



Ministry
of Defence



Policy

Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern

VERSION STATUS	1.0
Policy author	HR Department
Policy approver	Director of HR, DE&S
Date effective	07 September 2015
Revision date	August 2017 (or sooner if Legal and/or organisational change dictates the need)
Applicable audience	DE&S civilian and Service Personnel.



Introduction

DE&S is committed to ensuring the highest standards of conduct in all that it does. For civil servants, these standards are reinforced by the [Civil Service Code](#) and [Policy Rules and Guidance: Standards of Conduct and Behaviour](#). However, wrongdoing can occur. It is important that employees know what to do if, in the course of their work, they come across something that they think is fundamentally wrong, illegal or endangers others within DE&S or the public. DE&S wants a positive whistleblowing culture so that concerns can be raised and dealt with promptly and professionally. The DE&S Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern policy and process has been developed to provide employees with support in how and when to raise a concern.

1 Policy objectives

The DE&S Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern policy is designed to:

- Provide employees with the confidence to raise concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice at work; and
- Assure employees that it is safe and acceptable to raise concerns.

This can help to deter and detect wrongdoing, save lives, property, jobs, money and reputations, and minimise the risk of employees feeling they have no recourse but to disclose official information, particularly to the media.

2 Scope

This policy is applicable to all DE&S employees. Everyone who works in Defence has a responsibility to speak up if faced with, or having a suspicion of wrongdoing. Equally DE&S has a duty to provide a safe and straightforward framework in which employees can do this free from the threat of victimisation. Therefore, any employee with a concern may use the policy without fear of retribution.

- **Service Personnel:** Issues relating to offences covered under the Armed Forces Act (AFA) 2006 and single service core values will be managed through the appropriate service discipline chain. Matters will be referred back to the Service Police Authorities and/or to the employee's Chain of Command.

3 DE&S Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern Policy

Whistleblowing is when an employee reports suspected wrongdoing or danger at work, which is officially referred to as making a protected disclosure in the public interest. DE&S expects employees to raise concerns when it is believed that an employee is doing, or asking others to do, something that goes against the core values of the Civil Service Code, is illegal or endangers others within the organisation or the public – this can be a past, present or possible imminent wrongdoing, or an attempt to cover up wrongdoing.

DE&S has an equal duty to protect all of its employees and gives a personal pledge that the organisation will not tolerate any form of retribution taken against employees using the policy and process to raise a genuine concern. This extends to both civilian and Service Personnel; recognising that civilians can be afforded protection in law but Service Personnel have no statutory protection regarding qualifying disclosures. Providing employees are acting honestly, it does not matter if the concerns raised are mistaken. The reporting of a wrongdoing under this policy and process may be covered by the law



concerning protected disclosures of information. Please refer to the Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern process for further information relating to Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA).

Policy Principles

The following principles underpin the Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern Policy, namely that:

- Employees are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have about wrongdoing as soon as they notice it;
- Employees raising a concern will be afforded protection as detailed in the policy and process;
- DE&S will not tolerate the victimisation of anyone raising a concern and robust action will be taken against anyone found to be responsible for such actions;
- All genuine concerns will be handled responsibly, professionally and in a positive manner; and
- Help and support will be available to employees where concerns are raised under this policy.

4 Roles and responsibilities

DHR is responsible for the fair and consistent application of the policy and process. There are a number of key roles and responsibilities in the application of the policy of which full details can be found in Section 6 of the process document.

5 Diversity and inclusion

In accordance with Departmental procedures this policy has been equality assessed and a MOD Equality Analysis Template has been completed. This policy is due for review in August 2017.

6 Monitoring and review of the policy application

The Confidential Hotline will record all concerns raised.

7 Document coverage

This document supersedes the previous MOD Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern policy. The MOD have also developed a new Whistleblowing and Raising a Concern policy and DE&S has worked in conjunction with the MOD to develop this DE&S document.

8 Document control

Version Number	Date	Revision History	Revised Pages	Authorised By
v1.0	07 September 2015	N/A	N/A	DHR

DE&S will review this policy in two years, or when changes to legislation or best practice dictate.