

MEALES CONCRETE PUMPING

Human Resources Manual

Version 1 – February 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	PERSONAL CONDUCT	4
1.1	Dress Code	4
1.2	Personal Communications and Relationships.....	5
1.3	Gifts & Gratuities	7
2	EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY	8
3	HARASSMENT.....	9
4	BUSINESS EXPENSES	12
5	INDUCTION.....	13
6	HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT	14
6.1	Smoking	14
6.2	Alcohol, Drugs & Other Substance Abuse.....	15
6.3	Manual Handling.....	15
6.4	Workers' Compensation	15
6.5	Total & Permanent Disability.....	16
7	PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....	17
7.1	Introduction	17
7.2	Performance Management Philosophy.....	17
7.3	Position Descriptions	17
7.4	Probationary Period Reviews.....	18
7.5	Performance Appraisals.....	18
7.6	Professional & Personal Development	19
7.7	Superannuation	20
8	LEAVE POLICY:	21
8.1	Annual Leave.....	21
8.2	Personal Leave	22
8.3	Compassionate/Bereavement Leave.....	22
8.4	Long Service Leave.....	22
8.5	Maternity Leave	22
8.6	Paternity Leave	23
8.7	Adoption Leave	24
8.8	Study Leave.....	24
8.9	Time off instead of overtime (Time in Lieu)	24
8.10	Leave Without Pay.....	25
8.11	Blood Donor Leave.....	25

8.12	Jury Duty	25
8.13	Emergency Services Leave	25
9	TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION	26
9.1	Air Travel.....	26
9.2	Accommodation.....	26
9.3	Travel Other Than By Air	27
9.4	Motor Vehicle Rental	27
9.5	Taxi Fares	27
9.6	Parking Charges	27
9.7	Work Events.....	27
10	EMPLOYEE RELATIONS.....	28
10.1	Discipline.....	28
10.2	Disciplinary Appeal	30
10.3	Grievance	31
11	POST TRAUMA COUNSELLING.....	33
12	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND SECURITY.....	34
13	CONFLICT OF INTEREST	35
14	PRIVACY	36

Meales Concrete Pumping (Meales)

Meales Concrete Pumping includes the following Group Companies:

- Meales Concrete Pumping (QLD) Pty Ltd,
- Meales Concrete Pumping and Placing (QLD) Pty Ltd;
- Gladstone Concrete Pumping Pty Ltd;
- Specialised Concrete Pumping Pty Ltd;
- Specialised Concrete Pumping Victoria Pty Ltd;
- Meales West Concrete Pumping Pty Ltd;
- Meales Concrete Pumping NT Pty Ltd;
- MCP QLD Pty Ltd;

Meales is Australia's largest concrete pumping operation. It services a broad range of construction projects Australia-wide ranging from small scale residential to commercial/ industrial and large scale infrastructure/resource sector projects.

Meales has a head office at Kunda Park on the Sunshine Coast and regional depots spread throughout Queensland between Brisbane/Gold Coast and Townsville and across to Darwin, Northern Territory. As a business, it is committed to giving all employees every opportunity to develop their careers, to contribute to the business and to share in its success.

Overall management of Meales Group Companies is the responsibility of the Managing Director.

Operational management of the Group is carried out by the General Manager, who is located in Meales' head office, and regional depot Managers have operational responsibility for their regional areas.

Policy & Procedures Manual

The Human Resources Manual has been developed to clearly define and facilitate the implementation of Meales' policies on human resource management.

The Manual provides guidelines to be followed in the administration of these policies and enables all employees to determine who is responsible for each human resource management decision and the correct procedure to be followed.

The policies specified within are consistent with best practice management principles. They have the full support and commitment of Meales' management.

HR policies must be kept current and relevant. Therefore, from time to time it will be necessary to modify and amend some sections of the policies and procedures and for new procedures to be added.

Any suggestions, recommendations or feedback on the policies and procedures specified in this Manual are welcome. They should be provided by email.

These policies and procedures apply to all areas of operations within Meales including related entities.

1 PERSONAL CONDUCT

Policy Statement

Meales expects its employees to achieve and maintain a high standard of ethics, professional conduct and work performance to ensure that Meales maintains its reputation with all internal and external stakeholders.

Objective

To enhance Meales' reputation as a high quality service provider whilst maintaining an enjoyable, stimulating and challenging place to work.

Application

Meales' Human Resources Policy will be seen to be successfully applied when all employees are seen to perform their duties professionally with skill, care and diligence.

It includes:

- observing Meales' policies and procedures,
- treating colleagues with courtesy and with respect for their rights, duties and aspirations, and
- for employees who do not conform to this standard of conduct, provision for disciplinary action as detailed in this Manual

1.1 DRESS CODE

Where a uniform or particular clothing, including protective clothing, is prescribed under a statutory requirement, enterprise agreement, employment contract or job-site agreement, you are required to wear such uniform or clothing at all times during working hours or when carrying out work for Meales.

Where there is no prescribed uniform or clothing, choice of dress and adornments (including tattoos) is a matter of personal discretion, taking into account requirements for any protective clothing, customer/supplier interaction and professional environment.

Your appearance at work will have an impact upon Meales' image as well as your work colleagues. Some occasions may require a higher standard.

As a minimum standard, dress should be clean, neat and professionally appropriate.

The following are examples of items that are not acceptable:

- ripped or torn clothing;
- thongs or sports sandals; and
- sportswear or beachwear.

Meales reserves the right to request a staff member to dress to an appropriate standard as a condition of employment.

If you are in a work environment with inappropriate clothing, you may be sent home to change, before returning to work.

1.2 PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

1.2.1 Communications and business relationships generally

Communication with other staff, suppliers and the public must be respectful, promptly returned and as formal as the circumstances require. Whilst friendships may form, it is inappropriate for those friendships to interfere with the proper performance of the duties of the employee or other staff.

Communications with the Managing Director, General Manager, Depot Managers and all other persons should be open and transparent. Whilst the Managing Director may have confidential communications with individuals where appropriate, other employees are not permitted to do so without the prior authority (on a matter by matter basis only) of the Managing Director.

An employee must not engage in any commercial or business activity or relationship that is not on behalf of Meales without the prior written approval of the Managing Director which may not be unreasonably withheld unless it is inconsistent with the employee's contract, there is a possible conflict of interest between that activity or relationship and the duties of the employee, or the activity or relationship may have an adverse effect on the activities, business or good standing of Meales.

See also the Conflict of Interest Policy and Privacy Policy.

1.2.2 Phone Calls and Texting

It is acknowledged that personal communication is inevitable and sometimes necessary. It is expected this will be kept to appropriate or reasonable levels. The workplace is not a place for continuing your external social interaction.

1.2.3 Email

Email has legal status as a document and is accepted as evidence in a court of law. Even when it is used for private purposes, Meales can be held responsible for the contents of email messages, including any attachments. Access to emails can be demanded as part of legal proceedings in some circumstances.

It is therefore important that email is used within the following guidelines:

- email should mainly be used for formal business correspondence and care should be taken to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information. Formal memos, documents and letters for which signatures are important, should be issued on Meales' letterhead regardless of whether a physical or electronic delivery method is used;
- if electronic messages need to be preserved, they should be printed out and filed as well as stored in the appropriate folder on the network server;
- limited private use of email is permitted, provided that it does not interfere with or distract from an employee's work. However, management has the right to access incoming and outgoing email messages to determine whether staff usage or involvement is excessive or inappropriate;
- non-essential email, including personal messages, should be deleted regularly from the 'Sent Items', 'Inbox' and 'Deleted Items' folders to avoid congestion; and
- all emails sent should include the approved Meales disclaimer.

In order to protect Meales from the potential effects of the misuse and abuse of email, the following instructions are to be observed by all users.

No material is to be sent as email that is defamatory, lewd, offensive, in breach of copyright or business confidentiality, or prejudicial to the good standing of Meales in the community or to its relationship with staff, customers, suppliers and any other person or business with whom it has a relationship.

Email is not to contain material that amounts to gossip about colleagues or that could be offensive, demeaning, persistently irritating, threatening, discriminatory, involve the harassment of others or concern personal relationships.

Where an email is received which is in breach of this policy, it must be immediately deleted unless it must be retained for the purposes of possible disciplinary action against another employee. It must not be displayed, printed or forwarded to any person without the prior written authority of the employee's manager for the purposes of possible disciplinary action and at the conclusion of that disciplinary process, it must be deleted.

The email records of other persons are not to be accessed except by management (or persons authorised to do so by management) engaged in ensuring compliance with this policy, or by authorised persons who have been requested to attend to a fault, upgrade or similar situation. Access in each case will be limited to the minimum required to complete the task. However, material stored on computers and emails are not secure and Meales cannot be held responsible for maintaining its confidentiality.

When using email a person must not pretend to be another person or use another person's computer without permission.

Excessive private use, including mass mailing, "reply to all" etc. that are not part of the person's duties, is not permitted.

Failure to comply with these instructions is a disciplinary offence and will be subject to appropriate investigation. In serious cases, the penalty for an offence, or repetition of an offence, includes dismissal. Staff need to be continually aware that some forms of email conduct may be the subject of criminal prosecution.

1.2.4 Internet

The internet is a facility accessed by Meales for business use. Access is authorised by managers on the basis of business needs. It is not provided for personal use although very limited private use is permitted provided that use does not interfere with or distract from a person's work. Meales has the right to access its system to determine whether private use is inappropriate or excessive.

The following activities, using Meales' internet access are not permitted:

- attending to personal activities of a business nature;
- accessing or viewing, other than by accident, sites and pages that verbally, in writing or pictorially portray obscene, sexually explicit, violent, offensive, defamatory and unlawful material or material that could cause Meales to be in breach of equal opportunity, anti-discrimination or other legislation;
- downloading or printing material as described above;
- showing or allowing to be seen by others, material as described above;
- repeated or prolonged use that is not directly relevant to the user's work;
- introducing computer viruses by failing to follow Meales' IT procedures; and
- downloading software or files from the internet or from unauthorised disks, CD ROMs and other sources on to the internal network.

Failure to comply with these instructions is a disciplinary offence and will be subject to appropriate investigation. Such conduct may expose Meales to theft, prosecution, viruses and total loss or corruption of data – each having potentially catastrophic consequences for the standing, business, operations and confidential records of Meales. Involvement of or affecting another employee or member of the public compounds the seriousness of the offence. In serious cases, the penalty for an offence, or repetition of an offence, includes dismissal. Staff need to be continually aware some forms of internet conduct may be the subject of criminal prosecution.

1.3 GIFTS & GRATUITIES

Meales is committed to ensuring all business relationships with suppliers and clients are legal and based on professional integrity.

Managers should be notified when a gratuity has been received. If the gratuity has been received as a thank you for work performed, it should be noted on the employee's personal file to ensure it is included in the employee's next appraisal.

No employee may give a gratuity to a client, supplier or other person without prior approval from management. Such gratuities must always be part of an approved program of managing customer relations and specific gifts will be purchased centrally in appropriate quantities with management approval.

DO NOT COPY

2 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Policy Statement

Meales provides equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons without discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, disability, marital status or religion in accordance with applicable local, state and national laws and regulations. Meales will make reasonable job accommodation for persons with disabilities who can perform the essential functions of the position for which they are qualified and selected.

All employment and promotion decisions will be based solely upon qualifications, experience, prior contribution and demonstrated capacity to perform at higher or improved levels and will be in accordance with the principle of equal employment opportunity. Meales will take whatever affirmative action is reasonably necessary to attract and retain suitably qualified persons.

Objective

The objective of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy is to support the attraction and retention of employees who contribute most to the development of Meales' business.

Application

The Equal Employment Opportunity Policy will be successfully applied when all roles are filled by the best qualified and experienced candidates regardless of their personal circumstances.

Process

The Equal Employment Opportunity Policy is reflected throughout Meales' staff recruitment and retention processes.

3 HARASSMENT

Policy Statement

Meales is committed to ensuring employees are treated fairly and equitably in an environment free of intimidation and sexual harassment. Sexual and other harassment is not only unlawful but also an unacceptable form of behaviour which will not be tolerated under any circumstances. All complaints of harassment will be treated seriously and promptly, with due regard to confidentiality. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who breaches the policy.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the displaying of offensive material or other behaviour which creates a sexually tense or hostile working environment. Sexual harassment can occur between an employee and a co-worker, manager, supplier, client, agent, consultant or contractor.

Sexual harassment is not just unlawful during working hours or in the workplace itself. The behaviour is unlawful in any work-related context, including conferences, work functions, business or field trips, and interactions with suppliers and clients.

Harassment degrades a working environment. Meales encourages any employee who feels they have been harassed to contact their manager. Meales aims to provide a working environment which is free of workplace harassment and intimidation.

Meales recognises that comments and behaviour which do not offend one person can offend another. Meales accepts that individuals may react differently and expects this right to be generally respected.

Any complaints or reports of sexual or other harassment will be treated promptly, seriously and sympathetically. They will be investigated thoroughly, impartially and confidentially. Managers must act immediately on any reports of harassment. Employees will not be disadvantaged in their employment conditions or opportunities as a result of lodging a complaint.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have harassed a co-worker or harassed any other person in a work-related activity. Depending on the severity of the case, consequences can include an apology, counselling, transfer, dismissal, demotion or other forms of disciplinary action. Immediate disciplinary action will also be taken against anyone who victimises or retaliates against a person who has complained of harassment.

Meales has a legal responsibility to prevent harassment. Managers have a responsibility to:

- monitor the working environment to ensure acceptable standards of conduct are observed at all times;
- model appropriate behaviour themselves;
- treat all complaints seriously and take immediate action to investigate and resolve the matter; and
- refer complaints to another manager if they do not feel they are the best person to deal with the case (e.g. if there is a conflict of interest or if the complaint is particularly complex or serious).

All employees have a responsibility to:

- comply with the organisation's sexual harassment policy;
- offer support to anyone who is being harassed and let them know where they can get help and advice (they should not approach the harasser themselves); and

- maintain complete confidentiality if they provide information during the investigation of a complaint (employees who spread gossip or rumours may expose themselves to defamation action).

Objective

The objective of the Harassment Policy is to foster a professional, open and trusting workplace.

Application

The Harassment Policy will be successfully applied when all staff are treated on merit by their managers, by all other staff, by all other persons with whom they interact through the workplace and by direct reports.

Process

Making a Complaint:

If you believe you are being, or have been, harassed, follow the procedure below:

- unless you do not feel comfortable enough to approach the offender directly, inform them that the behaviour is offensive, unwelcome, against Meales' Harassment Policy and should stop;
- keep a record of the incident(s);
- if the unwelcome behaviour continues, contact your manager for support;
- if this is inappropriate, you feel uncomfortable, or the behaviour still persists, contact your manager; and
- if your manager has been unable to curb the persistent behaviour or if your manager is involved in the behaviour itself, contact your manager's manager.

Receiving a Complaint:

When a manager receives a complaint, he/she should follow the procedure below:

- listen to the complaint seriously;
- treat the complaint confidentially;
- allow the complainant to bring another person to the interview if he/she wishes to do so;
- ask the complainant for the full story, including what happened, step by step;
- take careful notes, using the complainant's own words;
- ask the complainant to check your notes to ensure your record of the conversation is accurate;
- explain and agree upon the next action with the complainant;
- if investigation is not requested:
 - ▲ act promptly;
 - ▲ maintain confidentiality; and
 - ▲ pass your notes on to your manager; and
- if investigation is requested, or is appropriate, follow the procedure set out below.

Investigating a Complaint:

When a manager investigates a complaint, he/she should follow the procedure below:

- interview all directly concerned, separately;

- interview witnesses, separately;
- keep careful records of interviews and investigation;
- do not assume guilt;
- interview the alleged harasser, separately and confidentially;
- let the alleged harasser know exactly what he/she is being accused of;
- give him/her a chance to respond to the accusation;
- listen carefully and record details;
- make it clear he/she does not have to answer any questions;
- ensure confidentiality, minimise disclosure;
- determine appropriate action based on investigation and evidence collected; and
- check to ensure the action meets the needs of the complainant and Meales.

In appropriate circumstances involving serious allegations of harassment, the manager should seek guidance from his/her manager before implementing this procedure to ensure that this procedure is properly implemented and appropriate assistance is obtained.

If resolution is not possible within an appropriate time frame, the manager should seek guidance from his/her manager or refer the complainant to that manager.

If the resolution requires the authority of a more senior manager, the complainant should be referred to that manager.

Outcomes as they affect the complainant should be discussed with the complainant to ensure that the complainant's needs are met, where appropriate.

Potential Outcomes:

If a complaint is found to be justified, the complainant may be entitled to any or all of the following:

- a commitment that the behaviour will cease;
- a private apology (verbal or written);
- a re-credit of any leave taken due to the harassment;
- payment of medical and counselling expenses;
- transfer, with no job disadvantage (if available within the organisation); and
- other compensation.

4 BUSINESS EXPENSES

Policy Statement

Meales will reimburse employees for out of pocket business expenses incurred in the performance of their role where prior approval has been received from their manager.

Tax receipts (showing an ABN if in Australia) must be provided for all expenses to be reimbursed.

Cash advances in advance of anticipated expenses can only be approved by senior managers.

Objective

The objectives of the Business Expenses Policy are to ensure that staff are not out of pocket in the course of fulfilling their responsibilities, and expenses can be correctly allocated to optimise Meales' tax position.

Application

The Business Expenses Policy will be successfully applied when all staff expenses are reported, allocated and reimbursed within 30 days of being incurred.

Process

Minor one-off expenses (\$50 or less) may be reimbursed through petty cash. Where possible this should be in advance for a known requirement and clearly identified receipts, along with change, should be returned to petty cash.

Expenses for more than \$50 or for employees with ongoing individual expense requirements should be submitted to Accounts when the expense has been signed off as approved by the employee's manager.

Claims may be submitted within 7 working days after the expense is incurred.

Payment of reimbursed expenses will be made directly into your nominated bank account (recorded with Accounts) or by cheque.

5 INDUCTION

Policy Statement

All new employees should complete an induction program upon their commencement. The induction period also refers to the three month probationary period during which it is recognised all staff may need ongoing familiarisation with their role and Meales' business, systems and processes.

Objective

The objective of the Induction Policy is to familiarise the employee with their role and tasks, the context in which they work and Meales' business, systems, policies and processes with a view to ensuring that the employee can make a positive contribution to Meales' business outcomes and operations as quickly as possible.

The induction should be a combination of standard components as well as learning specifically tailored to the role.

Application

The Induction Policy will be successfully applied when all new employees meet their probationary period performance targets and tasks and are successfully integrated into Meales' business.

Process

The Induction Policy will be implemented using the following procedure:

- complete the induction planning format prior to the employee's commencement date;
- introduce the employee to the induction schedule and dates; and
- review the progress against the schedule with the employee at the end of each week.

6 HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT

Policy Statement

Meales is committed to providing and maintaining a safe work environment for the health, safety and welfare (*'HSW'*) of its staff, contractors, visitors, suppliers, clients and members of the public who may be affected by its work.

Meales undertakes to provide resources in terms of personnel, time and financial outlay commensurate with the commitment it places on HSW to achieve these objectives.

To do this, Meales will:

- develop and maintain safe systems of work and a safe working environment;
- provide information and training at all levels in the organisation to enable all employees to support this policy; and
- require that all risks to be assessed prior to engaging in new areas of operation, purchasing new equipment, and implementing new work methods, and that these risks continue to be reviewed.

All employees are responsible for the work activities of other employees and the HSW of any person present or entering the workplace or any other area in which Meales is operating or conducting an activity. As such, all employees will be held accountable for:

- identifying practices and conditions which could injure employees, clients, members of the public or the environment;
- implementing steps to control such situations; and
- if unable to control such practices and conditions, reporting these to their manager.

All employees also have a responsibility for their own HSW and must report promptly any circumstances that may have an adverse effect on the HSW of them or any other person.

Meales demands a positive attitude and performance with respect to HSW and the environment by all employees, irrespective of their position.

6.1 SMOKING

Meales has a non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted in any premises occupied or used by Meales or any vehicle owned or leased by Meales at any time. Smoking is accepted to be harmful to the health of those who smoke and those around them (passive smokers). Consequently, smoking in any premises occupied or used by Meales, in any vehicle owned or leased by Meales (when accompanied by another person), or contrary to the requirements applicable to any premises attended as an employee of Meales will be considered gross misconduct and will render an employee liable to instant dismissal. Smoking in any vehicle owned or leased by Meales (when unaccompanied) will be considered serious misconduct and will render an employee liable to serious disciplinary action.

Smokers who need to smoke during normal business hours should do so during their allotted breaks (no more than two per day in addition to their lunch break).

These breaks must not be taken within 10 metres of the entrance to premises being used by Meales or visited on Meales' behalf and the resulting litter must be thoughtfully disposed of. Smoking at the entrance to the premises is a poor representation of Meales and visitors to premises being used by Meales should not be required to walk through a cloud of smoke.

If an employee is working from home or a home-office and any person attends in relation to the business or activities of Meales, the requirements of this policy shall apply during the period in which that person is present at those premises.

No special privileges will be afforded to smokers. Any additional breaks (outside of allotted breaks) must be approved by your manager and limited to 10 minutes from leaving the workplace to recommencing work with the time taken to be made up at the conclusion of the working day. Excessive smoking breaks will be regarded as absenteeism and disciplinary action may be taken.

6.2 ALCOHOL, DRUGS & OTHER SUBSTANCE ABUSE

This policy applies to all levels of Meales. The policy is not concerned with social drinking or the taking of prescribed drugs for medical purposes: the concern is directed to instances where alcohol or other drug dependence or abuse affects the job performance and/or safety of any employee and to preventing illegal activity on premises occupied or being used by Meales.

Meales is concerned by factors affecting an employee's ability to safely and effectively perform work to a satisfactory standard. Meales recognises alcohol or other drug abuse will cause short-term and potentially long-term impairment to such work performance.

Meales is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy and productive workplace for all employees. Meales has a zero tolerance policy to the possession or use of illicit drugs on its premises or on any other premises attended as an employee of Meales or to attending such premises while under the influence of illicit drugs. Contravening either of these requirements may lead to instant dismissal.

Attending work under the influence of alcohol will not be tolerated and will be treated as being unfit for work. It may result in disciplinary action and ultimately dismissal.

Limiting the consumption of any alcohol made available is the responsibility of the employee. Driving under the influence of alcohol or any other illicit drug is illegal and it is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with this requirement.

Meales staff, at times, must also not allow alcohol to be made available to any person (including any member of Meales' staff) who is under 18 years of age.

An employee reasonably suspecting the possession or use of illicit drugs by any person on premises occupied or being used by Meales must report the matter to a manager as soon as practicable.

6.3 MANUAL HANDLING

It is the policy of Meales to provide all employees with a safe and healthy working environment by identifying, assessing and controlling manual handling risks within the workplace.

While managerial staff are ultimately responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all staff, all employees are expected to participate by reporting potential and actual manual handling hazards within the workplace.

In all circumstances, do not lift or manually handle items larger or heavier than you can easily support. If you are in any doubt, ask for assistance.

6.4 WORKERS' COMPENSATION

All employees, including part-time, temporary, and probationary employees, are eligible for workers' compensation benefits in the event of an injury arising from, or in the course and scope of, their employment.

The process to be followed if an injury occurs is as follows:

- the first priority in the event of an injury at work is medical attention;
- in the event of any apparently serious injury, an ambulance should be called;
- any employee who sustains an on-the-job injury or experiences a safety incident or 'near miss' must report the incident to their manager;
- the manager must then complete a report in the Register of Injuries, Incidents and Near Misses; and
- this standard report must include:
 - ▲ employee details;
 - ▲ time and location the injury/incident occurred;
 - ▲ details of the injury including:
 - part of body injured;
 - time lost; and
 - name of the first aid attendant;
 - ▲ details of first aid treatment; and
 - ▲ details of any investigation of the accident.

6.5 TOTAL & PERMANENT DISABILITY

Meales is committed to retaining its employees. Consequently, if an employee is injured while away from work, Meales will allow them to exhaust their paid personal leave, accumulated annual leave or long service leave.

If the injured employee has used all leave owing, been off work for a lengthy period and is not fit enough to return to work, Meales' management will discuss the employee's expectations of returning to work.

If the employee is incapable to perform his/her duties because of the disability, their employment may be terminated in compliance with the termination provisions in their employment contract and any relevant legislation.

Meales will hold an injured worker's position open for a period of time as stated in the relevant legislation unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so.

Employees whose employment is terminated due to an incapacity to perform their duties because of a disability, will be paid all amounts owing to them, including accrued wages, leave entitlements, severance pay and superannuation.

7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Meales' aim is to be an employer of choice – one that people want to work for. As a business, it is committed to giving all employees every opportunity to develop their careers, to contribute to its business and to share in its success.

The Performance Management System is designed to support the completion of the work of the organisation. It will also define, measure and recognise the contribution of individuals and help the organisation establish achievable goals for all staff. It is a team based approach.

At any stage, if you have any questions or concerns you can raise them with your manager.

7.2 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

Meales believes that everyone who comes to work for it wants to realise their potential and to develop their relationships with others (managers, colleagues and clients).

Work may be characterised by feelings of satisfaction, frustration, opportunity, exasperation, stimulation, excitement and even feelings of honesty and unfairness. To succeed and excel, Meales recognises that employees need to know what is expected of them, what authority they have and how they are performing. In addition, the approach to managing them needs to be consistent.

If Meales can help its employees to feel more of the positive emotions and eliminate most of the negatives, then it will have come a long way to being an employer of choice.

The Performance Management System is designed to be the foundation for fulfilling careers at Meales.

7.3 POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

All employees will have position descriptions. These will only be produced in an agreed format and amendments need to be approved by Meales management.

Objectives

The objective of the Performance Management System is to establish achievable goals for Meales using a team based approach and to define, measure and recognise the contribution of individuals within it.

The objective of all position descriptions is to provide an accurate picture of the responsibilities required within specific job roles, the authority levels attached to each role and a clear explanation as to how the output of the role is to be measured.

Application

The Performance Management System will be successfully applied when all position descriptions are used as the basis for performance appraisals and when amendments are completed within 14 days of a performance appraisal discussion. Any changes to position descriptions deemed necessary by managers will be communicated as soon as practicable to the employee: these changes will be implemented by both parties signing a copy of the amended position descriptions.

Process

Introduction and Amendment of Position Descriptions

All employees will receive individual briefings on their position descriptions from their manager.

Position descriptions will always be discussed in detail at job interviews and all new employees are to be given a copy of their position description with their letter of offer.

7.4 PROBATIONARY PERIOD REVIEWS

Policy Statement

All new employees are appointed with the intention of the placement being permanent or on-going unless otherwise stated in the letter of offer.

All new employees will serve a three-month probationary period to ensure both Meales and the employee are happy with the commitment to the role and the ability to perform the role. Managers should engage new employees in informal performance-based feedback regularly and have specific meetings to discuss progress after one and two months respectively from commencement.

Prior to the completion of the three-month probationary period, new employees will undergo a performance appraisal to provide feedback on performance and guidance on future direction and to set selected specific objectives for the next performance appraisal period.

Objectives

The objectives of the probationary performance appraisal is to ensure both Meales and the employee are satisfied the role is as agreed and a confirmation of the permanent or on-going nature of the position consistent with the letter of offer.

Application

The policy on probationary performance appraisals will be successfully applied when all probationary appraisals are completed within six months of employment commencing.

Process

The process is as follows:

- the manager and the employee will agree upon the date for a performance appraisal meeting. In the case of all probationary period appraisals, this must be before the completion of three months of service;
- the manager will prepare a written performance appraisal in the approved format and provide this to the employee at least 48 hours before the meeting; and
- the manager and the employee will meet and agree upon any objectives for the next appraisal period.

Where a probationary performance appraisal meeting is not held or completed on the agreed date, it shall be deferred until the next possible date.

7.5 PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Policy Statement

All employees will undergo performance appraisals with their manager on timing that is based on the level of their role. All performance appraisals will be timed from the date that employment commenced. This is to ensure performance management is a regular, rather than an occasional

management responsibility. Performance appraisals are completely separate from remuneration reviews.

Objectives

The objectives of the performance appraisal system are to constantly monitor progress of the capabilities and achievements of employees and to facilitate the ongoing development of staff. The performance appraisal system also provides feedback to Meales on the achievability of its objectives and the capability of managers to manage their employees.

The objectives of individual performance appraisals are to review work performance on the basis of both capabilities and achievement of specific performance objectives and to identify when an employee has demonstrated readiness for greater responsibility.

Application

The policy on performance appraisals will be successfully applied when all employees' appraisals are satisfactorily completed within the required time frames.

Process

The process is as follows:

- the manager and the employee will agree on the date for a performance appraisal meeting to be within the allowable time frame for each role;
- the manager will prepare a written performance appraisal in the approved format and provide this to the employee at least 48 hours before the meeting; and
- the manager and the employee will meet and agree upon any objectives for the next appraisal period.

Where a performance appraisal meeting is not held or completed on the agreed date, it shall be deferred until the next possible date.

7.6 PROFESSIONAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Policy Statement

Meales encourages the ongoing professional and personal development of its employees to enhance and develop their careers with Meales and to contribute to and share in its success. It is up to the employee to take a leading role in managing their own development within an approved structure and Meales' role will be as a supportive facilitator.

Development may take various forms including training, education, mentoring, coaching or counselling and may comprise 'on-the-job' programs.

Meales may require employees from time to time to attend specific training or instruction delivered by internal or external facilitators. This may be on or off-site.

A request for assistance with fees for professional and personal development will be considered by Meales on its merits.

Objectives

The objective of the Professional and Personal Development Policy is to provide an environment for learning and development for the individual within Meales' business framework.

Application

The Professional and Personal Development Policy will be successfully applied when employees are successfully managing their own professional and personal development goals.

Process

The process is as follows:

- either the employee or the employee's manager may identify and raise with the other any areas where they consider the employee's performance may be enhanced by further training;
- the manager will consult with the General Manager as to the suitability of the employee for further training and the General Manager, at his discretion, may authorise the employee to undertake further training, specifying the most appropriate form such training should take;
- subject to authorisation by the General Manager, the employee and manager will then work together to develop a mutually suitable plan for the employee to undertake further training; and
- where a request to attend professional development activities is made by the employee, the request should be submitted in writing to the employee's manager and must include:
 - ▲ suggested dates,
 - ▲ costs,
 - ▲ anticipated outcomes, and
 - ▲ anticipated benefits to the employee's work performance.

7.7 SUPERANNUATION

Policy

Meales' policy is to provide superannuation benefits to all employees to assist them to prepare for retirement and provide options for coverage in the event of death or permanent incapacity. Meales will comply with legislation in this area as a minimum.

Process

Where employees are members of the QBUS, this will be the superannuation fund into which Meales will pay superannuation benefits. Employees who do not qualify for membership in QBUS may nominate an eligible superannuation fund of their choice when they commence with Meales. All employees must belong to a superannuation fund whilst employed by Meales. Contributions made by Meales and the employee will cease when the employee retires or reaches the age fixed by occupational superannuation standards for cessation of contributions.

Employees may make their own contributions in addition to those made by Meales.

Procedure

On commencement, an employee should complete a super choice form.

Superannuation contributions will be deducted directly from an employee's salary.

8 LEAVE POLICY:

Policy Statement

All employees are entitled to leave in accordance with this policy unless it is inconsistent with a statutory requirement, enterprise agreement, award or employment contract that applies to the employee or their group of employees: that statutory requirement, enterprise agreement, award or employment contract shall take precedence to the extent of the inconsistency.

Leave is to be arranged and approved to ensure minimal disruption to work flows and to the leave arrangements of other employees.

Leave for part time employees will generally be pro rata of the entitlement of a full time employee.

Objectives

The objectives of the Leave Policy are to ensure all staff have adequate time away from work for family holidays, special events, rest, recreation and to assist in community emergencies while avoiding the build up of large amounts of untaken annual leave and ensuring that Meales' business operations are not compromised.

Application

The Leave Policy will be successfully applied when staff take appropriate breaks from work and when all annual and other leave is taken within the calendar year without disruption to work flows or the leave arrangements of other employees.

Process

All planned leave will be taken at a mutually agreed times and will take into account workflow, the employee's individual needs and the reasonable competing needs of other employees.

Leave must be approved in advance with the exception of sick leave, special leave and emergency services leave where absences cannot be anticipated.

Leave Application Forms must be signed and submitted to the employee's manager for approval as soon as practicable in relation to all forms of leave including leave that is to be approved after the event.

8.1 ANNUAL LEAVE

All employees are entitled to a minimum of 20 days annual leave per year on completion of 12 months of service. Leave entitlements are calculated from the date of commencement of employment.

It is preferred that annual leave is not accrued from year to year. Employees are expected to take annual leave during any period that Meales closes for business, ie. over the Christmas break.

During the first 12 months of employment, employees can only take annual leave once it has accrued (or at management's discretion) unless required to take annual leave over the Christmas period.

In some circumstances, leave in advance of accrual may be approved. Each request will be assessed individually by the relevant manager. Approval may be conditional on the individual agreeing to Meales deducting any advance in the event of termination or to the employee accepting leave without pay.

Applications should be lodged with the employee's manager at least four weeks in advance of the proposed leave and require the approval of the employee's manager.

Annual leave will count towards continuous service.

Employees may request to cash out up to two weeks of their credited annual leave entitlement every 12 months (or the pro-rata equivalent for part-time employees). A request to cash out annual leave must be made in writing and given to the employee's manager for approval.

8.2 PERSONAL LEAVE

The National Employment Standards (January 2010) aggregated personal leave, carer's leave and sick leave under the title 'personal leave'.

An employee should notify his/her manager as soon as possible if he/she is unable to attend work due to illness or injury. An absence of two or more consecutive working days requires a medical certificate.

Full time employees are entitled to 10 days of personal leave every 12 months.

Paid personal leave accrues on a pro-rata basis and is cumulative.

Personal leave for illness immediately prior to or following a gazetted public holiday requires a medical certificate.

If all personal leave accumulated has been taken, then an employee is entitled to a period of up to two days unpaid personal leave per occasion when a member of the employee's immediate family or household requires the employee's care or support. Each application for this additional leave will be assessed individually by management. Such leave will not count towards continuous service.

8.3 COMPASSIONATE/BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Compassionate leave will be granted in accordance with the relevant legislative requirements. It is paid leave taken by an employee for the purposes of spending time with a family member or member of employee's household:

- who has a personal illness or injury that poses a serious threat to his/her life, or
- after the death of a close family member or member of the employee's household.

An employee is entitled to a period of two days paid compassionate leave for each occasion.

Each application for compassionate leave will be assessed individually by management.

Compassionate leave will count towards continuous service.

8.4 LONG SERVICE LEAVE

An employee is entitled to long service leave in line with the provisions of the applicable legislation in Queensland.

Employees should give reasonable notice of intention to take long service leave and payment will be made at the normal hourly rate of pay.

Long Service Leave will count towards continuous service.

8.5 MATERNITY LEAVE

Female employees with at least 12 months of continuous service are entitled to maternity leave.

Maternity leave is unpaid leave which is available for a minimum period of six weeks and for a maximum period of 52 weeks if the employee is the primary carer. Other types of leave can be taken in conjunction with maternity leave providing the total period of absence does not exceed 52 weeks.

Any employee taking maternity leave is required to take at least six weeks continuous leave after the date of the birth of her child. The employer may, upon 14 days notice, require the employee to commence maternity leave for up to six weeks immediately before the presumed confinement date.

Applications for maternity leave should include personal details, a medical certificate detailing the expected date of confinement or birth, proposed commencement date and duration of leave. Advice as to whether superannuation payments will continue should be given by the employee.

Where the pregnancy is terminated other than by birth of a living child and the employee has not commenced maternity leave, her entitlement to such leave ceases. However, an employee may be entitled to special maternity leave, as specified by her doctor, if the pregnancy has extended beyond 28 weeks, and ends other than by birth of a living child.

Details of return to work date must be given four weeks in advance. The employee is entitled to return to the position held prior to taking maternity leave or to an alternative position of comparable status and pay.

Maternity leave will not count towards continuous service.

Transfer to a Safe Job

If a pregnant employee provides a doctor's certificate stating she is fit to work but is unable to continue in her present position, she is entitled to be transferred to a safe job. If transferring the employee to a safe job is not reasonably practicable, then the employee is entitled to paid leave for the period during which she is unable to continue in her present position (as stated in the medical certificate).

A pregnant employee is only eligible to be transferred to a safe job if she is entitled to, and has formally applied for, maternity leave.

This entitlement is in addition to any other leave entitlement and does not reduce the period of maternity leave to which an employee is entitled.

8.6 PATERNITY LEAVE

Permanent male employees with at least 12 months continuous service are entitled to paternity leave.

Paternity leave is unpaid leave available for a period of one week at the time of confinement and for a maximum period of 52 weeks if the employee is the primary carer during the period of that leave.

Other types of leave can be taken in conjunction with paternity leave providing the total period of absence does not exceed 52 weeks.

Applications for paternity leave should include personal details, a medical certificate detailing the date of confinement or birth, proposed commencement date and duration of leave. Additionally, the employee will need to provide a Statutory Declaration stating he will be the primary carer during the period of leave. Advice as to whether superannuation payments will continue should be given by the employee.

Where the pregnancy is terminated other than by the birth of a living child and the employee has not commenced paternity leave, his entitlement to such leave ceases.

Details of the return to work date must be given four weeks in advance. The employee is entitled to return to the position he held prior to taking paternity leave or to an alternative position of comparable status and pay.

Paternity leave will not count towards continuous service.

8.7 ADOPTION LEAVE

An employee seeking to adopt a child may take up to two days of unpaid pre-adoption leave to attend any interviews or examinations required to obtain approval for the adoption.

Employees adopting a child under the age of five years are entitled to take up to 52 weeks of unpaid adoption leave (shared between both parents). This leave is only available when the adopted child has not previously lived continuously with either parent for at least six months and is not a child or stepchild of either parent. Parents may take up to three weeks unpaid leave simultaneously when an adopted child is placed with them.

Other types of leave can be taken in conjunction with adoption leave providing the total period of absence does not exceed 52 weeks.

Adoption leave will not count towards continuous service.

8.8 STUDY LEAVE

Employees are entitled to study leave to undertake further education courses relevant to Meales' business and approved by Meales.

The maximum amount of study leave that should be approved is four hours per week to attend lectures or 10 full days per year for those who are studying by correspondence and who are required to attend residential courses. Written requests attaching details of the course and a copy of the course application form should be lodged with the employee's manager no later than four weeks in advance of the intended leave.

Employees are entitled to paid leave to sit an examination.

Days in excess of this entitlement are at the discretion of the employee's manager.

Study leave will count towards continuous service.

8.9 TIME OFF INSTEAD OF OVERTIME (TIME IN LIEU)

Time-in-lieu must be pre-approved by the General Manager in conjunction with the Managing Director.

Where time-in-lieu has been approved under an employee's terms of employment, an employee may elect, with the consent of the employer, to take time off instead of payment for overtime that would otherwise be payable under this policy at a time or times agreed with the employer.

Overtime taken as time off during ordinary time hours must be taken at the ordinary time rate that is an hour for each hour worked.

An employer must, if requested by an employee, provide payment, at the rate provided for the payment of overtime in the applicable award, for any overtime worked under this policy where such time has not been taken within four weeks of accrual.

An employee may elect, with the consent of the employer, to work 'make-up time' under which the employee takes time off during ordinary hours, and works those hours at a later time, during the spread of ordinary hours provided in the award.

8.10 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Approval of leave without pay is at the discretion of Meales.

An application giving personal details, the amount of time and the reason for the leave should be submitted to the employee's manager.

Other types of appropriate paid leave should be used before approval for leave without pay can proceed.

Failure to return to work on the date stipulated may result in loss of continuity or termination. Extension of leave without pay will be considered on an individual basis. A written agreement or an exchange of letters is required setting out all agreed conditions.

Leave without pay will not count towards continuous service.

8.11 BLOOD DONOR LEAVE

Employees may donate blood during working hours without loss of pay provided that:

- the leave will be for up to two hours, once in each quarter of the year;
- the leave fits in with work requirements and falls during the employee's usual hours of work; and
- the leave is with the prior approval of the employee's manager and the attendance is verified by an attendance card authorised by the Red Cross Transfusion Service.

8.12 JURY DUTY

An employee is entitled to paid leave to serve on a jury. Where the employee did not volunteer for jury duty, the employee is entitled to paid leave for a period of one month per annum. However, where the employee has volunteered for jury duty, the employee is entitled to paid leave for a period of one month for each three-year period and any further period of leave during that three-year period shall be unpaid.

An employee on jury service should provide official evidence of requirement to attend and of attendance at the Court.

Employees should declare the amount paid to them by the Court and Meales will reimburse the difference between that amount and the employee's base salary.

Jury duty leave will count towards continuous service.

8.13 EMERGENCY SERVICES LEAVE

An employee who needs to take temporary absence from work because of voluntary emergency management activities (e.g. dealing with an emergency/natural disaster on a voluntary basis as a member of Country Fire Service, State Emergency Service, etc) must submit an application for leave to the employee's manager.

The total absence for such leave must be reasonable (taking into account current work deadlines, work schedules and related factors) and must be agreed between the employee and the employee's manager.

Meales may refuse a request by an employee to attend emergencies if the employee is urgently required at work. If an employee does not accept the decision of the employee's manager and leaves work without permission, they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings including dismissal.

9 TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

Policy Statement

All staff should adhere to the Travel and Accommodation Policy when travelling on Meales' business. Meales recognises business travel is generally an inconvenience and seeks to make such inconvenience more comfortable at a cost that is appropriate for Meales' size and cash flows.

Objective

The objective of the Travel and Accommodation Policy is that the employee can be in the required location to do business and be ready to do business. All travel arrangements are intended to be comfortable, practical and economical ensuring the employee endures no discomfort when they are required to travel or stay away from home.

Application

The Travel and Accommodation Policy will be successfully applied when travel is completed within budget at minimal discomfort to the employee.

9.1 AIR TRAVEL

Policy

All travel, both domestic and international, is to be booked at economy class rates or the lower available discount fare, unless otherwise approved by management.

Process

At least three days notice and wherever possible, the maximum period of notice of bookings required, should be given, to allow maximum use of available discounted fares.

9.2 ACCOMMODATION

Policy

Persons requiring accommodation should enquire from the nominated booking facility about the availability of current deals in various suitable locations.

Accommodation should take maximum advantage of available corporate membership plans and lowest available rates.

All accommodation and meal charges are to be paid by the employee, unless an alternative arrangement has been previously agreed by the employee's manager. Where there is more than one employee present, meal charges should be paid by the most senior employee.

The preferred method of payment is by an accepted credit card. Expenditure will be reimbursed on production of a personal expenses claim form or by Meales directly.

No accounts may be opened in Meales' name. No charges are to be invoiced directly to Meales, unless previously authorised by the employee's manager. Under no circumstances are accounts to be opened or operated at restaurants, hotels etc.

Process

See the Business Expenses Policy.

9.3 TRAVEL OTHER THAN BY AIR

Policy

If it is necessary to travel by rail or coach, arrangements and authorisation as for air travel will apply.

9.4 MOTOR VEHICLE RENTAL

Policy

Approval must be obtained from the employee's manager before any vehicle is rented.

Car rental may not be the most cost effective form of local transportation, considering rental, insurance, fuel, mileage and parking charges. For short distances in a day, taxis may be the more economical form of transport.

Meales does not have accounts with any car rental firms. All rentals are to be paid for by the employee and reimbursed by Meales (see the Business Expenses Policy).

Car rental is to be used only when other means are unavailable, more costly or impractical. The class of car should be a small sedan, unless a larger vehicle is reasonably required for safety or carrying capacity. Insurance for car rental must be included in the rental contract and signed for. The conditions of hire must be observed and, if an accident occurs, the rental company should be advised promptly.

9.5 TAXI FARES

Policy

Employees who are travelling on work related business and who require the use of a taxi for travel should pay the fare and then forward an expenses form with receipt to accounts to be reimbursed.

9.6 PARKING CHARGES

Policy

Unless required for permanent parking of a particular vehicle, no reserved parking places are to be maintained for general use. It is more cost effective to pay casual rates or catch taxis.

Parking fees for approved business purposes only will be reimbursed by forwarding an expenses form with receipt to accounts.

Parking infringement penalties or fines will not be paid by Meales.

9.7 WORK EVENTS

Work social events are optional events for employees.

All employees need to organise their own transportation to and from the venue unless previously organised by Meales.

Where the event may involve the consumption of alcohol, limiting the consumption of alcohol is the responsibility of each employee. Each employee must ensure that arrangements in place which will enable the employee to return home safely without driving a motor vehicle or being in a motor vehicle being driven by a person affected by alcohol.

See also the Health, Safety & Environment Policy.

10 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

10.1 DISCIPLINE

Policy Statement

Meales has a human resources' strategy that recognises the value of its employees. Part of this strategy is the fair treatment of all employees: this requires that a minimum standard of conduct and performance be agreed, set and communicated with all employees. If employees do not meet this standard, appropriate corrective action, such as training, should be undertaken. Discipline should only be engaged with an employee on a performance issue if the conduct is sufficiently serious to justify immediate disciplinary action or all other corrective action has failed to achieve the desired result.

Where an employee has deliberately breached a Meales policy or procedure, or engaged in misconduct, disciplinary procedures should be initiated.

Employees should be treated fairly and the proper procedures should be followed.

For minor issues, employees must be made aware of their responsibilities, counselled and given the opportunity to reach the standards expected of them and they must be given the chance to defend their actions and conduct before action is taken.

It is a requirement that a third party attend a disciplinary meeting and that notes are taken and signed as a true record of discussions.

The expected standard must be clearly defined and the measurement criteria understood. A reasonable date for achievement of standards must be agreed. This should be shown as a minimum time, e.g. within one month.

For more serious issues, employees also must be advised in writing and such advice should be recorded on the employee's personnel file.

Where immediate termination of employment is possible and contemplated, special considerations and procedures shall apply (as detailed below).

Process

Poor Performance

Wherever possible the Performance Management System should be used to manage employee performance. However, there may be times when performance, conduct or employee attitude need to be immediately addressed.

If an employee falls below required performance standards and performance management processes have not been adequate to address the issue, the employee must be personally counselled and, if appropriate, then given written confirmation of their deficiencies in performance (a written warning).

Written warnings must clearly define:

- the deficiency;
- the expected standard;
- by when that standard should be achieved;
- how Meales will help the employee achieve the improvement required; and
- the consequences of failing to do so.

A record of all meetings, training and/or coaching given and a summary of discussions must be kept by the manager concerned and a copy placed on the employee's personnel file. This should include date, location and time of discussion.

If an employee consistently fails to meet agreed standards, he/she has been counselled and appropriate support/training has been offered and/or given, then further action is required. This may lead to the employee being dismissed.

Where an employee has not been performing as required, the following processes should be adopted where applicable:

- all possible corrective action, including training and coaching, has been offered and/or undertaken;
- the employee's manager has compiled documentation showing the conversations taken place, agreed action plans, and other communication with the employee;
- the employee has been informed in writing on at least two occasions of the standards required and his/her performance deficiency(ies) with action plans and the consequences of failing to meet the required standards;
- the employee has been given the opportunity to appeal or respond to the issues highlighted on each occasion; and
- no other suitable option, or other appropriate positions, is/are available.

If all these processes have been followed and the employee's performance still has not improved to an acceptable standard, the employee may be dismissed*.

Misconduct

Managers are expected to investigate misconduct and proceed through the following steps:

- a verbal warning should be given to an employee for minor misconduct. The employee must be given the opportunity to respond. A record of the warning must be kept by the manager and should be signed by the employee;
- if the unacceptable behaviour continues, a written warning will be issued, and signed by the employee as being received and understood. The employee must be given the opportunity to respond: a record must be made of the response, signed by the employee and kept by the manager;
- a second written warning should be given to an employee if he/she requires further discipline for the same or a related issue, and also signed by the employee as being received and understood. The employee must be given the opportunity to respond: a record must be made of the response, signed by the employee and kept by the manager;
- employees who have been disciplined three times are subject to dismissal (but see **Notes* below); and
- details of disciplinary actions should be recorded on the employee's personnel file and removed after twenty four months if further disciplinary action is not required.

If a manager considers the allegation to be serious, and it requires further investigation, an employee may be suspended on base pay for a maximum of two weeks while an investigation takes place. The employee must be notified in writing of the details of the allegation and advised their conduct is under investigation. The employee must sign this letter as being received and understood.

This letter should also invite the employee to present his/her version of events to the investigating officer and inform the employee that he/she may be accompanied by an observer. The only purpose of an observer is to observe proceedings; they are not attending as a participant or representative of the employee and any observer may be excluded from the proceedings if they seek to participate.

Should Meales consider an employee's conduct likely to lead to a situation in which it may wish to dismiss without notice, a diary must be kept at all times to record incidents and conversations and associated matters which may be needed in subsequent proceedings. The relevant manager is responsible for keeping this diary. This manager should also issue a written warning that a continuance of such behaviour will lead to instant dismissal.

Gross or Serious Misconduct

Summary (instant) dismissal for gross or very serious misconduct is possible (depending on the facts involved) for the following: insubordination, drunkenness, theft, dishonesty, assault, deliberately endangering the safety of others, commission of a serious criminal offence, commission of a criminal offence at Meales' premises or whilst apparently acting as an Meales employee, and objectionable language (but see ****Notes** below). **However, this action should only be taken by the General Manager in conjunction with the Managing Director (see *Notes below).**

In such cases, follow the procedure below:

- investigate the alleged offence thoroughly, including talking to any witnesses;
- ask the employee for his/her response to the allegation (taking detailed, careful notes of this discussion);
- consult with the Managing Director (if not the manager taking the action) regarding possible action;
- if still appropriate following a thorough investigation, terminate/dismiss the employee; and
- keep a file on all evidence collected and action taken in these circumstances.

All procedures must be followed in accordance with employment equal opportunity/anti-discrimination legislation.

***Note:**

In all such cases, 'procedural fairness' guidelines must apply. This means the warning and dismissal process must allow the employee to offer their view of the events concerned. The employee must have every chance to defend himself/herself against the allegation and has the right to appeal against a decision made. If this process is not followed, the termination may be overturned by an industrial relations authority.

****Note:**

For some offences, Meales retains the right to report the matter to the police where charges may be laid. The police will be notified with regard to any criminal act against Meales or an employee. Meales has a duty of care to its staff which at all times will be subordinate to legal process.

10.2 DISCIPLINARY APPEAL

Policy Statement

During all stages of the disciplinary process, employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them.

An employee who believes the disciplinary action taken against them is unfair is able to appeal the process.

An appeal will be treated fairly, dealt with discreetly and actioned promptly.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Grievance Policy.

Process

An employee is entitled to lodge a written appeal to their manager's manager detailing his/her objections to the disciplinary action within three working days of notification of that action.

The manager's manager should:

- acknowledge receipt of the employee's objection;
- investigate the matter thoroughly; and
- report back to the employee within seven days. However, where extraordinary circumstances prevent determination of the appeal within 7 days, the senior manager shall report every 7 days thereafter until the outcome of the appeal is notified.

If the appeal is disallowed, an employee is entitled to appeal against the determination in writing to the Managing Director of Meales.

The Managing Director or some person nominated by the Managing Director for this purpose shall investigate the matter and report back to the employee within 10 working days. However, where extraordinary circumstances prevent determination of the appeal within 10 days, the Managing Director or his/her nominee shall report every 7 days thereafter until the outcome of the appeal is notified.

The employee has no further right of appeal under this process if the second appeal is disallowed.

All procedures must be followed in accordance with employment equal opportunity/anti-discrimination legislation.

10.3 GRIEVANCE

Policy Statement

Meales supports the right of every employee to lodge a grievance with his/her manager if the individual believes a decision, behaviour or action that affects their employment is unfair. Meales' aim is to resolve problems and grievances promptly and as close to the source as possible with graduated steps for further discussions and resolution at higher levels of authority as necessary.

Grievances should be actioned discreetly and be promptly dealt with in an objective manner.

Process

The employee should attempt to resolve the complaint as close to the source as possible. This can be undertaken informally and verbally. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the employee, further steps may be taken.

All reasonable attempts to settle a grievance before starting the formal grievance process should be taken.

For the formal grievance process to begin, the employee must fully describe their grievance in writing (including dates and locations wherever possible) and the remedies sought.

The person(s) against whom the grievance/complaint is made should be given the full details of the allegation(s) against them and should have the opportunity and reasonable time to respond before resolution is attempted. The duration of this should not exceed one week.

If resolution is still not reached, the matter will be referred to the Managing Director for consideration and final decision. A grievance taken to this level must be in writing from the employee.

The employee's manager will forward to the Managing Director any additional relevant information. The Managing Director will provide a written response to the employee and also communicate with any other parties involved.

If the matter is still not resolved, the employee will be advised of his/her rights to pursue the matter with external authorities if they wish.

In some circumstances, it may not be appropriate for an employee to discuss his/her grievance with his/her manager. Grievances relating to harassment would fall into this category and an employee should be able to make their approach to their manager's manager.

All procedures must be followed in accordance with employment equal opportunity/anti-discrimination legislation.

The above procedure takes place for individual employee grievances. Whatever the final outcome, it will affect the attitudes of each party and their long-term relationship. The issues which sparked the grievance should be reviewed by the Managing Director so the dispute does not reoccur.

DO NOT COPY

11 POST TRAUMA COUNSELLING

Policy Statement

Meales' policy is to ensure all staff who are faced with a traumatic event in a work environment are provided with immediate support and counselling, by a professional, external provider.

Traumatic events can include being the victim of a robbery or assault, witness to such an event, witness to a significant injury, or death of another employee or any other person, within the work environment.

Post-trauma counselling must be provided to employees involved in such situations. In normal circumstances, such employees should be sent home and referred to appropriate counselling agencies.

Meales will pay for such counselling for a reasonable period.

Objective

The objective of the Post Trauma Counselling Policy is to provide immediate care to any staff affected by a traumatic event in a work environment and to support their return to work.

Process

Check employee(s) are physically okay, not in need of immediate hospital treatment, etc. If in doubt, call an ambulance.

Be prepared to listen:

- to the facts;
- to how he/she is feeling; and
- do not give advice, direction or comment on how they should act or react.

Identify local providers of post-trauma counselling and advice. In more serious cases, arrange an immediate telephone interview from a qualified counsellor. In all traumatic circumstances, encourage and facilitate the employee to attend counselling. Arrange a time for counselling for him/her. A number of counselling sessions may be required or appropriate.

It is recommended that a manager speaks directly to the counsellor after a telephone interview to ensure support for the employee's well-being.

The counsellor may make recommendations on how the employee should get home and which family and friends should be contacted for additional support.

In consultation with a counsellor, the manager should ensure contact with the employee is maintained in accordance with their recommendations.

Following the return to work, ensure vigilance is maintained regarding their state of mind and discuss any concerns with the counsellor before speaking to the employee.

The manager must complete workers compensation reports where appropriate. Contact the insurance company or government agency early in the process is essential because difficulties often arise if there is no medical certificate or other required documentation.

12 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND SECURITY

All intellectual property (including discoveries and inventions) devised or developed in the performance of an employee's duties for Meales or any related entity is the property of Meales or the related entity. Employees are required to do everything necessary to ensure Meales or the related entity has and is recorded as having ownership of such intellectual property including, if required assigning such intellectual property to Meales, the related entity or any other entity nominated by Meales.

From time to time during the course of employment, employees have access to sensitive information, data, passwords, codes, records, manuals, materials, know-how, equipment, keys to premises or any other information and property of Meales and any related entities. Each employee must treat this information and property as intellectual property and must take such action as is necessary to prevent and detect any unauthorised disclosure, unauthorised access, interference, theft and/or loss in any manner including by:

- not providing any information or property physically or electronically to any person who has not been authorised by a manager to receive it at all or in that format;
- ensuring that computers are locked and password-protected;
- ensuring all passwords, codes and other security information are stored in separate secure systems;
- adopting and using safe and secure data, email and internet practices; and
- storing all information and property securely either physically and/or electronically.

Failure to protect, secure and look after this information and property properly will result in disciplinary proceedings and possibly dismissal.

See also the Personal Communications and Relationships Policy.

13 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is a condition of employment that an employee of Meales does not carry on or be associated with any business that competes with or is related to the business of Meales. It is also a condition of employment that an employee does not carry on or be actively engaged in any other business without the express knowledge and agreement of Meales' General Manager or Managing Director.

Prior to employment with Meales, employees may have conducted business activities which potentially give rise to real or perceived conflict of interest with Meales' objectives and future activities.

In such circumstances, any past or existing business or other external interests or activities that have or create a real or perceived conflict of interest should be declared to Meales prior to employment or promptly upon identifying that a conflict may exist.

Meales will review the potential areas of conflict with the employee and mutually agree on practical, commercial arrangements, which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Meales purchases the intellectual property rights of the business in question;
- the employee's business interests are combined into Meales' business and the employee is compensated accordingly; or
- the employee must cease that business or remove himself/herself from active involvement in and apparent association with that business.

Employees must at all times keep Meales' senior management informed of any other interests that they, or any entities in which they actually or apparently participate, have or may enter into that could cause a conflict with their employment with, interests in or commitment to Meales.

Any external involvements that do not represent a direct conflict of interest but have an adverse effect on the employee's performance or attendance whilst working at Meales will also be considered as a conflict of interest giving rise to the remedies described above or disciplinary proceedings and possibly dismissal.

An employee must obtain approval in writing from Meales' senior management before approaching any of Meales' suppliers or clients in relation to the employee's commercial or non-commercial external interests. This includes fund raising, sponsorship and similar activities.

See also the Personal Communications and Relationships Policy.

14 PRIVACY

Each employee is required to observe and uphold all of the Meales' privacy policies and procedures as implemented or varied from time to time.

Collection, storage, access to and dissemination of the personal information of employees, contractors, suppliers and clients will be determined in accordance with the principles of the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cwth)* and related legislation. In any event, the personal information of employees, contractors, suppliers and clients must not be provided in any form to any person without the prior written authority of the employee's manager.

DO NOT COPY

If you would like any clarification of any of the policies or procedures contained within this Manual, please contact management who will be pleased to provide guidance and support.

Human Resources Manual Agreement

I, _____, have been provided with access to the Meales Human Resources Manual and have read and understood all of the policies and procedures contained within.

I acknowledge that these policies and procedures (as reasonably varied from time to time) form part of my contract of employment with Meales and that I am bound by its procedures.

Signed _____

Dated _____

Changes to Human Resources Manual

I, _____, have been advised of the changes to the policies and procedures (listed below) in the Meales Manual. I acknowledge that these policies and procedures form part of my employment with Meales and that I am bound by its procedures.

Changes made to HR Manual:

Signed _____

Dated _____