



# Code of Conduct

Australian Council for International Development

ACFID is an independent association of Australian non-profit aid and development agencies



e-bulletin

2009/11: 22 December 2009

**ACFID's Code of Conduct e-bulletin** provides updates on changes to the Code, its Guidance Document and the current work of the Code of Conduct Committee. As only one bulletin is sent to each signatory agency, please ensure that it is circulated internally and that staff members are aware of any information relevant to them.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE CODE TEAM

The Code is well regarded nationally and internationally, and it is one of only a few nationally significant self-regulatory codes in the not for profit sector. It has helped set and maintain agreed standards for NGO's working in the development area for the last eleven years.

Next year will be a very exciting and busy one for all Signatories as we review the Code, commence the mandatory annual compliance self-assessment process and implement the new Section 5 financial guidance.

We realise that these are significant changes and the Code Team want to help you in achieving and maintaining the agreed requirements. Please don't hesitate to call us if you would like some support or if you would like to provide us with some feedback.

## LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

### Code Review Update

The Executive Committee of ACFID has approved the consultation framework for the Code Review in 2010. The following are the key points:

- An expert panel, ACFID Committees and Code Committee working groups will be working with Phil Khoury from the Navigator to produce the first draft of the revised Code;
- This draft will be released for consultation in early May to Signatories and national and international interested parties;
- There will be opportunities for face to face consultations on 19 & 20 May in Sydney and Melbourne and templates for written feedback will be on the website;
- The final Code will be released on 20 August and submitted to ACFID Council for approval on 21 October.

Monthly updates will be provided via this newsletter and we welcome your views.

Only ACFID members can vote at ACFID Council on the revised Code. Membership enquiries can be directed to Martin Loughton on 02 6281 9225.

### Code Committee Election Results 2009

Counting of ballots received for ACFID's Code of Conduct Committee election took place today, Monday 21 December 2009. Greig Collins, Returning Officer, conducted the count.

Congratulations and welcome to Greg Brown, nominated by CARE Australia, and Narelle Magee, nominated by Marie Stopes International Australia, on their election to ACFID's Code of Conduct Committee.

If you would like to provide feedback to the Code of Conduct Management Team or submit information for inclusion in the ACFID Code e-bulletin please forward it to [code@acfid.asn.au](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au).  
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As we welcome two new Committee Members, we will sadly be saying goodbye to David McLaughlan, nominated by Save the Children, and Lisa Schultz, nominated by Plan International Australia. David and Lisa were instrumental in the development of Sector standards and guidance relating to the revised financial reporting requirements and child protection, respectively. We thank David and Lisa for their contributions to the Code of Conduct, and the Sector.

## **Code Committee Donor Representative Appointment**

Congratulations and a very warm welcome to Simon Smith, who was recently appointed to undertake the Donor Representative appointment on the Code Committee. Simon has extensive experience in legal and consumer affairs.

Simon will replace Robin Brown as Donor Representative. Robin has been a very active Committee member, who has consistently represented the interests of the donor public. Thanks to Robin for his contribution to the Sector.

## **Compliance Self Assessment Checklist**

The Compliance Self Assessment Checklist will become compulsory from 1 July 2010. Take advantage of the current voluntary self-assessment period, and use the online Checklist to familiarise yourself with the process.

In response to your feedback, the Code Management Team is currently making adjustments to the online Checklist. The issues that are being resolved:

- Increased character spaces in the 'notes' section, allowing you to provide more detailed notes as appropriate.
- Print before submitting the Checklist. The print function will work prior to the document being 'submitted', allowing your governing body to review and sign-off on the Checklist before submitting it to the Code Committee.
- The compliance status of 'N/A' will be included in each Checklist, to allow for greater flexibility and accuracy in the compliance self-assessment of your organisation.

It's expected that these changes will be finalised and ready for use by mid to late January 2010.

If you have any more suggestions, or would like your organisation's username and password, please contact the Code Management Team.

## **SIGNATORY RESOURCES**

### **New Code & Guidance Document**

The latest version, October 2009, of the Code and its Guidance Document are available on the ACFID Code of Conduct web page.

The revised Section 5 – Finances will be effective from 1 January 2010. Please ensure you have reviewed this Section of the Guidance Document, as quite substantial changes have been made to the financial reporting requirements.

### **Signatory Resources – ACFID Website**

The Code Management Team and Code Committee have developed three new compliance resources for use by Signatories:

If you would like to provide feedback to the Code of Conduct Management Team or submit information for inclusion in the ACFID Code e-bulletin please forward it to [code@acfid.asn.au](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au).

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- Guidance on Financial Reserves Policy
- Common compliance issues
- Guidelines for lodgement of Annual Reports and Financial Statements

All Signatory resources are available on the ACFID website:

<http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/signatory-tools>

## Complaints Process

The latest version of the ACFID Code of Conduct, October 2009, includes a revised Section 8 – Complaints Handling and Compliance Monitoring Process. For a copy of the latest ACFID Code of Conduct, visit the ACFID website

<http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/acfid-code-of-conduct>

## GET INVOLVED

### Environmental Impact Reporting – your opportunity to contribute

A new Signatory Resource available on the ACFID website provides Signatories with an introduction to [Environmental Impact Reporting](#). If your organisation has an example of an environmental reporting policy, and would like to share this with other Signatories, please email it to [code@acfid.asn.au](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au).

### Annual and Financial Reporting Compliance Submissions

We have now commenced the annual report assessment process for those signatories with a 30 June 2009 financial year-end. Please be aware that this is an extremely busy period for the Code Management Team, as we have approximately 80 signatories who submit their annual reports at this time. We are working hard to have all assessments completed as soon as possible, and anticipate having all compliance certificates sent out by mid-March 2010.

A reminder also to those signatories who are yet to submit their annual reports and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2009 - these were due by 30 November. Any organisation that has not submitted should now have received a reminder letter.

The Code Management Team is happy to discuss individual circumstances with signatories who may be experiencing difficulties, so please do not hesitate to contact us.

### Code Compliance Workshop – save the date

A Code Compliance Workshop will be held in April 2010. This full-day workshop will cover Annual and Financial Reporting requirements, including the revised Section 5: Finances, *and* the new Compliance Self Assessment Process in detail.

This workshop will be held on 14 April in Melbourne, 15 April in Sydney, and Canberra on 16 April 2010.

A flyer and registration form will be available in the New Year.

## CODE COMMITTEE MEETING

The next meeting of the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee will be held on Friday 12 February 2009.

If you would like to provide feedback to the Code of Conduct Management Team or submit information for inclusion in the ACFID Code e-bulletin please forward it to [code@acfid.asn.au](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au).

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If you have an area of concern, an idea or a topic that you think should be tabled at the Code of Conduct Committee Meeting, please contact the Code Management Team at [code@acfid.asn.au](mailto:code@acfid.asn.au), 02 6281 9222.

## CODE IN FOCUS – Revised Section 5 Finances

### **Revised Section 5 Finances – available on the ACFID website 8 January 2010**

Due to technical difficulties, the revised Section 5: Finances will be available on the ACFID website on Friday 8 January 2010.

*Revised financial reporting requirements* will be introduced from 1 January 2010. This major project has involved the redrafting of the Code Guidance Document's Clause 4.1 and Section 5: Finances in their entirety.

There have been many changes and refinements made to Section 5 of the Guidance Document, principal amongst them being the introduction of *differential reporting*, where different entity types have been recognised and different financial reporting requirements will be required from each.

### **Implementation Dates**

Although it is planned to introduce the *revised financial reporting requirements* from 1 January 2010, it should be noted that Signatories will *not* be required to report in the revised reporting format until:

- for financial year-end 31 Dec 10 – first report in the revised format is due by May 11;
- for financial year-end 31 Mar 11 – first report in the revised format is due by Aug 11;
- for financial year-end 30 Jun 11 – first report in the revised format is due by Nov 11; and
- for financial year-end 30 Sep 11 – first report in the revised format is due by Feb 12.

\* *Notwithstanding these forecast timeframes, Signatories will be encouraged to adopt the revised reporting formats sooner if possible.*

## CODE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Code of Conduct Management Team has two principal roles:

- (1) to assist the Code of Conduct Committee in all aspects of its work; and
- (2) to assist Signatories to meet their compliance obligations.

If you need to clarify any issues of concern, would like to provide feedback on issues relating to the Code, or to access Code resources, please feel welcome to contact the Code Management Team.



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Code Manager	02 6281 9220	Cath Blunt
Program Administrator	02 6281 9222	Helen Vogt
Compliance Officer	02 6281 9234	Alicia Toohey (Mon, Wed, Fri)

Further details at: <http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/contact-the-code-management-team>

**Code Management Team  
Australian Council for International Development**