



## Workplace Acceptable Use Policy

This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) provides guidance about acceptable use, for the purpose of engaging and collaborating using Workplace as provided by the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) as a committee of the National Fire Chiefs Council Limited. The Data Controller is National Fire Chiefs Council Limited.

The policy describes the standards that users are expected to observe when using these facilities and ensures that users are aware of the legal and other consequences attached to the inappropriate use of the facilities, including potential application of disciplinary procedures. The policy establishes a framework within which users of these facilities can apply self-regulation to their use of the facilities.

The policy is designed to advise users that their usage of Workplace facilities will be monitored. The policy also specifies the actions that the NFCC will take in the event of the investigation of complaints received from both internal and external sources, about any unacceptable use of NFCC Workplace facilities.

Be mindful that you are using the system in a professional capacity and must be identified as an employee of your professional organisation. Be aware this system is used by Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) and a number of agreed external stakeholders.

### Access to systems

1. You will not share your access information with any other individual, attempt to impersonate another individual or falsely claim to represent a person or organisation. Doing so will result in your removal from the groups.
2. It is your responsibility as the individual allocated with access to NFCC Workplace facilities to ensure that, as the sole user, your login and password is not shared with anyone else and that your device is locked if it is left unattended. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of how to lock your device.
3. Any activity carried out whilst logged in to a system is the responsibility of the individual allocated with that login.

4. You must ensure that when replying to messages or posting in the group where there are multiple users, that the content is suitable for all recipients.
5. Do not use the groups for commercial gain or any form of personal financial gain. This includes but is not limited to advertising or promoting chargeable products or services.
6. Usage must not be of a nature that competes or conflicts with obligations to the NFCC.

### **System Integrity and Availability**

The NFCC Workplace platform must not be used for activities such as transmitting, retrieving, creating, downloading, uploading, displaying, accessing or storing of any 'unsuitable' messages, attachments, web pages, communications, documents or media that are:

1. The transmission of unsolicited commercial or advertising material, chain letters, press releases or other junk-mail of any kind;
2. The unauthorised transmission to a third party of confidential material concerning the activities of the NFCC;
3. The transmission of material that infringes the copyright of another person, including intellectual property rights;
4. The deliberate unauthorised access to services and facilities;
5. The unauthorised provision of access to NFCC Workplace and facilities by third parties;
6. Activities that unreasonably waste staff effort or networked resources, or activities that unreasonably serve to deny service to other users;
7. Activities that corrupt or destroy other users' data;
8. Activities that disrupt the work of others; or
9. Allowing confidential content to be read by third parties by leaving a display screen in full view.

### **Content**

Do not submit content that may be confidential, defamatory, unlawful, harassing, abusive, threatening, harmful, pornographic, obscene, profane, sexually orientated, political, likely to cause offense, breach copyright, condone or incite illegal activity, could prejudice court proceedings or break a court injunction.

## Definitions

1. Harassing - harassment is unwanted conduct which is designed or likely to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety. This includes abuse, threats, insults and 'jokes' that relate to gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability or other similar matters;
2. Political – political neutrality must be maintained;
3. Illegal – illegal activities include the use of pirated software;
4. Defamatory - defamation is the publication of material which adversely affects the reputation of a person or company;
5. Copyright - copyright means that the owner of such material has the exclusive right to decide how that material might be copied and used. Copyright material may not be sent if the owner's permission has not been obtained;
6. Pornographic or obscene (including glamour) – pornographic or obscene means any material of a sexual or obscene nature. As there can be no possible legitimate business use for accessing or sending sexually explicit or obscene materials at work, the question of whether or not such material is obscene or constitutes pornography is not relevant to the use of NFCC Workplace and all such material is banned; and
7. Offensive - offensive means any material which might reasonably be expected to cause distress to the recipient. This includes hate and discrimination as well as violence.

It is advisable not to submit information that can identify a living individual and therefore might be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018. Some information may already be widely available from other sources about public figures such as the Information Commissioner or government ministers but please be mindful and consider privacy expectations before you post content.

Operationally sensitive information should not be posted on the forum including but not limited to references to Bronze, Silver and Gold command structures.

Do not spam or flood the forum. Only submit a comment once to each group. Do not resubmit the same, or similar, comments. Keep the number of comments you submit on a topic at a reasonable level. Multiple comments from the same individual, or a small number of individuals, may discourage others from contributing. Please keep your comments relevant to the discussion topic.

You must not advertise non-sector related [job postings](#) in Workplace groups.

You must not advertise chargeable events in Workplace groups. On occasions when events or courses are available to fire service staff which either benefit learning or Continuing Professional Development you must seek prior [approval from NFCC](#) to offer spaces on Workplace.

## Monitoring

NFCC will maintain appropriate monitoring arrangements in relation to the NFCC Workplace, and these will apply to all users. These arrangements may include checking the contents of and, in some instances, recording messages for the purpose of:

- Establishing the existence of facts relevant to the NFCC's business;
- Ascertaining or demonstrating standards which ought to be achieved by those using the facilities;
- Preventing or detecting crime;
- Ensuring effective operation of NFCC Workplace;
- Detecting or investigating unauthorised or inappropriate use of Workplace facilities.

Indications of non-compliance with this policy will be referred to individual fire and rescue services by the NFCC Support Team for further consideration and action if required within their own organisational policies.

Publication of some materials will be a criminal offence, in which case the issue will be reported to the Police for them to take appropriate action.

It should be noted that the role of the NFCC Support Teams in any investigation will be solely that of providing technical advice and factual information to the investigating party.

### **Brief outline of some of the legal consequences of misusing NFCC Workplace**

**Intellectual property:** Anyone who uses any materials that infringe the intellectual property rights of a third party may be liable to that third party if such use is not authorised by them.

**Obscenity:** A criminal offence is committed if a person publishes any material which is pornographic, excessively violent or which comes under the provisions of the Obscene Publications Act 1959. Similarly, the Protection of Children Act 1978 makes it an offence to publish or distribute obscene material of a child.

**Defamation:** As a form of publication, posting messages/comments is within the scope of legislation relating to libel where a statement or opinion is published which adversely affects the reputation of a person, group of people or an organisation. Legal responsibility for the transmission of any defamatory, obscene or rude remarks which discredit an identifiable individual or organisation will rest mainly with the sender of the e-mail or message and may lead to substantial financial penalties being imposed.

Data Protection: Processing personal information (including photographs) which contains personal data about a living identifiable individual such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, must be in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. Any use of personal data beyond that registered with the Information Commissioner (Data Protection) will be illegal.

Discrimination: Any material disseminated which is discriminatory or encourages discrimination may be unlawful under the Equalities Act 2010 where it involves discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, age or disability.

Where there is evidence of a criminal offence, the issue will be reported to the Police for them to take appropriate action. The NFCC will co-operate with the Police and other appropriate external agencies in the investigation of alleged offences.

Any user deemed to have wilfully breached the rules will be removed from the NFCC Workplace platform.