

# Konkan LNG Limited

## VIGIL MECHANISM / WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY

### 1. Preface:

The Company believes in conducting its business in a fair and transparent manner by adopting highest standards of professionalism, honesty, integrity and ethical behavior. As such, the company endeavors to work against corruption in all its forms including demand and acceptance of illegal gratification and abuse of official position with a view to obtain pecuniary advantage for self or any other person.

Section 177 of the Companies Act 2013 inter-alia, provides that every listed company or such class or classes of companies, as may be prescribed, shall establish a vigil mechanism for directors and employees to report genuine concerns in such manner as may be prescribed and the vigil mechanism shall provide for adequate safeguards against victimisation of persons who use such mechanism and make provision for direct access to the Chairperson of the Audit Committee.

The objective of Vigil Mechanism / Whistle Blower Policy is to build and strengthen a culture of transparency and trust in the organization and to provide employees with a framework/ procedure for responsible and secure reporting of improper activities (whistle blowing) within the company and to protect employees wishing to raise a concern about improper activity/ serious irregularities within the company.

The policy does not absolve employees from their duty of confidentiality in the course of their work. It is also not a route for taking up personal grievances.

### 2. Definitions:

1. “Company” means Konkan LNG Limited (KLL).
2. “*Audit committee*” means the Audit Committee constituted by the Board of Directors of the Company in accordance with Section 177 of the Companies Act, 2013.
3. “Competent Authority” means the Chairperson, Audit Committee of the Board of Directors of the Company (After its constitution) till then Chairman of the Board and will include any person(s) to whom he may delegate any of his powers as the Competent Authority under this policy from time to time.
4. “Employee” means every employee whose name appears on rolls of the company including Directors of the Company.
5. “Improper Activity” means any activity by an employee of the Company that is undertaken in performance of his or her official duty, whether or not that act is within the scope of his or her employment, and that is in violation of any law applicable to

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the employee, including but not limited to abuse of authority, breach of contract, manipulation of company data, pilferage of confidential/ proprietary information, criminal offence, corruption, bribery, theft, conversion or misuse of the Company's property, fraudulent claim, fraud or willful omission to perform the duty, or that is economically wasteful or involving gross misconduct, competence or gross inefficiency and any other unethical, biased, favoured or imprudent act.

Activities which have no nexus to the working of the Company and are purely of personal nature are specifically excluded from the definition of Improper Activity.

6. "Investigators" mean those persons authorized, appointed, consulted or approached by the Competent Authority in connection with conducting investigation into a protected disclosure and includes the Auditors of the Company.
7. "Protected Disclosure" means any communication made in good faith that discloses or demonstrates information that may evidence unethical or "Improper Activity".
8. "Service Rules" means the rules as applicable for the employees of KLL.
9. "Subject" means an employee against or in relation to whom a Protected Disclosure has been made or evidence gathered during the course of an investigation.
10. "Whistle Blower" means an Employee making a Protected Disclosure under this policy.

### **3. Eligibility:**

All employees of the company are eligible to make "Protected Disclosures".

### **4. Guiding Principles:**

1. Protected disclosures are acted upon in a time bound manner
2. Complete confidentiality of the Whistle Blower is maintained
3. The Whistle Blower and / or the person(s), processing the Protected Disclosures are not subjected to victimization.
4. Evidence of the Protected Disclosure is not concealed and appropriate action including disciplinary action is taken in case of attempts to conceal or destroy evidence.
5. Subject of the protected Disclosure i.e. person against or in relation to whom a protected disclosure has been made, is provided an opportunity of being heard.

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## **5. Types of Concern which are Covered**

1. Conduct which is an offence or a breach of law.
2. Failure to comply with a legal obligation.
3. Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as employees.
4. Damage to the environment.
5. The unauthorized use of funds.
6. Possible fraud and corruption.
7. Sexual, physical or other abuse of clients.
8. Other unethical conduct.
9. Actions which are unprofessional, inappropriate or are in conflict with a general understanding of what is right and wrong.

## **6. Whistle Blower – Role & Disqualification:**

### **A) Role:**

1. The Whistle Blower's Role is that of a reporting party with reliable information.
2. The Whistle Blower is not required or expected to conduct any investigations on his own.
3. The Whistle Blower does not have any right to participate in investigations.
4. Protected Disclosure will be appropriately dealt with by the Competent Authority.
5. The Whistle Blower shall have a right to be informed of the disposition of his disclosure except overriding legal or other reasons on his written request.

### **B) Disqualifications:**

1. Genuine Whistle Blowers will be accorded protection from any kind of unfair treatment/ victimization. However, any abuse of this protection will warrant disciplinary action against him.
2. Whistle Blowers, who make any Protected Disclosures, which have been subsequently found to be motivated or malafide or malicious or frivolous, baseless or reported otherwise than in good faith, will be liable for disciplinary action.
3. Whistle Blowers, who make three Protected Disclosures, which have been subsequently found to be malafide, frivolous, baseless, and malicious or reported otherwise than in good faith, will be disqualified from reporting further Protected Disclosure under this policy.

## **7. Procedures – Essentials and handling of Protected Disclosure:**

1. In Protected Disclosures, the Complainant should, in addition to the complaint, attach separately a letter bearing the identity of the whistle blower /

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complainant i.e. his/her Name, Employee Number and Location, and should be submitted in a closed/ secured / sealed envelope addressed to the Competent Authority. The envelope should be superscribed with the words “Complaint under Protected Disclosure”. (If the envelope is not superscribed and closed / sealed / secured, it will not be possible to provide protection to the whistle blower as specified under this policy).

The text of the complaint should be carefully drafted so as not to give any details or clue as to the identity of the Whistle Blower.

2. If a protected disclosure is received by any executive of the Company other than the Competent Authority, the same should be forwarded by the executive to the Competent Authority for further appropriate action. Further, appropriate care must be taken by the executive to keep the identity of the whistle blower confidential.
3. If the Whistle Blower believes that there is a conflict of interest between the Competent Authority and the Whistle Blower, he may send his protected disclosure directly to the Chairperson, Audit Committee of the Board of Directors of the Company (after its constitution) till than to the Chairman of the Board (in case the Competent Authority is not the Chairperson of the Audit Committee).
4. Anonymous or pseudonymous protected disclosure shall not be entertained.
5. Protected Disclosure should either be typed or written in legible hand writing in English, Hindi or Regional language of the place of employment of the Whistle Blower and should provide a clear understanding of the Improper Activity involved or issue/ concern raised.
6. Protected Disclosures should be factual and not speculative or in the nature of a conclusion, and should contain as much specific information as possible to assist for proper assessment of the nature and extend of the wrong doing and should help in investigation. In order to protect identify of the person, Competent Authority will not issue any acknowledgement and the whistle blowers are advised not to enter into any further correspondence.

## **8. Investigations and Role of Investigators:**

On receipt of Protected Disclosure, the Competent Authority shall first detach the covering letter containing the identity of the whistle blower and verify/ confirm the authenticity of the Whistle Blower. On receipt of confirmation, the protected disclosure only (and not the identity of the whistle blower) shall be forwarded to the investigators for investigation as per following procedure:

### **A) Investigation:**

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1. Investigations will be launched only after a preliminary review by the Competent Authority which establishes that:
  - a. The alleged act constitutes and improper or unethical activity or conduct, and
  - b. The allegation is supported by information specific enough to be investigated or in cases where the allegation is not supported by specific information but it is felt that the concerned matter deserves investigation.
2. If the Competent Authority determines that an investigation is not warranted, reason(s) for such determination shall be recorded in writing.
3. If the Competent Authority is *prima facie* satisfied that the Protected Disclosure warrants investigation of the alleged improper activity, the Competent Authority will direct appropriate investigating machinery of the Company to investigate the matter.
4. The decision to conduct an investigation taken by the Competent Authority is by itself not to be construed as an accusation and is to be treated as a neutral fact-finding process.
5. The identity of a Subject and the Whistle Blower will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the legitimate needs of law and the investigation.
6. Subjects will normally be informed of the allegations at the outset of a formal investigation and will be given opportunities for providing their inputs during the investigation.
7. Subjects shall have a duty to cooperate with the competent authority or any of the investigators during investigation to the extent that such cooperation will not compromise self-incrimination protections available under the applicable laws.
8. Subjects have a responsibility not to interfere with the investigation. Evidence shall not be withheld, destroyed or tampered with, and witnesses shall not be influenced, coached, threatened or intimidated by the Subjects.

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9. Unless there are compelling reasons not to do so, Subjects will be given the opportunity to respond to material findings contained in an investigation report. No allegation of wrong doing against s Subject shall be considered as maintainable unless there is good evidence in support of the allegation.
10. Subjects have a right to be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
11. The investigation shall be completed normally within 45 days of the date of receipt of the protected disclosure or such extended period as the Competent Authority may permit for reasons to be recorded.

## **B) Role of Investigators:**

1. Investigators are required to conduct a process towards fact-finding and analysis. Investigators shall derive their authority from Audit Committee/ Competent Authority, when acting within the course and scope of their investigation.
2. All investigators shall perform their role in an independent and unbiased manner. Investigators have a duty of fairness, objectivity, thoroughness, ethical behavior and observance of professional standards.

## **9. Protection:**

1. The identity of the Whistle Blower shall be kept confidential.
2. No unfair treatment will be meted out to a Whistle Blower by virtue of his/her having reported a Protected Disclosure under this Policy.
3. Complete protection will be given to Whistle Blowers against any unfair practice like retaliation, threat or intimidation of termination/ suspension of service, disciplinary action, transfer, demotion, refusal of promotion, or the like including any direct or indirect use of authority to obstruct the Whistle Blower's right to continue to perform his duties/ functions including making further Protected Disclosure.
4. If the Whistle Blower is required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, arrangements will be made for the Whistle Blower to receive advice about the procedure. Expenses incurred by the Whistle Blower in connection with the above, towards travel etc. will be reimbursed as per normal entitlements.
5. A Whistle Blower may report any violation of the above clause/(s) to the Competent Authority, who shall investigate into the same and take corrective action as may be required.
6. Any other Employee assisting in the said investigation shall also be protected to the same extent as the Whistle Blower.

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7. Whistle Blower shall have direct access to the Chairperson, Audit Committee of the Board of Directors of the Company against victimization.

## **10. Action:**

1. If the Competent Authority is of the opinion that the investigation discloses the existence of improper activity which warrants disciplinary action against the subject employee(s), the Competent Authority shall report the matter to the concerned Disciplinary Authority for appropriate disciplinary action.
2. The Competent Authority shall take such other remedial action as deemed fit to remedy the improper activity mentioned in the protected disclosure or to prevent the re-occurrence of such improper activity.
3. If the Competent Authority is of the opinion that the investigation discloses that no further action on the protected disclosure is warranted, he shall so record in writing. Recording should be incorporated in the Quarterly Report to be submitted to Audit Committee as mentioned in sub-para 1 of para 11 (Reporting & Review).
4. If the Competent Authority is satisfied that the protected disclosure is false, motivated or vexatious, the Competent Authority may report the matter to the concerned Disciplinary Authority for appropriate disciplinary action against the Whistle Blower.

## **11. Reporting and Review:**

1. The Competent Authority shall submit a quarterly report of the protected disclosures only if the complaint is received and covered under this policy and of the investigation conducted, and of the action taken report shall be submitted to the Audit Committee (if constituted) other wise to the Board for review annually.
2. The Audit Committee shall have power to review any action or decision taken by the Competent Authority.

## **12. Retention of Documents:**

All Protected Disclosures in writing or documented along with the results of Investigation relating thereto shall be retained by the company for a period of five years.

## **13. Amendments:**

This policy can be modified or amended in whole or in part at any time by the Managing Director of the Company under intimation to the Board of Directors of the Company.