



EDITORIAL & CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. Background

1.1 Editorial

As a creator, broadcaster, and publisher of opinion and topical/factual content, SEG has an obligation to be impartial. The implication of this is that whilst individual items of content can take a particular perspective on an issue, SEG must be able to demonstrate that it has provided its audience with a range of different perspectives on an issue being considered.

A genuine commitment to this key principle will ensure that audience's can read and hear a broad range of viewpoints and this assists with allaying any criticism that SEG unfairly favours one perspective over another.

This is not to suggest that we should be neutral on every issue or that there is no room for the expression of strong opinions, however, our primary obligation is to ensure that all reasonable points of view are represented.

There should be no confusion in the audience's mind about what is being offered, the reporting of factual information on the one hand and presentation of opinion on the other.

The intention of this policy is to offer advice and a framework to assist on air presenters, contributors and support staff to make judgements whilst acknowledging that issues and details may differ from case to case.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

These principles will provide you with guidance to follow when performing your duties, to enable you to achieve the highest possible standards in meeting both your and SEG's obligations, and to provide you with a clear understanding of corporate governance practices. More specifically, these cover the following obligations:

- i. act in good faith in the best interests of SEG and for a proper purpose;
- ii. avoid any potential conflict of interest;
- iii. exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence;
- iv. do not make improper use of information; and
- v. do not make improper use of your position.

2. Key Values

- Honesty
- Fairness
- Independence
- Respect



3 Editorial Responsibility

3.1 Content

- a) On air presenters and support staff are responsible both for making content and for exercising editorial judgement. If a problem arises or there is any doubt, then you must consult with the next higher level of management. If you don't refer the issue upwards, then you are ultimately responsible for the editorial decisions made.
- b) If content is controversial or likely to have a significant impact, then the next higher level of management should be notified in advance even where editorial guidance is not being sought.
- c) Any matter with legal implications must be referred to the next level of management for advice.
- d) SEG seeks to avoid errors, however we will not hesitate to admit and correct a significant error when it is established that one was made. Where a correction is necessary, it will be made in an appropriate manner as soon as reasonably practicable.
- e) With respect to print and online stories on, we publish these in good faith believing them to be a true and accurate report of events that the time of publication.
- f) Every reasonable effort, in the circumstances, must be made to ensure that factual content of programs and publications is accurate and in context.
- g) Balance should be sought but may not always be achieved within a single program or article. It may well be achieved as soon as reasonably practicable and in an appropriate manner. It is not essential to give all sides equal time and as far as possible, present the principal relevant view on matters of importance.
- h) The media do not have an unrestricted right to say what they like. Laws relating to copyright, defamation, contempt of court, racial vilification etc apply. All on air presenters, contributors, and support staff are required to have a good working knowledge of how the law does or might apply to their work.

3.2 Conduct

- a) Be questioning.
- b) Exercise civility unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.
- c) Exercise reasonable respect for privacy.
- d) Under no circumstances should you initiate or participate in a "personal" attack on an individual.
- e) SEG does not agree to "deals" with interviewees who seek to place caveats on particular subject areas. The interviewee is free to say "no comment".
- f) Coarse language is permitted provided it is not used gratuitously and can be justified in the context of news and current affairs reporting.
- g) SEG will advise anyone who requests a right of reply in relation to content, with the avenues available to that person. A person exercising such a right of reply will not be excluded from making a complaint about the content in question.



4. Conflicts of Interest

- a) There should be no conflict between your private interests and your official duties as an air presenter, contributor, or member of the support staff.
- b) Your outside activities, including financial, personal and social should not compromise SEG and you are expected to arrange your affairs in a manner that will prevent any conflict of interest,
- c) At all times, you should consider whether there is a potential, actual, or perceived conflict. If in doubt seek advice from the next higher level of management.
- d) To prevent conflicts of interest, the next higher level of management must be told about any associations or interests which an individual has that may conflict with their editorial or other role responsibilities such as sales and finance etc.
- e) Following a declaration, the next higher level of management will decide an appropriate course of action:
 - To approve or accept a proposed activity; or
 - That no further action is required.
- f) In determining the appropriate course of action, consideration will be given to the following:
 - – Will the activity, association or interest damage the integrity of SEG;
 - – Will the activity, association or interest damage the ability of the individual to do his or her job;
 - – The nature of the outside activity, association, or interest;
 - – The damage that could be done to the individual/s or SEG's integrity if the outside activity, association, or interest is discovered.

5. Summary

In summary, SEG adopts a "Five Point Code of Conduct" to:

- a) Be factual – do your research, understand the issues and rules, correct immediately any mistakes including those made by talk-back callers / guests, avoid beat-ups and don't exaggerate.
- b) Be balanced – give every party the chance to voice their case, when giving an editorial opinion seek a right of reply.
- c) Be respectful – no personal attacks, avoid "ambushing" interviewees and don't use the medium as a "vehicle" to air "dirty laundry".
- d) Be lawful – no defamation, operate in delay and dump if needed, seek management approval of any content if in doubt.
- e) Be honest – no conflicts of interest, declare any potential conflicts.