

Modern Slavery - Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Slaughter and May is a leading international law firm, providing an extensive range of legal services to a diverse range of clients. Slaughter and May Services Company (“SMSC”) is the in-house company which engages the firm’s staff.

The firm’s [Modern Slavery Statement](#), as required by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, describes the steps which the firm has taken during the financial year ended 30 April 2020 to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains, or in any part of its own business.

This statement covers the activities of SMSC during the financial year ended 30 April 2020 and explains how it seeks to ensure that all SMSC staff are treated fairly and with attention, courtesy, respect and consideration.

Business model

SMSC is ultimately wholly-owned by the partners of Slaughter and May. The company engages individuals to work for Slaughter and May and arranges the secondment of individuals to/from the firm. Its “turnover” is generated from associated administrative activities in relation to the payment of staff remuneration. SMSC has no real business, although it does have a small number of contracts with various companies that provide benefits to those working for Slaughter and May.

Our commitment

SMSC’s commitment to fair employment practices in relation to the individuals it engages is underpinned by the Slaughter and May [Code of Business Conduct](#). The standards in the Code are reflected in Slaughter and May’s policies and procedures and the firm endeavours to embed them in everything it does. In agreeing staff secondments to Slaughter and May, knowledge of the seconding firm and its business (including that it is regulated and/or committed to high ethical standards) is relied on.

With respect to its relationships with suppliers, SMSC follows the same approach as outlined in the Slaughter and May Modern Slavery Statement. We expect our suppliers to have fair employment practices and we ask them to sign our [Supplier Code of Business Conduct](#). Due diligence is also carried out on suppliers to assess whether to form, continue or renew a relationship with them.

Policies

A number of policies are in place that are designed to provide a fair, safe, supportive and dignified working environment for those engaged by SMSC. In particular, the firm expects all staff to treat others with respect and promotes equality and inclusion.

All staff are paid at market rates (and always in excess of the London Living Wage) and enhanced sick pay is offered to eligible employees. Where practical, steps are taken to allow staff to work on a basis that meets their personal needs as regards the number of hours of work in a week or the time of work. This includes (for eligible staff) the option of working from home on a regular basis.

We strongly encourage all staff to take each year one continuous period of holiday of not less than two weeks and to use their full holiday entitlement (which exceeds the statutory provisions). We aim to support those with childcare duties by offering various enhanced family leave policies.

Performance indicators

The firm has a dedicated Human Resources department which deals with employment and welfare issues. Members of HR work closely with heads of departments and groups within the firm to ensure staff issues are identified quickly and addressed in an appropriate way.

In 2017 we conducted a firm-wide employee survey, which gave us some valuable insight into how our staff value different aspects of the employee experience. Since the survey, the firm has introduced an on-site GP service and enhanced its leave offering.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the firm has regularly consulted staff through pulse surveys to understand how people are feeling and how that can be factored into the firm's way of working and transition back to the office.

UN Global Compact

In April 2019 the firm issued a letter of commitment to the United Nations, confirming that the firm supports the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. This support includes promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals, of which Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) is particularly pertinent to the issue of modern slavery.

In July 2020 the firm published its first [Communication on Progress](#) report as a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact. The report covers the firm's work with suppliers, its engagement with clients, its culture and how it supports employees, as well as its carbon reduction ambitions, its pro bono work and support of the community. The firm's supplier engagement, ethics and culture of integrity are central to ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in the firm's supply chains.

This statement has been approved by the board of directors of SMSC.

Paul Stacey, Executive Partner