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## ANNEXURE 2 – SUMMARY OF PROTECTIONS UNDER THE TAXATION ADMINISTRATION ACT

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The Taxation Act sets out disclosures that are protected under the Taxation Administration Act if certain conditions are met as well as 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 Taxation Administration Act itself for a full understanding of the conditions and protections available and the relevant definitions. You can also visit the ATO website for more information.**

### 1. PROTECTED DISCLOSURES

Disclosures will be protected if:

- (a) the discloser is an **Eligible Whistleblower**, being an individual who is, or has been, any of the following:
  - (i) an officer (within the meaning of the Corporations Act) or employee of the Company;
  - (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;
  - (iii) an associate (within the meaning of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936*) of the Company;
  - (iv) a spouse, child or dependant of any individual referred to in (i) to (iii) above or of such an individual's spouse; or
  - (v) any prescribed individual under the regulations under the Taxation Act;
- (b) **and** the disclosure is made to:
  - (i) the Commissioner **and** the discloser consider that the information may assist the Commissioner to perform his or her functions or duties under a taxation law in relation to the Company or an associate of the Company; or
  - (ii) an **Eligible Recipient**, being:
    - (A) a director, secretary or senior manager of the Company;
    - (B) an employee or officer of the Company who has functions or duties that relate to the tax affairs (within the meaning of the Taxation Act) of the Company;
    - (C) the Company's auditor (or a member of that audit team);
    - (D) a registered tax agent or BAS agent (within the meaning of the *Tax Agent Services Act 2009*) who provides tax agent services or BAS services to the Company;
    - (E) a person authorised by the Company to receive disclosures that qualify for protection under the Taxation Act; or
    - (F) anyone prescribed under the Taxation Act regulations as being an Eligible Recipient;

**and** the discloser has reasonable grounds to suspect that the information indicates misconduct, or an improper state of affairs or circumstances, in relation to the tax affairs of the Company or an associate of the Company ("tax affairs" means affairs relating to any tax imposed by or under, or assessed or collected under, a law administered by the Commissioner);

**and** the discloser considers that the information may assist the Eligible Recipient to perform functions or duties in relation to the tax affairs of the Company or an associate of the Company; or
  - (iii) a legal practitioner for the purposes of obtaining legal advice or legal representation in relation to the whistleblower provisions in the Taxation Act.

## 2. **PROTECTIONS AVAILABLE**

### (a) **Protected Disclosures will be given the following protections under the Taxation 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;
- (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 was a disclosure of information to the Commissioner, 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;

(Note that in relation to (i) to (iii) above, the discloser has qualified privilege in respect of the disclosure and a contract to which the person is a party may not be terminated on the basis that the disclosure constitutes a breach of the contract.)

#### **Victimisation prohibited**

Anyone who causes or threatens to cause detriment (as defined in the Taxation 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**

- (i) a discloser's identity (or information likely to lead to the identity of the discloser) 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 the Commissioner, 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 the 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 authorised.

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

- (i) to the Commissioner 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 Taxation Act;
- (iii) to a person prescribed by the regulations of the Taxation Act for this purpose; or

(iv) with the express written consent of the discloser.

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.