



## **Introduction**

The SARA requires all Executive Members, staff and volunteers at all times to act honestly and with integrity and to safeguard the public resource for which they are responsible. Fraud is an ever present threat to these resources and hence must be a concern to all. The purpose of this statement is to set out the responsibilities with regard to the prevention of fraud and the actions to be taken should fraud be suspected.

## **What is fraud?**

Whilst there is no precise legal definition of fraud; the term is used to describe such acts as deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, corruption, theft, conspiracy, embezzlement, misappropriation, false representation, concealment of material facts and collusion. For practical purposes fraud may be defined as the use of deception with the intention of obtaining an advantage avoiding an obligation or causing loss to another party.

## **Responsibilities**

The Executive of the SARA are responsible for:

1. developing and maintaining effective controls to prevent fraud
2. ensuring that the controls are being complied with
3. carry out vigorous and prompt investigations if fraud occurs
4. taking appropriate legal and/or disciplinary action against perpetrators of fraud
5. taking disciplinary action against supervisors where supervisory failures have contributed to the commission of fraud.

Individual staff and volunteers are responsible for:

1. acting with propriety in the use of official resources and in the handling and use of public funds whether they are involved in the use of cash or payments systems, receipts or dealing with contractors or suppliers
2. reporting details immediately to an Executive Member and their line manager if appropriate if they suspect that a fraud has been committed or see any suspicious acts or events.

## **Ethic and Conduct**

As stewards of public funds, SARA Executive Members, staff and volunteers must have and be seen to have high standards of honesty, propriety and integrity in the exercise of their duties. They should not receive gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity.

## **Response to Suspected Fraud**

SARA has established procedures for financial controls, asset control and ethics.

Any member, volunteer, staff member or officer suspecting that SARA's assets or resources are being misused should immediately report the matter to the relevant officer or staff member responsible for that area of activity.

The officer or staff member will investigate the matter immediately and take any necessary action to prevent or correct any identified misuse. In the event that any SARA policies or procedures have been deliberately ignored, the matter will be reported to the relevant sub-committee or officer.

In the event that an alleged incident concerns a staff member or office-bearer of SARA, the matter should be reported to the President for investigation.

Where allegations of financial fraud or irregularity are made and cannot be satisfactorily investigated and resolved within two weeks, the matter will be forwarded to the company auditors for investigation.

Whilst offences of a minor nature may be dealt with internally by the SARA under existing disciplinary procedures, serious cases may be reported to police for consideration for criminal prosecution.

All confirmed cases of fraud will be reported to the AGM