

# Members Code of Practice

Mission statement: *The UK Fire Association provides a service to companies in the fire industry by helping to establish a favourable operating environment, by providing a forum for discussion on non-competitive issues, and by providing information to assist them in developing their business.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The UK Fire Association Members Code of Practice is intended to set down the way that our Members are expected to conduct themselves and do business both with Consumers and between themselves. It also attempts to cover any issues of potential misunderstanding that can occur through a Members trading style and their business philosophy.

This Code of Practice clearly states among other things the Associations position on; equality, ethics, contracts, conflict of interest and duty of care. These are matters that usually get overlooked in the process of buying and selling, which surface later and cause problems because they have not initially been properly explained or understood.

This Code of Practice is therefore important in order to establish a clear common understanding of expectations and deliverables both between sometimes competing Members and most importantly their Customers.

## 2. COMMITMENT OF THE UK FIRE ASSOCIATION

The *UKFA* will endeavour to be fair and impartial when dealing with Members and Consumers.

We will respect the confidentiality of information received from Members and from Consumers in accordance with Data Protection Act 1998 principles.

We will be courteous, fair and impartial when dealing with all Members and Consumers and will endeavour, whilst operating within these principles, to operate a policy of openness when dealing with complaints unless anonymity is specifically requested.

## 3. CONFIDENTIALITY

Members are committed to maintaining the highest degree of integrity in all their dealings with potential, current and past clients, both in terms of normal commercial confidentiality, and the protection of all personal information received in the course of providing the business services concerned. They will extend the same standards to all their Customers, suppliers, subcontractors and associates.

## 4. ETHICS

Members will always conduct their services honestly and honourably. They expect their clients, subcontractors and suppliers to do the same. Advice and assistance imparted by Members through training and consultancy will take proper account of ethical considerations, together with the protection and enhancement of the moral position of our clients, subcontractors and suppliers.

## **5. DUTY OF CARE**

Our Members actions and advice will always conform to relevant law, and we believe that all businesses and organisations, including this Association, should avoid causing any adverse effect on the human rights of people in the organisations we deal with, the local and wider environments and the well-being of society at large.

## **6. COMPETENCE**

Members will ensure that they, their managers and staff are appropriately qualified and familiar with relevant legislation.

## **7. SECURITY**

On arrival at a Customers site Members employees are expected to sign in and where this is not possible, to make themselves known to a person in authority.

Members will endeavour to ensure that their employees do not pose a risk to a Customer's security.

Criminal Records Bureau checks to the Enhanced level should be undertaken and routinely updated, by Members for employees, subcontractors and associates coming into contact with vulnerable people, e.g. in schools, hospitals, residential care facilities, etc.

Members are encouraged to extend CRB checks to all employees, subcontractors and associates that work at Customers premises.

## **8. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Members staff will at all times while working at a Customers facilities comply with the Customers HSE procedures and wear appropriate PPE where this is required.

Where appropriate, Members are encouraged to gain registration with a recognised Health & Safety Auditing Scheme e.g. Safecontractor, CHAS, etc.

## **9. ENVIRONMENT**

Members are expected to work with due consideration of the impact of their work to the environment. Members are committed to the disposal of waste of generated in the course of their work in a responsible manner. This may incur a reasonable disposal charge to be levied upon the Customer.

The *UKFA* encourages but does not require, Members to obtain BS EN ISO 14001 with a UKAS accreditation authority.

## **10. GENERAL TRADING PROVISIONS**

Members will ensure that all goods and/or services are accurately described in a clear and accessible format and language.

High pressure and unethical sales techniques are to be discouraged. Where reasonably practicable, Members will offer assistance to ensure that all aspects of the transaction are fully understood, particularly by vulnerable Customers.

Members will ensure that all goods are safe and comply with any relevant safety legislation applying to those goods.

Members will not attempt to restrict a Customers statutory rights in any way.

## **11. CONTRACTS**

A Members contract to provide a service will usually be identified in the Service Report or quotation, where this is provided. However, the quality of a Members service and the value of their support often provide the only true basis for continuity. However Members can specify a reasonable cancellation period, where cancellation by the Customer will need to be provided in writing.

## **12. CHARGES**

Members are encouraged to provide competitive prices for their goods and services which should be of high quality, tailored to the Customers requirements. However, the quality of a Members service and the value of their support often provide the only true basis to determine true value. A Member should always try to propose solutions which accommodate the Customers available budgets and timescales.

Wherever possible the charges and the basis of charges should be given clearly in writing and agreed with the Customer in advance.

## **13. PAYMENT**

Wherever possible the Members payment terms should be given clearly in writing in advance.

The *UKFA* supports the Members right to charge interest on late payments.

Members supplying goods or services on credit or rental terms (not credit cards) will comply with Consumer Credit licensing requirements and legislation.

## **14. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The *UKFA* encourages but does not require Members to obtain third party auditing. This could be through the *UKFA* or another recognised Auditing Scheme and ultimately by having BS EN ISO 9001 with a UKAS accreditation authority.

## **15. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE**

Representatives from Member companies are expected to conduct all of their activities professionally and with high integrity. They should take great care to be completely objective in their judgement and any recommendations that they give, so that issues are never influenced by anything other than the best and proper interests of their Customers.

Dress, appearance and behaviour is expected to be that befitting a professional person.

## **16. EQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION**

Members will always strive to be fair and objective in their advice and actions, and should never be influenced in their decisions, actions or recommendations by issues of gender, race, creed, colour, age or personal disability.

## **17. NON COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE**

Where any non-compliance with the Code of Practice by a Member is brought to the attention of the *UKFA*, the matter will be investigated and dealt with in the first instance by the Directors.

## **18. GOODS TRANSACTIONS**

Members will ensure that all goods sold comply with the requirements of the Sale of Goods Act 1979 (as amended).

## **19. SERVICE TRANSACTIONS**

Where services are provided to a Customer those services will be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982 and/or the Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994.

Members will provide details of the Customers right to cancel the service contract, upon request.

## **20. COMPLAINTS**

Members are advised to establish a written 'Customer Complaints procedure'. Members should deal with all complaints in accordance with their complaints procedure the Member does not have a Customer Complaints Procedure in place, the *UKFA* procedure (refer to appendix 1) shall be used.

Where a complaint relates to a safety issue, the Member should advise details of the complaint immediately to the Secretary of the *UKFA*.

Where a complaint is related directly at the UK Fire Association the Grievance Procedure in the Associations Constitution will apply.

Members will co-operate with the *UKFA* or any other appropriate intermediary consulted by the Customer in an attempt to resolve any complaint

## **21. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

In the event of a complaint against a *UKFA* Member by a fellow Member, a Customer, or other organisation, the complaint will be referred to the Steering Group for investigation. Complaints will only be considered if substantiated and submitted in writing. If, in the Steering Group's opinion, the complaint is justified action appropriate to the severity of the complaint will be taken. This may be in the form of a warning or termination of Membership.

## **22. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

In the event of a Member appearing to contravene this Code of Practice will be referred to the Steering Group for investigation. If, in the Steering Group's opinion, the transgression is justified, action appropriate to the severity of the transgression will be taken. This may be in the form of a warning or termination of Membership.

Members disciplined by the Steering Group have the right to appeal through the Grievance Procedure.

## **23. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Where any grievance occurs that cannot be resolved by other means it will be handled using the *UKFA* Grievance Procedure detailed in the Associations Constitution.

**[Company Name]**  
**Our Complaints Procedure**

We are committed to providing a high quality of service to all our Customers. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it to will help us improve our standards.

If you have a complaint, please contact us with the details.

**What will happen next?**

1. We will send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three days of receiving it, enclosing a copy of this procedure.
2. We will then investigate your complaint. This will normally involve passing your complaint to our Customer care person, [name], who will review the matter.
3. [Name] will then telephone you to discuss your complaint. If this is considered by either party to be an inappropriate course of action he/she will invite you to a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve your complaint. [Name] will do this within 14 days of sending you the letter of acknowledgement.
4. Within three days of the telephone conversation or meeting, [name] will write to you to confirm what took place and any solutions he/she has agreed with you.
5. If you do not want a meeting or it is not possible, [name] will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including his/her suggestions for resolving the matter, within 21 days of sending you the acknowledgement letter.
6. At this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should contact us again and we will arrange for a Director/business owner to review the decision or appropriate alternative such as mediation to review the decision.
7. We will write to you within 14 days of receiving your request for a review, confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons.
8. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Secretary at the UK Fire Association at Unit 9 Enterprise House, 44-46 Terrace Road, Walton on Thames, Surrey. KT12 2SD about your complaint. Any complaint to the UK Fire Association must usually be made within six months of the date of our final decision on your complaint but for further information, you should contact the Secretary on 01932 252306 at [www.uk-fa.org](http://www.uk-fa.org).

If we have to change any of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.