



VS-D001: Verification Services Impartiality Policy

CSIRO Verification Services (CVS) is committed to maintaining impartiality in all its scheme activities (i.e., ActivFire, APAS and PCCP) including, but not limited to, client on site witness testing, product, process and service certification, internal and external auditing, and personnel training.

Impartiality is the presence of objectivity, independence, fairness, and open-mindedness and the absence of any conflict of interest and bias so as to not adversely affect or influence the activities of CVS.

We understand that impartiality is essential to ensuring the integrity and credibility of our services.

To ensure impartiality, CVS:

- does not engage in any activities that may compromise its impartiality, and
- ensure that all personnel (including contractors) are aware of the importance of impartiality and the procedures for maintaining it, including ongoing CSIRO wide impartiality awareness through personnel Code of Conduct, Privacy and Conflict of Interest training, and
- ensure that all personnel, contractors, and technical committee members (which includes both scheme members and industry association members), are free from conflicts of interest and biases by:
 - ongoing and regular discussions (i.e., CVS group meetings, scheme technical panel standing agenda items, risk matrix analysis etc.) whereby any risks identified in activities are monitoring and reviewing to ensure continued impartiality; if a risk is identified, any and all action required to respond is taken to eliminate or minimise the risk, and
 - have a process for managing conflicts of interest, including the above stated training and declarations of conflict of interest, and
- provide equal opportunities and treatment to all applicants, clients, and stakeholders (members and industry associations), and
- have impartiality commitment from top management i.e., CVS Group Leader and Executive Officer and Infrastructure Technologies Director, and
- have implemented measures to prevent any influence or pressure from external parties that may compromise CVS impartiality by:
 - not having any financial or commercial interests in the outcome of a certification decision, and
 - not having any financial or commercial relationships with applicants or clients that could influence a certification decision, and
 - not allowing commercial, financial, or other pressures to compromise impartiality, and
 - ensuring that a certification decision¹ is made by personnel who are independent of the client or applicant, and
 - ensuring that all decisions are based solely on the evidence and criteria established by the relevant standards and/or schemes under CVS, and
- shall not:
 - be the designer, manufacturer, installer, distributor, or maintainer of a certified product, and
 - be the designer, implementer, operator, or maintainer of a certified process, and
 - be the designer, implementer, provider, or maintainer of a certified service, and
 - offer or provide consultancy in any form (i.e., management system or product, process, or service consultancy) nor state or imply that certification would be simpler, easier, faster, or less expensive if a specified consultancy organisation were used, and
- have a process in place for handling complaints and appeals² (i.e., AF-D004 for ActivFire, AP-D004 for APAS and PP-D004 for PCCP), and
- have a publicly available statement on impartiality (this policy).



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NOTE:

¹ If a personnel member was a former employee of a client, a minimum of two years must pass, in conjunction with a completed (and ongoing) Conflict of Interest Declaration, before being involved in any part of a certification decision.

² Personnel (including Top Management) who have provided consultancy prior to employment by CVS for a client, or have been employed by a client, will not be used by CVS to review, or approve the resolution of a complaint or appeal for that client within two years following the end of the consultancy or employment.

This policy applies to all CVS personnel, contractors, and technical committee members. Any breaches of this policy shall be handled in accordance with the CSIRO Code of Conduct.

By implementing this policy, CVS demonstrates its commitment to impartiality and the highest ethical standards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trudy Lennon-Bowers".

Trudy Lennon-Bowers
Executive Officer, CSIRO Verification Services



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Appendix A Document History

Status: Current
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Document Version No.:	Date Published:	Summary of Changes:
0	10-09-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Original policy version