

The Role of the Contact Officer

Contact Officers are employees trained to provide other employees with information and impartial support regarding issues of discrimination, harassment and bullying. They also provide clarification about the employer's policies and complaint procedures.



Roles & Responsibilities of Contact Officers:

- ◆ **Initial Contact** to provide employees with assistance independent of supervisors and management
- ◆ **Discuss** issues of concern and outcomes being sought
- ◆ **Inform & Explain** about options available which might help to resolve the issue (including the advantages and disadvantages of each option). These may include:
 - Directly approaching others involved to discuss possible resolutions
 - Informal Complaints Procedures
 - Formal Complaints Procedures
 - External Assistance – contact the relevant agency depending on the situation e.g. NT Anti-Discrimination Commission, EASA, Community Justice Centre, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Ombudsman
- ◆ **Facilitate informal options** and assist with the option that is most suitable to the situation
- ◆ **Recommend actions to management** to assist in the prevention or the termination of discrimination and harassment in the workplace
- ◆ **Act as a support person**
 - By being present while issues are discussed with the person involved and/or management
 - By attending meetings with staff to discuss and develop equal opportunity policies and codes of conduct
- ◆ **Perform an educative role** by:
 - Raising awareness in the workplace of discrimination and harassment issues
 - Provide information on issues such as equity and diversity, work life balance etc
 - Assisting with training and education on equal opportunity principles

Contact Officers:

- Are approachable and apply good interpersonal skills
- Deal with concerns impartially, sensitively and in a timely manner
- Build trust, confidence and rapport
- Listen without judgement
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality
- Display integrity and act as a role model for appropriate behaviours

Contact Officers are not:

- Responsible for the management of the complaint
- Investigators or Decision-makers
- Counsellors or Mediators