



FAALAPOTOPOTOGA O SU'ESU'EGA FAASAIENISI A SAMOA

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ORGANISATION OF SAMOA

Human Resource Management Policy Manual

Version Five (5), November 2018



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Foreword

As Chairman of the SROS Board of Directors, I am pleased to endorse and issue an updated version (Version 5) of the *SROS Human Resource Management Policy Manual*, approved at a board meeting held in September 2018.

This document has been developed to cater for the evolving human resource needs of the organisation. It is the result of a holistic review of the whole policy, and appropriate sections have been removed and added. This manual will be reviewed and updated periodically to suit SROS' needs, and updates will be submitted to the SROS's Board of Directors for approval every two years.

This document aims to provide a central user-friendly guide for human resource related matters for all SROS staff and management for specific matters.

In the event that a human resource matter is not covered in this manual, it is management's responsibility to make a decision or recommendation to the best of their ability to serve as an interim guideline until additions or amendments are approved by the SROS Board of Directors.

The application of and adherence to this manual is everyone's responsibility.

We trust that this manual will serve its intended purpose and provide a series of policy statements, clarify the aims and objectives of SROS, and define the methods by which the organisation will manage its staff/human resources.

Sulamanaia Montini Ott
CHAIRMAN, SROS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Document History

Issue date	Document status / amendments	Name of person responsible	Sign-off
September 2012	Version 3 – SROS HRM Policy Manual	Mere Aisake/Sia Ah Sam	
December 2017	Version 4 – SROS HRM Policy Manual Review	Sia Ah Sam/Mamea Samuel Ieremia	
June 2018	Version 5 – Review & Additional Information added after discussion with Management	Sia Ah Sam/Christopher Lei Sam	
September 2018	Finalised Human Resource Management Policies for Board Meeting	Sia Ah Sam/Christopher Lei Sam	
November 2018	Version 5 Release renamed Human Resource Management Policy Manual	Sia Ah Sam/Christopher Lei Sam with the Assistant of VSA Volunteers	



Warnings and Cautions

Throughout this manual, the following items are used:

WARNING: A Warning is used to indicate risk to life, up to and including death.

CAUTION: A Caution is used to indicate risk to property and / or injury to people.

Note: A Note provides additional information.

Even if a warning, caution, or note is not given, staff are at all times encouraged to take care when working on site. **Protection of life is the first consideration in an emergency.** Property protection is secondary.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the manual

To clarify, in a series of policy statements, the aims and objectives of the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS), the framework in which the organisation will operate, and methods by which SROS will manage its staff/human resources.

1.2 Role of the Board of Directors and Management

1.2.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the SROS is the governing body of the organisation and has the following functions:

- To ensure the proper and efficient performance of the functions of the organisation.
- To determine the policy of the organisation with respect to any matter.
- To give directions relating to the administration of the SROS Act 2008 to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Such other functions as are conferred on it by the SROS Act 2008 / Amendment to the Act 2014.

1.2.2 Management

Management is responsible for reviewing all information forwarded pursuant to this manual and making recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to be submitted to the Board of Directors for final approval.

1.3 Delegated authority

Throughout this manual, subject to the board's approval, the CEO may, in writing, delegate to an eligible person, or to a committee or group of eligible persons, all or any of his/her powers under the SROS Act 2008.

1.4 Application of the manual

This Manual will apply to all staff and Division Managers with the exception of the CEO, whose employment conditions are governed by his/her individual employment contract. Where a term or condition of employment is not provided for in an employee's employment contract, the relevant term or condition in this manual will apply unless it is specifically excluded.

Although casual staff (wage workers) and part-time employees are also governed by the provisions of this manual, their entitlements and staff benefits are different and separate from permanent and contracted staff.

2. SROS Vision, Mission Statement, and Objectives

2.1 Vision

The vision of SROS is:

- Through Research and Development of value adding to goods and services, a significant improvement in national GDP and social benefits to Samoans is achieved.
- To achieve a significant improvement in the national GDP and social benefits to Samoa, using research and development to add value to goods and services.

2.2 Mission statement

SROS aims to conduct scientific research and develop technologies with outcomes that are of great value in the development and sustainability of value added goods and services for export, and to achieve reduction on fuel imports and greenhouse gas emissions.

2.3 Objectives

- To promote the national economy of Samoa, based on research and development.
- To undertake scientific and technical research, with the primary aim of adding value to local resources and services.
- To develop functional prototypes of products and processes based on scientific and technical research, for local or overseas markets.
- To establish partnership with the private sector and commercial interests to support the organisation's activities.
- To ensure effective training for researchers and professionals engaged in scientific and technical research work.

3. Employment, General

SROS will actively encourage and as a major objective, whenever practical, provide opportunities for Samoan nationals to join the organisation in staff positions and offer career opportunities through innovative training and development programmes that support the aims and objectives of the organisation.

3.1 Employment procedures

3.1.1 Authority to engage staff

Increase to establishment: Staff commencing at officer level and higher positions will be appointed to particular jobs for fixed three (3) year terms. Part-time work is sometimes available. Approval from the CEO is necessary prior to the engagement of new staff. Requests will be through the Manager Administration and Finance Division.

Filling of vacancies: Filling of vacancies requires the prior approval of the CEO based on the Division Managers' recommendations (with justification) and in consultation with the Administration and Finance Division Manager.

3.1.2 Advertising of vacancies

The organisation seeks to provide the highest level of internal promotion and will fill or advertise vacancies internally for a period of two (2) weeks. This does not restrict SROS from advertising the position externally to ensure that the best candidates are recruited according to job position description requirements. Advertising of vacant positions is the responsibility of the Administration and Finance Division.

3.1.3 Salaries

Recruitment advertisements give the salary range for the position being filled. In the case of an appointee from overseas, the salary will be paid from the date of embarkation by the most direct route, with a deduction for any time spent on non-approved breaks in the journey.

The salary offered to the successful candidate will reflect the qualification and experience using the steps within the same grade as according to the SROS Salary Scale approved by the board.

A local appointee will be paid from the first day of reporting to work or from any earlier date previously agreed to by the CEO, provided in both cases that the appointee is not receiving a salary from a previous appointment at that time

3.1.4 Travel expenses

Subject to the Board of Directors' prior approval, an appointee from overseas, his/her spouse and legal dependent child(ren) will, on application, be reimbursed for travelling expenses incurred in taking up the appointment to the maximum of the equivalent of economy-class air fares as appropriate (fares are determined on the basis of the most direct route). All the correct documents must be presented for reimbursement. Monetary assistance for extra luggage can be provided to the maximum value of \$500 tala.

3.3 Application method

Candidates are required to set out the following information in their applications:

- Full name, address, telephone number, and email address.
- Present appointment.
- Details of other appointments and experience.
- University training and qualifications held.
- Details of published works.
- Details of administrative experience.
- Names and addresses (telephone and fax numbers) of three referees.

3.4 Initial engagement procedures

Managers must adhere to the following procedure when hiring a new employee.

3.4.1 Applications

- Examine background, experience, and Curricula Vitae, see also 3.4.2 *Investigate job references*, below.
- Check/verify authenticity of qualification records.
- Check with referees.
- Verify employment eligibility/legal immigration status.
- Interview the applicant.

3.4.2 Investigate job references/background

Verifying references from job applications and providing references for former employees is an essential part of the employment process. Managers must be careful to avoid hiring individuals who pose a threat to the safety of our clients, the public, or our employees.

Managers should be aware that while reference and background checks are essential to recruiting good employees, the process is not free from legal implications. Reference checks that are handled inappropriately or that are not carried out at all can subject the organisation to violations of certain laws, claims of defamation of character, negligent hiring, violation of an employee's right to privacy, and so on.

Because the reference checking process involves legal considerations, managers should obtain and provide references based on the following guidelines:

- **Obtaining job references:** Managers should verify the employment data and perform reference checks for all prospective employees. The depth and nature of the reference check should vary with the type of job in question, that is, more sensitive jobs should

entail more extensive reference checks, with less sensitive jobs entailing routine verifications of previous employment, job duties, and so on.

An applicant's employment application or resume (CV) is the standard source for conducting a reference check. Managers should confirm exact dates of employment and education (where this is job related) and look into gaps in employment or extraordinary information. A written record of references obtained should be kept in an employee's personnel file.

- **Criminal/extensive background investigations:** There are certain types of jobs where a more thorough and more extensive background check or even a criminal background check is appropriate. Examples may include jobs that involve:
 - Safety/security sensitive positions.
 - The handling of cash.
 - The handling of hazardous materials or chemicals.
 - Being entrusted with or responsible for maintenance of the organisation's expensive equipment.
 - Exposing clients or co-workers to a significant risk of harm.

3.5 Interviews

3.5.1 Management position levels

Interviews shall be coordinated by the CEO's Executive Assistant. The interviewing panel shall comprise the CEO and two (2) nominated board members.

3.5.2 Non-management position levels

For non-management positions, interviews will be done as follows:

- **For positions below Management level**, interviews shall be coordinated by the Administration and Finance Division after consultation with the Division Manager whose vacancy is to be filled.
- **For Principal Officer positions**, the interviewing panel shall consist of the CEO or his/her delegate, the Division Manager, and the Administration and Finance Manager. Where appropriate, an external party may be invited to be a panel member at the discretion of the CEO to provide specialised expert counsel.
- **For all other Officer positions below Principal Officer**, the abovementioned process applies with the CEO's participation being flexible. In the absence of the CEO, the third interviewing panel member may consist of the CEO's delegate, another Division Manager and/or nominated Principal and/or Senior level officer.

3.6 Contract of service

For positions below Management level, the salary and entitlements applying to the position will be determined before a contract is offered. This is done in consultation with the respective Division Manager and Manager Administration and Finance, prior to obtaining approval from the CEO.

3.7 Fixed term contracts

In addition to the procedures described in this section, the engagement of contract staff requires that a completion date is specified. If the organisation requires a need for an extension, a new contract shall be entered into. The salary and conditions shall be determined in consultation with the respective Division Manager and Manager Administration and Finance prior to obtaining approval of the CEO.

3.8 Pre-employment medicals

A pre-employment medical examination report may be required for a position below management level depending on the nature of the work required by the position. The Manager of Administration and Finance will work in collaboration with the Interviewing Panel to ensure that the medical examination report is acquired.

3.9 Commencing date

The commencing date of the appointment will be agreed in advance in correspondence between the appointee and the CEO of the organization.

3.10 Reservation

The Board of Directors and CEO reserve the right to make no appointment or to appoint by invitation at any stage.

3.11 Length of service

Length of service is the period of continuous employment from the date of initial engagement. If employees take leave under the *SROS Overseas Long Term Study Policy*, this will not be included in the length of service until they resume employment with SROS.

However, if employees work at SROS during their study breaks, this will be included in their length of service.

3.12 Staff orientation

It is the responsibility of the Division Managers to ensure that orientation for new recruits under their control is carried out. Either the Manager Administration and Finance Division or Senior Administration Officer will assist with the orientation as required.

3.13 Probationary period

An employee on initial engagement will be contracted for a fixed three (3) year term subject to the completion of six (6) months' probation (inclusive) with a performance rating of at least 3 (satisfactory performance). The probationary period for internal appointments within SROS will generally be 3 months but may be determined on a case by case basis.

This performance report from the Division Manager is to be completed at the end of the probationary period to determine the confirmation of employment or an extension of the probationary period or termination of service.

3.14 Annual performance review period

The annual performance reviews must be carried out thereafter to gauge an employee's performance at year end, effective on the date of recruitment.

The Management has the discretion to re-advertise a position where an employee achieves a rating of 2.5 and below for any two consecutive annual review periods of employment, giving the employee four week's written notice of termination. The incumbent may reapply to the position.

4.0 Personnel Records

Personnel records shall be maintained for each employee by the Administration and Finance Division to meet policy requirements, provide information that may be required by government agencies, and to ensure the efficient administration of the organisation.

All personnel files are to be kept under the custody of the Manager Administration and Finance. Personnel files are confidential, and access to the information they contain is restricted to the CEO, Division Heads, and authorised officers only. Staff may access their personnel files with the approval of their Division Manager.

All matters relating to the employee must be filed in their personnel files, including complaints, warnings, and other disciplinary actions.

Local and overseas training / workshops and meetings attended by each staff member will be filed separately. Training / workshop and meeting reports are to be submitted to AFD together with any certificates for the purpose of updating personnel files.

Due to their sensitive and confidential nature, annual staff performance appraisal review reports are kept in the CEO's custody.

5. Staff Employment Terms and Conditions

5.1 Definitions

- **Day** is a period of 24 hours, starting at midnight.
- **Week** is a continuous period of seven calendar days, commencing on Sunday.
- **Public Holiday** is any public holiday defined in or declared under the *Labour and Employment Relations Act 2013*.

5.2 Hours of work and overtime

5.2.1 Attendance and flexible working hours

Employees must attend work during the hours of attendance prescribed by the Board or the CEO. The standard prescribed working hours per day is 8 hours from Monday to Friday, unless a day is a designated public holiday or a commission holiday.

5.2.2 Starting time, breaks, and finishing time

With the exception of the Flexible Working Hour (FWH) arrangement, the standard prescribed starting and finishing time for all employees is 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. respectively.

On every working day, every employee is entitled to a 15 minute morning break from 10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m., a one (1) hour lunch break taken from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. and a 15 minute afternoon break from 3:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

FWHs are designed to allow for the provision of services over the lunch hour.

5.2.3 Flexible Working Hours (flexitime scheme)

"Flexitime" is a commonly used term to describe the flexible attendance arrangements that apply in SROS. The flexitime scheme enables staff to work efficiently while at the same time recognizing that staff have to manage both work and private commitments on a daily basis. This is achieved by granting time off where this is can be accommodated with work demands.

Additional benefits of FWHs include reduced administrative costs resulting from:

- Fewer formal leave applications for short absences.
- Fewer pay variations for short absences.

The CEO may approve flexible working hours for an employee upon request.

In approving FWH, the following conditions should be complied with:

- With the exception of employees granted FWH, all staff should attend work during the public service core hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- All staff, including staff on FWHs, must work 8 hours per day.
- Employees on FWH should clearly communicate their hours of work to their Division Manager and/or CEO.
- FWH must be clearly recorded in the attendance record.

The CEO (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring that FWHs do not compromise the delivery of services and performance of functions by the organisation. Thus, the CEO (or delegate) should ensure that, at any particular period of the day, sufficient staff is present to maintain delivery.

The CEO may review whole or part of the conditions of FWH for an employee from time to time, when it is appropriate.

It is considered late attendance if an employee reports after the standard prescribed hours of work and he or she is not on approved FWH.

Flexitime does not apply to shift workers and casual staff.

5.2.4 Late and irregular attendance

Each employee has the responsibility to ensure that the Administration Officer or their superiors are contacted no later than 9:30 a.m. to let them know the reason for lateness or to report that they are sick and when they are likely to attend / return to work. The Administration Officer will mark this in the attendance book, with other types of leave, before submitting the attendance book to the Manager, Administration & Finance Division for a second review by 10 a.m.

Every employee who reports late for duty under FWH is required to make up the time lost as directed by his or her Division Manager.

All cases of habitual irregular attendance and lateness that are not approved FWHs is to be reported to the CEO by the responsible Division Manager.

An employee who is not on approved FWHs and is habitually irregular regarding the time of arrival or departure from their place of employment will be subject to disciplinary action under section 10.

5.2.5 Absence from place of employment

An employee may not be absent from their official duty during hours of work unless they have obtained official leave or unless, in the case of illness or emergency, they have taken all reasonable steps to inform their Superior or the Administration Officer of their absence and when they are likely to return.

Except in the case of illness and emergency, an employee may not leave work during their hours of duty without the permission of their Division Manager/Leader.

Any employee who absents themselves from duty or who fails to return to duty and, in either case, continues to be absent without permission for a period of two (2) weeks and more, shall be deemed to have forfeited their office. Their services will then be terminated immediately on this

basis. However, if the employee subsequently satisfies the CEO that there was a valid reason for his/her absence and for his/her failure to inform the CEO earlier of that reason, the CEO may re-instate the employee; and in such a case the employee shall be deemed not to have forfeited office, but to have been on leave without pay from SROS during the period of absence.

Division Managers/Leaders must ensure that staff do not attend work outside standard hours in workload troughs merely to build up flexitime credits or time off hours.

Flexitime does not apply to shift workers and casual staff.

5.2.6 Recording attendance

All officers must keep formal daily attendance records unless they are offered an exemption from this requirement by the CEO.

5.2.7 Payslips

SROS will provide both electronically and printed payslips as and when staff salaries are processed by the Wednesday of every fortnightly pay period.

5.2.8 Overtime / time off in lieu

All staff below management level who formally record attendance and who have been directed to work outside standard working hours are allowed time off entitlements. All requests for work to be conducted outside standard working hours are to be approved and signed off by the CEO by 2 p.m. on the day of the request.

Overtime will only be paid in exceptional cases, subject to the approval of the CEO and/or the Board of Directors. Exceptional cases include, but are not limited to, these examples:

- The driver responsible for picking up of the staff every morning before work and after work is entitled to 3 hours per day to be paid at T1.5 hours fortnightly.
- Casuals working overtime are entitled to be paid overtime hours.
- An employee working on behalf of the nightwatchman when he is on leave shall also be entitled to be paid overtime hours.
- Payments of overtime hours are subject to appropriate budget savings identified.

Accumulated Time Off Hours for unpaid overtime have to be taken within the next month following the month an employee was approved to work overtime. At the end of the second month, untaken Time Off Hours are forfeited.

All employees who have been approved paid overtime work by the CEO shall be paid in accordance with the *Labour and Employment Relations Act 2013*. Overtime rates shall be calculated on the employee's hourly rate of pay, exclusive of allowances and other benefit payments that the employee is entitled to.

Meals for overtime shall be paid to employees, subject to the CEO's approval, before any overtime is taken at the rate of \$5.00 tala per person. This will be considered based on the work carried out by staff and continuous overtime work exceeding 5 hours.

An officer working part time may be required to perform additional duties. Payment for additional hours shall be made as set out above.

5.3 Public holidays

Any day in a year declared to be Public Holiday by the Head of State, as per the *Public Holidays Act 2008*, and additional days approved by the SROS Board shall be observed as holidays by SROS employees.

Any employee who is required to work on any day declared as a public holiday will be allowed double time off entitlements. Only in exceptional cases will overtime be paid, subject to the approval of the CEO and/or the Board of Directors.

6. Leave Entitlements

6.1 Annual leave

Annual leave entitlements depend on the employee category and the length of service.

Employee category	Length of service	Number of working days on full pay for each year of service.
CEO		25
Division Manager / Leader		20
All Employees	Less than 6 years	10
	More than 6, but less than 12 years	15
	12 or more years	20
Graduates (at least / equivalent to a Bachelor)	More than 3 years	15
Wage workers (Casuals)	1- 10 years	5
	11 - 20 years	10
	21 and more years	15

- Annual leave is due on the first anniversary of an employee's appointment. New recruits are not entitled to annual leave until they have reached the first anniversary of employment.
- Where a public holiday or a commission holiday falls during a period of annual leave, sick leave, or paid special leave, the employee is entitled to the holiday to be added to the period of leave or for it to be added to the balance.
- An employee on cessation of employment from the service who works on the day preceding a public holiday will be paid for the holiday.
- Annual leave cannot be taken in advance of your anniversary date.
- Annual leave granted to an employee shall be taken within 12 months from the date on which it becomes due. The employee may take it in either one (1) unbroken period or in more periods of which one must be a continuous period of one (1) week.

An employee who fails to take his/her annual leave within this period, shall forfeit his/her annual leave entitlements, except if the CEO approves deferment in taking leave.

An employee may be directed to take their annual leave at a time convenient to the organisation but as far as practicable the employee's wishes in the matter are to be considered.

The Division Managers are to ensure that employees under their control take their annual leave in the year in which it is due. Employees should be encouraged to take leave over the Christmas - New Year holiday period and be discouraged from taking their leave in single days.

- There shall be no payment of annual leave entitlements if an employee is dismissed for misconduct or a breach of the code of conduct.
- Application forms for annual leave must be checked and signed by the employee's Division Manager and forwarded to the Administration and Finance Division for checking against entitlement prior to the authorization being considered by the CEO. Applications must be submitted to the CEO at least one working day prior to the commencement of leave unless in the event of an urgent or emergency case.
- If the accumulation of annual leave is taken as leave without pay in any given period is seen to be an issue, the employee may face disciplinary action under section 10.
- Annual leave for ACEOs to overseas require approval from SROS Board of Directors whereas the CEO require approval from Minister

6.2 Sick leave

Sick Leave Entitlements depend on category of employment and length of services as follows;

Employee category	Length of service	Number of working days on full pay for each year of service.
CEO		25
Division Manager / Leader		20
All Employees	1 - 9 years	10
	10 - 18 years	11
	19 - 29 years	12
	30 and more years	13
Graduates (at least / equivalent to a Bachelor)	More than 3 years	15
Wage workers (Casuals)	1 - 9 years	5
	10 - 19 years	10
	20 years and higher	15

- To be entitled to paid sick leave, the employee must notify the Administration Officer and/or his/her Division Manager / Leader before or by 9:30 a.m. on the first day of absence from work.
- Where a period of sick leave involves an absence of three (3) days or more, a medical certificate must be submitted upon the employee's return to work.

- If it is suspected that the sick leave entitlement is being abused, SROS reserves the right to ask an employee for a medical certificate for less than three (3) day's absence on sick leave. If the accumulation of sick leave taken as leave without pay in any given period is seen to be an issue, the employee may face disciplinary action under section 19.
- All new permanent employees are entitled to 5 days sick leave while casual employees are entitled to 2 days sick leave during their first year of employment, the remaining five days (permanent) and three days (casuals) will be received once the employee reaches their first anniversary.
- Sick leave for ACEOs require approval from the CEO whereas sick leave for the CEO requires approval from the SROS Board of Directors

6.3 Bereavement leave

After completion of 12 months continuous service, all employees, casuals and new recruits are entitled to bereavement leave in any given financial year with pay of up to three (3) consecutive working days plus travelling time overseas on the death of an immediate relative, that is, father, mother, brother, sister, spouse/de-facto or child:

- The travelling time will be subject to CEO approval based on eligible circumstances, 1 day for return-based inter Samoan island travel including American Samoa, and 2 days for all return-based travel to other overseas destinations.
- Any leave beyond three (3) days is subject to approval by the CEO.

In the event of the death of an employee's grandmother, grandfather, uncles and aunts (and that of the employee's spouse's daughter, son, father, mother, sister, brother) the entitlement shall be 2 days for all employees, casuals and new recruits after completion of 12 months continuous service are. Any other relations not specified, or leave beyond two days, is subject to approval by the CEO.

For the purpose of this section, all of the above related are deemed to be **immediate**. Any requests for bereavement leave for **extended** family will be considered on its merit and requires the approval of the CEO.

An application form for leave must be signed by the employee's Division Manager and forwarded to the Administration and Finance Division for the CEO's approval.

6.4 Special leave

Special leave is a general entitlement granted to meet the needs of employees that do not fall within the specific purposes of other leave entitlements, but that are considered special in nature as follows:

- Special leave **with pay** for a period not exceeding 15 working days per annum may be granted to an employee officially representing Samoa as a participant, coach, or manager in any sport or cultural event, subject to the CEO's discretion on a case by case basis.

A letter from the event's governing body stating the purpose of the request must be attached to the leave application form for final approval by the CEO.

- Special leave **without pay** may be granted to any employee for a period of not more than 2 months subject to CEO approval based on special circumstances such as medical treatment and other major situations that warrants an application.

6.5 Maternity leave

Maternity leave will be granted to employees under the following terms and conditions after completion of 12 months continuous service:

Female employees may, on becoming pregnant, apply for up to 26 weeks leave in one continuous period provided a 3 month notice is given to the Administration and Finance Division.

- The first eight (8) weeks will be with pay.
- Remaining eighteen (18) weeks on leave without pay.
- All outstanding annual leave must be used first prior to starting leave without pay. If the leave of absence exceeds 26 weeks, no guarantee will be given that the employee's position will be available on their return unless a medical certificate is presented for the absence over the extended period.

A female employee who returns to work after taking her maternity leave must be provided with the right to one (1) or more daily breaks or a daily reduction of hours of work to breastfeed or provide milk for her child up to six months after birth. She should also apply for Flexible Working Hours under section 5. This is monitored by the Manager of Administration and Finance and the respective Scientific Research Leader.

In the sad event an employee has a miscarriage during the third trimester of pregnancy or gives birth to a stillborn child, she is entitled to claim leave and protection under this section.

An employer cannot terminate the service or employment of a female employee during her pregnancy or after her pregnancy except of a ground unrelated to her pregnancy or birth of the child.

A female employee who adopts a newborn child shall be entitled to Maternity Leave subject to evidence of adoption and CEO approval.

6.6 Paternity leave

Male employees are entitled to paternity leave after 12 months of continuous service.

Five (5) days paid paternity leave will be available to officers on the birth of their child or the adoption of a child under 12 months of age. This leave is not available as an additional benefit to officers who are taking maternity leave. Relevant documents shall be submitted to support adoption of a child.

Such leave shall be taken within the period commencing in the week prior to the expected date of the birth of the child and concluding six weeks after the birth of the child.

7. Duty Travel, Transport, and Allowance Entitlements

Business related travel is regarded as "time on duty" for the purposes of credit accrual.

7.1 Travel

The following provisions apply to staff travelling on SROS business.

7.1.1 Authorisation

The CEO will approve duty travel application for all staff or in his/her absence the Acting CEO.

7.1.2 Overseas travel allowances on SROS business

Business related travel is regarded as "time on duty" for the purposes of credit accrual.

All SROS staff business related travel must prepare for cabinet approval (FK) after endorsement by the SROS Board of Directors.

For overseas SROS business related travel, the organisation will provide travel allowances to staff in accordance with the latest Circular Memorandum from the Cabinet Secretariat on *DAILY SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (DSA) RATES*.

7.1.3 Local travel allowances

When an employee is required to travel on SROS business locally, an overnight incidental allowance of SAT\$25 is paid per night in advance of any approved local travel. The minimum qualifying period of absence is one (1) full day. The maximum period for travelling allowance is five (5) days of continuous absence from normal place of residence. Any continuous period exceeding five (5) days requires the approval of the CEO. Transport, accommodation, and meal costs for approved local travel will be processed by the Administration & Finance Division. Any other extra costs will be reimbursed, provided that claims are supported by receipts and approved by the CEO. The CEO may authorise, in appropriate cases, advances of funds.

In the event that SROS will provide accommodation through its own facilities apart from hotels (and other), an allowance of \$60 will be paid to each staff member travelling on official SROS duties.

7.1.4 Clothing allowance for overseas travel

An employee shall be paid a clothing allowance once within any one year or 12 month period or since the last paid clothing allowance.

The current rates are as follows.

Officer level	Amount (SAT\$ p.a.)
Chief Executive Officer	SAT\$1,000
Assistant CEOs	SAT\$800
All other officers	SAT\$600

The above rates are subject to change from time to time based on the latest circular memorandum from the Cabinet Secretariat

7.1.5 Public holiday entitlement while on official duty travel

In the event that an employee of SROS, including the CEO and Management, are on official duty travel and a public or commission holiday is observed during this period, any employee (including the CEO and Management) is entitled to request to take the missed holidays as leave within one month following the date of return (for example, if you return on 8 June, then you can apply to take the two days of the Independence holiday by 8 July).

7.2 Higher duties allowance (HDA)

Subject to annual approved budget provisions, an employee shall be paid a Higher Duties Allowance (HDA) when he/she is assessed to have substantially and efficiently carried out the duties of a higher position for a period of at least five (5) working days in any period of twelve (12) months. Periods of less than five (5) working days are not entitled to HDA and will be forfeited after twelve (12) months from date of the first acting period.

The eligible staff for acting positions are as follows:

- Manager / Leader level can act on the CEO positions
- Principal levels only can act on the positions of Manager / Leader level

These employees are eligible for acting positions when the CEO, a Divisional Team Leader, or Managers take their annual leave, are on overseas duty travel (not local), or when they are sick for more than 3 working days.

An employee who is acting in any role is not entitled to HDA for the days he/she takes as annual or sick leave, time off in lieu, or if the acting period includes public holidays (both public and commission holidays).

The rate for calculating the HDA is the difference between the basic salary of the higher position and that of the employee who is performing the duties of the higher position in an acting capacity. The daily rate of the difference in salaries is multiplied by the number of working days of the acting capacity.

Where the CEO or Manager/Leader deems that the employee had performed only a portion of the duties of the higher position, or not satisfactorily performed all of the duties of the higher position, the CEO may authorise the payment of a percentage (%) of the HDA commensurate/proportionate to the percentage of the duties deemed to have been satisfactorily performed.

To receive payment of the HDA, a memo must be prepared by the responsible Manager/Research Leader, signed by the CEO after all the conditions above are met and forward to the Administration and Finance Division to process payment which should take less than three (3) working days.

8.0 Local Study (Education) Support Policy

8.1 General

This policy applies to employees below Management level only who wish to undertake studies that are deemed by the organisation to be appropriate to their relevant work-related area or field. Studies are limited to locally-based higher education institutions only, namely the National University of Samoa (NUS) and the Alafua campus of the University of the South Pacific (USP).

This policy does not apply to other study opportunities that the organisation may be able to access for its permanent fulltime employees under formal memorandums of understanding with other local or overseas higher education institutions and other organizations. Such study opportunities will be governed by regulations stipulated therein these memorandums of understanding.

Any study undertaken at the organisation's expense is subject and limited to Government's annual budget allocations towards personnel training and development and only in response to identified organisation needs. It should improve the organisation's delivery of its mandate and anticipated output outcomes. It needs to prepare the individual to carry out their current job responsibilities. The organisation supports studies only if they have long-term benefits to both the organisation and the employee.

8.2 Eligibility criteria

All approvals will be based on the employee's annual performance rating, academic potential, and time of employment with the organisation. Approvals will also be subject to the following eligibility criteria:

- Study programme and course(s) must be work related.
- Employee must have served a minimum 1 year (12 months) with the organisation.
- The employee's annual performance assessment rating must be a minimum 3 rating (meets expectations) in the last appraisal.
- Employee must have a good general adherence to the staff code of conduct and no disciplinary record.
- Employee must have a proven past good academic record.
- The study application must be endorsed by the Division Manager for collective endorsement consideration by the Management Team prior to obtaining final approval from the CEO.

The organisation may refuse support for local study where:

- The above eligibility criteria are not met.
- A clear benefit to both the organisation and employee is not evident.
- The level of support the employee is seeking appears excessive.
- The employee already holds a qualification at a similar level.
- There is insufficient government funding available for personnel training and development.

8.3 Terms and conditions

- SROS reserves the right to provide either zero, partial and/or full funding/financial support for requested study programme course(s)/subject(s), subject to availability of annual SROS budget provisions for staff development and training.
- Study funding support covers registration/enrolment and tuition costs/fees for one unit/paper only per semester. All other associated costs are to be borne by the employee.
- SROS employees are required to pay the approved study unit registration/ enrolment and tuition costs/fees upfront and subject to the successful completion of the unit, SROS will reimburse fees upon presentation of an official subject pass result from the local higher education institution.
- Given the high costs associated with the organisation's education funding support policy, the duration of SROS's local study funding assistance is linked to the staff member's employment contract term. Further or continued SROS funding assistance is subject to the renewal of the staff member's employment contract.
- It should be noted that at all times it is expected that priority will be given to the employee's work/job responsibilities over the employee's pursuit of academic qualifications. Should work circumstances require this, and if an employee is not able to be released from work to attend lectures/classes, the organisation reserves the right to insist that the employee remains at work.
- Employees are expected to make up in full hours taken to attend classes/lectures during normal working hours at no cost to the organisation, for example, forfeiting lunch breaks or working after hours and weekends, including public holidays.

Note: *The eligibility criteria and abovementioned terms and conditions will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the employee's work performance has not deteriorated in pursuit of academic qualifications.*

8.4 Study, examination, and graduation leave entitlement

The CEO may, upon application from any employee (including new recruits) grant study, examination, and graduation leave as set out below:

- Leave on full pay of one and a half (1.5) days for each unit/paper for end of semester final examinations.
The period of 1.5 days study leave covers both the study and examination times (that is, 1 day for study and 0.5 day for examination).
- In cases where examinations are for course(s)/subject(s) being repeated or because the student has failed to achieve a pass in previous attempts, only one (1) day study leave may be granted (that is, 0.5 day for study and 0.5 day for the examination).
- All staff (including new recruits) are entitled to 3 days graduation leave with pay to attend their award ceremony.

Applications for leave must be made to the CEO through the Division Manager at least one (1) week before the study/examinations/award ceremony are to be held.

The CEO and Division Manager may require the employee to provide him/her with relevant documents to support the application for leave.

8.5 Application procedures to undertake study

Applications are to be submitted using the *Application for SROS Support of Local Studies* form (available from HR & Admin). This form must be submitted at least one month before the course commences, first to the employee's Division Manager for endorsement, followed by the Management Team's collective assessment, and ultimately the CEO's approval,

Sufficient information must be provided to enable the organisation to make an informed decision. The procedures that applicants and Division Managers are required to follow are outlined below. Employees are advised not to enrol for courses until CEO approval has been confirmed. Applications must be submitted one month prior to the course commencement date.

8.6 Employees' responsibilities

The employee must complete and supply the following information in the *Application for SROS Support of Local Studies* form:

- Level and name of study program, for example, Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor Degree, Postgraduate Studies.
- Name and type of course/program.
- List of mandatory and/or elective units/papers.
- Course/subject tuition costs.
- Duration of the course/paper.

Employees must also include any other significant information about the course/program such as a schedule or timetable to attend lectures, tutorials or laboratory classes during business hours, whether the employee intends taking annual and/or unpaid leave around exam time, and so on.

All enrolments, registrations, and associated paperwork are to be completed by the employee in question and forwarded to the relevant educational institution after approval has been obtained for the CEO. Once the employee's enrolment is confirmed, a copy of confirmation from the institution is to be retained by HR in the employee's personal file.

8.6.1 Action by Division Managers

The Division Manager is required to submit the above application form to the Management Team and the CEO with the following details:

- Confirm relevance of course/program, comment on employee's attitude, work performance, long term potential level, development needs, and so on.
- Detail recommendation incorporating how the intended study will directly enhance the employee's ability to carry out their current responsibilities, or to progress on a clearly identified post/career path.
- Upon CEO approval, manage the employee's study time off requirements and ensure coverage in the employee's absence so work is not compromised

8.6.2 Action by Manager, Administration and Finance

- Confirm application details fall within policy guidelines.
- Maintain updated study records in the employee's personnel file.

An electronic copy of the *Application for SROS Support of Local Studies* form can be obtained from the HR & Administration section.

9. Overseas Long-term Study Policy

9.1 General

This policy applies to full-time employees who wish to pursue overseas postgraduate studies mutually agreed to between SROS and the employee at an institution with a formal signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) / Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) / Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC). Such overseas study opportunities will be approved subject to compliance with SROS's *Overseas Long Term Study Policy* and will be governed by regulations stipulated under formal agreements signed between SROS and overseas-based higher education institutions/organizations, or overseas long-term study/scholarship opportunities awarded to SROS staff that have direct relevance to SROS's research mandate.

The study undertaken must be in response to identified SROS needs and should enhance the delivery of SROS's mandate and anticipated outcomes in the long term in accordance with the Government's strategy for the development of Samoa.

All approvals will be based on the employee's annual performance rating, academic potential, and the length of their employment with the organisation. Approvals will also be subject to the criteria set out below.

9.2 Eligibility criteria

- Employee must be a Samoan citizen.
- Employee's annual performance assessment rating must be a consistent minimum 3 (meets expectations)
- Employee must show a good adherence to the general staff code of conduct and have no disciplinary record.
- Employee must have served a minimum of 3 years with SROS (that is, equivalent to 1 full contract term). If an employee does not meet this criterion, the board will have the discretion to disregard it.

9.3 Selection criteria

- Study programme and course(s) must be work related and for a minimum 12 months duration.
- A proven good past academic record.

SROS may refuse support for overseas long-term study where:

- The above eligibility and selection criteria are not met.
- A clear benefit to both the organisation and employee is not evident.
- The employee already holds a qualification at a similar level.

9.4 Terms and conditions

In addition to overseas study provisions stipulated in the relevant agreement signed with SROS and/or the overseas-based higher education institution, the following terms and conditions also apply:

- The employee must formally apply for overseas long-term study leave with necessary supporting documents such as a letter of study acceptance from the higher education institution/organisation and a detailed study programme for consideration by the SROS Board of Directors.
- Any extension to the approved duration of overseas long-term study leave must have the support of the higher education institution/organisation and requires the endorsement of the SROS Board of Directors.
- If the employee's contract expires whilst he/she is away on overseas study, the employee's contract is extended until the end of the study term and another 12 months on the employee's return.
- Employees on overseas-long term study are not entitled to standard leave benefits as stipulated in the *Human Resource Management Policy Manual* nor will leave entitlements be accumulated.
- Employees who return to Samoa to take their break during the Education/Institution vacation break do not have to report to work.
- On completion of the overseas study period, the employee is required to serve a minimum of two (2) years as stipulated in the Bond Agreement.
- Five (5) days graduation leave with pay is granted for staff to attend their overseas award ceremony.
- An employee may apply for additional financial assistance to the CEO in writing with all necessary documentary evidence to support claim for assistance. This assistance would not be more than 50% of their base salary and this will be reviewed annually. The CEO's decision is final.
- Employees who returned from overseas long-term study will have a stand-down period of a minimum of 2 (two) years before the employee can reapply for another overseas long-term study opportunity.

9.5 Returning graduates reward

Returning officers will serve a three (3) months probationary period upon receipt of a higher qualification and are then automatically eligible for a pay increment according to the latest SROS salary scale.

For Principal Officers with more than three years working experience, returning with:

- Masters: Grade 4, Step 3
- PhD: Grade 7, Step 5 as per SROS Salary Scale.

Note: *The SROS Salary Scale may change from time to time*

10. Staff Performance Incentive Scheme Policy

10.1 Introduction

In line with SROS's intention of a performance-related reward strategy, the staff performance incentive scheme policy has been adopted to promote capacity building and acknowledge a high-performance culture within SROS's working environment.

The policy is three-fold. It aims to provide guidelines and procedures for guiding the organisation concerning the following:

- The awarding of annual cash bonuses to acknowledge exceptional staff performance.
- Benefit sharing arrangements concerning consultancy as a means of generating income for the organisation.
- A consideration of salary increments upon the successful completion of a higher qualification relevant to his/her work and a good performance appraisal after a six (6) month assessment.

All other position increments will be based on the review and performance assessment by the Divisional Manager/Scientific Leader after a three (3) years contract term with a consistent performance rating of 4-5, this shall only be one (1) increment step.

10.1.1 Guidelines for annual cash bonuses for staff performance

These guidelines govern the operation of the annual cash bonus scheme based on individual staff members' performance every year. The guidelines provide information on the following and its contents do not in any way form part of any employee's employment contract terms and conditions.

The Scheme Year: The scheme operates by reference to the performance review period, which is the employee's employment contract start date for the duration of a twelve month period.

For example, all employees whose reviews are due between January to June must be reviewed and the cash bonuses must be awarded, if the candidate is successful, before the end of June. The same applies to reviews that are due between July to December – the cash bonuses must be awarded before the end of December.

Performance Appraisal Ratings: The CEO and Management shall discuss and approve the increment rates for each staff member before it is taken to the Board of Directors for endorsement.

Following the completion of the Scheme Year, each employee will be given a Performance Rating Score. The Performance Rating Score will be allocated in accordance with the *SROS Annual Performance Review Process*. As part of this process, each employee's performance is measured against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set by an employee's line manager and agreed to with the employee.

Details of the Performance Appraisal Rating Key are as follows:

Rating score	Rating description	Rating definition
5	Outstanding Achievement	Performance far exceeds the expectations for officers at this classification level. This level indicates that the officer has delivered exceptional results against all indicators.
4	Exceeds Expectations	Performance exceeds the expectations for officers at this classification level. This level indicates that the officer has delivered more than satisfactory results against nearly all indicators.
3	Meets Expectations	Performance meets the expectations for officers at this classification level. This level indicates that the officer has delivered satisfactory results against nearly all indicators.
2	Marginal	Performance meets some of the expectations for officers at this classification level. This level indicates that the officer has delivered less than satisfactory results against most indicators. It could be expected that some inexperienced officers could be rated marginal.
1	Unsatisfactory	Performance does not meet the expectations for officers at this classification level.

The employee's Annual Performance Rating Score will be the key basis used to calculate the one-off cash bonus payment that each employee is eligible to receive for the Scheme Year, subject to SROS's financial ability to pay out cash bonus payments.

10.1.2 Principles

Subject to the rules of the scheme, the following principles have been adopted:

- All full-time employed staff from the second year of their employment are eligible to receive an Annual Cash Bonus Payment.
- The level of bonus payment paid to each employee will depend on the Performance Rating Score given to each employee during the Scheme Year.
- There will be no payments, pro-rata or otherwise, for employees whose employment terminates during the Scheme Year.

10.1.3 Eligibility for participation in the scheme

An employee is eligible to participate in the scheme if the employee:

- Is employed full time on SROS terms and conditions.
- Has completed his / her first year of employment.
- Has been allocated a performance rating score of at least 3.5 in respect of the Scheme Year.

An employee will not be eligible to participate in the scheme if the employee:

- Has been promoted to a higher salary band, grade or level during the Scheme Year
- Has his/her employment contract terminated.

10.1.4 Special groups

There are some special groups that may require particular consideration with regard to the way that they are dealt with under the scheme. These groups are as follows:

Group	Rules for bonus payment
Employees on maternity leave	The employee's bonus payment will be pro-rata.
Employees on long-term sick leave (sickness or injury)	The employee's bonus payment will be pro-rata.
Employees who retire during the scheme year (either Normal Retirement Date, as defined in the employee's terms and conditions of employment, or on another date as agreed with SROS).	The employee's bonus payment will be pro-rata.
Employees on other types of approved leave or unpaid absence (for example, annual leave, paternity leave, national sport representation, national official duty, and so on)	The employee's bonus payment will be pro-rata.
Employees on overseas study leave under SROS MOU	The employees are not entitled to bonuses.

10.2 Cash bonus payouts under the scheme

10.2.1 Bonus payments

The proposed cash bonus to be paid out to eligible staff under the guidelines for achieving exceptional staff performance will be restricted to:

- SAT\$250 for achieving a performance rating score of 3.5 to 4.4.
- SAT\$500 for achieving a performance rating score of 4.5 to 5.

Government tax applies to all of the bonus cash amounts payable.

Subject to the rules of the scheme as set out in this document and any other rules regarding the scheme as notified to the employee from time to time, SROS will aim to make the bonus payments according to the rules set out above. These rules are based on a full-time employee who has been employed for the entire Scheme Year.

Cash bonuses are not renewable, nor may they be added to the employee's salary base, but an employee may be considered for cash bonuses in successive years.

The payments of the cash bonus will take into account SROS's ability to pay and may be reduced or not paid depending upon overall affordability and fee revenue generated during the Scheme Year.

10.2.2 Scheme payment date

The cash bonus payments will normally be paid out twice per year (June and December) after CEO approval and SROS Board of Directors endorsement on a normal pay day following the end of the Scheme Year.

The staff member receiving the cash bonus will also receive a Certificate of Appreciation that acknowledges the contribution he/ she has made to the organisation over the Scheme Year by which he/she has received the bonus.

10.3 Guidelines for benefit-sharing arrangements concerning consultancy

In instances whereby an individual or a team secure and undertake consultancy work on behalf of the organisation, benefit-sharing arrangements in relation to such consultancy work will apply as follows:

- The individual or team will be remunerated at a rate of up to 50% of the net consultancy price (after deduction of the organisation's resources used for said work).
- The actual percentage rate will be determined on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the SROS Board of Directors before payment is made.

10.4 Review of the Staff Performance Incentive Scheme Policy

This Staff Performance Incentive Scheme Policy may be reviewed on an annual basis where appropriate. Employees will be notified of any changes to the rules of the scheme as and when they occur.

11. Staff Code of Conduct

11.1 Purpose

SROS takes pride in providing excellence of service by being professional in its approach and courteous in meeting the needs of its customers and service providers. Therefore, the highest standards are expected at all times from staff in their performance and conduct, including when they are travelling locally and overseas on official SROS business.

Where employees breach any of the standards, counselling and disciplinary action will take place including termination of employment where appropriate. See also *Cessation of Employment, Section 23* and *Counselling Disciplinary Procedures, Section 19*.

The particular principles that SROS considers most important in this regard are described in more detail below.

11.2 General principles

This *Staff Code of Conduct* addresses issues and situations that may arise in staff's day-to-day work and is based on four main principals:

- Staff are expected to be punctual in their attendance and to perform their duties with professionalism and integrity, and work efficiently to enable SROS to meet its goals.
- Fairness, honesty, equity and all legal requirements are to be observed by all SROS staff in the conduct of official duties and during interactions with clients and members of the public.
- Real or apparent conflicts of interest are to be avoided.
- There is to be adequate protection of intellectual property and confidential information and strict observance of business and commercial protocols while you are an employee of SROS and after you leave SROS's employment.

11.3 Working to achieve SROS's objectives

11.3.1 Dress and appearance

Appropriate dress and appearance will give a good impression when representing SROS externally. By this means staff can enhance their own and SROS's image and reputation. Staff are also expected to wear any protective clothing or safety equipment provided. When working in and/or entering SROS laboratories, employees and visitors to the organisation are required to wear standard laboratory apparel (proper protective equipment). Refer to the *SROS's Occupational Safety and Health Manual*.

11.3.2 Staff obligations (general)

Staff must:

- Perform official duties with skill, care and diligence, using their authority in a fair and unbiased way.
- Apply knowledge and skills in a positive and imaginative way, not just obey instructions.
- Observe the *SROS Act 2008* as this relates to their official duties.
- Treat colleagues, clients and members of the public with courtesy and with sensitivity to their rights, duties, and aspirations.
- Behave at all times in a manner that maintains or enhances the reputation of SROS:
 - Be honest and impartial.
 - Work carefully and diligently.
 - Treat everyone with respect and courtesy and without coercion or harassment.
 - Comply with all laws that apply to them.
 - Comply with all lawful and reasonable directions given to them by persons who have authority to give those directions.
 - Disclose, and take all reasonable steps to avoid, any real or apparent conflicts of interest in relation to their employment.
 - Use Government resources properly.
 - Use official information only for official purposes.
 - Act with integrity and not misuse their status or authority to seek or obtain a benefit for themselves or any other person or body.
 - Uphold the values of the public service set out in section 17.
 - Comply with any other conduct requirements set out in the regulations.
 - Uphold the good reputation of the public service.

11.3.3 Confidentiality

All staff are required to maintain an appropriate standard of confidentiality. Any unauthorized disclosures of the organisation's records or information made unlawfully outside the proper course of duty will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence that may result in dismissal.

11.3.4 Conflict of interest

If staff find that they have some personal, financial, commercial, or other interest that may affect the way they perform their official duties, or the way they are seen to perform their official duties, they must declare that interest to the CEO or their Division Manager, and take whatever action is necessary to mitigate a real or apparent conflict of interest. This may involve divesting themselves of those interests or, with SROS's agreement, having their duties changed to avoid the conflict.

11.3.5 Use of official position

Staff are not permitted to use their official position to seek or obtain any financial advantage, bribe or kickback for themselves, their families or any other person or organization. Nor can they use their official position to harass, compromise or deny the rights of another organization, individual or group of people.

11.3.6 Accepting gifts and benefits

Staff are not permitted to accept gifts or benefits of any significant value related to the performance of their official duties without the approval of Division Manager and/or CEO. It is acceptable to receive a meal or a few drinks in the interest of normal business practice but not to give the impression that there may be any connection with business opportunities.

Likewise, financial support to attend international conferences and technical meetings or to visit clients' premises is acceptable in most cases but the employee should discuss this with their supervisor before acceptance. If it is awkward to refuse a gift (for example, in overseas countries where offering and accepting a gift is normal local practice), it may be appropriate to accept the gift but this must be declared in writing to the Division Manager and/or CEO upon return. The Chief Executive is able to approve situations where external earnings related to SROS's activities may be retained. This might include consultancy fees, or fees for lecturing or examination of research theses.

11.3.7 Use of SROS's money, property, goods, or services

Staff are expected to use the organisation's money, property, goods and services economically and for official purposes only. Staff will need to know what their delegations are and should obtain them in writing and to exercise them with impartiality and care. Staff may have access to information about other staff members or external clients or members of the public. Privacy and administrative law contains strict controls on the disclosure or use of such information other than for quite specific purposes.

11.3.8 Special responsibilities as a supervisor of staff

Supervisors are expected to show leadership by example and particularly to:

- Ensure that the work results and decisions arising from the work of both themselves and their staff are recorded and kept in accord with SROS's records management policies.
- Be accurate and fair in appraising the work of others.
- Resolve conflicts fairly and quickly using established procedures.
- Be strictly impartial when considering reward outcomes, promotions or redundancies.
- Avoid unfair or misleading statements to committees or tribunals investigating appeals or grievances lodged by staff.
- Provide accurate, informative references.

11.3.9 Frequently asked questions

What happens if staff do not follow this code of conduct?

If staff do not follow the standard code of conduct outlined, they may be subject to disciplinary action as defined under the *Disciplinary Section* of this manual. In addition, staff will be held accountable through their Performance Appraisals which will take into account compliance with the principles and practices set out in this code.

Where can staff obtain further help to understand their responsibilities?

If staff have any questions about their responsibilities or the contents of this code, they should talk to their Division Manager, the Administration and Finance Manager, or the CEO. Most of the issues contained in this code are explained in greater detail in the *SROS Act 2008*.

What is staff's responsibility if they see a breach of the code or any illegal behaviour?

All staff are responsible for doing something about any illegal behaviour or behaviour outside of the spirit of this code. It may only be necessary to speak to other staff involved or affected to fix, address, or resolve the matter. Alternatively, it may be appropriate for a staff member to discuss the matter with their Division Manager, the Administration and Finance Manager, or the CEO.

Staff who bring complaints, without malice and with reasonable belief that a case of misconduct or non-compliance with policy exists, to the attention of their Division Manager or the CEO, will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against in any way. On the other hand, where staff make malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations or allegations without having reason to believe that they are true, SROS will not support them if legal proceedings are initiated against them

12. Working Arrangements within SROS

12.1 The work environment

SROS recognises that the creative output of its staff, the conditions under which people work and the way in which they are managed, have a significant impact on performance, productivity, and level of satisfaction. SROS will provide significant resources for the development and improvement of the work environment for SROS staff in terms of health, safety, equality of opportunity and participative work practices.

12.2 Access to premises

Access to SROS premises is limited to those times that staff are engaged in performing their duties. Access outside working hours requires management and CEO approval.

Certain areas have restricted access and are clearly identified. Access to these areas is prohibited and requires authorisation from the authorising officer.

12.3 SROS staff identification card

A SROS identification card is issued to all staff and must be worn at all times on SROS premises.

The Administration and Finance Division is responsible for issuing the identification cards. Staff are responsible to ensure that their identification card is current and to advise the Administration and Finance Division of any changes.

Staff must immediately advise Administration and Finance Division if their identification card is lost. Replacement of a lost card is subject to a fee of SAT\$25.00 or as advised from time to time.

12.4 Participation in decision making

By being an active member of a work team and participating fully in the planning and conduct of quality research and other work, both the quality of SROS's effort and the way in which we achieve it will be enhanced.

Management have a particular responsibility to ensure that the work arrangements are conducive to maximum participation by all and that the right of subordinates to exercise their discretion is recognized.

All staff members have a responsibility to attempt to resolve matters of concern through the line management structure in the first instance.

12.5 Equity and fair treatment

All staff are responsible for treating colleagues fairly and with consideration. Equity and natural justice principles should underpin all working relationships and the application of SROS procedures. You are not permitted to discriminate against or harass any colleague, client or member of the public, particularly on the basis of:

- Race
- Religion
- Gender
- Political or union affiliation
- Sexual preference
- Political opinion
- Marital status
- Pregnancy
- Social origin
- Criminal record
- Age
- Physical, intellectual, or mental disability or impairment

12.6 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

SROS is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all its employees and willingly accepts its responsibility to comply with safety legislation and ensure the safety of all people involved with our operations.

Safety hazards will be identified and where practicable eliminated, isolated, or minimised.

It is the responsibility of all employees to read SROS safety policies, to follow the procedures, to actively participating in job safety briefings, including annual SROS fire drills.

Divisions Managers must be aware of the responsibilities placed on them to ensure the safety of all officers under their care. These are explained in greater detail in the *SROS Occupational, Health & Safety Manual 2018*.

Managers must take all reasonable practical steps to provide a safe work environment, particularly with regard to:

- The handling, storage, use and disposal of chemicals and equipment.
- The provision of information, instruction, and training in safe working procedures.
- The monitoring of employees' health and workplace conditions, keeping appropriate records and providing access to appropriate medical, first aid and counselling services.

An employee must take all reasonable steps to promptly report any work accident or near miss to their Manager and have it recorded.

Accidents and injuries can be prevented. Employees are required to participate in the organisation's safety programmes and be responsible for knowing and following the health and safety rules applicable. SROS will provide adequate first aid facilities.

Laboratory clothing and equipment appropriate to the work conditions will also be provided which must be worn. All employees will be instructed in the proper use of protective equipment and failure to use such equipment will constitute serious misconduct. Such clothing and equipment remains the property of SROS.

13. External Interactions

If an employee's work at SROS requires them to interact with commercial clients, granting bodies, the media or to present the outcomes of their work in public or professional forums, then the following principles apply. These are necessary to protect the property, reputation, and integrity of SROS.

13.1 Managing official information

Staff members are not permitted to use or disclose official information without prior approval from their Division Manager or the CEO. Inadvertent disclosure of confidential information can damage prospects for commercialization of SROS's research results. The organization has specific protocols and procedures covering commercial and intellectual property dealings that are to be observed absolutely by all staff. Staff members may be aware of, or be entrusted with, business information that relates to customers or external organizations who/which expect, on both legal and ethical grounds, that this information will be protected. All staff members have an absolute duty of care to comply with those expectations and must make themselves aware of any agreements and expectations that relate to their research program or work area.

13.2 Publishing or making statements or commitments about official matters

Staff members are only permitted to make statements or commitments on behalf of SROS with the approval of their Division Manager and/or the CEO. If they wish to make a statement on official matters as a private citizen or representative of a particular group, they must declare this to their audience. It is most important that they make it clear that they are expressing opinions rather than stating facts, especially when their opinions are not shared by all professional colleagues. In making public comment, acting as an expert witness or in presenting or publishing work outcomes:

- Always obtain express permission for reproduction of figures, drawings, tables, and direct quotations to avoid copyright infringement or civil breaches.
- Give accurate and full reference to past scientific work to avoid potential defamation action.
- Acknowledge all substantial assistance or advice.
- Obtain written permission from SROS before entering into any publication contracts or disclosing any information which may be confidential or protected by commercial arrangements.
- Do not use the position as a SROS officer to add any credence to public statements they might make about non-SROS matters.

Staff members need to ensure that they have sought all relevant views and that they have access to all necessary information before committing the organisation to:

- SROS's official point of view.
- Commercial or contract negotiations that bind the organisation.
- Signing research or resourcing contracts.
- Exercising SROS's commercial or financial delegations.

14. Drugs and Alcohol

14.1 Drugs

The organisation policy is to maintain a drug-free workplace. The use of drugs is inconsistent with the behaviour expected of employees and undermines the organisation's ability to operate effectively and efficiently.

If an employee uses recreational drugs in the workplace, this subjects the employee to instant dismissal.

14.2 Alcohol on SROS premises

Unless prior permission is given by management, the consumption of alcohol on SROS premises is not permitted.

The consumption of alcohol while on duty, or working under the influence of alcohol, is unacceptable and staff contravening this restriction are liable to instant dismissal.

15. Non-Smoking Policy

SROS is a "smoke free" organisation and rigidly adheres to a "no smoking" policy.

The organisation also applies "a no smoking" policy in the work place. As a consequence, employees who wish to smoke may only do so in areas designated by management.

There is no "cigarette break" inherent in the conditions of employment and therefore employees wishing to smoke while on duty must seek leave from their immediate Supervisor or Division Manager.

16. Energy Conservation

Energy is a precious resource and any effort by staff to conserve it should be encouraged.

The switching off of air conditioning units after hours in areas where continued operation is not necessary and turning off office equipment and lighting are measures that will greatly assist in conserving energy and reducing costs. The co-ordination of effort to achieve these objectives rests within each division.

17. Care of Organisation Premises and Property

Unlawful removal of or wilful damage to SROS premises and property is a serious offence and may result in instant dismissal and/or criminal prosecution.

Any incident of this nature should be reported immediately to a Senior Officer and/or Division Manager for referral to the Administration and Finance Division.

18. Harassment

Harassment is defined as any form of behaviour that is unwanted, not asked for and not returned and may have the effect of causing someone offence, or that demeans, humiliates someone because of their race, sex, status and so on.

18.1 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment may be defined as unsolicited behaviour which an officer feels is personally offensive and unwelcome and which constitutes a physical or verbal affront of a sexual nature against him/her. It includes:

- Making an unwelcome sexual advance.
- Making an unwelcome request for sexual favours.
- Other unwelcome conduct or behaviour of a sexual nature - such as sexual language, or innuendo, offensive jokes, display of offensive or pornographic material, creation of a hostile or intimidating environment.

Sexual harassment is recognised as a form of sex discrimination and as such will not be condoned or tolerated within SROS. It may take many forms and may occur between co-employees or between a Senior Officer and an employee or between a Manager and a Senior Officer.

Sexual harassment does not refer to friendly repartee, light-hearted exchanges, or occasional compliments. It refers to behaviour which is not welcome, which is personally offensive and which from a management point of view can lower morale and interfere with work effectiveness.

It is important to note that a person's intention is irrelevant and the person who is offended need not be the one to whom the conduct is directed.

Anyone experiencing sexual harassment should, in the first instance, immediately make it clear to the person responsible that such behaviour is unwelcome and unacceptable. If the unacceptable behaviour continues the Officer should then seek the counsel of his/her immediate Senior Officer or Manager, as appropriate, within a reasonable time after its occurrence.

If preferred, a mature person, preferably of the same sex as the Officer, should also be present at the interview. Complaints of sexual harassment should be considered seriously and fairly while at the same time ensuring that privacy and confidentiality are protected.

Note: *Regardless of whether behaviour is unlawful or not, any behaviour that creates an offensive, uncomfortable or threatening work environment will not be tolerated. Counselling and disciplinary actions will be taken as necessary, which may include termination of employment, if appropriate.*

19. Counselling and Disciplinary Procedures

19.1 Staff discipline

The responsibility for staff discipline rests with Division Managers. In the event that suspension, removal of privileges, or termination is considered, prior consultation with the Manager Administration and Finance is necessary to:

- Comply with labour regulations.
- To ensure that a consistent policy is followed within SROS.

19.2 Counselling and warning processes

Where situations arise that warrant disciplinary action other than instant dismissal, for example, where an Officer is repeatedly late, Division Managers must follow a procedure whereby the Officer receives adequate warning that his/her actions will not be tolerated and that any future repetition will result in his/her employment being terminated by dismissal. In all cases please refer to the Administration and Finance Manager before following these procedures.

If the actions/behaviour are repeated within a specified time frame of the first offence documented below, grounds for dismissal have been established. In some situations, however, it may be appropriate to issue a second and final warning as stated in the process below. Managers must consult the Administration and Finance Manager before deciding on the appropriate step to take.

In the event that an employee provides evidence for consideration and/or in a case where it instant termination cannot be fully justified, the procedure set out below will apply.

19.2.1 Warning process

First offence: Counselling, verbal warning and document report

Subject to the severity of the offence, a further lapse within a specified period (agreed to by both parties) could lead to suspension.

Second offence: Written warning.

Subject to the severity of the offence, a further lapse within a specified period (agreed to by both parties) will lead to dismissal.

A further lapse within a specified period agreed to by both parties, subject to severity, will result in dismissal.

Third offence: Termination

The responsible Division Manager/Leader may recommend termination of staff for unsatisfactory performance, but before termination can be considered, the staff member is to be counselled and placed on probation for a period of not less than three months. At the conclusion of this period, a performance review and recommendation is made on the officer's continued employment in light of his/her performance during the probationary period. In all cases a written report is to be completed and signed by both parties concerned immediately following counselling of the staff member.

The responsible Division Manager/Leader provides full details of report/recommendation for termination to the CEO for endorsement in writing and also provides a copy for the office records.

19.2.2 Counselling process

The Administration and Finance Manager, as part of her/his usual duties, is available (by arrangement) to each officer for discussions on any work or personal problems that may confront officers during their service.

Personal matters discussed either orally or in writing will be treated confidentially if the officer so wishes, except for matters involving improper conduct.

As far as practicable, officers are expected to seek the counsel of their Division Leader before approaching the Administration and Finance Manager. Counselling interviews are to be documented and filed in the officer's personal records.

19.3 Serious misconduct

Serious misconduct is any type of act or conduct that damages the employment relationship to such an extent that continued employment is no longer viable, for example, theft. In such cases, dismissal without notice is the usual outcome although dismissal with notice is used in some instances.

Examples of serious misconduct include those outlined in Section 11

Suspension involves removal from duties and responsibilities, without actual termination of employment. It is not possible to list all circumstances under which this situation may arise, but in addition to performance related matters they may include the following:

- Dereliction/negligence of duty.
- Defalcations/misappropriation of funds.
- Fraudulent practices involving SROS and/or its customers.
- Occasions when strong circumstantial evidence implicates an officer in malpractice.
- Activities outside work evidently giving grounds for a criminal offence charge.
- Discrimination and harassment.

An officer will be suspended (on full pay) in these and other circumstances, pending further investigations, but without prejudice to the officer's future employment or service should suspicions be not proven. Before suspending an officer, he/she is to be informed of the reason for suspension, in the presence of a witness of the Manager's choosing and a witness of the officer's choosing. A dated record of the interview with the officer is to be made and signed by all parties present.

Suspension of an officer is a serious step and it is taken only after careful enquiry into the circumstances including close consultation with Manager Administration and Finance.

Dismissal may proceed on with or without notice basis, and in situations of serious misconduct, without suspension.

Managers must consult with the Manager Administration and Finance before taking or threatening any such action. Procedures are as described below.

19.3.1 Internal investigation procedure

Unless there are grounds why it shouldn't be done (for example, a conflict of interest or if the staff member is very unwell and cannot attend), the relevant Division Manager is to initiate a full investigation into all instances of misconduct, with the assistance of the Manager Administration and Finance.

Officers strongly suspected of misconduct must be interviewed in the presence of two witnesses, one of the Manager's choosing and one of the officer's choosing. An initial interview will generally be conducted by the Division Manager and Administration and Finance Manager to obtain a detailed account of the circumstances of the (suspected) malpractice or misconduct and the magnitude of any misappropriation, and to obtain an admission where possible.

The purpose of interviews is threefold:

- To question whether there are any other facts that the officer wishes to disclose.
- Where the malpractice is evident, to establish the willingness and ability of the officer (s) to make any necessary restitution.
- To ensure that maximum protection is afforded to the SROS by way of repayment/securities and so on in relation to amounts owing by the officer(s).



In normal course, cases of proven malpractice will result in instant dismissal (without notice or pay in lieu of notice) and the matter will be reported to the Police. Before taking such action, Managers must consult with Manager Administration & Finance and the CEO.

Withholding information regarding a malpractice could place SROS at risk in law. The amount involved is not a criterion; the extend of the defalcation initially revealed may increase by later revelations. At the conclusion of the interview a written report is to be made and signed by all parties present.

From the facts before them, an investigation panel (Manager AFD, Responsible Division Leader, Division Leader, and HR) must decide on and recommend the appropriate course of action to take, for CEO endorsement. This will either be:

- Suspension of the officer to further investigate the situation.
- Further investigation without suspension.
- Restitution where appropriate.
- Termination.
- No further action – staff cleared of misconduct.

If further investigation is warranted, the officer must be given the opportunity to respond to any further findings before a final decision is made.

If termination is the final course of action, this must be carried out by the CEO. It may not be carried out by any person who is not fully conversant with the facts of the case. The termination letter must be delivered to the officer involved in the event that the officer does not return to work.

19.3.2 Restitution / reimbursement

If the officer admits defalcation or malpractice, he/she and any other persons involved shall make appropriate restitution, he/she shall sign an authority for reimbursement. An example is shown below – additional clauses may be added as appropriate:

I hereby authorise the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) to apply all monies due to me in respect of salary, leave entitlements and long service leave entitlements towards amounts misappropriated/equivalent amount of damage and clearance of all debts/penalties owed by me to SROS. I further undertake to make full restitution of all funds misappropriated by me which are not satisfied from the abovementioned monies.

Witness..... Signature.....

Date..... Date.....

Ensure that the authority does not specify the amount for which the officer accepts responsibility.

Determine the likelihood of restitution in view of the particular circumstances.

19.4 Appeals

An employee terminated/dismissed by the organisation has the right to appeal. This must be done in writing and must be submitted directly to the Chairperson of the SROS Grievance Committee nominated by the SROS Board of Directors within 10 working days of termination.

20. Conflict Resolution and Grievance Committee

Management and the Board of Directors recognizes that complaints, grievances and disputes may occur within the organisation. It is also recognized that staff may need avenues to raise complaints with the organisation and/or its Board of Directors. Complaints will be handled fairly and efficiently in order to promote the transparency and credibility of the organisation's high standards and to maintain a positive environment.

20.1 General principles

All complaints and disputes will be addressed promptly and within the guiding principles of:

- Transparency
- Fairness
- Respect
- Accountability

Management and staff of the organisation are expected to work cooperatively as a team, to acknowledge any internal dispute at an early stage, and to resolve the dispute in the most constructive manner possible.

Any conflict of interest arising from the dispute will be declared and all necessary steps must be taken to ensure persons working to resolve a dispute are impartial. Members and staff are expected to maintain confidentiality in relation to complaints and disputes.

20.1 Procedures

The first point of reference for any internal staff complaint/grievance is to be referred to the CEO in writing after which the grievance/complaint will be collectively assessed by the Management Team for a resolution. The complaint must be made within 10 working days after experiencing the problem and addressed to the CEO as the chairperson of the management assessing team.

Within 5 working days after receiving the staff grievance/complaint, the CEO will respond in writing, acknowledging receipt of the staff grievance/complaint. Within the next 10 working days, the CEO will send a written notice with a resolution. The CEO may extend the time frame of the resolution process to 15 working days if the complaint/grievance justifies a need for additional information and the delay is in the staff's best interest.

- Notify the staff member about whom the complaint is being made and the nature of the complaint.
- Provide the staff member with the opportunity to respond to any issues raised.
- Notify the Management assessing team.
- Notify the parties involved of the resolution.

In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution outcome, he/she may appeal the decision and write directly to the Chairperson of the SROS Board of Directors who may nominate a Grievance Committee made up of members of the SROS Board of Directors. Members of the Grievance Committee shall be decided by the Board members in accordance with the nature of issues involved. The complaint must be in writing and addressed to the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee who will notify the staff member of a resolution within the next 15 working days.

Where a written complaint against a management member, including the CEO of the organisation, is received pertaining to the management and/or governance of the organisation, the complainant may write directly to the Chairperson of the SROS Board of Directors or nominated Grievance Committee Chairperson who will:

- Notify the management member about whom the complaint is being made and the nature of the complaint.
- Provide the management member with the opportunity to respond to any issues raised.
- Notify Grievance Committee members (if applicable).
- Mediate and facilitate meeting to resolve the matter.
- Board of Directors Chairperson or Chairperson of the Grievance Committee to report to the Board of Directors at its next meeting for a final decision.
- Notify the complainant and management member of resolution within 30 working days of receiving the complaint/grievance.

Other internal HR issues are to be dealt with in accordance with other relevant sections of the organisation's HRM Manual and individual staff employment contracts.

21. Personal Accident Insurance Cover

SROS will provide all its full time and casual staff members with a *Personal Accident Insurance Cover* with a reputable local insurance company for the duration of their employment contract. The insurance cover renews annually and generally protects staff from any work-related injury that occurs during normal working hours (9 a.m. – 5 p.m.) and overtime hours approved and signed by the CEO.

HR and Administration must work together with the responsible Manager/Leaders to ensure that any training or work-related trips to the rural areas or to other islands within Samoa must be documented and notify the relevant Insurance Company for cover.

22. Long-Service Leave

Contract employees below management level are entitled to long service leave depending on continuous years of service completed as follows:

Length of continuous service completed by employee.	Number of days per year on full pay.
10 years and above	7 days per year served.
15 years and above	8 days per year served.
20 years and above	9 days per year served.
25 years and above	10 days per year served.
30 years and above	11 days per year served.
35 years and above	12 days per year served.

All employees are to claim their long-service leave when reaching 10 years of continuous service within the organisation.

The years of service for employees who have been approved to attend long-term overseas study are to be on hold until they return to work for the organisation.

All SROS casual workers who have been officers since October 2013, 50% of their service as a wage worker will be counted for assessment of long service entitlement.

Payment of long-service leave will be subject to availability of funds seeking board endorsement for release of funds.

23. Cessation of Employment

23.1 End of 3-year term for contracted employees (CEO and ACEO level)

Where contracted employees complete serving their three-year term, they are entitled to:

- 30% of untaken sick leave
- Severance pay (eight days per year)

Where a contracted employee resigns from the service, they are required to provide a notice of resignation to the CEO in writing at least four weeks (1 calendar month) before the nominated effective date of resignation.

Their contract of employment will be used as a guideline for all other situations that arise, with the exception of resignation.

23.2 Resignation

All officers, other than casual employees, are required to provide a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice of resignation before the nominated effective date of resignation.

If an officer fails to give the requisite notice, SROS shall have the right to withhold moneys due to the officer to a maximum amount equal to the officer's salary for the period of notice.

Upon an officer giving their resignation, SROS may agree that the officer does not work throughout the whole notice period. If this is the case, SROS will pay the officer the balance of the two-week notice period only for the days worked.

Any period of annual leave or part thereof may be used to offset notice of resignation by the officer where mutually agreed between the officer and SROS.

23.3 Retirement age

Retirement from SROS service will be at the age of 55 years. By mutual agreement and formally stipulated in the employee's employment contract, an employee may continue in the service beyond the age of 55, provided a clear medical check-up is obtained from a medical practitioner nominated by SROS. The associated costs will be borne by SROS.

An employee can be medically cleared to work for SROS until the age of 60.

Once an employee has reached the age of 60, there can be no extension.

23.4 Early retirement

An employee shall be eligible to apply for early retirement if any of the following apply:

- Upon reaching the age of 50 years with a minimum of 10 years of service.
- At least 30 years continuous service.
- For health reasons, after a minimum of 10 years of service.

23.5 Retirement benefits

Upon retirement, an employee is entitled to and shall be paid the following benefits provided that the conditions for each entitlement are satisfied:

- Untaken long service leave.
- Untaken annual leave.
- 30% of untaken sick leave.

23.6 Death

The CEO may approve a cash payment payable to the deceased employee's spouse and/or dependents a sum equivalent to the following untaken leave entitlements that the deceased employee is entitled to upon death:

- Untaken long service leave.
- Untaken annual leave.
- 30% of untaken sick leave.
- Ex-gratia payment of six (6) months' salary.

The CEO may in addition to any payments, grant to a surviving spouse or dependents of a deceased employee (including Management), or partly to a surviving spouse and partly to dependents, an ex-gratia payment equivalent of up to six (6) months' salary or wages: -

- Where death occurred while the deceased employee was employed as a staff/casual employee.
- Within six (6) months after a staff/casual employee passed away.
- If death occurs as a result of injury suffered or an illness or disease contracted during the period that the deceased was so employed, **EXCEPT** where in the opinion of the CEO special circumstances exist, no payment shall be made where death results from misconduct on the part of the deceased employee.

23.6.1 Supporting documentation

Relevant documents required for assessment include:

- Death certificate of employee.
- Details of surviving legal spouse/dependents of the deceased employee.
- Personal file of deceased employee.

23.7 Termination

23.7.1 Summary dismissal (without notice)

The following are examples of the type of behaviour that constitutes serious misconduct warranting summary dismissal without notice. This list is not exhaustive.

- Misappropriation of the organisation's or customer's funds, and any acts of fraud, misappropriation or any form of theft or conversion, inside or outside of SROS.
- Seeking or accepting tips or gratuities from customers.
- Misuse and abuse of SROS telephones, including mobiles.
- Using or manipulating the organisation's systems and/or procedures for the employee's or another party's advantage.
- Falsification of SROS records, including attendance records.
- Deliberate and serious breaches of SROS procedures.
- Gross insubordination, neglect of duty, or disobedience in carrying out Manager's, Senior Officer's reasonable instructions

- Removing equipment or articles from workplace without proper authorisation.
- Unauthorised use of SROS vehicles.
- Being in possession of another employee's property without that employee's permission.
- Intimidation or persistent harassment of any employee and or customer.
- Sexual harassment.
- Using SROS equipment or services without proper authorisation.
- Accessing, down-loading, and/or storing material from inappropriate internet sites or sending or receiving inappropriate material via email.
- Wilful damage of SROS property.
- Assaulting any person on SROS premises during working hours.
- Reporting for work in such a condition of intoxication, through either alcohol or drugs, that the employee is unable to perform his or her duties properly or safely. At the time of the first offence the employee reported in such condition will be sent home. A second occurrence will constitute grounds for instant dismissal
- Consuming intoxication liquor on the SROS premises without management consent.
- Supplying or using drugs on the SROS premises, except those drugs prescribed by a registered medical practitioner for the employee's own use or non-prescribed items purchased from a pharmacy provided they are used as prescribed or directed.
- Possession of unlawful drugs (e.g. marijuana, ice, heroin etc) classified in the First and Second Schedule of the Narcotics Act 1967 either for use or supply, on or off the premises
- Irresponsible use of fire protection or safety equipment installed on the premises
- Breaches of security or confidentiality
- Behaviour that would bring dispute and bad reputation to SROS.

In all dismissal cases under this clause, the following procedure must be followed;

1. Specific information on the allegation of misconduct or poor performance will be provided to the employee together with advice of the likely consequences for the employee if the allegations are upheld.
2. A real opportunity will be given to the employee to explain or refute the allegation and this will be given full and unbiased consideration before any warning is given or dismissal effected.
3. In all cases, a written report is to be completed and signed by both parties concerned immediately
4. The staff member will be interviewed and the interview signed by all who were present at the interview, one of whom is a witness nominated by the staff member prior to the interview.

23.7.2 Dismissal with notice

An employee may be dismissed with notice if he/she fails to meet the requirements of the following:

- Standards of work performance
- Discipline
- Observance of rules
- Work attendance
- Conduct
- Engagement in extra marital affairs on SROS premises

23.8 Division Manager / Leader responsibilities regarding resignation / death / termination

Provide Administration and Finance Division with the following information:

- The reason for resignation, termination, early retirement
- The last day of employment with SROS
- Interview the employee and ensure the return of identification card, any organisation property (for example, keys, uniforms, cell phone, and so on). All items must be returned to the Administration and Finance Division with a covering letter.
- Ascertain whether employee has any outstanding monies owing to SROS, for example, staff social club account, telephone bills and so on, and then advise the employee that if they are dismissed or have their services terminated they must repay any outstanding debt in full by the end of employment.
- Have the employee sign a 'letter of authority' for SROS to direct any/all funds from his/her final pay towards clearance of any outstanding debts owed by the employee to SROS (liaise with Administration and Finance Division for authority format).

23.9 Final payment of salary

SROS will try to pay salary and other entitlements on date of termination of service, or as soon as possible afterward.

23.10 Certificate of Service

SROS does not give detailed written testimonials except in confidence direct from the Administration and Finance Division to a new employer, if requested. However, SROS through its Administration and Finance Division may issue a Certificate of Service in the following form:

Voluntary Resignation

This is to certify that (staff full name) of (residential address) was employed by the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa from .../.../.... to .../.../... when he/she resigned of his/her own accord.

Note: A Certificate of Service may not be issued before the effective date of the employee's resignation.

23.10.1 Request for Certificate of Service

Where requested by an employee whose service was terminated by SROS, the Administration and Finance Division Manager may issue a Certificate of Service in the following form:

This is to certify that (staff full name) of (residential address) was employed by the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) from/.../.... to .../.../....'.