

Statement of Business Ethics

This Statement has been written as a guide for all Tenderers undertaking business with Regional Procurement.

It outlines the ethical standards of Regional Procurement and our expectation that service providers will comply with these standards in all dealings with us and our member councils. It also outlines what clients can expect when working with Regional Procurement.

Our procurement policies and business ethics are designed to be consistent with Government Policies, Acts and Regulations and we also aim to be an example to the public through our own work practices and standards.

Regional Procurement staff are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical conduct, consistent with the positions of trust they hold. We expect no less of the suppliers that are providing products and services to our member councils.

This Statement is designed to ensure that business relationships with Regional Procurement are fair and productive for all.

If you require additional information about this Statement or any ethical issue, please contact Regional Procurement via the contact details listed at the end of this document.

Peter Salafia
Manager

Our key business principles

Our goal is to increase market share to provide cost effective tendering and procurement solutions to our clients. Consolidating our position as the provider of choice for contract services to our existing and new clients is paramount to the success of this Initiative.

Regional Procurement, a division of Strategic Services Australia (formerly known as Hunter Councils Ltd), was established in 2004 in response to a need for a collaborative approach to regional tendering and contracting. It is estimated that Regional Procurement **clients** contribute upwards of 200 million dollars to the economy through their tenders and contracts.

The purpose of Regional Procurement is to:

- Minimise the administrative impost on member councils caused by annual or bi-annual tender processes.
- Enable companies to access multiple councils through one tender process.
- Build confidence in our Tender processes in particular, through transparent tender outcomes that are supported by member councils.
- Provide a central contact point between suppliers and member councils.

Our commitment to Clients

Regional Procurement will provide efficiencies in both financial and administrative areas by adopting a centralised approach to common use period contracts and services.

We will deliver value to our **clients** and achieve economies of scale savings by:

- Providing a service to member councils that will deliver the same or better outcome to what could have been achieved by councils without the need to invest valuable resources.
- Reducing council's administration of the tender process as we obtain and collate all preliminary information, prepare and pay for tender advertisements and formulate the tender specification in consultation with relevant council officers.
- Forming a tender evaluation panel consisting of relevant council officers and a Regional Procurement representative. This in itself saves the member councils time and money in that a dedicated group of people are focussed on obtaining an outcome that best serves all concerned parties.
- Presenting a generic tender evaluation report to each member council to expedite the acceptance process.
- Providing an outcome that offers member councils the security of knowing that their best interests have been taken in to consideration.

Regional Procurement Management and staff offer:

- Demonstrated commitment to Local Government
- Extensive supply management experience
- Industry knowledge and experience
- Commitment to Quality Assurance and Probity Practice
- A focus on client satisfaction and support.

What we ask of you

We require all providers of goods and services to observe the following principles when doing business with Regional Procurement.

- Provide accurate and reliable advice and information when required.
- Declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of a conflict.
- Act ethically, fairly and honestly in all dealings with Regional Procurement.
- Take all reasonable measures to prevent the disclosure of confidential information.
- Refrain from engaging in any form of collusive practice, including offering our employees inducements or incentives designed to improperly influence the conduct of duties.
- Refrain from discussing Regional Procurement business information in the media without first seeking permission from us.
- Communicate with Regional Procurement in a clear, direct and accountable way to minimise the risk or perception of inappropriate influence being brought to bear on the business relationship.
- Respect our intellectual property rights and formally negotiate any access, licence or use of intellectual property.
- Assist us in preventing unethical practices in business relationships.

Why compliance is important

By complying with this Statement of Business Ethics you will be able to advance your business objectives and interests in a fair and ethical manner. As all suppliers of goods or services to our member councils are required to comply with this Statement, compliance will not disadvantage you in any way.

Complying with this statement will also prepare your business for dealing with the ethical requirements of other public sector agencies, should you choose to do business with them.

You should be aware of the consequences of not complying with these ethical requirements when doing business with us.

Demonstrated corrupt or unethical conduct could lead to:

- Termination of contracts
- Loss of future work
- Loss of reputation
- Matters being referred to ICAC for criminal investigation

What you can expect from us

Responsible Business Practice

Regional Procurement is committed to the practice of responsible business. This includes:

- **Financial sustainability**
To operate our business in an economically sustainable manner.
- **Engagement with Member Councils**
To actively engage with our member councils.
- **Maintaining a Supportive Workplace**
To provide a workplace that supports workers and employee well being and inclusiveness.
To be aware of social diversity, professional development and work/life balance whilst providing full entitlement to employment rights.
- **Ethical Governance**
To ensure transparency, risk management, due diligence and effective codes of conduct are adhered to across the organisation.

Our management and staff abide by and maintain the following ethical guidelines:

- Avoid the intent and appearance of unethical or compromising practice in relationships, actions and communications.
- Demonstrate loyalty to the employer by diligently following the lawful instructions of the employer, using reasonable care and only the authority granted.
- Refrain from any private business or professional activity that would create a conflict between personal interests and the interests of the employer.
- Refrain from soliciting or accepting money, loans, credits or prejudicial discounts and the acceptances of gifts, entertainment, favours or services from present or potential suppliers that might influence, or appear to influence, procurement decisions.
- Handle confidential or proprietary information belonging to employers or suppliers with due care and proper consideration of ethical and legal ramifications and government regulations.
- Promote positive supplier relationships through courtesy and impartiality in all phases of the procurement process,
- Refrain from reciprocal agreements that restrain competition.
- Know and obey the letter and spirit of the laws governing the procurement function and remain alert to the legal ramifications of procurement decisions.
- Enhance the proficiency and stature of the procurement profession by acquiring and maintaining current knowledge and the highest standards of ethical behaviour

All Regional Procurement activities are guided by the following core business principles:

- Potential suppliers will be treated with impartiality and fairness and given equal access to information and opportunities to submit tender submissions when a tender is called.
- Procurement activities and decisions will be fully and clearly documented to provide an effective audit trail and to allow for effective review of contracts.
- Regional Procurement will take all reasonable measures to prevent the disclosure of confidential or proprietary information.
- Regional Procurement will ensure that all policies, procedures and practices relating to tendering, contracting and the purchase of goods and services are consistent with best practice and the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Compliance with relevant Codes of Conduct, Guidelines and Regulations

Our staff are bound by a comprehensive Code of Conduct and abide by the following Governments Acts, Legislation and Regulations that govern our business and practices.

When doing business with suppliers of goods or services Regional Procurement staff are accountable for their actions and are expected to:

- Use public resources effectively and efficiently
- Deal fairly, honestly and ethically with all individuals and organisations
- Avoid any conflicts of interest (whether real or perceived)

We abide by the following Guidelines and Acts

- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Part 7 - Tendering
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- Tendering Guidelines for NSW Local Government, NSW Division of Local Government, October 2009
- NSW Government Code of Practice for Procurement, January 2005

Incentives, gifts and benefits

Regional Procurement expects its staff to decline offers of gifts, benefits, travel, accommodation, hospitality or other incentives. Cash gifts are never acceptable. Suppliers should refrain from offering any such 'incentives' to our staff.

Reporting conflicts of interest and corrupt behaviour

All Regional Procurement staff are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest. This requirement extends to all of our business partners, contractors and suppliers.

Employees reporting corrupt conduct or maladministration are protected by the Protected Disclosures Act. This Act protects public officials who disclose corruption and/or related matters from reprisal or detrimental action and ensures disclosures are properly investigated and dealt with.

Communication between parties

All communication should be clear, direct and accountable to minimise the risk or perception of inappropriate influence being brought to bear on the business relationship.

Use of Regional Procurement equipment, resources and information

All equipment, resources and information should be used only for its proper official purpose.

Confidentiality and intellectual property rights

All Regional Procurement information should be treated as confidential unless otherwise indicated.

In business relationships with Regional Procurement, parties will respect each other's intellectual property rights and will formally negotiate any access, licence or use of intellectual property.

Who to contact

For enquiries regarding this Statement please contact:

Mr Peter Salafia
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For all concerns regarding the management of Regional Procurement or to provide information regarding suspected corrupt or unethical conduct, please forward details in writing to:

CEO
Strategic Services Australia
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Thornton NSW 2322.

For all general enquiries:

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