

# Equal Opportunities Policy

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

Premier Technical Services Group PLC and its constituent companies aim to ensure everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and where there is equal opportunity for all.

This means that all staff and users should understand and respect that there is a diverse work force and user community and that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and equality.

Valuing diversity means that we recognise that we all have complex identities made up of many strands. These can include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical and mental aptitudes, nationality, socio-economic status, and religious, political or other beliefs. This means we embrace and celebrate our differences in a positive environment, and are committed to engage with the needs of our diverse staff and users to enable us, both individually and corporately, to achieve our aims.

The company will create a culture in which equal opportunities and equal treatment are a priority for all staff and users. In the recruitment, training, pay and management of staff, and in all our day-to-day work with both colleagues and users, we seek to create an environment where attitudes and biases that hinder the progress of individuals and groups are dismantled and where we work together in mutual respect and tolerance.

### **Management Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all management to:

- ensure that the standards established within this policy are adhered to within their own area of responsibility
- familiarise themselves with the procedures in all Equal Opportunities documentation
- ensure that they are not instructing employees to act in a discriminatory manner
- ensure they are not putting pressure on employees to discriminate
- bring the details of the policy and procedure documents to the attention of all staff
- ensure that information on equal opportunities is incorporated in all induction processes for new or temporary staff and is supported by ongoing training

### **Staff Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of employees at all levels to:

- co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity
- report any discriminatory acts or practices
- not induce or attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination
- not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination

### **Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination takes place when a person is treated less favourably than others (in the same circumstances) on the grounds of their race, sex, disability etc.

*For example, a job advertisement which states that “Only those who have English as their first language may apply”*

### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination means applying a condition, or requirement, which adversely affects one particular group more than another, and cannot be justified in terms of the requirements for performing a job.

*For example, a line manager who only offers overtime to full time members of staff (the group being directly discriminated against will be part timers but where female part timers form the majority of the part time group they would be eligible to claim indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender).*

### **Refusal to work on the grounds of Health and Safety**

The group recognises the right of employees to escalate their health and safety concerns to the appropriate levels of management without the fear of discrimination. Employees are advised at induction of the arrangements for the reporting of accidents and incidents.

Further details are provided in the arrangements section of the health and safety policy document including the Network Rail Confidential Incident Reporting and Analysis Systems [CIRAS] [www.ciras.org.uk](http://www.ciras.org.uk)

### **Genuine Occupational Qualification**

The law recognises that there will be occasions when it is necessary to restrict certain jobs to certain categories or groups of people. This is rare and an employer would have to demonstrate that they have researched the requirement thoroughly

## **Recruitment Process**

The company will:

- Review Job Descriptions to ensure they do not contain any potentially discriminatory criteria that are not essential for the role.
- Advertise vacancies so that they are likely to reach all potential applicants.
- Ensure that recruitment literature and advertisements make it clear that applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates and that they avoid stereotypical images.
- Include in any advertising details of flexibilities such as childcare vouchers, job share and flexi time where they are available.
- Advise any agencies, job centres, career offices etc. of our equal opportunities policy and practices and ask them to convey these to potential applicants.
- Monitor returns of application forms to identify any concerns in failing to attract a broad range of individuals.
- Invite applicants to identify any special arrangements they may need at interview.
- Ensure that selection decisions for any post are taken by more than one person.

## **Performance Management**

The Company will

- Quality assure completed performance agreements, interim reviews and main reviews to ensure that performance targets are fairly set and progress fairly assessed and there is no indication of the use of stereotypical assumptions.
- Act on learning and development needs identified in personal development plans.



[Signed for and on behalf of the company]

T Wilcock – Group Director – Health and Safety