



## Maritime Union of Australia – Policy on Mutual Respect

The MUA is opposed to any discrimination based on gender, nationality, race or colour, age, sexual orientation, disability or beliefs.

Among trade unionists there is a very high degree of appreciation of the need to respect the dignity of every individual. Nevertheless in all organisations there should always be vigilance to ensure that all participants feel they are able to operate in an atmosphere in which they feel comfortable and safe.

The MUA is committed to creating and maintaining a working environment based on dignity and mutual respect. The MUA neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive environment. This commitment applies to all delegates and participants, women and men, in MUA meetings, activities and social gatherings wherever they may take place around the world.

As an employer the MUA has a legal as well as moral responsibility to protect its employees from any form of harassment, abuse or similarly unacceptable behaviour. It also applies to social occasions where the attendance of MUA staff is linked to their employment and where the MUA is liable as an employer. MUA employees are encouraged to report any such incident.

It is recommended that the national office and branches should provide guidelines for all on the MUA Policy on Mutual Respect, which should be included as part of the documentation for all future MUA meetings.

### **GUIDELINES ON THE MUA POLICY ON MUTUAL RESPECT**

The MUA is committed to creating and maintaining a working environment based on dignity and mutual respect. In all organisations there should always be vigilance to ensure that all participants feel they are able to operate in an atmosphere in which they feel comfortable and safe. This should apply to meetings, socialising and all the events around MUA activities.

#### ***What we ask of you:***

- To treat everybody, including other delegates from other unions, as well as MUA staff members, with respect and dignity.
- To make absolutely sure your own behaviour does not cause offence or misunderstanding.
- To think before you make personal remarks.
- To accept responsibility for challenging all forms of unacceptable and offensive behaviour, and for upholding personal dignity.

#### ***What is unacceptable behaviour?***

Unacceptable behaviour includes unwelcome physical, verbal or non verbal conduct including the use of e-mail and any behaviour that ridicules, intimidates, or is physically abusive.

This may have as its focus such things as:

- Race, ethnic origin, nationality, and skin colour
- Gender and sexual orientation
- Disabilities or sensory impairments
- Age, health, or physical characteristics
- Religious or political beliefs

This may involve such forms of unwanted behaviour as:

- Unwanted physical contact
- Physical or sexual assault
- Sexual or compromising propositions
- Racist, sexist or religious jokes
- Offensive language, insults and obscene gestures
- Unwelcome gifts
- Intrusion by pestering or stalking

These lists are not definitive.

We are aware that among trade unionists there is a very high degree of appreciation of the need to respect the dignity of every individual. We welcome your cooperation in our practical efforts for making MUA meetings a positive experience for everyone.