

# International Technical Rescue Association (ITRA)

## Professional Code of Conduct

### Scope

The ITRA Professional Code of Conduct applies to its officers, directors, membership, volunteers, and staff whenever they are acting in any non-operational technical rescue, including training, consulting, public speaking or engaging with other members in connection with ITRA programs and activities.

### Code of Conduct

1. We agree that we shall act in accordance with the values established by the ITRA and which are expected of its officers, directors, volunteers, staff and members:
  - a. *Transparency:*
    - i. As officers, directors, staff and volunteers, we will fully and promptly disclose real and/or reasonably perceived conflicts of interest and to be honest in our ITRA related activities while endeavoring to preserve and protect information, data and documents made available to us that are and should be treated as private and confidential;
    - ii. As officers, directors, staff and volunteers, we will work to ensure that ITRA's membership are actively engaged and consulted on key matters related to the Association, its mission and membership;
    - iii. As officers, directors and volunteers of the ITRA we will engage in conduct that is consistent with the tax-exempt mission and purposes of the organization.
  - b. *Accountability and Safety:*
    - i. As leaders and members of the ITRA, we will respect the intellectual property rights of others and recognize that we are each accountable for our respective actions;
    - ii. We will comply with applicable local, state and national laws and regulations applicable to our profession within our respective countries;
    - iii. We will strive to at all times place safety above all other work-related priorities;
    - iv. We will endeavor to follow best practices as they evolve within the profession and to adhere to practices that are defensible by our peers and within our capabilities;
    - v. We accept and recognize the need to constantly challenge and improve upon our professional practices with safety being of the utmost concern;
    - vi. We will not permit our activities or those activities under our control to be conducted under or affected by the use of alcohol or drugs;
    - vii. We will strive to be proactive in sharing safety related lessons from accidents, near-misses and reviews;
    - viii. We agree to speak up where we know or have a good faith reason to believe that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct by a peer;
    - ix. We will act in a manner consistent with the tenets of this Code of Conduct when active in the public online environment;

c. *Work Together:*

- i. As leaders and members of the ITRA, we are committed to working collaboratively to advance the profession and those we serve in a respectful, fair, and constructive manner;
  - ii. We accept and encourage robust and truthful debate from time to time within the scope of ITRA's mission, meetings, activities and its governance;
  - iii. We will conduct ourselves in an inclusive manner both at the individual and organizational level and encourage diversity;
  - iv. We will conduct ourselves professionally, without discrimination or harassment and to provide a safe working and professional environment for others;
  - v. We will not tolerate unwanted behavior that may reasonably be deemed to offend, or be considered bullying, disrespectful, harassing or otherwise culturally inappropriate;
  - vi. We will strive to protect those who are vulnerable while in our care or under our supervision and to champion their rights.
2. We acknowledge and agree to accept the authority of the ITRA and its leadership to inquire and/or investigate alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct and to take disciplinary action to enforce the Code, where appropriate and necessary.
  3. We will at all times endeavor to act in a manner that is professional and which does not bring the ITRA or the profession into disrepute.

### **Procedures for Enforcement of the Professional Code of Conduct**

In the event a member of the ITRA observes what he or she reasonably and in good faith believes to be unprofessional or unethical conduct contrary to the tenets of the Professional Code of Conduct on the part of another ITRA member, he or she may submit a written complaint to the ITRA administrator. Such complaint must be made in good faith and include such facts, documents and supporting evidence as the complaining party may possess in order to fully state the complaint. The complaint must specify the nature and extent of the alleged unprofessional or unethical conduct and the specific provision(s) of the Code of Conduct that are alleged to have been violated. Such complaint may not be submitted anonymously and any complaint made with knowledge of its falsity, reckless disregard for the truth, intended to harass, or in bad faith shall be dismissed and may result in disciplinary action being undertaken against the complaining party. Such discipline may include, but is not limited to, censure, suspension or loss of membership.

#### **Procedures:**

- 1) A written complaint setting forth sufficient facts, details and documentation to support a claimed violation of the Professional Code of Conduct shall be submitted to the ITRA Administrator. Upon receipt of such complaint and supporting documentation, the Administrator shall open a file on the matter.
- 2) The Administrator shall refer the complaint and file to the Chair of the ITRA Board of Directors and the Chair of a Board appointed Ethics Committee for their determination as to whether the complaint sets forth sufficient facts and conduct as to reasonably constitute a violation of the Code of Professional Conduct. If such a determination is made, the Administrator shall be notified by the Board and Ethics Committee Chairs and a copy of the complaint and supporting documentation shall be provided to the party against whom the complaint is addressed.

- 3) The party who is the subject of the complaint shall have thirty (30) days to respond in writing and to request the opportunity to present his or her response to the Ethics Committee in-person or whether he or she will rely solely upon a written response. Such written response and request for a hearing shall be submitted to the ITRA Administrator and the Ethics Committee Chair. A copy of the response will also be provided by the ITRA Administrator to the complaining party.
- 4) Where a hearing before the Ethics Committee is requested in writing, it shall be scheduled and conducted without undue delay on a day and at a time mutually agreeable to the parties and the members of the Ethics Committee. Such hearing, where requested, may be conducted in-person, by telephone or video conference at the reasonable discretion of the Ethics Committee Chair. All hearing participants must be able to hear and be heard by all other participants simultaneously.
- 5) Within thirty (30) days following the completion of the hearing or where the matter is to be resolved solely on the written complaint and response, the Ethics Committee shall confer and review all evidence and submissions and render a finding. Such finding shall be in writing and shall be delivered to the ITRA Administrator, ITRA Board Chair and the complaining and responding parties. The finding will include, where appropriate, the sanctions to be imposed upon the party found to have violated the Code of Conduct.
- 6) The written finding of the Ethics Committee is subject to appeal to the ITRA Board of Directors, which shall consider the appeal solely on the papers submitted and without further hearing. The decision of the Board on the matter shall be final and binding upon all of the parties to the complaint. The Board may, in its reasonable discretion, sustain, overrule or alter the sanctions imposed by the Ethics Committee.