DRUGS & ALCOHOL POLICY

1. Introduction

Drug and alcohol misuse is an ever-increasing problem within the workplace. Statistics show that employees who take unlawful drugs and excessive alcohol are more likely to endanger their fellow workers, have accidents at work, be absent from work and be less efficient than colleagues who do not do so.

2. Aims of the policy

Our employees are the company's most valuable assets and whilst we hope it never happens we recognise that, for a number of reasons, employees could develop drug or alcohol related problems during the course of their employment.

This policy applies to drugs which are unlawful under criminal law and not to prescribed medication and excessive intake of alcohol. The aims of this policy are to:

Promote a responsible attitude to drugs and alcohol within the company by:

- making known to employees the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol.
- minimizing problems and accidents at work arising from the misuse of drugs and alcohol.
- promoting the well-being and health of employees.
- protecting our reputation and that of our customers.

Offer assistance and advice to employees who need it by:

- identifying employees with possible problems relating to drug or alcohol misuse at an early stage;
- offering guidance and, where required, actively encouraging employees with possible problems to seek appropriate help;
- offering employees known to have drug or alcohol related problems affecting their work referral to an appropriate agency for diagnosis.

3. Prohibition on drugs and alcohol in the workplace

If an employee is found under the influence of drugs or alcohol at work, there could be serious health and safety issues to the individual and others. It is therefore a disciplinary offence to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at work.

No drugs must be brought onto or consumed on company premises at any time. Staff must

not take drugs or alcohol if they are required to drive private or Company vehicles on business. Staff must also not take drugs or alcohol when they are on operational standby or on call.
Staff representing the company at business functions, providing hospitality or attending company organized social events outside normal working hours should adopt a sensible approach to alcohol consumption and not embarrass themselves or the company.

Any breach of these rules will result in disciplinary action being taken which is likely to result in summary dismissal on grounds of gross misconduct.

4. Advice and counselling

It is our company's intention to deal constructively and sympathetically with an employee's drug or alcohol related problems.

When it is known that an employee has a drug problem, the matter should immediately be reported to a member of the Leadership Team who will be able to seek advice and guidance on how to manage the problem and, if necessary, enable suitable treatment. The primary objective of any discussions of this type will be to assist the employee with the problem in as compassionate and constructive way as possible.

Whilst the processing of employee records will be necessary, any discussions of the nature of an employee's drug problems and the records of any treatment will be strictly confidential unless the employee agrees otherwise.

5. Drug-related misconduct

This policy, for assisting employees with drug-related problems, is separate from the company's disciplinary procedures. However, action will be taken under the disciplinary procedure if misconduct takes place at work as a result of taking drugs or if an employee is found to be under the influence of drugs whilst at work or is found to have brought drugs on to or consumed drugs on company premises.

If an employee is known to be, or strongly suspected of being, intoxicated by drugs during working hours, arrangements will be made for the employee to be sent home for the rest of the day without pay.

Incapacity through drugs at work, which have not been prescribed on medical grounds, is a potential gross misconduct offence under the disciplinary procedure and the employee is therefore liable to be summarily dismissed.

Where an employee with an identified drug problem which affects conduct at work or performance at work refuses the opportunity to receive help, the matter will be referred for

action through the disciplinary procedure as appropriate. Likewise, if after accepting counselling and assistance, and following review and evaluation, the conduct or work performance reverts to the problem level, the matter may also be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

6. Drug screening

On the grounds of protecting health and safety and only where necessary to achieve a legitimate business aim, the company reserves the right to carry out random drug screening tests on employees in the workplace whose activities and job duties have a significant impact on the health and safety of others.

If an employee receives a positive test result, as stated above, this will be viewed as a potential gross misconduct offence and renders the employee liable to summary dismissal. Refusal to submit to a drug screening test without reasonable excuse will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

7. Training

On commencing employment with the company every new employee will be given a copy of this policy and an opportunity to discuss it. They will be made aware of the effects of drug misuse and will be encouraged not to cover up for employees with a drug problem but to recognize that collusion represents a false sense of loyalty.

Signed: A.H