

## Vigil Mechanism for Directors and Employees

### PREFACE

Astra Metal Systems Limited has formulated a Policy that lays down the principles and standards that should govern the actions of the Company and their employees. Any actual or potential violation of the policy howsoever insignificant or perceived as such, would be a matter of serious concern for the Company. Section 177(9) of the Companies act, 2013 read with Rule 7 of the Companies (Meetings of Board and its Powers) Rules, 2014 and Regulation 22 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 provides for mandatory establishment of vigil mechanism for the Directors and employees of the Company to report their genuine concerns in the prescribed manner. SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 provides for the establishment of a mechanism called Whistle Blower Policy by listed entity, enabling stakeholders including individual employees and their representative bodies, to freely communicate their concerns about illegal or unethical practices to the management. It will also enable employees to report to the management instances of fraud or violation of the Company's code of conduct or ethics policy. In line with the above and in order to comply with the mandatory requirement of the above provisions, it is necessary to formulate a specific vigil mechanism/whistle blower policy for Astra Metal Systems Limited for use by its Directors, Officers and Employees.

### DEFINITIONS

The definitions of some of the key terms used in this Policy are given below.

1. **“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 read with Regulation 18 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.
2. **“Employee”** means every employee of the Company (whether working in India or abroad), including the Directors in the employment of the Company.
3. **“Policy”** means the Vigil Mechanism/ Whistle Blower policy.
4. **“Investigator(s)”** mean the person(s) authorised, appointed, consulted or approached by the Audit Committee and includes the Auditors of the Company and the Police.
5. **“Protected Disclosure”** means any communication made in good faith that discloses or demonstrates information that may evidence unethical or improper activity.
6. **“Subject”** means a person against or in relation to whom a Protected Disclosure has been made or evidence gathered during the course of an investigation.
7. **“Whistle Blower”** means an Employee making a Protected Disclosure under this Policy.

### SCOPE

The Whistle Blower's role is that of a reporting party with reliable information. They are not required or expected to act as investigator(s) or finder(s) of facts, nor would they determine the appropriate corrective or remedial action that may be warranted in a given case. Whistle Blowers should not act on their own in conducting any investigative activities, nor do they have a right to participate in any investigative activities other than as requested by the Audit Committee or the Investigator(s). Protected Disclosure will be appropriately dealt with by the Audit Committee.

## **APPLICABILITY**

All Employees of the Company are eligible to make Protected Disclosures under the Policy. The Protected Disclosures will be in relation to matters concerning the Company.

## **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

While it will be ensured that genuine Whistle Blowers are given complete protection from any kind of unfair treatment as herein set out, any abuse of this protection will attract disciplinary action. Protection under this Policy would not mean protection from disciplinary action arising out of false or bogus allegations made by a Whistle Blower knowing it to be false or bogus or with a mala fide intention. Whistle Blowers, who make three or more Protected Disclosures, which have been subsequently found to be mala fide, frivolous, baseless, malicious, or reported otherwise than in good faith, will be disqualified from reporting further Protected Disclosures under this Policy. In respect of such Whistle Blowers, the Company/ Audit Committee would reserve its right to take/recommend appropriate disciplinary action.

## **PROCEDURE**

All Protected Disclosures should be addressed to Mr. Ramakant Subray Kamat an Independent Director of the Company.

Below are contact details:-

Mr. Charles Charlton Collaco  
**Astra Metal Systems Limited**  
L - 75, Verna Industrial Estate,  
Verna, Goa - 404722, India  
**E-mail:** [info@astrametals.com](mailto:info@astrametals.com)  
**Website:** [www.astrametals.com](http://www.astrametals.com)

The Protected Disclosures should preferably be reported in writing so as to ensure a clear understanding of the issues raised. The Protected Disclosures can also be reported verbally, either personally or over telephone to the Chairman of the Audit Committee, which should be followed by a written communication. The written communication should either be typed or written in a legible handwriting in English, Hindi or in the regional language of the place of employment of the Whistle Blower. It is suggested that the Protected Disclosure should be forwarded under a covering letter which shall bear the identity of the Whistle Blower. The Chairman of the Audit Committee shall detach the covering letter and discuss the Protected Disclosure with Members of the Audit Committee to decide further action in the matter. If the Whistle Blower does not wish to reveal identity he/she may feel free to do so without revealing identity. However the disclosure has to be complete and supported by facts and figures to enable proper scrutiny and investigation. 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 enable proper assessment of the nature and extent of the concern and the urgency of a preliminary investigative procedure.

## **INVESTIGATION**

The Audit Committee may at its discretion, consider involving any Investigator(s) for the purpose of investigation. All Protected Disclosures reported under this Policy will be thoroughly investigated by the Investigator(s) appointed by the Audit Committee who will investigate the matter under the authorization of the Audit Committee. The decision of the Audit Committee to conduct an investigation, by itself is not

an accusation and is to be treated as a neutral fact finding process. The outcome of the investigation may not support the conclusion of the Whistle Blower that an improper or unethical act was committed. The identity of a Subject will be kept confidential to the extent possible keeping in mind the legitimate needs of law and the investigation. Subjects will normally be informed of the allegations at the outset of a formal investigation and given opportunities for providing their inputs during the investigation. This will be after conclusion of the initial review and findings which prima facie establish a need for a formal investigation. Subjects shall have a duty to co-operate with the Audit Committee or any of the Investigator(s) during investigation to the extent that such co-operation sought does not merely require them to admit guilt. Subjects have a right to consult with a person or persons of their choice, other than the Investigator(s) and/or members of the Audit Committee and/or the Whistle Blower. Subjects shall be free at any time to engage counsel at their own cost to represent them in the investigation proceedings. 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. 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 wrongdoing against a Subject shall be considered as maintainable unless there is good evidence in support of the allegation. Subjects have a right to be informed of the outcome of the investigation. If allegations are not sustained, the Subject should be consulted as to whether public disclosure of the investigation results would be in the best interest of the Subject and the Company. The investigation shall be completed normally within 45 days of the receipt of the Protected Disclosure.

## **PROTECTION**

No unfair treatment will be meted out to a Whistle Blower by virtue of his/her having reported a Protected Disclosure under this Policy. The Company, as a policy, condemns any kind of discrimination, harassment, victimization or any other unfair employment practice being adopted against Whistle Blowers. Complete protection will, therefore, 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. The Company will take steps to minimize difficulties, which the Whistle Blower may experience as a result of making the Protected Disclosure. Thus, if the Whistle Blower is required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the Company will arrange for the Whistle Blower to receive advice about the procedure, etc. The identity of the Whistle Blower shall be kept confidential to the extent possible and permitted under law. Whistle Blowers are cautioned that their identity may become known for reasons outside the control of the Audit Committee (e.g. during investigations carried out by Investigator(s)). Any other Employee assisting in the said investigation shall also be protected to the same extent as the Whistle Blower.

## **INVESTIGATORS**

Investigator(s) are required to conduct a process towards fact-finding and analysis. Investigator(s) shall derive their authority and rights from the Audit Committee when acting within the course and scope of their investigation. Technical and other resources may be drawn upon as necessary to augment the investigation. All Investigators shall be independent and unbiased. Investigators will have a duty of fairness, objectivity, thoroughness, ethical behavior, and observance of legal and professional standards. Investigations will be launched only after a preliminary review which establishes that a) The alleged act constitutes an improper or unethical activity or conduct and b) The allegation is supported by information specific enough to be investigated.

## **DECISION**

If an investigation leads the Audit Committee to conclude that an improper or unethical act has been committed, the Audit Committee shall recommend such disciplinary or corrective action as it deems fit. It is clarified that any disciplinary or corrective action initiated against the Subject as a result of the findings of an investigation pursuant to this Policy shall adhere to the applicable personnel or staff conduct and disciplinary procedures.

## **REPORTING**

The Investigator(s) shall submit a report to the Audit Committee on a regular basis about all Protected Disclosures referred to him / her / them since the last report together with the results of investigations, if any.

## **RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS**

All written Protected Disclosures along with the results of investigation relating thereto shall be retained by the Company for a minimum period of seven years.

## **AMENDMENT**

The Company reserves its right to amend or modify this Policy in whole or in part, at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever. However, no such amendment or modification will be binding on the Employees unless the same is notified to the Employees in writing.