
ANNEXURE 1 – SUMMARY OF PROTECTIONS UNDER THE CORPORATIONS ACT

The Corporations Act sets out disclosures that are protected under the Corporations Act if certain conditions are met as well as the protections available to protected disclosures. **A summary of such protections (as at the date of this policy) is set out below but you should refer to the Corporations Act itself for a full understanding of the conditions and protections available and the relevant definitions. You can also visit the ASIC website for more information.**

1. **PROTECTED DISCLOSURES**

Disclosures will be protected if:

- (b) the discloser is an **Eligible Whistleblower**, being an individual who is, or has been, any of the following:
 - (i) an officer or employee of the Company (eg current and former employees who are permanent, part-time, fixed-term or temporary, interns, secondees, managers and directors);
 - (ii) an individual who supplies services or goods to the Company (whether paid or unpaid) or an employee of a person that supplies goods or services to the Company (eg current and former contractors, consultants, service providers and business partners);
 - (iii) an associate of the Company;
 - (iv) a relative, dependant or dependant of the spouse of any individual referred to at (i) to (iii) above; or
 - (v) any prescribed individual under the Corporations Act;
- (b) **and** the disclosure is made to:
 - (i) the ASIC, APRA or a prescribed Commonwealth authority; or
 - (ii) an **Eligible Recipient**, being:
 - (A) an officer or senior manager of the Company or a related body corporate of the Company;
 - (B) an auditor (or a member of the audit team) of the Company or a related body corporate of the Company;
 - (C) an actuary of the Company or a related body corporate of the Company;
 - (D) a person authorised by the Company to receive disclosures that qualify for protection under the Corporations Act;
 - (E) anyone prescribed under the regulations as being an eligible recipient; or
 - (iii) a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation in relation to the whistleblower provisions in the Corporations Act (even in the event such legal practitioner concludes that a disclosure does not relate to a disclosable matter under the Corporations Act);
- (c) **and** the disclosure relates to a **Disclosable Matter** in that the discloser has reasonable grounds to suspect that the information concerns misconduct, or an improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to the Company or a related body corporate of the Company. This includes any suspicion that the Company or its body corporate, or an officer or employee of the Company or its body corporate has engaged in conduct that:
 - (i) constitutes an offence against, or a contravention of, a provision of the Corporations Act, the *Australian Securities Investments Commission Act 2001*, the *Banking Act 1959*, the *Financial Sector (Collection of Data) Act 2001*, the *Insurance Act 1973*, the *Life Insurance Act 1995*, the *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009*, the *Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993*, or an instrument made under any such Act; or
 - (ii) constitutes an offence against any other law of the Commonwealth of Australia that is punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more; or

- (iii) represents a danger to the public or the financial system; or
- (iv) is prescribed by regulation.

(Note that the term “misconduct” is defined in the Corporations Act to include fraud, negligence, default, breach of trust and breach of duty.)

(d) **Public interest and Emergency Disclosures**

Emergency or public interest disclosures (as defined under the Corporations Act) will also be protected if made to Journalists or Parliamentarians (each as defined in the Corporations Act) in extreme cases (excluding tax matters) in circumstances where at least 90 days have passed since an earlier protected disclosure has been made to ASIC, APRA or another Commonwealth body without reasonable steps having been taken to address the misconduct, or there will be substantial and imminent danger to someone's health or safety. Note that before such public interest disclosure is made, the discloser must have given written notice to the relevant regulatory body. Such notice must include sufficient information to identify the previous disclosure and must state that the discloser intends to make the public disclosure if appropriate steps are not taken.

Disclosers are advised to contact the Company's Whistleblower Protection Officer or an independent legal adviser to ensure they understand the criteria for making an emergency or public interest disclosure that qualifies for protection.

(e) **Personal work-related grievances**

Personal work-related grievances (as defined in the Corporations Act) will not be protected to the extent that the information disclosed does not concern a contravention, or an alleged contravention, of the prohibition on victimisation under the Corporations Act that involves detriment caused to the discloser or a threat made to the discloser.

However, a personal work-related grievance will still qualify for protection if:

- (i) it includes information about misconduct, or information about misconduct includes or is accompanied by a personal work-related grievance (mixed report);
- (ii) the Company has breached employment or other laws punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more, engaged in conduct that represents a danger to the public, or the disclosure relates to information that suggests misconduct beyond the Discloser's personal circumstances;
- (iii) the Discloser suffers from or is threatened with detriment for making the disclosure; or
- (iv) the Discloser seeks legal advice or legal representation about the operation of the whistleblower protections under the Corporations Act.

2. **PROTECTIONS AVAILABLE**

(a) **Protected disclosures will be given the following protections under the Corporations Act**

Protected disclosures not actionable

- (i) the discloser will not be subject to any civil, criminal or administrative liability (including disciplinary action) for making the disclosure; and
- (ii) no contractual or other remedy may be enforced, and no contractual or other right may be exercised against the discloser on the basis of the disclosure; and
- (iii) if the disclosure qualified for protection under the Corporations Act (including public interest and emergency disclosure), the information is not admissible as evidence against the discloser in criminal proceedings for the imposition of a penalty, other than proceedings in respect of the falsity of the information;

Victimisation Prohibited

Anyone who causes or threatens to cause detriment (as defined in the Corporations Act) to a discloser or another person in the belief or suspicion that a report has been made, or may have been made, proposes to or could be made, may be guilty of an offence and may be liable for damages or subject to a court order. Examples of possible court orders include, but are not limited to:

- (i) requiring compensation for loss or damage;
- (ii) an injunction to prevent, stop or remedy the effects of detrimental conduct;
- (iii) an order requiring an apology for engaging in detrimental conduct;
- (iv) if the detrimental conduct wholly or partly resulted in the termination of an employee's employment, reinstatement of their position; and
- (v) any other order the court thinks appropriate.

Identifying information not to be disclosed

Subject to applicable laws:

- (i) a discloser's identity cannot be disclosed to a Court or tribunal except where considered necessary; and
- (ii) the person receiving the report commits an offence if they disclose the substance of the report or the discloser's identity, without the discloser's consent, to anyone except an authorised disclosure to ASIC, APRA, the AFP or a lawyer for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or representation in relation to the report.

Costs of proceedings

A discloser may not need to pay costs of legal proceedings unless they have acted vexatiously or without reasonable cause and the unreasonable act caused the other party to incur the costs.

(b) Confidentiality

In relation to a protected disclosure, the identity of a discloser (and any information likely to lead to the identification of a discloser) must be kept confidential unless expressly authorised in writing.

A disclosure of the discloser's identity will be authorised if made:

- (i) to ASIC, APRA or a member of the AFP;
- (ii) to a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation in relation to the whistleblower provisions in the Corporations Act;
- (iii) to a person prescribed by the regulations of the Corporations Act for this purpose;
- (iv) with the express written consent of the discloser; or
- (v) by ASIC, APRA or a member of the AFP to a Commonwealth or State or Territory authority for the purpose of assisting the authority in the performance of its functions or duties.

However, such confidentiality does not apply where the disclosure is not of the identity of the discloser and is reasonably necessary for the purposes of investigating a matter and all reasonable steps have been taken to reduce the risk that the discloser will be identified.

(c) Timing

A discloser will qualify for protection from the time they make their disclosure, regardless of whether, at this time, the discloser or recipient recognises that the disclosure qualifies for protection.

(d) **No immunity from misconduct**

Note that the protections do not grant immunity for any misconduct a discloser has engaged in that is revealed in their disclosure.