarism is intentionally appropriating another person's ideas or composition, in whole or in part, verbatim or otherwise, and passing them off as an officer's own work.

Plagiarism is not permitted and is a breach of the Code.

Similarly, falsifying results, or not giving appropriate credit to others' work, breaches the Code. Any of these unethical practices assumes greater significance in the context of writing reports, technical articles, research papers and conference papers, particularly where an officer stands to benefit or gain credit.



8.4 Testimonials, Referee Reports & Performance Reviews

An officer shall be honest when providing reports on other officers. If asked to give a reference or testimonial for a colleague, and an officer considers that he/she could not be honest without detracting from the officer's chance of success, an officer should disclose the limits within which an officer is prepared to comment.

False or deliberately misleading assessments of an individual's performance or merits (positive or negative) represent an abuse of office and may constitute official misconduct.

When providing testimonials or references, an officer shall not make false or derogatory statements about an individual, or assessments, which cannot be substantiated. Similarly, referees shall not exaggerate the substance or relevance of a person's competence, qualifications or experience.

9. Use of Email and the Internet

Officers shall abide by the following Policy and Principles Statement as endorsed by the Queensland Government for the use of electronic mail (email) and the Internet by Government and Government agency employees:

1. Internet and electronic mail (email) access is provided for officially approved purposes only.
2. Safe Food is responsible for ensuring that its employees are made aware of policies and know where to find information on policy and practices. Safe Food is also responsible for having systems in place to reduce risks associated with the use of these technologies.
3. Employees must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including respect for the rights of the owners of material published on the Internet or attached to email.
4. Internet and email usage must be able to survive public scrutiny and/or disclosure. Unauthorised accessing, transmitting or storing of material that might bring Safe Food and the wider public sector into disrepute is prohibited.
5. Safe Food information must not be transmitted or made available via the Internet or email except under protocols approved by the management of Safe Food.
6. Employees must not use the Internet or email in a manner that could defame, harass, abuse or otherwise offend other Internet and email users, individuals or organisations.
7. Employees must not create or distribute any form of malicious or deleterious material via the Internet or email.



8. Employees must not attempt to obscure the origin of any message or download material under an assumed Internet address or otherwise disguise their user identity.
9. Employees must not knowingly obtain unauthorised access to information and must not damage, delete, insert or otherwise alter such information with malicious intent.
10. Employees may be called upon to explain their usage of the Internet, email and electronic files. Employees' use of the Internet, email and electronic storage of material will be monitored by Safe Food.
11. Electronic messages and electronic files may be subject to record keeping, archiving, freedom of information and audit requirements.
12. Safe Food is responsible for applying appropriate internal disciplinary procedures for inappropriate use of the Internet, email and electronic facilities. Safe Food is also responsible for referring potential breaches of the law to the relevant law enforcement authority and for reporting suspected official misconduct to the Crime and Corruption Commission.

For further information, officers should refer to Safe Food's policy on 'Use of the Internet, Email and Social Media'.