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United Nations Global Compact

Communication on Progress 2022



CourtHeath
Consulting

COVERING EVERY ANGLE WITH INTEGRITY

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STATEMENT OF CONTINUED SUPPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I am pleased to reaffirm CourtHeath's support for the United Nations Global Compact's Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

Covering the period from 14 November 2021 to 12 November 2022, this seventh annual Communication on Progress outlines steps taken by CourtHeath to integrate the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture and daily operations. We also commit to transparency in sharing this information with our stakeholders through our primary communication channels.

CourtHeath is a small consulting firm based in Melbourne, Naarm, Australia. Our business provides probity and procurement advice and associated services to government departments and agencies, local government and not-for-profit organisations. We uphold the principles of the UN Global Compact in our own small-scale operations and have enshrined these principles in our business processes.

However, we anticipate that our greatest impact will be our ability to influence the practices and purchasing approaches of public sector agencies, so that government behaviour upholds the Global Compact's principles. This is likely to be primarily in the areas of:

- anti-corruption training, awareness raising (integrity, anti-corruption, whistle-blower protections, etc), upholding labour rights in the supply chain (through our procurement work and particularly through government Social Procurement initiatives which also address human rights and environmental sustainability).


CourtHeath supports human rights initiatives relevant to our sphere of operation including workplace diversity and gender equity (including family violence leave and gender pay equity objectives). We also support clients that promote environmental initiatives in Victoria.

In 2016 we commenced this journey, establishing our presence in the Victorian public sector as a Global Compact participant and an ethical and values-based organisation. We developed a website giving prominence to the UN Global Compact. Having been appointed to panels providing us access to government probity and procurement business, we are able to raise awareness of the UN Global Compact principles with government purchasers and policy makers.

During 2022, CourtHeath was pleased to observe public sector departments and agencies in Victoria, Australia continuing to implement the government's Social Procurement Framework effective from 1 September 2018 and has joined a Roundtable to improve its efficacy.

The social procurement framework objectives span ten areas:

1. Opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal People
2. Opportunities for Victorians with disability
3. Women's equality and safety
4. Opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians
5. Supporting safe and fair workplaces
6. Sustainable Victorian social enterprise
7. Sustainable Victorian regions
8. Environmentally sustainable outputs
9. Environmentally sustainable business practices
10. Implementation of the Climate Change Policy Objectives.



Pauline Bernard
Managing Director
November 2022

1. HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

1.1. ASSESSMENT, POLICY AND GOALS

CourtHeath is committed to respecting human rights in its work. Despite being a small consulting organisation, which does not have direct experience of human rights violations, we aim to encourage government agencies to engage in ethical purchasing and effective social procurement. This approach emphasises propriety in allocating public funds to further human rights, the creation of positive and sustainable social externalities, and the mitigation of inequality through empowerment of disadvantaged communities.

More broadly, we endorse the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and aim to incorporate its standards in our policy and practice. Through rigorous due diligence, we pledge to avoid infringing the rights of others, and to take steps to avoid negative human rights impacts resulting from our work. We will adhere to international human rights standards in our activities and our relationships. This includes taking steps towards respect, protection and fulfilment for such rights as freedom of association and collective bargaining; the effective elimination of child labour and modern slavery; the elimination of all forms of racial and gender discrimination; and the realisation of a workplace which positively empowers its employees and people of the broader world without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, physical ability, or mental illness.

Beyond these basic commitments, we intend to implement measures, which positively contribute to the realisation of human rights, in particular through the creation of a diverse, inclusive and accessible workplace. We believe this pledge places us in line with best-practice international standards regarding human rights.

Among the human rights risks in the government procurement sector in which our clients operate are discrimination against disadvantaged groups based on gender, disability, race or ethnicity. Our specific human rights goals are to achieve improved effectiveness of ethical procurement as measured by purchasing agencies including effective tendering provisions. Our participation in the University of Melbourne Social Procurement Roundtable conducted by the Melbourne School of Government that commenced in October 2020 will further this goal. Other attendees include: academics, state and local government, contractors, social benefit suppliers and social enterprise representatives. This supplements a program to evaluate the effectiveness of social procurement and explore opportunities to further improve government policy and practice.



“Our specific human rights goals are to achieve improved effectiveness of ethical procurement as measured by purchasing agencies including effective tendering provisions.”



Implementation

We have offered all staff practical ethics training provided by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, which has raised staff awareness of human rights risks in procurement supply chain management. We have also trained CourtHeath staff about the Global Compact and its Ten Principles. CourtHeath has articulated responsibilities to respect, protect and fulfil human rights in the *Our People* policy. The Managing Director, ensuring strong leadership on human rights issues within the company, oversees this policy personally.

We have promoted the Victorian government's Social Procurement Framework, assisting clients to tailor their tender schedules to elicit responses from tenderers that will facilitate involvement in projects of disadvantaged Victorians.

1.2. MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

This is our seventh year as a member of the UN Global Compact.

We have a diverse staff whose needs we strive to accommodate, providing employment for:

- Victorians with disability 1,950 hours annually
- Victorian Aboriginal people 1,150 hours annually.

We have contributed to social justice initiatives globally via our various communication channels.

We have a publicly available [complaints policy](#) to ensure accountability for human rights issues within our small company and would deal with alleged human rights issues through this confidential mechanism in accordance with *Our People and Culture* policy.

From our complaints policy:

CourtHeath Consulting encourages a workplace with appropriate, ethical conduct, and recognises the right for complaints to be made about the conduct of our people, including employees and contractors. CourtHeath Consulting will take all reasonable steps to protect those involved in a complaint from any victimisation, as a result of such a complaint.

Complaints will be managed confidentially, discreetly and courteously, and all records pertaining to complaints will be held in confidence.

This Policy applies to CourtHeath Consulting personnel as well as clients and members of the public who make complaints relating to CourtHeath Consulting or to CourtHeath Consulting personnel.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan states: At CourtHeath, our vision for reconciliation is to support and provide opportunities for the First Peoples of Australia. As employers, suppliers and consumers we have a tri-partite role to promote reconciliation and self-determination for the Aboriginal community, in a culturally sensitive and safe manner. We recognise that our business is small, but we lead by example and embrace and celebrate Aboriginal people, influencing others to do the same. One of our Principal Consultants is an Aboriginal woman who is committed to learn more about her culture and help us to do the same.





Our awareness raising activities relevant to this area have included publishing the following blog:



- **IWD 2022 – A global call to action**

Monday, 8 March marked International Women's Day (IWD). The theme, #BreakTheBias, set a challenge: to imagine a world free of bias and to then take steps to collectively Break the Bias. Whether deliberate or unconscious, bias makes it difficult for women to move ahead. But knowing bias exists isn't enough – action is needed to level the playing field.

According to the [World Economic Forum](#), we will not see gender parity in our lifetime. In fact, because the global COVID-19 pandemic [disproportionately affected women](#), the proposed timeline of gender parity has been pushed back from 99.5 years to 135.6 years. IWD is more important than ever.

<https://www.courtheath.com.au/iwd-2022-breakthebias/>

(Image: [IWD 2022](#))

- **More women in Victorian public construction**

In 2022, the Victorian government in Australia introduced a policy promoting gender equality in the construction industry. The [Building Equality Policy](#) (BEP) was designed to create training and employment opportunities for women through government procurement on building and infrastructure projects. The State government said that the BEP sought to disrupt gender stereotypes, norms and roles in the construction industry.

The government's two objectives of the policy were to:

1. create training opportunities for women through government procurement on building, infrastructure, civil engineering and any other capital works projects
2. increase the targets and requirements in the Building Equality Policy (BEP) to create a more gender inclusive industry.

The BEP was implemented through the existing [Social Procurement Framework](#) (SPF), and had its own weighting independent of the SPF weighting.

<https://www.courtheath.com.au/more-women-in-victorian-public-construction/>

2. LABOUR PRINCIPLES

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

2.1. ASSESSMENT, POLICY AND GOALS

In keeping with the pursuit of equitable, transparent and accountable government and corporate institutions, CourtHeath recognises the importance of collective and individual labour rights. We affirm our commitment to the International Labour Organisation's Core Conventions, especially to the freedoms of association and collective bargaining and freedom from all forms of employment discrimination.

Our work aims to promote ethical sourcing and procurement, working towards the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour, as well as the effective abolition of child labour.

We have a diverse staff whose needs we strive to accommodate.

We embrace flexible working hours and working from home, where this is the choice of the staff member in question.

We are committed to providing compensation and benefits for employees, for instance in the case of workplace injuries.

Our policy encourages adherence to the UN Global Compact labour principles from our business partners and suppliers.

CourtHeath staff members have participated in committees advocating inclusion, for example digital accessibility for people with a disability and diversity in the legal profession.

2.2. IMPLEMENTATION

We have offered all staff practical ethics training provided by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, which has raised staff awareness of labour rights risks in procurement supply chain management. We have also trained CourtHeath staff about the Global Compact and its Ten Principles.





2.3. MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

CourtHeath is a small consulting organisation which has had no reported incidents of labour rights violations.

Our awareness raising activities relevant to this area have included publishing the following blog:



- **People with disability in a post-COVID world**

On International Day of People with Disability we discussed the [theme](#), *Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID world*, as well as the ways people and organisations could participate in this important day.

According to the [United Nations](#) (UN), more than one billion people, or 15 per cent of the global population, live with some form of disability. Alarming, 80 per cent live in developing countries. [In Australia](#), about 4.4 million, or 10 per cent of people, have disability. This is also known as 'disability prevalence'.

The UN reported that the pandemic had magnified the challenges and barriers people with disabilities experienced due to "reduced access to routine health care and rehabilitation services, more pronounced social isolation, poorly tailored public health messaging, inadequately constructed mental health services, and a lack of emergency preparedness for people with special needs."

The [Australian Network on Disability](#) (ANoD) stated direct input from employees with disability was vital in any organisation that wished to truly practice disability inclusion. Storytelling, for example, was a powerful tool of connection. Employees with disability might feel comfortable sharing their experiences and stories. On IDPwD 2021, the ANoD recommended sharing the stories of employees with disability, as no two experiences are the same.

<https://www.courtheath.com.au/people-with-disability-in-a-post-covid-world/>

(Image: IDPwD)



3. ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLES

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

3.1. ASSESSMENT, POLICY AND GOALS

CourtHeath has a publicly available environmental policy outlining its commitment and approach to environmental sustainability. This Policy can be accessed through our website at www.courtheath.com.au.

We are committed to improving environmental performance across all of our business activities, and encourage our business partners and members of the wider community to share that commitment.

We practice sustainable procurement, purchasing goods and services that are less damaging to the environment and human health. As a small business, the major items we purchase are commuter transport services, stationery and power.

In its professional advisory services, CourtHeath has made a commitment to promote environmental sustainability. Where appropriate, we seek to educate and influence others (clients, community and sub-contractors). We are mindful of the opportunities that government purchasers have to set behavioural expectations of suppliers and the supply chain. This opportunity often arises in our procurement advice and particularly as we are drafting market invitation documents. We work with our clients to ensure that the specifications they publish reflect current best practice and identify suitable alternatives (both goods and services) which are environmentally friendly such as energy saving, recycled content, water saving, low toxicity or other significant attributes.

We can direct clients to the full range of activities related to purchasing goods and services ranging from contracting for an entire service to purchasing small assets such as office equipment. Green purchasing spans the entire life cycle of the product or service from inception and design through to contract management and disposal of any redundant assets.

3.2. MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

We aim to use the following criteria to measure our progress on environmental sustainability goals:

- Ensuring that our office equipment and stationery (including lighting and paper products) are sourced sustainably
- Ensuring that suppliers (such as website hosting providers and office providers) meet sustainability standards relevant to their various operations
- Ensuring that our transport arrangements are sustainable where possible.



Our awareness raising activities relevant to this area included continuing a major commitment to fighting climate change:



TAKE2 is Victoria's collective climate change program supporting individuals, government, business and other organisations to help the state achieve net zero emissions by 2050. ([Source](#)) CourtHeath took the TAKE2 pledge in 2018, making a public commitment to tackle climate change as stated on our TAKE2 [profile page](#).

Our pledge in part is to “improve our environmental performance across all our business activities, and encourage our business partners and members of the wider community to do the same. We practice sustainable procurement, purchasing goods and services that are less damaging to the environment and human health.”

In addition to our TAKE-2 pledge, our awareness raising activities around the Environmental principle also includes publishing the following blog:



- **State of the Environment**

This year, Australia's long-awaited [State of the Environment](#) report was released, and as many expected, it chronicled the terrifying accelerating loss of Australia's flora and fauna, and the declining health of our lands and oceans. It also detailed the scale of the challenge governments, industry and citizens face finding ways to reverse the deteriorating state of our environment “now considered a threat to humanity,” stated the report, “which could bring about societal collapse.”

In our blog, we offered an overview of the State of the Environment (SoE) report, outlining its approach, aims, and key findings. We also discussed the Climate Change Act (Vic.) 2017, as well as Victoria's Social Procurement Framework and Climate Change Action.

Some sobering facts from the SoE report included:

- Environmental degradation is being hastened by climate that has warmed Australia's average land temperature by 1.4 degrees since the early 20th century
- Australia's “Black Summer” fires of 2019-2020 burned more than 8 million hectares of native vegetation and killed or displaced 1-3 billion animals
- Our unique wildlife is being devastated by bushfires, drought, habitat loss and global warming
- Marine heat-waves caused mass coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef in 2016, 2017, and 2020.

<https://www.courtheath.com.au/state-of-the-environment/>

(Image: Used under licence from [shutterstock](#))



Implementation

We communicate our own environmental practices and achievements to our customers with a view to encouraging environmental impact considerations in procurement activities. Initiatives undertaken by our organisation in reducing our environmental impact include:

- We use low energy LED lights to reduce electricity and corresponding greenhouse emissions.
- We use recycled paper products where possible. We recycle paper and printer cartridges. We dispose of our e-waste including redundant equipment through recycling depots. We print double-sided to save paper.
- We have purchased re-useable “keep cups” for our staff and encourage their use as well as the re-use of coffee trays.
- We have retained the services of a secure document destruction service provider that practices recycling.
- We chose Crucial, our web host, for its environmental credentials, supporting eco-friendly business and donating to the ‘Plant a Billion Trees’ initiative as well as The Nature Conservancy Australia through its carbon offset program. In 2013/2014 Crucial offset its entire year of carbon emissions by sponsoring the Tasmanian Native Forest Protection project “Climate Friendly”. This project sponsors jobs for Australian workers and assists with the protection of large tracts of land and wildlife.



Our web host, Crucial, supports eco-friendly business and continually donates to The Nature Conservancy Australia through its carbon-offset program.

Image used under licence from [shutterstock](https://www.shutterstock.com) shows Lake Bellfield, from Boroka Lookout, Grampians, Victoria, Australia.

4. ANTI-CORRUPTION

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

4.1. ASSESSMENT, POLICY AND GOALS

It is CourtHeath's policy to pursue all its business transactions in an honest and ethical manner. In doing business anywhere in the world, neither CourtHeath nor any person associated with it may offer, pay, promise, authorise or receive any bribe, kickback or illicit payment.

CourtHeath has a zero-tolerance policy for corruption, bribery and extortion. We actively promote awareness about anti-corruption practices amongst our public sector clients.

Our goals over the next year are to continue to provide education for all staff and relevant clients about corruption, as well as what to do if one should encounter it.

4.2. MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

CourtHeath aims to make measurable progress according to the following criteria:

- Participation in anti-corruption dialogues and events
- Raising awareness of corruption and probity issues through training, social media and stakeholder engagement
- Assisting clients to achieve transparent and accountable probity processes.





4.3 IMPLEMENTATION

On 10 November, 2021, we attended the virtual presentation of the *2021 Australian Dialogue on Business and Human Rights – Plenary: How the Pandemic is Re-shaping Human Rights for Business*. The panel, which was facilitated by Vanessa Zimmerman (Global Compact Network Australia) discussed the challenges businesses are facing in implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights during the global Covid-19 pandemic, and offered ways business could work collectively to help create a new path that honoured both people and the planet.

We have also contributed to the local and global conversation around anti-corruption initiatives, including publishing the following blogs:

- **Eliminating corruption and educating the VPS**

In this blog, we offered an overview of the Victorian Parliament’s Integrity and Oversight Committee’s report on its Inquiry into the Education and Prevention Functions of Victoria’s Integrity Agencies.

The Committee reviewed the following agencies that strive to ensure high standards in Victoria’s public sector and expose and address wrongdoing: Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC); the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC); the Victorian Inspectorate (VI), and the Victorian Ombudsman.

The Committee made 18 recommendations, including: the need across all agencies for more in-depth engagement with diverse and vulnerable communities in Victoria; to provide more realistic, accessible and detailed information for whistle-blowers about how to make reports safely and securely; and a requirement that the agencies develop and use systematic and rigorous frameworks to measure the quality and impact of their work, and to report the outcomes in their annual reports.

<http://www.courtheath.com.au/eliminating-corruption-and-educating-the-vps/>



- **Corruption Perceptions Index 2021 (part one and two)**

Two years into the COVID-19 global pandemic, this year’s [Corruption Perception Index](#) (CPI) showed that despite commitments on paper, worldwide public sector corruption levels had stagnated, with 131 of the 180 countries and territories surveyed making no significant progress against corruption over the last decade. And while 25 countries had made much-welcomed improvements, alarmingly, this year also showed 27 countries had hit historic lows in their CPI score, with Australia listed among those countries.

In part one of the blog series, we discussed the CPI, and then offered an overview of the 2021 findings and recommendations. In part two, we focused on Australia and the [Asia-Pacific region](#), particularly in terms of CPI rankings, and findings.

“The dramatic fall in Australia’s standing underscores the urgent need for the establishment of a national integrity commission with the full powers of a royal commission,” said [Serena Lillywhite](#), CEO of Transparency International Australia.



Lillywhite went on to say that in poll after poll, Australians had voiced their concern about corruption and misconduct in Australian politics, and saw the establishment of a national anti-corruption watchdog as essential.

<http://www.courtheath.com.au/corruption-perceptions-index-2021-part-two/>

<http://www.courtheath.com.au/corruption-perceptions-index-2021-part-one/>

(Image: ©[Transparency International](#))

- **Your role in preventing corruption**

December 9 was International [Anti-Corruption Day](#). The theme, “Your right, your role: say no to corruption”, highlighted the need for a multifaceted response to fight corruption. In other words, all countries and every person had a role to play to prevent and counter corruption.

The focus was on countering corruption in six key areas: Education and youth; Sport; Gender; Private sector; COVID-19; and International cooperation. The aim: to create effective, accountable, and transparent institutions and a global culture of integrity and fairness in all these areas.

We at CourtHeath agree that transparency and accountability is key to the prevention of corruption.

<http://www.courtheath.com.au/spotlight-on-how-to-help-prevent-corruption-and-misconduct/>



5. DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth

Valuing diversity, CourtHeath supports opportunities for full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with a disability.

SDG12 Ensure responsible consumption and production

Supplier diversity enhances resilient sustainable and adaptive supply chains. CourtHeath's work in government procurement aims to increase awareness about ethical procurement and sourcing responsibly, considering the entire supply chain.

SDG 16 peace, justice and strong institutions

CourtHeath contributes to building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions working with public sector clients in procurement, seeking to promote accountability and to reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

SDG 17 Partnership for the goals

On a daily basis, CourtHeath works to encourage and promote effective public-private partnerships, ultimately fostering sustainable development. Our work to promote ethical supply chains is central to government's public-private partnerships.