

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY



Policy Number	PEO210	Version	2
		Approved by Board on	21 Sept 2016
Responsible Person	Chair	Scheduled review date	Sept 2019

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA) recognises it is the right of every employee, volunteer and stakeholder to be able to attend any WIOA workplace and to perform their duties without being subjected to any form of sexual or other harassment.

Equally, it is the obligation and responsibility of every employee, volunteer and stakeholder to ensure that the workplace is free from sexual harassment.

WIOA is fully committed to its obligation to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace and in customer relations.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline WIOA's position on sexual harassment and to document the process which is to be followed should any grievances arise.

This policy applies to:

- all employees, including: full-time, part-time or casual, temporary or permanent staff; job candidates; student placements, apprentices, contractors, sub-contractors;
- stakeholders - (including individuals employed by all organisations involved with WIOA events); and
- Board and Committee members, volunteers and members.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

*Sexual harassment* means any unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes any person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated, and where that reaction is reasonable in the circumstances.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- intrusive enquiries into an employee's private life;
- reference to their sexuality or physical appearance;
- unwanted body touching or physically molesting a person;
- standing too close;
- excessively lengthy handshakes;
- unwanted brushing against another's body;
- indecent exposure;
- obscene, suggestive or offensive communications, including electronic mail;
- pornographic or offensive posters, handouts or screensavers;
- sexual jokes or anecdotes;
- leering or staring;
- unwanted sexual compliments or excessive flirting;
- sexual assault.

Behaviour that is based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect is not sexual harassment.

### **3. POLICY**

WIOA will not tolerate sexual harassment under any circumstances. Responsibility lies with every manager, employee, volunteer or stakeholder to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur.

Both federal and State based Equal Employment Opportunity legislation provide that sexual harassment is unlawful. WIOA considers that legislative obligations under the Acts establish minimum the standards of behaviour for all employees and stakeholders.

The principles set out in this policy are intended to apply to any work-related context, including conferences, work functions, social events and business trips.

No employee, volunteer or stakeholder at any level should subject any other employee, volunteer or stakeholder to any form of sexual harassment.

A breach of this policy will result in disciplinary action. Depending upon the severity of the case, consequences may include apology, counselling, transfer, demotion, dismissal, ejection from an event or other forms of disciplinary action deemed appropriate.

WIOA strongly encourages any employee, volunteer or stakeholder who feels they have been sexually harassed to take immediate action, preferably by making it clear that such behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. Alternatively, or in addition, they may follow the procedures for reporting the behaviour.

Any reports of sexual harassment will be treated seriously and promptly with sensitivity. Such reports will be treated as completely confidential up to the point where a formal or informal complaint is lodged against a particular person, at which point that person must be notified under the rules of natural justice.

Complainants have the right to determine how to have a complaint treated, to have support or representation throughout the process, and the option to discontinue a complaint at any stage of the process.

The alleged harasser also has the right to have support or representation during any investigation, as well as the right to respond fully to any formal allegations made. There will be no presumptions of guilt and no determination made until a full investigation has been completed.

No employee, volunteer or stakeholder will be treated unfairly as a result of rejecting unwanted advances. Disciplinary action may be taken against anyone who victimises or retaliates against a person who has complained of sexual harassment, or against any employee or volunteer who has been alleged to be a harasser.

All employees, volunteers and stakeholders have the right to seek the assistance of the relevant tribunal or legislative body to assist them in the resolution of any concerns.

Managers or supervisors who fail to take appropriate corrective action when aware of harassment of a person will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### 4. AUTHORISATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Martin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Martin  
Chair

21 September 2016  
Water Industry Operators Association of Australia