

## **SHARK BAY WORLD HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **Introduction**

This Code of Conduct gives the Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee (SBWHAC) members a summary of their obligations and provides guidance about ethical conduct.

It draws on the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner's publication *Template Code of Conduct for Government Boards and Committees*, which in turn, is based on the *Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics*.

An appointment to the SBWHAC carries with it responsibilities and obligations. Ignorance about those responsibilities can damage both the individual and the SBWHAC. People appointed as members should understand their responsibilities and this Code of Conduct can assist them to contribute in a positive way.

This Code of Conduct includes information on ethical issues that may confront members and provides practical guidance. The adoption of this Code of Conduct assists and strengthens SBWHAC's ability to perform its functions as specified in the Terms of Reference.

#### **Personal Behaviour**

SBWHAC members and observers are expected to act with ethical behaviour, which relates to personal integrity, relationships with others and accountability for behaviour, decisions and actions.

SBWHAC members will:

- Stay informed about all relevant activities of the SBWHAC
- Operate within the framework of the Terms of Reference of the SBWHAC
- Attend all meetings where at all possible and submit an apology if not. If absence is likely to extend for several consecutive meetings, a leave of absence is to be obtained.
- Participate actively and work cooperatively with fellow members and stakeholders to achieve agreed goals.
- Prepare for meetings by reading and considering papers circulated with the agenda.
- Treat each other with professionalism, courtesy and respect.
- Not improperly influence other SBWHAC members.
- Act loyally and in good faith.
- Consult stakeholders and affected parties about issues under consideration.

#### **Raise Concerns**

SBWHAC members shall:

- Express concerns to the chairperson about decisions or actions contrary to the SBWHAC's Terms of Reference or Code of Conduct.
- Disclose any information about actual or potentially corrupt or illegal activities to the chairperson, or if necessary, the Corruption and Crime Commission.

## **Accountability**

SBWHAC members will:

- Act in a lawful, ethical and justifiable manner
- Demonstrate personal integrity and reliability
- Ensure that accepting hospitality offered by suppliers, stakeholders or proponents is transparent, to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest or undue influence.

## **Remuneration, Gifts, etc**

SBWHAC members will not:

- Accept in connection with their official duties, any fee, reward, gratuity, free travel, gift or remuneration of any kind other than remuneration and allowances officially applicable to the SBWHAC.
- Use travel points accumulated on government business under frequent flyer or other programs to acquire benefits such as upgrading of tickets or for private travel, whether or not members have personally met the costs of membership to a frequent flyer scheme. Benefits accrued on government business can only be used for official purposes.
- Demand or accept in connection with their official duties, any fee, favour, reward, gratuity or remuneration of any kind, outside the scope of their entitlements as a member.
- Use their public position for personal profit or gain.
- Accept a gift if it could be seen by the public, knowing the full facts, as intended or likely to cause a member to act in a particular way or deviate from public duty.

## **Allowances**

SBWHAC members will:

- Be reimbursed for travel and accommodation expenses upon receipt of appropriate documentation.
- Be reimbursed private vehicle costs at public service allowance rates for attending meetings or official business.
- Be reimbursed at public service rates for accommodation, meals and out of pocket expenses incurred on official business and these will be paid directly to members by Parks and Wildlife.
- Be paid sitting fees, where eligible, for attendance at meetings in accordance with current Public Sector Commission rates.

## **Confidential Information**

SBHWAC members and observers will:

- Treat sensitive matters in strict confidence and only discuss these with SBWHAC members.
- Ensure confidential records are subject to appropriate access procedures.
- Respect confidential information and observe any restrictions agreed by SBWHAC (subject to Freedom of Information Act requirements).
- Maintain confidentiality and not divulge information deemed confidential or sensitive.
- Not misuse information for gain or harm which is obtained in the course of committee duties.
- Respect the privacy of individuals.

- Have individual responsibility for any document, tape, disk or other record in their custody and keep these in a secure place.

*Note – All decisions will be documented and appropriate minutes prepared by the Secretariat, while according to certain records an extra level of security if necessary.*

### **Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest may occur where a member has private or personal interests which are in conflict, appear to conflict, or could potentially conflict with duties as a member.

Members must not allow their private interest/s to interfere with the proper discharge of their public duties and must always ensure that their conduct can survive public scrutiny.

A conflict of interest in itself is not necessarily wrong or unethical, however identifying and managing the situation is vital.

Private interests are of three types – pecuniary (financial), proximity and impartiality and these apply to the member and to any person with whom the member is closely associated who has a direct or indirect financial or proximity interest in the matter (i.e. partnership, employer, beneficiary, shareholder, spouse/partner).

Conflicts between private interests and public duties can arise when a member, a member's spouse, children or near relative, another organisation of which the person, their spouse, children, near relatives or close associates are members, stands to make a financial gain or loss from a SBWHAC decision.

### **Disclosure of Interest/s**

Members' interests in matters, and the nature of those interests, are to be disclosed at meetings either by written notice to the Chair before the meeting or at the meeting immediately before the matter is discussed. A disclosure of interest is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at the item relating to the disclosure.

A member who makes a pecuniary or proximity disclosure of interest at a meeting must not preside at the part of the meeting relating to the matter, participate, or be present during any discussion or decision making procedure relating to the matter, unless the matter is deemed by the committee members to be so trivial or insignificant as to be unlikely to influence the member's conduct or is common to a significant number of other persons.

Any decision to allow the disclosing member to remain in the meeting is to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and the extent of the participation to be recorded (i.e. for discussion only or also for voting).

### **Public Sector Employees**

Public Sector employees (including local government employees) serving on a government board have the same fiduciary responsibilities as other SBWHAC members but should not receive remuneration additional to their salaries.

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