

Whistle blowing policy and procedures

1. Policy Statement and objective

- 1.1. ICMC is a Catholic organization working with and on behalf of forcibly uprooted and migrant populations and is committed to serve humbly and professionally, striving towards excellence and working with integrity, dignity, honesty, impartiality and transparency. (cfr. The ICMC Code of Conduct)
- 1.2. The present whistle blowing policy intends to help employees who have significant concerns over any wrong-doing related to unlawful conduct, unethical behaviour, procedural and financial malpractice within ICMC activities or relevant to ICMC activities.
- 1.3. The policy also provides ICMC employees with protection against victimisation or abuses should they reasonably and in good faith report such concerns.
- 1.4. This policy was approved by the Governing Committee during their 108th meeting in July 2009. The Committee reserves its right to amend the policy and its procedure as deemed necessary.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Whistle blowing means a disclosure of information made by one or more ICMC staff members or partners who reasonably believe that ill behaviour is ongoing, took place in the past or is likely to happen in a nearby future. It mainly concerns
 - a failure to comply with a legal obligation including the breach of a contractual or legal obligation, statutory or administrative requirements, suspected fraud and malpractice.
 - a failure to comply with internal ICMC rules, its code of conduct, general and operational procedures, financial regulations including any form of improper action or unethical conduct
 - any deliberate concealment of information tending to indicate any of the above.
- 2.2. It is the duty of all staff members to report any breach of the Organization's regulations and rules and to cooperate with duly authorized audits, inspections, investigations and inquiries that may be organized in this respect.

3. Scope of application

- The policy applies to all people who work for, collaborate with or advise the ICMC and its scope of interest includes all of the organizations' actions and decisions.
- The policy is not intended to be used for personal grievances or personal complaints.

- Disciplinary action will be taken against allegations maliciously made or known to be false. Such allegations will be regarded as gross misconduct.

4. Protection of the whistle blower against retaliation

- There will be no action taken against a whistle blower if his/her disclosure is made in good faith, if in other words he/she reasonably believes that allegations made are substantially true and if he/ she is not acting for personal gain.
- The procedure will guarantee the non-disclosure of the whistle blower to avoid possible victimisation or retaliation.
- Any retaliation against the whistle blower will be reported in the same way as the whistle blowing but sent directly to the Secretary General and the Director/ Head of the department involved.

5. Who to report to?

- As far as possible, concerns should be raised and resolved at the lowest appropriate level in the organisational and management structure. Staff concerns should therefore be first raised with the ICMC line manager. If for any reason this would be found difficult, the matter should be reported to one of the three senior staff in HQ (Director of Finance, Director of Operations, Head of Policy).
- If, exceptionally, the disclosure is about one of the above named senior staff, the wrongful conduct will be reported directly to the Secretary General and one of the three senior staff.
- If, exceptionally the disclosure is about the Secretary General, the wrong doing should be reported to the President and the Vice president or any other member of the Governing Committee who will discuss the issue and acknowledge receipt of the report.
- Concerns expressed by ICMC Council members and Governing Committee Members are sent to the President and the vice president.
- If exceptionally the disclosure is about the president or the Vice President, the wrong doing should be reported to two members of the Governing Committee who will discuss the issue and acknowledge receipt to the whistle blower.

5.1. Steps in the procedure

- All whistle blowing messages will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and actively investigated.
- Anonymous whistle blowing messages will be accepted but only taken into account if evidence or clear indicators for the failure are provided.
- All whistle blowing messages will be acknowledged and a receipt will be sent by him/her who received it within two weeks of reception. This message will contain indications on how contacts with the whistle blower, if assessed useful, will be established, whether further assistance or information may be wanted and whether further investigation will take place or why not.

- No action will be taken without hearing the incriminated person in his/her reasoning and or motivations. The line manager will organize this first exchange and report on the conversation and the suggested ordinary action.
- In general, the whistle blower will be informed on the closing of the case, not on the actions taken.
- If after the closure, the whistle blower believes the concern has not been satisfactorily settled, the whistle blower may choose to inform the Secretary General and the President. He /she will do this by means of a confidential letter clearly explaining the steps taken, the answer obtained and the reasons for his/ her discontent. If, exceptionally, the wrong doing would concern one of these persons, at least two Governing Committee Members will be informed.

6. Evaluation of the policy

This policy will be evaluated within a year on its effectiveness and the ICMC Governing Committee maintains its right to amend the policy and its procedures as deemed necessary.

Johan KETELERS
Secretary General

and approved by the Governing Committee
July 2009