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## **COMPETITION LAW COMPLIANCE & ANTI-COMPETITIVE BEHAVIOUR PREVENTION POLICY**

Bluestone understands and adheres to competition law to ensure fair business practices in the construction industry. We are committed to maintaining a fair and competitive market environment. Adherence to this policy is mandatory for all employees, contractors and business partners to ensure compliance with competition laws and ethical standards in business practices. By implementing this policy we can protect Bluestone from legal risks, ensure fair competition and build a positive reputation in the industry.

### **Avoiding Anti-Competitive Agreements**

Bluestone will not engage in any illegal agreements with competitors. These include –

- Price fixing - agreeing with competitors to fix prices for construction projects or services
- Bid-rigging – co-ordinating with competitors to manipulate the bidding process for contracts
- Market sharing - dividing territories, customers or types of construction projects to avoid competition with each other

### **Fair Tendering and Procurement**

Public and private construction contracts often involve competitive bidding. To comply with competition law, we will ensure that:

- Bids are submitted independently without collusion or coordination with others
- No insider information is exchanged

### **Avoid Collusive Practices**

Bluestone will not collude with any competitors.

### **Subcontracting and Partnerships**

In construction, subcontracting and partnerships are common, but they should be structured in a way that doesn't restrict competition. Bluestone will not undertake -

- Exclusive Agreements - forcing sub-contractors to work only our company
- Refusal to Deal – refuse to work with suppliers or sub-contractors who also serve competitors

### **Benefits of Competition Law Compliance**

By Bluestone adhering to competition law, not only avoids legal fines and penalties but also –

- Builds trust with our clients - demonstrates integrity in our business practices
- Ensures fair market play - competing fairly allows companies to thrive without being pushed out by larger competitors engaging in unfair practices
- Increases business opportunities - compliance with procurement and competition rules can open doors to public contracts and partnerships with larger firms that prioritise ethical practices
- Staying compliant not only keeps Bluestone legally secure but also promotes a fair and competitive market environment.

## **Anti-competitive behaviour prevention**

This policy outlines Bluestone's commitment to adhering to competition law and ensuring that all business activities, including bidding, contracting, and subcontracting, are conducted in a fair, competitive, and ethical manner. The policy applies to all employees, contractors, sub-contractors and management within the company.

### **Bluestone's objectives are –**

- Prevent any form of anti-competitive behaviour such as price-fixing, bid-rigging, and market sharing
- Promote fair competition and compliance with competition laws
- Ensure ethical practices in tendering and sub-contracting
- Protect the company from legal liabilities and fines associated with violations of competition law

### **Scope**

This policy applies to –

- Employees, including sales, procurement, project managers and finance staff
- Senior management and Directors involved in decision-making
- Sub-contractors, suppliers and any third party company we have a contractual relationship with.

### **Key Anti-Competitive Practices to Avoid**

#### **Price Fixing**

Employees and management must not agree with competitors on pricing for services, materials or projects. This includes direct discussions or indirect communications through third parties.

#### **Bid Rigging**

The company must submit all bids independently, without discussing prices, terms or conditions with competitors. Bid rigging is illegal and can include –

- Agreeing with competitors not to bid on certain projects
- Submitting artificially high bids to ensure a competitor wins the contract

#### **Market Sharing**

Dividing customers, geographical areas or projects with competitors is strictly prohibited. Bluestone will compete fairly for all projects.

#### **Exclusive Agreements**

Employees must avoid making agreements that force clients, sub-contractors or suppliers to work exclusively with Bluestone.

### **Tendering and Procurement Process**

#### **1. Independent Bidding**

All bids and tenders must be prepared internally without collusion with competitors or third parties. Employees must ensure that bid information, pricing and project scope remain confidential within Bluestone.

#### **2. Transparency in Procurement**

Bluestone will ensure that sub-contractors and suppliers are selected through a transparent and competitive process. Any personal relationships or conflicts of interest in procurement must be disclosed and managed.

## Compliance

### 1. Monitoring

Bluestone will monitor compliance with competition law. Employees must report any concerns or potential violations of this policy to management.

### 2. Whistleblower Protection

Employees who report suspected anti-competitive behaviour will be protected from any form of retaliation. Reporting can be anonymous to encourage open communication.

## Sub-contractor and Supplier Guidelines

Bluestone expects all sub-contractors and suppliers to comply with competition law and this policy. All contracts with third parties must include a clause confirming their commitment to anti-competitive practices and they will be subject to audits or reviews when necessary.

## Penalties for Non-Compliance

Violations of this policy or competition law can lead to severe consequences, including –

- For employees - disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment
- For Bluestone - fines, penalties and damage to our reputation
- Legal action – Bluestone will co-operate fully with authorities in the event of an investigation and will not defend employees or third parties found violating the law

## Reporting Violations

Any suspected breaches of this policy or competition law must be reported immediately to senior management or the directors.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the event of significant changes to competition law.



Richard Lee Molyneux



Lloyd Robert Medforth

31 March 2025

