**Anti-Bullying Policy**

The Company expects all members of the railway to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to be safe and secure at the railway and to be protected, so that all may flourish without fear of unfair treatment or harassment. The Company’s approach to bullying is clear: it is always unacceptable and the company will, therefore, do all it can to prevent it

Bullying may take many forms. Any behaviour, which makes another feel uncomfortable or threatened may be construed as bullying, whether intended or not. All complaints should be taken seriously and pursued. Acting against bullying is a part of every member’s duty of care to each other, both on and off site. This policy is intended to help all members, if they are concerned about bullying and to ensure a consistent response to any bullying incident. The policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence there are criminal laws, which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

**What is bullying?**

Bullying is hurtful behaviour that usually occurs over a period of time. It is behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was calculated or intended to hurt or upset the victim.  It is behaviour that harasses, humiliates or intimidates others.

It may take the form of teasing, verbal criticism and harassment on the grounds for example that someone has different coloured skin, the way they talk, their size or their name. The following list could all constitute claims of bullying or harassment: racism, sexual bullying, negative remarks about appearance, ability, health conditions or home circumstances, nationality, religion or culture, disability, gender or sexuality, SEN or cyber-bullying. Sometimes the perpetrator is just being thoughtless. Sometimes it can be hurtful to be different or to be made to feel different. Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim. It may also affect other members who witness it and it can damage the atmosphere in a roster team or even in the entire company.

**Examples of bullying behaviour**

**Physical bullying**

May include: fighting; damaging or hiding someone else’s belongings or clothes; setting up someone else to get the blame for a breach of company rules; initiation ceremonies.

**Emotional or psychological bullying**

May include: excluding someone from a group, activity or place; spreading rumours, being deliberately unfriendly; unpleasant e-mails, text messages or telephone calls or unpleasant material placed on websites.

**Verbal bullying**

May include: aggressive name calling, teasing, mockery, insults.

**Sexual harassment**

Includes making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery.

**Cyberbullying**

Is the use of information and communications technology particularly mobile phones, email, social websites, text messages, cameras and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

**What are the signs of bullying?**

It is not always easy or even possible to tell whether someone is upset. People who feel under emotional pressure may find it hard to talk. There may be changes in behaviour, such as shyness and nervousness, demands for attention, feigned or real illness. Work and sleep patterns may change. There may be lack of concentration or withdrawal, and a member who is being bullied or feels vulnerable may be unwilling to visit the railway site.

**What is expected of Directors, Team Leaders/ Deputy Team Leaders and members.**

All those involved in the company - and this includes Directors and members have a responsibility to show that they believe that any form of bullying is unacceptable - and to set an example, which reflects that view. All members of the Company should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action. Anyone who feels that they are being bullied should tell their Team leader or their nominated deputy or any Director.

It is important that any cases of bullying are reported to someone whom the victim feels able to talk to. Any member who suspects bullying should report it to a Director.

The company wants to help and it expects every members to:

* treat each other with respect and sensitivity
* think carefully before speaking/acting (whether face-to-face or via any form of media) in ways which may cause upset
* respect differences and variety
* be sensitive to the fact that what may seem fun to some (especially a group) may seem much more threatening to others (especially an individual)
* show kindness and consideration to those who appear unhappy or vulnerable
* make a stand against those who ignore or go against these aims

**Implementation of the policy**

In the event of an observed or reported instance of bullying, the facts will be ascertained from the victim(s), alleged perpetrator(s) and witness(es). The individual initially contacted/witness will record who was involved, what happened, when and where. This will be passed to the Board of Directors who will liaise with the relevant parties. The Board of Directors will identify patterns and decide what action needs to be taken to prevent similar occurrences.

The company will try to keep the relevant parties informed if and when it may be dealing with a significant bullying situation. The company will always try to handle information discreetly, and although what Team Leaders and their Deputies and Directors are told will be in confidence the company cannot promise secrecy. If matters need to be followed up the Company will do so with sensitivity. It is much easier to counter problems at an early stage.  Once investigated, every effort will be made to resolve the problem and change the behaviour of the perpetrator(s). This process will normally be carried out by a member of the Board of Directors.

For all incidents of bullying (whether isolated or occurring over a period of time), disciplinary sanctions will normally be applied, and may extend to suspension or in the gravest cases of severe or persistent bullying expulsion from the company. The policy is applied in conjunction with The Company’s Rules and Byelaws