

Statement of Business Ethics

October 2016

This publication has been compiled by Human Resources, Corporate, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

© State of Queensland, 2016

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. The copyright in this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia (CC BY) licence.

Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms.



You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

Note: Some content in this publication may have different licence terms as indicated.

For more information on this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/deed.en>

The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The Queensland Government shall not be liable for technical or other errors or omissions contained herein. The reader/user accepts all risks and responsibility for losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting directly or indirectly from using this information.

Director-General's Foreword

This statement provides guidance for the private and public sectors when doing business with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

It sets out the ethical standards under which we operate, including the expectations we have of our business partners and what people should expect of us.

Our strategic plan identifies building our capability in areas such as governance, embedding the public service values and our expected behaviours through good leadership and management practices. Our staff are expected to have high ethical and professional standards, and to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the Queensland public sector in all their work-related activities. Penalties can apply to staff that breach our Code of Conduct; we therefore ask the organisations and individuals we work with to respect these standards when they do business with us.

We expect that similar obligations and constraints will apply to the organisations and individuals with which we do business, and we respect their standards.

A shared understanding and commitment to integrity and ethical practices will build stronger and more productive relationships. It also helps to promote public confidence in the department and trust in our ability to deliver on our objectives and values in an open and accountable way.

Elizabeth Woods.

28.10.2016.

Dr Elizabeth Woods

Director-General

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Table of Contents

Our Key Business Principles	1
Purchasing	1
Principles for the Queensland Procurement Policy	1
Delivering	1
What You Can Expect From Us	1
What We Ask Of You	2
Why Compliance With This Statement Is Important	2
Guidance Notes	3
Incentives, Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality	3
Conflicts of Interest	3
Sponsorships	3
Confidentiality	3
Privacy	4
Intellectual Property	4
Communication	4
Secondary and Post-Separation Employment	4
Expectations of contractors and subcontractors	4
Further information	4

Our Key Business Principles

Purchasing

As a state government agency, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) must purchase goods and services in accordance with the Queensland Procurement Policy.

Principles for the Queensland Procurement Policy

The following six key principles underpin our procurement activities:

1. **Drive value for money in our procurement.** Value for money is the overriding principle, and in the case of any conflict or discrepancy with any of the other principles, value for money is the determining factor.
2. **Act as 'one government'**, working together across agency boundaries to achieve savings and benefits.
3. **Leaders in procurement practice.** We understand our needs, the market, our suppliers and have the capability to deliver better outcomes.
4. **Use our procurement to advance the government's economic, environmental and social objectives** and support the long term wellbeing of our community.
5. **Have the confidence of stakeholders and the community** in the government's management of procurement.
6. **Undertake our procurement with integrity, ensuring accountability for outcomes.** DAF is bound by the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, which sets ethics principles for public officials. The Code of Conduct for Queensland public service establishes standards for the ethical behaviour of its employees. The Code of Conduct and the issues it covers are dealt with in more detail below.

Delivering

As a supplier of services and a business partner, DAF ensures that its actions are always honest, ethical, fair and consistent. Our business dealings are open to public scrutiny as much as possible and in accordance with relevant legislation.

We work towards good business practice in delivering services to clients and stakeholders. For instance, we strive to pay our bills on time; be a reliable, open and consistent provider; and meet the expectations of our customers. If we fall short in any way, we want to know about it.

Doing business with us means dealing with DAF employees, and it is important to recognise that our employees are required to meet standards of behaviour in the course of their duties. These standards require them to perform their duties honestly, fairly and impartially; not seek gifts or favours; ensure that private interests do not conflict with public duties; and maintain appropriate confidentiality in business activities.

What You Can Expect From Us

DAF ensures that our policies, standards, procedures and practices relating to any aspect of our operations and activities are consistent with recognised best practice, and meet the requirements of legislation, government policy and the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Our employees are required to abide by the Code of Conduct. The code applies to all of our employees in Australia and overseas, whether they are at work, work related events/functions, on

leave or representing the department. The code is based on four ethics principles considered to be fundamental to good public administration:

- Integrity and impartiality – our employees are in a position of trust and should use their position, official powers, influence, resources and information properly. They must not use these things for personal or private gain. Our employees should always put the public interest above private interests, and abide by strict rules in respect to gifts and benefits
- Promoting the public good – our employees are obliged to treat members of the public, colleagues and clients fairly and with dignity, courtesy and respect. They should be professional in their duties, tolerant of others and have due regard to the rights, entitlements and beliefs of other people
- Commitment to the system of government – our employees have an obligation to uphold the laws of the state and Commonwealth, and abide by DAF standards and policies. They must carry out their duties faithfully and impartially, regardless of their personal views
- Accountability and transparency – our employees are expected to be diligent, and carry out their duties to the best of their ability and with due care and attention. When giving advice, their advice must at all times be frank, independent, accurate and comprehensive.

What We Ask Of You

We ask that organisations and individuals doing business with DAF:

- comply with the Queensland Procurement Policy and DAF purchasing procedures when supplying goods and services to the department
- respect the obligations and responsibilities of our employees as set out in legislation and in the Code of Conduct
- refrain from exerting pressure on our employees to act in ways that would breach the Code of Conduct or our business ethics principles
- tell us when our service or our conduct has been unsatisfactory
- declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they are discovered
- act fairly, ethically and honestly when dealing with DAF
- help DAF to prevent unethical practices in our business relationships.

Why Compliance With This Statement Is Important

By complying with the DAF Statement of Business Ethics, you will be able to progress your business objectives and interests with DAF in a fair and ethical way. We ask all our suppliers and business partners to comply with this statement.

Complying with the Statement of Business Ethics will also prepare you for the ethical requirements of other Queensland Government agencies.

You should be aware of the consequences of not complying with our ethical requirements. Corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to:

- termination of contracts
- termination of business relationships
- loss of future work
- loss of reputation
- investigation
- matters referred for criminal investigation.

Guidance Notes

Incentives, Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

In general, DAF staff cannot accept incentives, gifts, benefits, travel or hospitality that arise as a result of their work. You should not offer these things to our employees and they are not permitted to ask for them.

Any form of gift or benefit offered to our employees could be seen as an attempt to gain an advantage or to influence their impartiality. This could interfere with their public duty. An offer of an incentive, gift or benefit (other than items of nominal value) to a DAF employee will be reported under our Code of Conduct.

Business partners of DAF should not pay for any form of entertainment or hospitality for DAF staff, and DAF staff are generally not entitled to use public funds for entertainment or hospitality.

DAF discourages external agencies from providing DAF staff with benefits like meals, travel or accommodation unless through formal documented contract arrangements.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest for our employees refers to a situation where their duties could be affected by private interests or the possibility of personal gain or loss. Our employees have an obligation to put the public interest above private interests.

Our employees are required to disclose any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Sponsorships

DAF accepts sponsorships which build and strengthen the relationship between the department and stakeholder groups and organisations, in order to deliver the department's mission.

However, the department will not enter into a sponsorship arrangement unless it is open and transparent, and supported by a signed formal agreement.

The department cannot endorse private sector organisations or product brands.

Confidentiality

DAF is bound by the provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* (the RTI Act) in respect to documents held by the department. The RTI Act generally provides members of the public with access to information and documents held by the department, subject to exemptions such as business-related matters and legal advice, and considerations such as the public interest. The RTI Act also provides the means to ensure that personal information held by the department is accurate.

The confidentiality of information relating to the business or legal affairs of organisations and individuals with which DAF has commercial undertakings will be respected, subject to relevant legislation.

The department expects the same considerations will apply with respect to confidential DAF information held by the organisations and individuals with which it does business.

Privacy

DAF is also bound by the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2009* with respect to how information is collected, stored, used and disclosed by Queensland Government agencies.

The department may only collect personal information related to its activities and only by fair means. The information may only be used for the purpose for which it is collected, unless otherwise required by law.

Intellectual Property

In business relationships with DAF, all parties must respect each other's intellectual property rights and formally negotiate any access, licence or use of intellectual property.

Communication

All communication between DAF and other parties should be clear, direct and accountable, and based on mutual respect and trust.

Secondary and Post-Separation Employment

Our employees are able to accept secondary employment under certain conditions—detailed in the Code of Conduct. In general, secondary employment is acceptable if it does not affect the employee's ability to perform their DAF duties, and there are no integrity or conflict of interest implications.

A DAF employee taking up work after leaving the department has an obligation to respect the confidentiality of information to which they had access during their employment with DAF.

DAF senior executives including the Chief Executive must comply with the employment separation procedures, which explains provisions for post-separation employment and lobbying activities.

Expectations of contractors and subcontractors

Contractors and subcontractors providing services to DAF are expected to comply with the DAF Statement of Business Ethics and the Code of Conduct.

Further information

If you have any questions about this statement or any ethical issues, contact:

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
80 Ann Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Tel: 13 25 23

Fax: (07) 3404 6900

Email: callweb@daf.qld.gov.au

www.daf.qld.gov.au