

WCF

Corporate Social Responsibility Policy Statement

Updated: February 2024

Date of next review: February 2025

General

WCF is proud of its long-established reputation as a valued and trusted company, which since 1988 has been partially owned by its employees. Our culture and legacy has been developed throughout our +110 year trading history and we are committed to ensuring that our activities are conducted in a safe, compliant and ethical manner. We recognise our social responsibility to our shareholders, colleagues, customers, the general public, supply partners, contractors and local communities, as well as to the environment. Our vision is to hand WCF over to future generations of employees in a stronger position than when we inherited it so that they can benefit from its continued existence and resilience.

Employee Ownership

WCF is partly owned by its employees and our vision, mission and culture have all been developed to ensure that every one of our 400 employee owners have a unique opportunity to make a meaningful difference to our performance and to enjoy diverse and interesting roles. Our employee owners share in our success financially through the sharing of profit via a cash annual Employee Ownership Dividend, as well as the distribution of free WCF shares, intended to encourage retention and long service.

Real Living Wage Employer

In November 2022 WCF became an accredited Real Living Wage employer. This means that we have a consistent salary starting point regardless of age or length of service. This initiative supports our long-term commitment to support and improve the wellbeing of all our employee owners, no matter what their role is.

People and Culture

We believe that our success is enhanced by our decentralised structure and are committed to protecting the independence and culture of our individual business units. Through our Guiding Principles and structure of employee ownership we ensure that our colleagues behave in ways which are consistent with our values and heritage. These are communicated across the business via training and in different media. They support us to meet the needs of our customers, ensure that we remain curious, encourage our colleagues to develop their own skills and expertise and maintain a working environment in which everyone matters and has a unique opportunity to make a meaningful difference to our performance. A proportion of our profits are returned to our employee owners through free share awards and our annual Employee Ownership Dividend, with all full-time employees receiving the same award regardless of pay, status or role.

Customer Retention

We pride ourselves on the quality and longevity of our relationship with our customers and always strive to be their preferred partner or supplier. We put their needs at the heart of what we do and listen to and value what they are telling us, using review partners to establish superior customer satisfaction. Customer retention is one of our Key Performance Indicators and we have a number of active customer loyalty programs across our businesses. We are always looking for ways in which we can improve our customer intimacy to ensure that they want to stay with us for the long term and promote our business to their friends and family.

Health & Safety

We always put safety first and have policies, processes and procedures in place to ensure our businesses are run safely and implement learning from near misses and incidents. Our H&S Policy defines the responsibilities of our colleagues in promoting a transparent H&S culture, encouraging colleagues to report any concerns or breaches and identify opportunities for improvement.

Environmental

We manage our activities to minimise their impact on the environment and identify ways to reduce our carbon footprint. We comply with Waste Packaging Regulations, Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting and the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme and are working with an independent consultancy to map our carbon footprint and establish a roadmap to net zero.

We review ways to reduce energy and water consumption, eliminate single use packaging, reduce waste, decrease our emissions, work with our supply partners to integrate further recyclable and sustainable processes into our supply chains and encourage our customers to reduce, re-use and re-cycle. We utilise fleet technology to help us deliver the greatest efficiencies in our routing, driving techniques and fuel consumption. Where viable, we consider options for renewable energy installations within any property development activity, including the use of solar energy.

Given the potential for significant environmental impact from the loss of containment of even a small amount of our bulk fuel oil products, we have robust spillage procedures in place to ensure that all spills are treated seriously, reported, investigated and responded to in accordance with established and tested emergency procedures. Our fuel tanker drivers are ADR trained to the highest of standards to respond to incidents and we use available technology to facilitate their deliveries.

For more information, please refer to our Environmental Policy Statement.

Business Ethics

High ethical standards are an essential part of the way in which we do business. We have a Conflicts of Interest and Anti-Bribery Policy. Colleagues are required to conduct all their dealings with honesty, integrity, respect, fairness, using behaviours consistent with our Guiding Principles. We supply products and services that we are proud of – quality products, responsibly and ethically sourced.

We are aware of the social impact of our overseas supply chain and take the necessary steps to ensure that we comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We pay a fair price for our products to ensure that all workers are paid a living wage within the country of manufacture and ensure we pay our suppliers promptly.

In the clothing sector we deal with small family businesses overseas and undertake due diligence through our nominated UK agents to ensure that safe and hygienic conditions are provided within the working environment and that workers are not treated harshly or unfairly. We would not deal with any supplier with whom we had concerns regarding the working conditions. Our own manufacturing suppliers are all signed up to our ethical Supplier Code of Conduct.

Community Support

We focus on the charitable interests and families of our people and seek to match their fundraising efforts through company donations. We actively support the communities in which we operate and are corporate sponsors or patrons of a number of local organisations. We encourage our colleagues to participate in charitable events and hold regular office events to raise money for good causes. A large proportion of products returned to us and sample products are donated to local charities.

Equal Opportunities

We promote a working culture that is fair and inclusive, encouraging all colleagues to make distinctive contributions for the collective success of the company. We utilise our people in meaningful, diverse and interesting roles where they are engaged to make the greatest difference to our performance. Our employment practices are non-discriminatory and provide equal opportunities for both existing and prospective colleagues, ensuring that success is dependent upon the quality, effectiveness and skill base of our workforce. We adopt a behaviours-first interview technique to ensure that any new recruits are culturally aligned to our ways of working.

Compliance

We comply with all relevant laws and regulations and consult with appropriate enforcing authorities, insurance companies, and professional and trade organisations to ensure that a custom of best practice, benchmarking and continuous improvement is developed and encouraged.



Jo L. Ritzema
Managing Director



Phil J. Murray
Deputy Managing Director

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