

Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers

Anti money-laundering, terrorist financing and bribery policy

1. General policy

- 1.1** The directors of the Corporate Trustee of the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT) acknowledge the need to have policies and procedures in place to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and bribery which meet the requirements set out in the Terrorism Act 2000, Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, Bribery Act 2010 and Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017. This is done to honour God by showing obedience to the Charity Commission's expectation that all charity trustees need to be vigilant about the potential risks from terrorism and to ensure the proper use of charitable funds.
- 1.2** Our policy is to operate financial controls and, on a risk rated basis, to carry out other checks, sufficient to ensure that, as far as possible:
- The charity has reasonable knowledge and understanding of those providing funds to it and that those funds come from legitimate sources;
 - Grants or other payments of money made by the charity are transferred securely so as to reach the intended recipient;
 - The charity has reasonable knowledge and understanding of the character, nature, and work undertaken by the recipient organisation or individuals;
 - Grants provided by the charity have been used as directed and have not been diverted for use by terrorist organisations;
 - Grants and other payments made by the charity have not been used as bribes.
- 1.3** In constructing this policy the directors have paid due regard to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission. Directors are recommended to read the whole of the Charity Committee's guidance in this area.
- 1.4** The overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the directors of the Corporate Trustee of ACAT.

2. Donors and inflows

- 2.1** Using a risk rated approach, the charity takes reasonable steps to identify donors that provide unusual gifts; or donors that provide 'one-off' gifts or accumulated gifts in any one year that exceed £10,000.
- 2.2** Where relationships are strong and long-standing, these checks will be largely informal unless there are circumstances identified that cause sufficient concern to warrant more formal checks. More formal checks will be required for new and developing relationships.
- 2.3** Where formal checks are implemented these are intended to:
- Identify the donor;
 - Identify the source of funds from which the donation originated.
- 2.4** In cases where suspicions of money laundering or terrorist financing are identified, these should be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in section 4 of this policy.

3. Grants and outflows

3.1 ACAT rarely issues payments that constitute grants or donations. On those occasions where this occurs, ACAT implements financial controls sufficient to ensure that grants and other outflows of funds reach their intended recipients. Specifically this means that:

- Grants are generally made by transfer of funds from the charity's bank accounts directly to the bank account of the recipient;
- Where the recipient is an organisation, the bank account of the recipient will be in the name of that organisation rather than an individual. Where the bank account is not in the name of the organisation, proper enquiries should be made to confirm that the trustees of the recipient organisation:
 - have authorised the use of that account, and
 - have in place robust mechanisms for ensuring that all the funds paid into the account are received by the ultimate recipient with deductions that are no more than reasonable in the circumstances to cover the administrative cost of handling the onward transmission of funds.
- Where transfers can't be made, cheques will be used, made payable to an organisation rather than an individual, unless following procedures as above;
- Grants and other transfers will only be made in cash of any currency in extreme or unusual circumstances and only with the knowledge and consent of the directors.

3.2 Using a risk rated approach, the charity takes reasonable steps to identify and understand the nature of the work carried out by all recipients. The charity adopts a more formal approach for individual recipients or recipient organisations:

- Where relationships are less well developed;
- That operate in regions of the world where regulation is less well developed and are known to be more susceptible to corruption;
- That operate in conflict zones or known terrorist hotspots;
- Where recipients fall under the definition provided by the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 of politically exposed persons (PEP);
- Where the governing structure of the recipient has recently changed;
- Where the emphasis of the work undertaken by the recipient has recently changed.

3.3 Formal identification of recipients may include:

- The use of independent and reliable source material including:
 - Documents issued by, or evidence obtained from government departments;
 - Documents issued by, or evidence obtained from registering authorities or agencies;
 - Photographic identification, where the image can be compared to the likeness of recipient in person;
 - Database services such as those provided by Experian and similar organisations.

- Other research including:
 - Personal commendation;
 - Internet research;
 - Face-to-face visits;
 - Third party due diligence.

3.4 In cases where suspicions of money laundering or terrorist financing are identified, these should be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in section 4 of this policy.

3.5 ACAT will take reasonable steps to ensure the recipient of the grant understands the intended purpose of the grant and the limits of the use of the funds. This will include making it clear that none of the funds granted will be used for actions which fund terrorism or bribery.

3.6 Using a risk rated approach, the charity will take reasonable steps to ensure that the grant provided has been used in the way that was intended and that it has not been diverted towards terrorist organisations or for terrorist activities. Such reassurance may take the form of:

- Confirmation from a senior member of the recipient organisation that the grant has been used as intended;
- Receipts evidencing that grants have been used as expected;
- A written analysis of where the funds have been spent;
- Other means of research.

3.7 ACAT has a zero-tolerance policy to bribery. Where the charity identifies or has reasonable suspicion that payments have been used for the purposes of bribery it will with immediate effect stop sending further payments, until suitable assurances can be provided that further grants will not be used for bribery.

4. Reporting suspicions

4.1 Any volunteer or member of staff that has become aware or has reasonable suspicions of transactions that might constitute money laundering or terrorist financing or believes that grants have been used as bribes should report these to one of the directors.

A criminal offence may be committed where a person makes an unlawful disclosure which is likely to prejudice a money laundering investigation. For this reason reasonable suspicions should not be discussed with persons that do not need to know. In most cases, this will mean disclosure should be limited to reporting to the director.

4.2 In cases where the directors are satisfied that the transactions do constitute money laundering or terrorist financing or that the suspicions are well founded, a serious incident report will be made to the Charity Commission and a report shall also be made to the Police. Whilst it is recognised that the charity is not operating in the regulated sector, it may have an obligation to submit a SAR and the directors will take appropriate legal advice to be provided in writing to identify any such reporting obligations.

5. Staff training

- 5.1** The directors will provide suitable and relevant training to its staff and volunteers that may be impacted by these issues to ensure that they understand this policy and are made aware of changes and developments in the law that impact onto their responsibilities.

6. Adoption of this policy

- 6.1** The directors of the Corporate Trustee of the Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT) formally accepted this policy at the board meeting held on 24 February 2025.
- 6.2** Approved for publication at the Board meeting of 15 September 2025.

Livia Velicu

Chair