



# Commissioners' Code of Conduct

June 2019



# Introduction

- 1) The Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise must ensure that Commissioners are supported to make good decisions about the probity of their actions and how those actions might be perceived by others. This Code of Conduct is an important part of that support. The Code reflects best practice and the Commission's values. It sets out the standards of behaviour that are expected of Commissioners. Following the advice and requirements in this Code will help avoid misunderstandings about actions or behaviour.

## Key principles of public life

### Selflessness

- 2) Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### Integrity

- 3) Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### Objectivity

- 4) Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### Accountability

- 5) Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### Openness

- 6) Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### Honesty

- 7) Holders of public office should be truthful.

### Leadership

- 8) Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## **General Conduct**

### **Use of Public Funds**

- 9) You have a duty to ensure the safeguarding of public funds and the proper custody of assets which have been publicly funded.
- 10) You must carry out these obligations responsibly – that is, take appropriate measures to ensure that the body uses resources efficiently, economically and effectively, avoiding waste and extravagance. It will always be an improper use of public funds for public bodies to employ consultants or other companies to lobby Parliament, Government or political parties.

### **Allowances**

- 11) You must comply with the rules set by the board and the public body regarding remuneration, allowances and expenses. It is your responsibility to ensure compliance with all relevant HM Revenue and Customs' requirements concerning payments, including expenses.

### **Gifts and Hospitality**

- 12) You must not accept any gifts or hospitality which might, or might reasonably appear to, compromise your personal judgement or integrity or place you under an improper obligation.
- 13) You must never canvass or seek gifts or hospitality.
- 14) You must comply with the rules set by the body on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality. You should inform the Secretary to the Commission of any offer of gifts or hospitality and ensure that, where a gift or hospitality is accepted, this is recorded in a public register in line with the rules set by the body.
- 15) You are responsible for your decisions on the acceptance of gifts or hospitality and for ensuring that any gifts or hospitality accepted can stand up to public scrutiny and do not bring your public office and the public body into disrepute.

### **Use of Official Resources**

- 16) You must not misuse official resources for personal gain or for political purposes. Deployment of such resources must be in line with the body's rules on their usage.

### **Use of Official Information**

- 17) You must not misuse information gained in the course of your public service for personal gain or for political purpose.
- 18) You must not disclose any information which is confidential in nature or which is provided in confidence without authority. This duty continues to apply after you have left ICCAN.

### **Political Activity**

- 19) In your public role, you should be, and be seen to be, politically impartial. You should not occupy a paid party political post or hold a particularly sensitive or high-profile role in a political party. You should abstain from all controversial political activity and comply with the principles set out in Cabinet Office rules on attendance at party conferences and on conduct during the period prior to elections and referendums, whether local or national.
- 20) On matters directly related to the work of the body, you should not make political statements or engage in any other political activity.
- 21) You should inform the Head Commissioner and/or the parent/sponsor department before undertaking any significant political activity. Subject to the above, you may engage in political activity but should, at all times, remain conscious of your responsibilities as a Commissioner and exercise proper discretion.

## **Employment and Appointments**

- 22) If you wish to take up additional employment or appointments during your term of office, you must inform the Head Commissioner and/or the relevant parent department in advance, and allow them the opportunity to comment. Care should be taken if you accept additional public appointments to ensure that you are not being paid twice from the public purse for the same time.
- 23) On leaving office, you must comply with the rules of the body on the acceptance of future employment or appointments. Each body should have its own rules on this.

## **Conflicts of Interests**

- 24) When accepting an appointment to the public body you should consider if any conflicts of interest arise from your private interests or by virtue of any other roles you hold. You should consider, with advice from the appointing department how these should best be managed, and agree these with the organisation.
- 25) You must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between your public duties and your private interests, financial or otherwise.
- 26) You must comply with the rules of the body on handling conflicts of interests. As a minimum, these will require you to declare publicly, usually in the body's register of interests, any private financial or non-financial interests of your own, or of close family members, which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with your public duties. The rules will also require you to remove yourself from the discussion or determination of matters in which you have a financial interest. In matters in which you have a non-financial interest, you should not participate in the discussion or determination of a matter where the interest might suggest a danger of bias.
- 27) It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with the body's rules on handling conflicts of interests, that you comply with these rules and that your entry in the body's public register of members' interests is accurate and up-to-date.

## **Raising Concerns**

- 28) You should ensure that the body has an open, transparent and safe working environment where employees feel able to speak up and raise concerns, and complaints procedures are clearly communicated to them.
- 29) If you have a concern about a possible breach of this Code, a concern that you or any staff of the body are being asked to act in contravention of their own code of conduct, or a concern about misconduct or wrongdoing in any other areas, then you have a responsibility to raise that internally with the chair of the body or the Permanent Secretary of the sponsor department as appropriate.