


CODE OF BUSINESS CONDUCT –ERVIA/PD/16

CODE OF BUSINESS CONDUCT FOR

**Ervia Employees including Employees of Ervia Group and Subsidiary
Companies (including Irish Water and Gas Networks Ireland)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- Ervia’s values are collaboration, performance, customer service, safety and integrity. These values define the character of the organisation, guide our actions and decisions and provide a framework for how we interact with our colleagues, customers and stakeholders.
- Ethical standards must underpin how we conduct our business on a daily basis.
- Ervia’s reputation and the trust and confidence of those with whom we deal is one of our most vital corporate resources and the protection of this resource is of fundamental importance to Ervia and a key ingredient for success.
- Given Ervia’s public profile and the visibility of everything that it does, it follows that its employees must be seen to be beyond reproach in their conduct.
- Ervia complies with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and associated guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (the “Code of Practice”), the provisions of which apply to all Ervia employees as appropriate, and the highest ethical standards are required of all Ervia personnel.
- This Code of Business Conduct (the “Code”) applies to all Ervia personnel, which includes consultants, contractors, volunteers, trainees, work experience students, interns, part-time, full-time, casual workers and agency workers (“Employees”).
- The Code should be read in conjunction with contracts of employment where relevant, ethical standards as required by professional bodies to which you are affiliated and the following policies:
 - Regulation of Lobbying Act Policy (PD4);
 - Protected Disclosures Policy (PD9);
 - Corporate Giving and Sponsorship Policy (PD83);
 - Anti-Fraud Policy (PD84);

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- Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy (PD100); and
- Human Resources policies.

2. PURPOSE


- The purpose of this Code is to:-
 - establish an agreed set of ethical principles;
 - offer guidance on what actions are acceptable/unacceptable and on expected behaviours;
 - promote and maintain confidence and trust in Ervia and its subsidiary companies including the protection of Ervia’s good name; and
 - prevent the development or acceptance of unethical practices.

3. SCOPE

- For the purposes of this Code the term “Ervia” should be construed as including Ervia and its subsidiary companies in any geographic region (e.g. Gas Networks Ireland and Irish Water). Ervia may incorporate further subsidiaries from time to time and this Code shall apply to all subsidiaries notwithstanding that they may not be in existence at the time this Code was put in place.
- It is impractical to legislate in sufficient detail to cover every eventuality that could arise that would present Employees with a conflict of interest or other ethical issue. Accordingly, Employees should be aware that the spirit as well as the precise wording of the Code should be observed at all times.
- Violation of the Code may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment for Ervia staff, and in the case of third parties engaged by Ervia may result in legal redress.

4. CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

- All Employees have a primary duty to be loyal to Ervia as their employer. Ervia requires all Employees to conform to the highest standards of personal and business ethics in all of their dealings which may impact on the business activities of Ervia.
- All Employees are required to disclose in writing to their line manager details of any conflict of interest which might affect their impartiality in carrying out their duties as soon as they become apparent, including:

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- any interest, shareholding or possible conflict of interest an employee has with any firm or organisation from which Ervia purchases supplies, works or services, or to whom Ervia proposes to sell property or services;
- any interest of an employee’s immediate family (spouse, children, parents, brothers and sisters) that could involve such a conflict of interest.
- Where a conflict of interest situation could arise for an Employee, he/she must desist from dealing with the matter giving rise to that situation and may not attempt in any way to influence Ervia’s decision on the matter. An Employee who has a concern or query into his or her particular circumstances which may give rise to a situation where there is an actual or potential conflict of interest or other ethical issue should consult with the Group Chief Legal Officer.
- Involvement by an Employee in outside employment/business interests in conflict or potential conflict with the business of Ervia is prohibited.
- An Employee who is at any time involved in any gainful employment and/or the running of any business or company outside Ervia must inform his or her line manager in writing at the earliest possible opportunity. This applies likewise to consultancy and contract work undertaken by an Employee outside his or her employment. Any activity which has the potential to impair an Employee’s ability to execute his or her duties or to fulfil his or her primary role in Ervia, is prohibited.
- It is recommended that the acceptance by an Employee of an engagement and/or employment where the potential for conflict of interest arises should be avoided during a reasonable period of time after the exercise of a function in Ervia has ceased. In good time before taking up an engagement and/or employment which will or might involve a conflict of interest, a former employee should consult with the Group Chief Legal Officer.¹

5. INTEGRITY AND BUSINESS ETHICS

- It is Ervia’s policy to conduct all of its business in an honest and ethical manner. All Employees should conform and be seen to conform to the highest ethical standards and should be open, truthful and honest in all their dealings, both internally and external to Ervia.

¹ These provisions are in addition and without prejudice to any relevant terms of a contract between the employee and Ervia.


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- Those ethical standards should be adhered to when conducting the business activities of Ervia with its customers, suppliers, contractors and third parties. Employees should compete vigorously and energetically but also ethically, honestly and lawfully in Ireland and in overseas markets. Established procedures, regulations and authority levels already govern the conduct of much of Ervia’s business and this Code is intended to be complementary to them.
- Employees and/or their families should not participate in promotional offers, campaigns or competitions where the benefits of these are not available to Ervia staff in general or to the general public.
- Employees must not use the resources or time of Ervia for personal gain, for the benefit of persons/organisations unconnected with Ervia or for the benefit of its competitors. Employees, at any grade, must not use their position within the organisation to gain personal advantages e.g. discounted personal services from an Ervia supplier.
- Employees must ensure that Ervia promotes a culture of claiming vouched expenses only as appropriate to business needs and in accordance with good practice in the public sector generally and the Ervia Expenses Policy.
- Employees must ensure that Ervia’s accounts/reports are accurate and not misleading.
- Employees must not acquire information or business secrets by improper means.
- Equal care should be taken in dealings with public officials abroad and in Ireland to ensure that every interaction, at every level of Ervia (and within its subsidiaries), is ethical, honest and lawful. Employees should be familiar with the policies and procedures Ervia has in place to prevent bribery and corruption. As an employee of Ervia you must never offer or accept a bribe and must not participate or facilitate corrupt or illegal activities. Refer to PD100 Anti- Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy for further guidance.

6. INFORMATION SHARING, RETENTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY


- Employees are required to comply with the Ervia’s “Acceptable Usage Policy” (PD82) when accessing Ervia’s information assets, hardware devices, computer networks, systems and facilities. Ultimately, all Ervia Data (as defined in PD82) belongs to or is the responsibility of Ervia. Access to this data is to be granted on a need-to-know basis. Any document, message or correspondence that is created using Ervia’s resources, whether electronic or paper-based, personal or business-related belongs to Ervia. All end-user devices, including but not limited to laptops, desktops, tablets, smart phones, etc. issued by Ervia (“Ervia Equipment”), and all information stored on Ervia Equipment is

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the property of Ervia. All usage of Ervia Data or Ervia Equipment can and will be monitored for compliance with the Acceptable Usage Policy and for other legitimate business purposes.

- The need for observing confidentiality with regard to Ervia company affairs is paramount. The unauthorised release of confidential or strictly confidential information directly or indirectly to third parties, including the media, represents a gross breach of trust which can be highly damaging to Ervia and is strictly prohibited. This also includes the loss, misuse or disclosure directly or indirectly of confidential or strictly confidential information or the disclosure of proprietary information, for example in relation to competitive matters, the introduction of new services, contracts or property transactions, information not in the public domain, personal data or information received in confidence.
- Particular attention is drawn to **Section 20 of the Gas Act 1976 (as amended)** which provides that a person shall not, without the consent of the Board, disclose any information obtained by him while performing duties as a member, officer or servant of the Board. A breach of this duty is an offence liable on summary conviction to a fine. Attention is also drawn to **Section 11 of the Water Services Act 2013** which provides that a person shall not disclose confidential information obtained by him while performing functions as a director or a member of the staff of Irish Water unless he is duly authorised by Irish Water to so do.
- Employees must ensure that all supplier and tender information relating to tender processes in which Ervia is involved is treated in the strictest confidence and disclosure of such information, in particular to another interested party, is strictly prohibited.
- Employees shall observe appropriate prior consultation procedures with third parties where, exceptionally, it is proposed to release sensitive information in the public interest and in particular will ensure compliance by Ervia with all relevant statutory provisions, including the provisions of Data Protection Law (meaning the General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679 the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018, the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks & Services) (Privacy & Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011, the EU ePrivacy Directive 2002/58/EC (as amended)) and any applicable national implementing or supplemental legislation, along with guidance published by competent regulatory authorities).
- In certain circumstances, Ervia and/or its subsidiaries may hold information to which it is appropriate to restrict access from other parts of the business, in particular commercially sensitive information regarding customer, financial or regulatory information. In order to ensure that information is not released or used inappropriately:


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- Employees should release commercially sensitive information only to authorised persons within the business;
- If Employees are unsure whether information is commercially sensitive, or whether the requester is authorised, Employees should consult with their line manager.

Employees are obliged to comply with Ervia’s Data Protection Policy (PD64) when sharing information both within the business and externally.


- The terms of engagement of consultants employed by Ervia should be reviewed to ensure that they are subject to appropriate confidentiality obligations in carrying out their services.
- Employees should recognise that their behaviour can impact Ervia’s reputation, especially where they are identified as representing the organisation, and must ensure that they never bring Ervia and its subsidiaries into disrepute through their personal or professional actions.
 - The reputation of Ervia and its subsidiary companies should never be compromised in any way through inappropriate online interactions, in particular through the usage of social media channels. In this regard, Employees should not do anything to prejudice the reputation of Ervia or its subsidiaries when engaging in online activity. Furthermore they should never discuss or disclose confidential or non- public information relating to the organisation either on public media or any online media channels. Employees should familiarise themselves with the Social Media Advocacy Guidelines available on the Zone.
 - Employees should not comment or provide feedback on media related queries and should, where possible, direct such queries to the Chief Communications and Marketing Officer.
- Employees are required to comply with Ervia’s Regulation of Lobbying Policy (PD4) which aims to give effect to the obligations and provisions of the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 with a view to increasing openness and transparency in respect of any lobbying activities in which Ervia engages. Employees should have regard to the principles of the Code of Conduct for Persons carrying on Lobbying Activities as published by the Standards in Public Office Commission 2018 to ensure that their lobbying activities are carried out ethically and transparently.
- Ervia has adopted a Transparency Policy to ensure it is transparent in its operations and accountable for the responsibilities it manages. The Freedom of Information Act 2014 (the “FOI Act”) is in place to enable members of the public to obtain access, to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy, to information in the

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possession of public bodies. Ervia is not subject to the FOI Act. However, Irish Water and Gas Networks Ireland are subject to the terms of the Act. Both Irish Water and Gas Networks Ireland have prepared and published Publication Schemes on their websites in accordance with the requirements of Section 8 of the FOI Act. In addition, under the FOI Act, information provided by Ervia to public bodies subject to the FOI Act may become the subject of a freedom of information request. All Employees should be mindful of FOI publication obligations when entering into commercial agreements.

- Employees must take all steps to ensure compliance by Ervia with the provisions of the FOI Act. In order to assist in maintaining the confidentiality of Ervia and its subsidiaries' information, Employees should ensure that when any commercially sensitive information is submitted to Government Departments or other public bodies, appropriate wording is inserted to protect the documentation under the provisions of the FOI Act. In addition, it is important to ensure that appropriate confidentiality agreements are in place to ensure the confidentiality of any information released to consultants/ advisers appointed to assist Government Departments in relation to any dealings with Ervia and its subsidiaries. Queries and concerns in relation to freedom of information can be directed to Ervia's Freedom of Information Officer by email to foi@water.ie.
- Employees should be aware that bonds issued by Gas Networks Ireland are listed on the Irish Stock Exchange. This requires Gas Networks Ireland (as issuer) to comply with provisions of the European Union (Market Abuse) Regulations 2016, (the 2016 Regulations), as applied by section 1368 of the Companies Act 2014, as amended, dealing with insider dealing, market manipulation and disclosures to the market in a controlled and timely manner of information which, when made public, may have a significant effect on the price of such bonds. Any such information should, therefore, be treated in the strictest confidence until released to the market in the required manner. Group Treasury maintains a detailed procedures manual outlining the systems and controls for compliance with Gas Networks Ireland's disclosures obligations under the Irish Listing Rules and the 2016 Regulations.
- Employees should be aware that any attempt to engage in insider dealing (use of confidential information about a company/business gained through employment in that company/business or a stock brokerage, to buy and/or sell stocks and bonds based on the private knowledge that the value will go up or down) or market manipulation (deliberate attempt to interfere with the free and fair operation of the market and create artificial, false or misleading appearances with respect to the price of, or market for, a product, security, commodity or currency) with respect to bonds issued by Gas Networks Ireland and listed on the Irish Stock Exchange is strictly prohibited and may constitute a criminal offence. The Company Secretary will maintain a list of all persons within Ervia who have, from time to time, possession of information that may be

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regarded as inside information (together with a register of Persons Discharging Managerial Responsibilities (PDMR's) and Persons Closely Associated (PCA's) with any PDMR as required under the 2016 Regulations). The Company Secretary will notify these persons of their obligations in respect of transactions in Company Securities.

7. WORK/ EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

- Employees should endeavour to minimise any detrimental impact of operations on the environment.
- Employees should ensure that community concerns are fully considered.
- Employees should be committed to placing the highest priority on preserving the health and safety of their fellow Employees.
- Employees shall comply with all resolutions, regulations and directions from time to time laid down by Ervia and any Government Department including but not limited to compliance with the Code of Practice and the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001.

8. RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

- Ervia values the diversity of the people with whom we work and the contributions they make. Ervia has a long-standing commitment to equal opportunity and intolerance of discrimination and harassment. Ervia is dedicated to maintaining a workplace that is free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, gender, colour, national, ethnic or social origin, creed, age, disability, sexual orientation, political opinion or any other status protected by applicable law. The basis for recruitment, hiring, placement, training, compensation and advancement in Ervia is qualifications, performance, skills and experience. Regardless of personal characteristics or status, Ervia does not tolerate disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour, unfair treatment or retaliation of any kind. Harassment is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related circumstance outside the workplace. These principles apply not only to Employees but also to the business partners with whom we work.
- Ervia conducts its business in a manner that respects the human rights and dignity of all people, endeavouring to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

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- Employees of Ervia are expected to value their fellow employees and to treat others with fairness, equality, dignity and respect.
- Employees are expected never to infringe on human rights.
- Employees are expected to be alert to any evidence of human rights infringements in our direct operations or in the operations of our business partners and to report any situation in which a human rights infringement is suspected to your line manager.
- Ervia has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery (as defined in the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015). We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure modern slavery is not taking place anywhere in our own business or our supply chains. We are committed to ensuring that there is transparency in our own business and in our approach to tackling modern slavery throughout our supply chains and we expect the same high standards from our contractors, suppliers and other business partners.

9. FAIRNESS

- Employees should value customers and treat all categories of customers equally.
- Employees should ensure that their work is guided by Ervia’s commitment to fairness in all its business dealings.
- Employees must comply with employment equality and equal status legislation.

10. OBLIGATIONS

- Employees are required to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner in all of their dealings which may impact on the business activities of Ervia.
- Employees should not either during or after their engagement by Ervia:-
 - disclose any privileged or confidential information, or business or trade secrets of Ervia; or
 - accept positions of employment and/or engagement that could give rise to a potential conflict of interest.
- Employees must ensure that Ervia’s purchasing activities of goods/services are carried out in accordance with best business practice.

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- Employees must comply with applicable tendering and purchasing procedures as well as complying with prescribed levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure.
- Employees must comply with controls introduced to prevent fraud, including adequate controls to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures in relation to the claiming of expenses for business travel and subsistence.
- Employees are reminded of their responsibilities under Ervia’s Anti-Fraud Policy (PD84).
- Employees must co-operate fully with Internal Audit in the internal audit process.
- Employees must fulfil all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on Ervia.
- In order to ensure compliance with the European Union (Market Abuse) Regulations 2016 as referred to in Section 6 above, employees must seek the permission of the Chief Legal Officer and the Chief Financial Officer before trading in debt instruments and derivatives or other financial instruments linked to the debt instruments of Gas Networks Ireland. Further details are available in the Market Abuse Procedures, Systems and Controls Manual available from Group Treasury.

11. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY & SPONSORSHIP


11.1 Gifts and Hospitality

- As a general principle, subject to the exceptions set out below, Employees should avoid the giving or receiving of corporate gifts, hospitality, preferential treatment or benefits which might affect, or might be perceived to affect, the ability of the donor or the recipient to act objectively when making business decisions.
- If gifts, hospitality, or preferential treatment or benefits, are offered or received in accordance with this Code, Employees should bear in mind the fundamental principle of integrity in accepting such gifts and hospitality, from parties with which Ervia does business, or from parties seeking or likely to seek business from Ervia, particular care should be taken not to compromise the high standards expected by Ervia in such matters or to give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

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- Particular attention is drawn to persons who occupy designated positions of employment in Ervia (as defined under the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001) to the requirements regarding the disclosure of gifts and hospitality under the Ethics in Public Office Acts.
- Employees must not use their connections within Ervia for personal advantage. In particular, they must not request or receive personal services from a supplier or contractor where that might be perceived as compromising the exercise of objective judgement in Ervia's selection of suppliers or contractors. Similarly, Employees must not request discounts from suppliers or contractors for personal services.
- Employees should be aware that by virtue of the Criminal Justice (Corruption Offences) Act 2018, it is an offence for any Employee to solicit or accept a gift, consideration or “advantage” from any person for himself, herself or another person, as an inducement or reward, in return for any Employee doing, or omitting to do, any act in relation to his or her position or Ervia’s business.
- With respect to Ervia's operations or dealings in the UK, it is an offence under the UK Bribery Act 2010 to either entice or reward a person with a financial or other “advantage” to improperly perform his or her duties or to accept financial or other “advantage” in return for the improper performance of a duty. Similar laws apply in many other countries (such as the US).
- This does not mean that receiving gifts or accepting modest hospitality is inappropriate in all circumstances. Reasonable, small, appropriate and bona fide gifts, modest hospitality or entertainment extended or received from third parties is generally acceptable under the following circumstances:
 - acceptance of the gift/hospitality has been approved in writing by your manager;
 - the gift/hospitality is unsolicited;
 - the gift/hospitality is appropriate in the circumstances, taking account of the reason for the gift, its timing and value i.e it is customary for small gifts to be given at Christmas;
 - the gift/hospitality is given openly, not secretly;
 - the gift/hospitality is not given or could not be perceived to be given, with the intention of unethically influencing decision making. Extreme care must be taken where the gift/hospitality is being extended by a party who is seeking or is likely to seek to do business with Ervia;
 - it does not include cash or a cash equivalents (i.e. gift vouchers, gift tokens);

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- the frequency and scale of the hospitality is not more than Ervia might be expected to give in return;
 - the number of employees availing of the hospitality is kept to a minimum;
 - it does not include the provision of travel or overnight accommodation;
 - accepting the gift or availing of the hospitality does not identify Ervia in a public way with any particular supplier or contractor; and
 - details of the gift/hospitality are disclosed as part of the gifts and hospitality notification process, outlined below at 11.2.
- The test to be applied is whether in all the circumstances the gift or hospitality is reasonable and justifiable. The intention behind the gift/hospitality should always be considered. Particular care should be exercised when tender processes are being conducted.
 - In all other cases, gifts, etc. should be returned to the sender, with a note advising that acceptance would be contrary to Ervia policy. In no circumstances may cash or cash vouchers be accepted.
 - In circumstances where Employees are unsure as to whether or not it is appropriate to accept a gift or benefit, even after consulting this Code, they should discuss the matter with their relevant line manager.

11.2 Notification procedure for Employees of gifts/hospitality

- On a quarterly basis all employees are required to provide details of all gifts/hospitality extended/accepted/declined by them.
- Employees who;
 - accept gifts or hospitality in the period; or
 - decline gifts or hospitality in the period; or
 - extend gifts or hospitality in the period

must ensure that the relevant details are captured in their line manager's quarterly return so that these can then be included in the relevant Executives quarterly return to the Chief Executive Officer. A confidential register of gifts and hospitality returns is maintained by the Company Secretary and periodically (no less than annually) reviewed by the Head of Internal Audit.

- The deliberate non-declaration of gifts or hospitality or other inducements may result in disciplinary proceedings.

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- Low value hospitality items (tea/coffee/lunch) and gifts of small intrinsic value (e.g. calendars, diaries, pens) do not need to be recorded in the quarterly hospitality return. Industry events providing hospitality (excluding accommodation or travel) with the purpose of providing training and/or continuous professional development do not need to be recorded.

11.3 Sponsorship

- Sponsorship must never be solicited by an Employee from suppliers, contractors or other persons doing or seeking to do business with Ervia. Where sponsorship is offered it may be accepted only when expressly approved by the Group Chief Executive.

12. RAISING CONCERNS

- In urgent or sensitive situations where confidential advice is required by an Employee or where concerns arise which cannot be appropriately addressed through normal channels these should be directed to the Employee's line manager, where appropriate. However, if an Employee feels that this is not appropriate, concerns can be raised directly to the Group Chief Legal Officer. If neither of these options is appropriate or if an Employee does not wish to raise a concern directly to any particular person, then an Employee can email (anonymously or otherwise) a confidential email address or leave a message on a confidential voicemail; both options will be directed to the Group Chief Legal Officer and the Group Head of Internal Audit (as Anti-Fraud Champion). Details of these confidential communication options are outlined below. In circumstances regarding possible financial improprieties, concerns can alternatively be directed to the Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee at the email address provided below.


The following are the contact details for raising concerns under this Policy:-

Group Chief Legal Officer

Claire Madden

Telephone: 021 - 4534205

Email: claire.madden@ervia.ie

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Confidential email address (directed to the Group Chief Legal Officer and the Group Head of Internal Audit)

Confidential@ervia.ie

Confidential voicemail (directed to the Group Chief Legal Officer and the Group Head of Internal Audit)


01-8230333 (external)

30333 (internal)

Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee

Email: auditandriskchairman@ervia.ie


- Ervia encourages Employees to raise any concerns internally and is committed to addressing these concerns while protecting the Employee(s) making the disclosure. In line with that commitment, an Employee who has concerns about any aspect of Ervia’s activities is encouraged and expected to come forward and voice those concerns and may do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage as a result of the disclosure.
- Other, external, reporting channels may also be available as prescribed in sections 7 – 10 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and the May 2012 “External Whistleblowing Policy” of the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (“NIAUR”), based on the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998. The NIAUR policy applies in respect of a business that is subject to regulation by NIAUR (at present GNI (UK) Limited) and relates to qualifying disclosures (including a criminal offence, a breach of a licence or other legal obligation, damage to the environment and an anti-competitive practice) which a person reasonably believes has or will occur or is occurring.
- Under the Criminal Justice Act 2011, a person (including Ervia, a Board Member and a director or member of staff of Ervia) who has information that he or she knows or believes might be of material assistance in preventing the commission of or in solving or prosecuting certain crimes (such as theft and fraud) must disclose that information as soon as it is practicable to do so to the Garda Síochána. A person need not comply with the obligation if he or she has a reasonable excuse for not doing so. Any concern in respect of this provision should be discussed with the Group Chief Legal Officer.

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13. REVIEW

Ervia shall review this Code on an annual basis or more often as relevant law, regulation or practice dictates. Updates to this Code will be notified to Employees and the revised Code will be published on the intranet. Ervia welcomes engagement with Employees on the provisions of this Code. Any comments or queries relating to the Code can be directed to the Ervia Company Secretary.

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