

## **Guidelines: Drugs and Alcohol**

3 March 2005

### **1. Policy**

In accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* the Australian Film, Television and Radio School has a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees at work. The School also has a duty of care to ensure the health and safety of students and members of the public who enter AFTRS grounds or attend AFTRS events.

*AFTRS is committed to encouraging and assisting employees and students to realise their full potential within an environment that actively promotes their health, wellbeing and safety. In relation to the use of drugs and alcohol the School's objectives are to:*

- encourage moderation and a responsible attitude toward the consumption of alcohol;
- minimise alcohol and drug related harm to the individual;
- minimise alcohol and drug related damage to property;
- preserve the reputation of AFTRS in the community;
- provide adequate information about alcohol and drugs and their excessive use, and
- offer appropriate forms of assistance to those for whom drugs or alcohol have become a problem.

These guidelines outline the processes for the management of drugs and alcohol at AFTRS.

### **2. Who are these Guidelines for?**

These Guidelines apply to all members of the AFTRS community and to all activities undertaken on AFTRS sites or where AFTRS is responsible. This includes all enrolled students, employees whilst they are working for or representing AFTRS in any capacity, contractors, honoraries and any visitors to AFTRS.

### **3. Illicit Drugs**

AFTRS does not condone or support the use, possession, cultivation or trafficking of illicit drugs or the misuse or abuse of prescription or other medication. Illicit drugs are not permitted on AFTRS premises under any circumstances.

The carrying, storage or use of illicit drugs on AFTRS premises may result in disciplinary action which may include dismissal or termination of enrolment and/or referral to the Police. Sale, transfer or manufacture of illicit substances in the workplace will result in dismissal or termination of enrolment and referral to the Police.

### **4. What are the effects of alcohol or drug misuse?**

Alcohol is a depressant drug which slows brain activity and motor skill responses. It causes loss of balance and coordination and reduces a person's ability to judge

speed and distance. It also impairs the ability to process and respond to situations and make decisions. Alcohol can increase a person's confidence beyond their capacity or result in aggressive behaviour.

There is a range of illegal drugs which may produce unfavourable work performance e.g. confusion and impaired motor coordination. There is also a range of over-the-counter and prescribed medications which can also affect work performance. These include pain relievers, sleeping pills, tranquilisers, cough medicine, anti-histamines etc. Many of these commonly-used medications have a potent and adverse effect on performance, particularly when mixed with alcohol.

Issues associated with the consumption of alcohol illegal drugs or medication may impact on the School in absenteeism, accidents or poor work performance.

## **5. What are my responsibilities?**

It is AFTRS policy that persons working in or for AFTRS or studying at AFTRS arrive unaffected by drugs or alcohol and remain that way while they are on duty. This is incorporated in the AFTRS Code of Conduct that applies to both students and employees. In the case of productions no staff member, student or volunteer is to arrive at the set affected by drug or alcohol use and no drugs or alcohol are to be consumed on set. For areas involving high risks, e.g. machinery use, local restrictions, to be determined by the Head of Department, will apply.

For the purposes of these Guidelines "affected by drug use or alcohol consumption" means that a person's ability to work competently and safely is reduced or there is an increased risk of being involved in an accident and the safety of others or property are in reasonable doubt.

Everyone has the responsibility to ensure that no one commences or continues working if they appear to be affected by alcohol, illegal drugs, medication or other substances which may reasonably be considered to lead to a safety risk or an inability to fulfil the requirements of the position.

Where someone presents at AFTRS and appears to not be in a fit state to carry out their normal duties AFTRS reserves the right to remove them from the premises and to seek advice from a medical practitioner as to their fitness.

### **i. Supervisors / Managers/ Heads of Department**

Supervisors and managers are responsible for:

- implementing these guidelines in their area of responsibility and have the authority to act immediately should they have the need to do so;
- manage the performance of employees, contractors, students etc working in their area of responsibility;
- maintain confidentiality (as far as possible) when a person advises they have been prescribed medication by a medical practitioner if that medication can have an effect on their work performance or if it increases the risk to their own safety or the safety of others (there shall be no disadvantage or discrimination against someone notifying a potential risk of this kind);

- provide opportunities for support and assistance for those with alcohol or drug related problems by referring the person to Human Resources (Employee Assistance Program) or to Student Services (Assistance through Macquarie University Student Welfare Services).

## **ii. Employees / Contractors**

Employees, contractors etc. are responsible for:

- ensuring that they are not, by the consumption of alcohol or a drug, in a state which may affect their performance or endanger their own safety or the safety of someone else
- advising their immediate supervisor that they have been prescribed medication by a medical practitioner or are taking over-the-counter medication if that medication can have an effect on their work performance or if it increases the risk to their own safety or the safety of others. This should include a statement of any effects the drug may have on work performance as advised by the doctor or pharmacist (Employees will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against by notifying this potential risk)
- immediately consulting with their manager, supervisor or representative if they have concerns about working with another employee because of possible increased risk to health or safety from the use of non-prescription drugs or alcohol consumption
- not being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs if in charge of vehicles and machinery, handling hazardous chemicals or undertaking hazardous activities
- supporting a colleague whose wellbeing or job performance they perceive to be adversely affected by alcohol or drug use to seek appropriate assistance.

## **iii. In relation to students**

AFTRS is responsible for setting parameters for acceptable and inappropriate behaviour in students:

- Where behaviour of a student is influenced by drug or alcohol use and the behaviour is improper, unsafe or constitutes a risk to themselves or others, these issues must be addressed immediately.
- Staff are to avoid acting in a manner that may itself be unsafe or aggravate the situation and must bring the matter to the attention of their Head of Department, Head of Branch or the Dean of Studies.
- Where there is an issue of immediate safety, Security must be contacted to determine an appropriate management plan.
- Academic staff are not expected to diagnose or counsel students who appear to be misusing alcohol or drugs but do have a responsibility, where appropriate, to confidentially encourage students to seek assistance.

## **iv. Students**

- Students must ensure that they do not attend AFTRS if adversely affected by alcohol or drugs.
- Students are encouraged to seek assistance if they require support in dealing with an alcohol or drug problem (Confidential help is available by contacting AFTRS Student Services who will arrange consultations with the Student Welfare Services at Macquarie University).

- Where a student fails to seek assistance for an alcohol or other drug problem and their behaviour is improper, unsafe or impacts upon the wellbeing or enjoyment of others, disciplinary action (up to termination of enrolment) or other AFTRS procedures may be instituted.

## **6. What are the procedures for managing employees affected by alcohol or drugs?**

### **Initial Action**

If a supervisor determines that an employee is impaired by alcohol or drug use they will direct that employee to cease work immediately.

#### **i. The Supervisor should:**

- speak to the employee away from the hearing of others and advise them that their appearance, work performance and/or behaviour is causing concern and that the supervisor considers that they appear to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance
- seek clarification or explanation from the employee to ascertain the reason for their appearance, unsatisfactory work performance and/or behaviour, and
- if the supervisor is satisfied with the explanation given by the employee and believes that the employee is able to continue work safely and without causing risk to others, the supervisor should advise the employee of this.
  - ii. If the Supervisor is still of the opinion that the employee is affected by alcohol or other substances to the extent that they cannot work safely and without causing risk to others the situation is to be immediately referred to Human Resources, where possible, for advice and action.
  - iii. Where a Human Resources representative meets with the employee the employee should be advised that they are entitled to have a representative or observer in attendance if they wish. If the Human Resources representative observes behaviour which would lead them to consider the employee is under the influence of alcohol or another substance they may: refer the employee to a medical practitioner for assessment of their fitness for duty; stand down the employee with pay while the situation is investigated, and/or offer the employee transport home (AFTRS to meet reasonable travel costs).
  - iv. The employee is to be advised in writing that, as soon as practicable, the incident will be discussed with them, their supervisor and a Human Resources representative. They may invite an observer if they wish.
  - v. Formal discussion – This shall be documented and the record retained on the employee's personal file. The employee will be allowed an opportunity to explain their behaviour and, if appropriate, be offered assistance through the AFTRS Employee Assistance Program. They should be advised that should the occurrence be repeated formal disciplinary action may be taken.

## **Repeat Occurrence**

Where an employee has been encouraged to seek assistance for an alcohol or other drug problem but fails to do so, or there is a repeat occurrence of a serious nature that impacts on the safety or enjoyment of other employees or students, disciplinary procedures in line with the misconduct provisions of the AFTRS Enterprise Bargaining Agreement shall be followed.

## **7. How do we ensure AFTRS events are safe?**

While AFTRS accepts that alcohol consumption is ultimately a matter of individual choice, it expects that those responsible for the organisation of functions which involve alcohol will ensure that such functions are conducted in a manner consistent with the achievement of the objectives of these guidelines.

All activities involving alcohol must have at least one person nominated as an Event Manager from within the organising department who will be responsible for the planning and management of the event..

### **i. Event Manager**

The Departmental Event Manager is responsible for:

- ensuring the consumption of alcohol is a social adjunct to, and not the purpose of, the event;
- ensuring the event is fully inclusive and welcoming to all who choose not to drink alcohol;
- ensuring an appropriate standard of conduct is encouraged to ensure the safety and enjoyment of those attending the event and others who the event may impact on (e.g. employees whose work areas are located close to the event);
- ensuring there are low alcohol and attractive non-alcoholic drinks easily available and in adequate quantities;
- offering a mix of alcohol and food (and entertainment where reasonable) rather than alcohol only;
- wherever possible using employees trained in the responsible serving of alcohol to serve alcohol;
- doing everything that is reasonable and practicable to reduce or eliminate risk and minimise harmful consequences arising from the conduct of the event (see risk assessment form);
- considering appropriate courses of action in specific instances e.g. someone becomes grossly intoxicated at the event, passes out or becomes ill, becomes violent or leave the event intoxicated, and
- ensuring they have a charged mobile phone and emergency and security contact numbers.

### **ii. Informal Events Involving Alcohol**

The event must:

- be fully inclusive and welcoming of all invitees including those who choose not to drink
- have designated times between which alcohol will be served
- have non-alcoholic drinks including plain water freely available
- provide appropriate food which does not encourage further drinking

- have a system to identify intoxicated persons who will not be provided with more alcohol, and
- ensure an appropriate standard of conduct is encouraged to ensure the safety and enjoyment of those attending the event.

### iii. Formal Events Involving Alcohol

Departmental Event Managers for Formal AFTRS Events involving alcohol must complete the checklist at Attachment A (copy of signed Risk Assessment to be retained by Department and Property Services). The checklist must be completed to the satisfaction of the relevant Branch Head and the Property Services Manager prior to the event occurring. If the checklist is not submitted or not completed satisfactorily the event is not permitted to take place.

## 8. What do I do if there is an emergency?

In the event of an emergency occurring you should contact the Ambulance, Fire Brigade or Police Service as appropriate by dialling (0) 000 from all AFTRS internal phones or 000 from a public or mobile phone. If the situation is life threatening the Ambulance should be contacted first.

### i. Suspected overdose

If someone is suspected of having overdosed it is vital that they receive professional help as soon as possible.

- Call an ambulance immediately.
- Stay with the person until the ambulance arrives.
- If possible call your local first aid officer (all security staff are first aid officers). It is also worth determining if anyone at the scene knows mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- In all emergency situation it is also essential that Security be contacted. Dial extension 442, 577 or 540.
- Ensure adequate air by keeping crowds back and opening windows. Loosen tight clothing.
- If the person is unconscious, don't leave them on their back – they could choke. Turn them on their side and into the recovery position. Gently tilt their head back so their tongue does not block the airway.
- If breathing has stopped, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is required. If there is no pulse, CPR will need to be applied.
- Provide the ambulance officers with as much information as you can – drugs taken, how long ago and any pre-existing medical conditions.

## 9. Who can provide support?

Issues relating to drug and alcohol use are frequently complex and can require careful management. What may appear to be an obvious course of action can be complicated by other aspects of an individual's circumstances.

AFTRS staff do not have the expertise to assist staff and students manage these problems, although referral to the following services may be made.

## **i. Staff – Employee Assistance Program**

This service is provided by ACCESS and funded by AFTRS. Should you wish referral to this program please contact the Human Resources Manager on ext. 616.

## **ii. Students – Student Welfare Services**

AFTRS has an agreement with Macquarie University for the provision of welfare related services for AFTRS students. Should you wish referral to these service please contact Student Services. AFTRS funds this service.

## **iii. Useful websites**

Drug information	<a href="http://www.drugs.vic.gov.au">http://www.drugs.vic.gov.au</a>
Drug information in other languages	<a href="http://drugs.vic.gov.au/language.htm">http://drugs.vic.gov.au/language.htm</a>
Australian Drug Information Network	<a href="http://www.adin.com.au">http://www.adin.com.au</a>
The Alcohol and Drug Information Clearinghouse (Nebraska Council to Prevent Alcohol and Drug abuse)	<a href="http://www.prevlink.org/getthefacts/index.html">http://www.prevlink.org/getthefacts/index.html</a>

## **10. Related Documents**

- Risk Assessment – Formal Events Involving Alcohol: Management and Safety Checklist
- Staff Employee Assistance Program
- Student Welfare Services
- Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991
- AFTRS Production Guidelines
- AFTRS Enterprise Bargaining Agreement – Code of Conduct and Misconduct procedures
- AFTRS Student Handbook