

E-MAIL POLICY

The Company's Email system may not be used to broadcast solicitations for political or charitable organisations, to place personal advertisements for flat/house shares, theatre or sporting tickets, used cars, etc., to seek references for personal services, or for other personal reasons. E-mail in our business is not to be used to distribute such messages but may only be used for transmission of business-related information.

E-mail must be read promptly to avoid capacity and other problems, and mail should be deleted not only from the screen but also from delete facilities (including any recycle bin) at regular intervals. Please bear in mind you should not always expect an immediate response to e-mail and anything important should be followed up by a telephone call.

Important Points to note:

- (a) E-mail is often treated far more informally than other forms of business communication accordingly sentiments and opinions are expressed which would not normally materialise in writing.
- (b) E-mail can be copied and circulated much more easily than any traditional communication; an e-mail sent to a single recipient could be posted on the Internet with a click of a button even without the sender's permission.
- (c) It is extremely easy to inadvertently misaddress an e-mail with disastrous consequences (e.g. including, by clicking "Reply to All" when reply to a more limited circulation is intended).
- (d) E-mail is in a more permanent form than traditional communication; e-mail cannot be deleted easily and back-up copies will not only exist upon the sender's or recipient's PC but also the employer's network and if sent through a commercial service, it may pass through several computers each of which will hold a copy which may be retrieved.
- (e) E-mail is discoverable in legal proceedings and accordingly could expose the sender and his/her employer to liability for its contents particularly if the contents are defamatory, involve an infringement of copyright or a breach of confidence.
- (f) Incorrect use of e-mail may destroy the protection of legal privilege enjoyed by legal communications.
- (g) In certain jurisdictions legal proceedings may now be served via e-mail.
- (h) Internal company e-mail may be used to support claims for unfair dismissal, discrimination and to prove industrial espionage.
- (i) Offers of employment or contracts transmitted via e-mail are as legally binding on the Company as those sent on paper.

Confidentiality of E-Mail

- (a) Subject to the above, E-mail is to be read only by the persons to whom it is addressed. Unless you have the recipient's express permission, one person is not to read another person's e-mail.
- (b) All e-mail users, however, should realise that the Company cannot assure the absolute confidentiality of any e-mail message. Where confidentiality and security are important, an alternative to e-mail should be considered.
- (c) Just as the Company cannot assure confidentiality of e-mail messages, you should have no expectation of privacy in the content of e-mail messages. Among other things, as explained below, e-mail messages may be archived and are not really private, even if only sent to one person. If you would be embarrassed by the public disclosure of an e-mail message, then it is not appropriate to send the message via e-mail.

- (d) The Company periodically monitors e-mail but may inspect e-mail messages under any circumstances at any time and without notice.
- (e) Users should be aware that emails they have sent may well be forwarded to other recipients. If the email is a private and confidential matter users may consider email to be inappropriate and should consider the use of a password protected attachment or an alternative means of communication.

Legal Issues

- (a) E-mail to or from a lawyer or other professional representing the Company must be marked in the subject line Private & Confidential Lawyer Client Privilege, Do Not Forward Without Permission.
- (b) Do not express opinions or thoughts in e-mail which may be defamatory as this may render you and/or the Company to a libel action. Also, remain mindful at all times that statements made by an employee on the Company's system can be held in law to have been made by the Company. In such cases, there may be legal liability on the part of both the Company and the individual employee who made the statement(s) concerned.

Inappropriate Distribution of E-Mail

Everyone is strongly encouraged to consider carefully the groups to whom e-mail messages are distributed. It is not uncommon to see an individual in one office send an e-mail message to all individuals in all offices or other locations. Sometimes this may be appropriate, but often a more limited distribution would be better.

If you receive e-mail that is not addressed to you, it must be returned immediately unread.

Ownership of E-Mail

The Company's e-mail system belongs to the Company, and messages sent using the system constitute Company work product. Thus, like all work product, the contents of e-mail messages belong to the Company. In order to ensure the Company's continuous access to information on the Company's system, no employee shall use personal hardware or software to encrypt any e-mail or voicemail or any other data stored in or communicated by the Company's system of electronic communications, except in accordance with express prior written permission from the Company's Board.

Complaints

Employees who feel that they have cause for complaint as a result of communications via the Company's systems should invoke the Grievance or other relevant Procedure at the earliest opportunity.

Breaches

A breach of this policy shall render the employee(s) concerned liable to disciplinary action which, in serious cases, could include summary dismissal.

Users have a duty to report the following to your Reporting Manager:

- suspicious emails/email attachments
- obscene/illegal material found on a PC or records of obscene/illegal web sites visited
- persistent use of the Internet for personal reasons
- downloading of illegal material