



Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy

General

Alcohol and drug misuse affects performance, behaviour and relationships at work and at home. There is overwhelming evidence of links between alcohol misuse and social and psychological disturbances, medical problems, accidents and violence. The Company has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work.

This policy is designed primarily to:

- Explain the Company's approach to alcohol and drug consumption and attendant problems at work
- Raise awareness of the risks and prevent addiction
- Safeguard staff from the hazards of such abuse
- Ensure the early identification of problems
- Provide advice and support to staff in overcoming their problems

Our Position

The policy makes a distinction between patterns of alcohol and drug misuse which point to addiction, such as drinking or drug-taking to excess continually, regularly or in intense episodes, and, on the other hand, random instances of drug-taking or excessive drinking which affect work. The Company regards alcohol and drug misuse of the first kind as first and foremost a health problem and its approach will be informed by this understanding. Other forms of drink and drug consumption which affect work will be treated as conduct or performance issues and dealt with according to the disciplinary rules and procedures of the Company.

Whilst this policy is concerned principally with excessive use of alcohol (and drugs) leading to work-related problems, it also recognises that alcohol (which is a depressant) and other drugs, even when taken in moderation, can impair performance and behaviour at work. The policy draws attention to over-the-counter medicine that may make employees drowsy; this type of medicine should be avoided for those involved in engineering / warehousing activities, or those driving for work.

In the engineering and warehousing environment, on the grounds of safety, the Company position is to not permit any employee to commence work whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol, especially where as a direct consequence, the safety at work of the individual or others is put at risk. Examples include: driving, use of dangerous or potentially dangerous work equipment, working at heights, handling loads. This applies also to those using information systems that hold sensitive data and where error could damage the interests of the Company or part of it.

Purely to protect workers, the company definition of 'under the influence of alcohol' may be observed, for example, by a line manager smelling alcohol on the breath of an operative. This will be deemed an appropriate test on the grounds of health and safety.

Misuse of Drugs

The Company is obliged to comply with the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Under the Act it is an offence for anyone who occupies or is involved in the management of premises knowingly to allow certain activities to take place in those premises. Possession or supply of any controlled drugs is a criminal offence.

Confidentiality

Consent will be sought before breaking confidentiality, except in certain very exceptional circumstances, such as risk of serious harm to oneself or to others. Non-confidential and generalised information will be used to assist in developing and improving preventative and remedial measures.

Substance in this context includes: illegal drugs such as cannabis, heroin, cocaine, Ecstasy, amphetamine; controlled prescribed drugs, such as methadone, diamorphine, anabolic steroids; other prescription drugs such as diazepam, temazepam; other substances such as alcohol.

A member of staff who considers that they have an alcohol or drug related problem is encouraged to seek confidential help and advice from one of the following sources:- the HR Department, or their line manager.

Further Information

Employees are not obliged to work with someone who has consumed alcohol or drugs if they consider that by doing so they put themselves or others at risk; anyone in this position should immediately report their concerns to their line manager.

Individuals considered incapable of performing duties safely or competently due to consumption of alcohol or drugs should immediately be removed from duty and the HR Department informed.

Disciplinary Action

If an employee attends work in a condition that they would not be permitted to legally drive, they would be in breach of this policy and may not be permitted to commence work. This may be treated as a disciplinary or performance issue and action could be taken.

Sources of Help

The following may be approached on a confidential basis:

Alcoholics Anonymous (Drinkline) 0800 917 8282

National Drug Line 0800 776 600

Or sources on line, such as; www.talktofrank.com



David Cardwell
Group Managing Director