

## Anti-Tax Evasion Policy

### Overview

In the light of Criminal Finances Act 2017, Devcon Limited has adopted a statement of our corporate value on anti-facilitation of tax evasion. It is our policy to conduct all of our business dealings in an honest and ethical manner. The value statement governs all our business dealings and the conduct of all persons or organisations who are appointed to act on our behalf. We request all our employees and all who have, or seek to have, a business relationship with Devcon Limited to familiarise themselves with our anti-tax evasion value statement and to act at all times in a way which is consistent with our anti-tax evasion value statement.

### Our Anti-Tax Evasion Value Statement

Devcon Limited (the “Company”) has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of tax evasion, whether under UK law or under the law of any foreign country.

Employees and Associates of the Company must not undertake any transactions which:

- (a) cause the Company to commit a tax evasion offence; or
- (b) facilitate a tax evasion offence by a third party who is not an associate of the Company.

We are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships wherever we operate and implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter tax evasion facilitation.

At all times, business should be conducted in a manner such that the opportunity for, and incidence of, tax evasion is prevented.

### Who Must Comply With This Policy?

This policy applies to all persons working for the Company or on our behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels, directors, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, interns, subcontractors, external consultants, third-party representatives or any other person associated with us, wherever located.

### Who is responsible for this Policy?

The Board of Directors of the Company has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy complies with our legal obligations, and our employees and associates comply with it. This policy is adopted by the Company. It may be varied or withdrawn at any time, in the Company’s absolute discretion. Employees in leadership positions are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them understand and comply with this policy and are given adequate and regular training on it.

### What Is The Facilitation of Tax Evasion?

For the purposes of this policy:

**Associates** includes company subcontractors or agents of the Company (other than subcontractors) who are acting in the capacity of an agent, or any person who performs services for and on behalf of the Company who is acting in the capacity of a person or business performing such services.

**Tax Evasion** means an offence of cheating the public revenue or fraudulently evading UK tax, and is a criminal offence. The offence requires an element of fraud, which means there must be deliberate action, or omission with dishonest intent.

**Foreign Tax Evasion** means evading tax in a foreign country, provided that the conduct is an offence in that country and would be a criminal offence if committed in the UK. As with tax evasion, the element of fraud means there must be deliberate action, or omission with dishonest intent.

**Tax Evasion Facilitation** means being knowingly concerned in, or taking steps with a view to, the fraudulent evasion of tax (whether UK tax or tax in a foreign country by another person, or aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the commission of that offence. Tax evasion facilitation is a criminal offence, where it is done deliberately and dishonestly.

**Tax evasion is not the same as tax avoidance** or tax planning. Tax evasion involves deliberate and dishonest conduct. Tax

avoidance is not illegal and involves taking steps, within the law, to minimise tax payable (or maximise tax reliefs).

Tax means all forms of UK taxation, including but not limited to corporation tax, income tax, value added tax, stamp duty, stamp duty land tax, national insurance contributions (and their equivalents in any non-UK jurisdiction) and includes duty and any other form of taxation (however described).

## **Your Responsibilities**

You must ensure that you read, understand and comply with this policy.

The prevention, detection and reporting of tax evasion and foreign tax evasion are the responsibility of all those working for us or under our control. You are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.

You must notify your manager as soon as possible if you believe or suspect that a conflict with this policy has occurred or may occur in the future. For example, if an employee or supplier asks to be paid into an offshore bank account, without good reason, or a supplier asks to be paid in cash, indicating that this will mean the payment is not subject to applicable tax. Further “red flags” that may indicate potential tax evasion are set out on the last page of this document.

## **What Team Members and Associates Must Not Do**

Employees and Associates must at all times adhere to the Devcon Limited anti-tax evasion value statement and must ensure that they read, understand and comply with this policy.

It is not acceptable for team members and Associates to:

- Engage in any form of facilitating Tax Evasion or Foreign Tax Evasion
- Aid, abet, counsel or procure the commission of a Tax Evasion offence or Foreign Tax Evasion offence by another person;
- Fail to promptly report any request or demand from any third party to facilitate the fraudulent Evasion of Tax by another person, in accordance with this policy; or
- Engage in any other activity that might lead to a breach of this policy; or
- Threaten or retaliate against another individual who has refused to commit a Tax Evasion offence or a Foreign Tax Evasion offence or who has raised concerns under this policy
- An offence under the law of any part of the UK consisting of being knowingly concerned in, or taking steps with a view to, the fraudulent evasion of tax.

## **Prevention Through Vigilance**

There is not an exhaustive list of Tax Evasion opportunities. At a more general level, the best defence against Tax Evasion and facilitation of Tax Evasion remains the vigilance of our employees and Associates and the adoption of a common-sense approach supported by our clear whistleblowing procedure. In applying common sense, team members must be aware of the following:

- Is there anything unusual about the manner in which an Associate of the Company is conducting their relationship with the Company or a third party.
- Is there anything unusual about the subcontractors or Associate's conduct or behaviour in your dealings with them?
- Are there unusual payment methods?
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Unusual payment methods and unusual conduct of third parties with Company Associates can be indicative that a transaction may not be as it seems.

## **How To Raise a Concern**

Our employees have a responsibility to take reasonable action to prevent harm to Devcon Limited and we hold our employees accountable for their actions and omissions. Any actions that breach the Criminal Finances Act and the tax laws of wherever we operate brings harm to Devcon Limited and will not be tolerated.

You are responsible for properly following Devcon Limited's policies and procedures. These should generally ensure that all taxes are properly paid. If you are ever asked by anyone either inside or outside our company to go outside our standard procedures, this should be reported without delay, as someone may be attempting to evade tax.

## What Happens If the Employee Prefers, For Commercial Reasons, Not To Report Their Suspicions?

This should never happen. If there is any suspicion of any intention to evade tax and the transaction is nevertheless finalised, the Company can be criminally prosecuted, subject to a large fine and be publicly named and shamed.

### Potential 'Red Flag's'

The following is a list of possible red flags that may arise while you work for us and which may raise concerns related to tax evasion or foreign tax evasion. The list is not intended to be exhaustive and is for illustrative purposes only. If you encounter any of these red flags while working for us, you must report them promptly to your line manager:

- you become aware, in the course of your work, that a third party has made or intends to make a false statement relating to tax; has failed to disclose income or gains to, or to register with, HMRC (or the equivalent authority in any relevant non-UK jurisdiction); has delivered or intends to deliver a false document relating to tax; or has set up or intends to set up a structure to try to hide income, gains or assets from a tax authority;
- you become aware, in the course of your work, that a third party has deliberately failed to register for VAT (or the equivalent tax in any relevant non-UK jurisdiction) or failed to account for VAT;
- a third-party requests payment in cash and/or refuses to sign a formal order or fee agreement, or to provide an invoice or receipt for a payment made;
- you become aware, in the course of your work, that a third party working for us as an employee asks to be treated as a self-employed contractor, but without any material changes to their working conditions;
- a supplier or other subcontractor is paid gross when they should have been paid net, under a scheme such as the Construction Industry Scheme;
- a third-party request that payment is made to a country or geographic location different from where the third party resides or conducts business;
- a third party to whom we have provided services requests that their invoice is addressed to a different entity, where we did not provide services to such entity directly;
- a third party to whom we have provided services asks us to change the description of services rendered on an invoice in a way that seems designed to obscure the nature of the services provided;
- you receive an invoice from a third party that appears to be non-standard or customised;
- a third party insists on the use of side letters or refuses to put terms agreed in writing or asks for contracts or other documentation to be backdated;
- you notice that we have been invoiced for a commission or fee payment that appears too large or too small, given the service stated to have been provided;
- a third party requests or requires the use of an agent, intermediary, consultant, distributor or supplier that is not typically used by or known to us.

This Policy alongside all of our high-level policies will be reviewed at least annually to ensure they are continually developed and remain fit for purpose.



**L N Pope**

Managing Director

16 April 2024