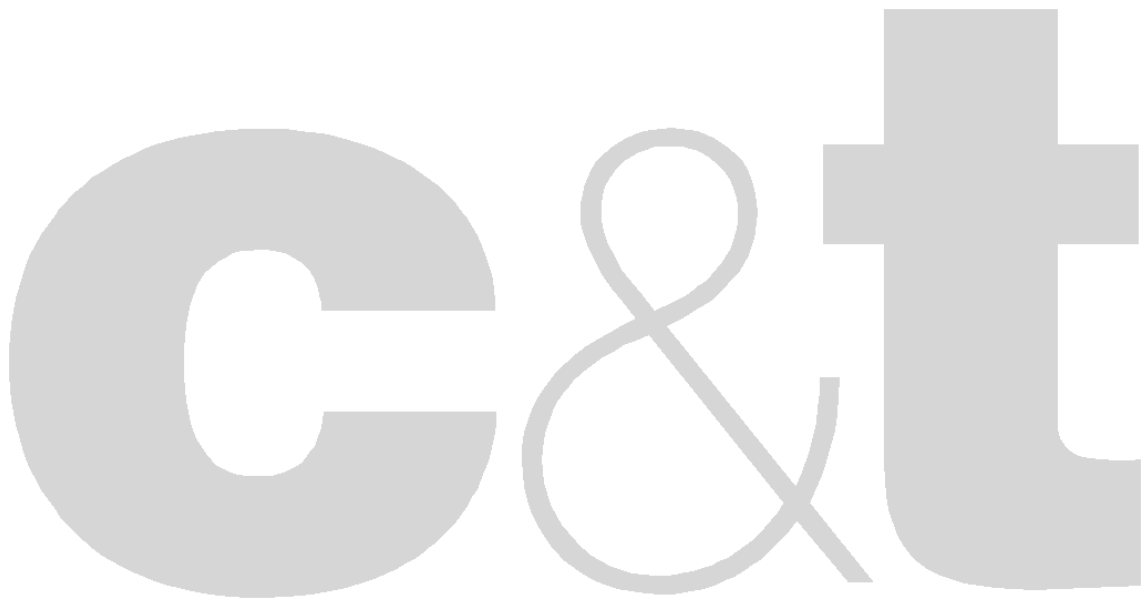


WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY



You can download this document at www.candt.org

Copies can also be obtained from:

- C&T, University of Worcester, Henwick Grove, Worcester, WR2 6AJ
- 01905 855436
- info@candt.org

© C&T 2006

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial education or training purposes on condition that the source is acknowledged. All other use must be with permission.

C&T WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

C&T is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. It seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner taking into account the requirements of the funding bodies and the standards in public life set out in the reports of the Nolan Committee.

Normally any concern about a workplace situation should be raised with the employee's immediate manager and if necessary dealt with under the grievance or harassment procedures. However, it is recognised that because of the seriousness and sensitivity of some issues, together with the knowledge of who the employee thinks may be involved in wrongdoing, this may be difficult or even impossible.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act ("the Act") gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or subjected to detriment by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns **provided that they are disclosed under procedures identified in the Act**. Full details of the Act can be found on the Department of Trade and Industry Website or a copy can be obtained from the Administrator if required.

It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. However, where an individual discovers information which they believe shows malpractice or wrongdoing within the organization then there should be identified procedures to enable the individual to disclose the information without fear or reprisal, and it may be necessary for the disclosures to be made independently of line management.

It should be emphasized that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or serious wrongdoing provided that they make the disclosure in accordance with the policy. It is not designed to question financial or business decisions taken by C&T nor may it be used to reconsider any matters that have already been addressed under harassment, grievance or disciplinary procedures. Individuals who make disclosures outside the arrangements set out here will not be protected under this policy and may not be protected under the Act.

The Policy

This policy is designed to enable employees to raise concerns or disclose information that they believe tends to show one or more of the following matters is either happening now, took place in the past or is likely to happen in the future.

Matters which may be disclosed under this policy ("Qualifying Disclosures") include:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to the health or safety of any individual
- A danger to the health or safety of the environment
- Child abuse
- Improper conduct or unethical behavior
- Attempts to conceal any of the above

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list and any matters raised under this policy will be considered seriously.

This policy is designed to offer protection to individuals who disclose such concerns provided the disclosure is made:

- In accordance with the procedures laid down in this policy
- In good faith

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, which is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against that individual provided they can show that it was a reasonable belief in the circumstances at the time of the disclosure. If, however, the investigation shows that an individual has made malicious or vexatious allegations, and particularly if he or she persists with making them, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual concerned.

C&T will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

Making a Disclosure via internal procedures

In most cases, making a disclosure in accordance with internal Company procedures is the best way to ensure that concerns are dealt with quickly and by the person best placed to resolve the problem. C&T undertakes to treat all such matters seriously and deal with them as a matter of priority.

- In the first instance, the individual should raise their concerns, as soon as possible with their immediate Manager who will undertake to look into the matter immediately.
- If the individual feels their disclosure is not being given due consideration, or in the event that the issue is one that involves the immediate Manager, then the individual should consult with the next manager in line or a member of the Board of Directors who will undertake to look into the matter immediately.
- If the concern is one relating to possible child abuse, the individual may raise the matter directly with the Chair of the Board of Directors, who is the designated person responsible for this area.

Making a Disclosure to an Outside Body or Individual

If for any reason, the individual feels unable to make their disclosure via the internal procedure, or if they feel their disclosure is not being given due consideration, they may make their disclosure to an outside body or individual. However, in order for such a disclosure to be protected, it must comply with the statutory guidelines laid down by the Act (see page 2, paragraph 3 for details). These are quite specific and should be considered carefully before making a disclosure in this way.

Additional Scope of the Policy

In addition to protecting C&T employees, should any concern, as described above, be raised by anyone else involved in the company's work, including children, the principles contained within this policy will still apply.