Australian Government
Defence

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR IGADF STAFF

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Approver	Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force
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Revision History

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF OF THE OFFICE OF THE IGADF

1. As an independent statutory appointment, and head of an integrity agency, the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force's (IGADF) role is to examine the fairness of the military justice system, promote military justice values and be an independent avenue to help when other avenues are not working. The Office of the IGADF (OIGADF) is an integrated workplace within the Defence portfolio encompassing APS staff, ADF members and contractors.

Purpose

2. This Code of Conduct standardises the expectations on all IGADF staff to ensure the highest professional standards and confidence in our work.

3. We routinely deal with people at their most vulnerable and critical moments. The way we respond, communicate, and engage with their concerns, and engage with Defence and its various elements, establishes our credibility, and develops trust that we will impartially examine all matters.

OIGADF values

4. OIGADF values, which build on the values of the Australian Public Service and Defence, guide how IGADF staff are to behave. As an independent office, the four IGADF values that underpin the success of our work are:

Respect

Integrity

Independence

Impartiality

Demonstrating *Respect*

5. Respect can be defined as the humanity of character to value others and treat them with dignity. To uphold the value of respect:

a. We are trauma aware and implement processes that are trauma informed and respect the safety and welfare of individuals participating in our processes.

b. We understand the importance of privacy and confidentiality. People who provide information to us have a right to expect this information will be treated appropriately.

c. We promote diversity of thought, experience and skillsets, and professional expertise within our workforce.

d. We use our knowledge and expertise to deliver a high-quality service and identify opportunities to improve outcomes.

e. We work individually and as a part of one OIGADF team. We engage constructively with our colleagues and accept that collegiate, robust conversations improve the quality of our work.

Demonstrating *Integrity*

6. Integrity is the consistency of character to align thoughts, words, and actions, to do what is right even when it is hard. As a member of OIGADF, we act honestly in the performance of our duties.

a. We are open when making decisions. We give frank, honest advice based on evidence – facts and data. We ensure our advice is practical, relevant, and current.

b. We use our authority in a responsible way. We respect the rights and dignity of those affected by our actions and decisions.

c. We observe the highest standards of integrity in financial matters. We comply with relevant law, policies and procedures concerning procurement, governance and management of finances and contracts.

d. We value and protect the sensitivity of personal information.

e. We comply with legislation, policies, and lawful directions in the performance of our work. We report any behaviours that violate a law, rule, or regulation or that represent corrupt conduct.

f. We advise the IGADF, through our Director, Deputy IGADF or Assistant Secretary as relevant, if we are charged with an offence, or if we become aware that we are under investigation.

Demonstrating *Independence*

7. Independence is about being free of influence in the performance of our duties.

a. We make decisions and provide advice that is free from prejudice, bias and favouritism and that is based on sound judgement.

b. We rely on evidence, established law and facts in exercising judgement.

c. We may consult others but make our decisions free from any external pressure or influence.

Demonstrating *Impartiality*

8. Impartiality is acting fairly by objectively considering all relevant facts and fair criteria.

a. We are conscious of the effect of any real or perceived biases and take steps to avoid that. We are self-aware and seek to identify and understand any unconscious bias we might have.

b. We refuse all gifts and benefits that could be perceived as influencing or undermining the OIGADF or ourselves in line with Defence policies.

Conclusion

9. If we do not consistently demonstrate these values in all that we do, we undermine our work and render meaningless our important responsibilities of ensuring trust and fairness in the military justice system.

10. We must always do our best, respect others, and act without malice or self-interest. Compliance with this Code of Conduct is therefore a mandatory requirement for working in support of the IGADF.

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s22 **JM Gaynor CSC**
Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force

19 May 2024

TRAUMA-INFORMED WITNESS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The Trauma-Informed Witness Engagement Framework aims to ensure that staff within our office and those engaging with our services are cognizant and sensitive to the potential trauma experienced by witnesses. The framework seeks to manage the risk of vicarious trauma while offering adequate support to all staff.

Expectations of Staff

Understanding of Trauma: Staff members are expected to have an adequate understanding of trauma and its potential impacts. This includes recognizing signs of trauma in witnesses, understanding trauma responses, and appreciating the prevalence of trauma in the population we serve.

Application of Trauma-Informed Approach: Staff should apply a trauma-informed approach in all interactions with witnesses, which includes ensuring that interactions are empowering, respectful, and prioritize the witness's safety and wellbeing.

Respect and Empathy: Staff are expected to engage with witnesses in a manner that is empathetic and respects the witness's autonomy, choices, and control over their situation.

Confidentiality: Staff are obliged to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of the witness, unless safety issues dictate the need for disclosure.

Collaboration and Mutuality: Staff are encouraged to work collaboratively with witnesses and other service providers, recognizing the importance of sharing power and decision-making.

Expectations for Those Engaging with Our Office

Respectful Communication: Individuals engaging with our office should communicate in a respectful manner with all parties, acknowledging the potential trauma experienced by witnesses.

Cooperation: Cooperation in the process and adherence to prescribed protocols are expected, as these practices are designed with the wellbeing of the witness in mind.

Understanding: We encourage understanding of the trauma-informed approach we use and patience with the process, as it aims to support individuals who may be traumatised.

Supporting Our Staff and Managing Vicarious Trauma

Training: Staff will receive regular training on trauma-informed practices, as well as on recognizing and managing the signs of vicarious trauma.

Supervision and Support: Regular supervisory sessions will be provided to all staff, offering an opportunity to discuss any concerns or difficulties and seek advice.

Self-Care Encouragement: Staff will be encouraged to engage in self-care activities and to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Peer Support: A culture of peer support will be fostered within the office, encouraging staff to look out for each other and offer assistance where needed.

Wellbeing Resources: Resources for managing stress, burnout, and vicarious trauma will be readily available to all staff members.

Professional Counselling: Access to professional counselling services will be provided to staff as required, ensuring they have the support they need to cope with the impacts of vicarious trauma.

Conclusion

A trauma-informed approach to witness engagement prioritizes the wellbeing of both the witness and the staff involved in the process. By adhering to this framework, we aim to provide a supportive and respectful environment for everyone, while also ensuring the overall effectiveness of our operations.

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