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## **Live Union Communication on Progress – Prepared by Steve Eakins**

**Period Covered: October 31<sup>st</sup> 2014 – October 31<sup>st</sup> 2015**

### **1.0 Company Mission:**

At Live Union our mission is to help complex organisations engage employees and other stakeholders through live events, that change minds and behaviours. And, by innovating event formats and technologies we find new ways to help our clients maximise the value of their live event programme.

### **2.0 Overview of the Company:**

Live Union was established in 2008. Currently trading from offices in Central London and employing 12 members of staff, Live Union strive to create events that change minds and behaviours, spark ideas and leave lasting memories.

As a company Live Union designs event formats that put employees or customers at the heart of the content - as technology opens up exciting new dimensions for events, Live Union help clients engage virtual audiences and implement event apps.

The above approach sees Live Union developing conferences, road shows, exhibitions and experiential campaigns for clients including: EDF Energy, Oracle, AXA IM, Amnesty International, Unite Students, VISA Europe and the Post Office.

[www.liveunion.co.uk](http://www.liveunion.co.uk)

### **3.0 Statement of continued support from the Managing Director:**

*“As a business participant of the Global Compact, I hereby state that Live Union reaffirms its support and will continue to make an ongoing commitment to integrate the initiative and ten principles into our working strategies and operations. I also commit to meeting local legal requirements and international standards.*

*In this, our second annual Communication on Progress (COP), we describe the practical actions taken towards implementing and measuring the four issue areas (human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption) into our business.*

*Furthermore, we issue a plan of how we strive to continue and improve upon this in future years ahead”.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Steve Eakins  
Managing Director.*

#### **4.0 Description of Practical Actions**

Live Union continually embrace, support and enact the 10 principles underpinned by the 4 core values of the UNGC. Below provides detail on how Live Union have made progress in implementing these principles and strive towards meeting the UN development goals.

#### **4.1 Human Rights**

- *Principle 1:* Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- *Principle 2:* make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

##### Assessment, Policy and Goals

Live Union actively support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Upon employment each individual is presented with a contract, which provides direction to the Staff Handbook and Company Policies document - This document covers relevant information on our equal opportunities and non-harassment policy.

As part of the nature of the business we occasionally work with overseas stakeholders, however, we will not carry out business with any companies or countries which do not adhere to fair human rights.

To assess the risks and for the safety of all on-site crew Live Union will always carry out a Health and Safety Risk Assessment which is sent round prior to the start of on-site arrival.

With regards to the day to day office working environment all necessary procedures are in place with regards to facilities provided being safe and sanitary, meeting all basic human needs. Live Union provides all staff with safe drinking water and a fridge for clean and sanitary food storage and eating.

3 employees are First Aid trained should an emergency arise and it is clear to all staff where the first aid kits and fire extinguishes/escapes are located. As part of our ISO14001 management system all staff have to sign a questionnaire to prove they have understood the health and safety risks and courses of action within the office environment e.g. where to meet in case of a fire.

Within each employee's contract they are informed of The Working Time Regulations 1998, which ensures they do not work more than an average of 48 hours per week. If staff do have to work at a weekend for example they will be issued with a day in lieu to ensure they are given reasonable rest periods.

All employees receive at least the minimum wage. This is agreed prior to employment in the contract and also reiterated in the Staff Handbook.

All employees are paid holiday leave, sick leave and parental leave in accordance with international minimum standards.



Live Union will continue to support and protect internationally proclaimed human rights and make sure we are not complicit in human rights abuses. Live Union will not tolerate harassment, discrimination or victimisation under any circumstance.

All employees are over 16 years old therefore Live Union does not focus on implementing Children's rights to its policies.

#### Implementation

Being a reasonably small company it is easy for Live Union to communicate with employees, therefore can effectively keep on top of supporting and protecting their human rights. Live Union's working environment is extremely open so should any employees feel their rights are even slightly in danger of being breached they have the opportunity to communicate this with higher management, via email, phone or face-to-face.

Should a concern be raised the MD will take immediate action. Firstly, they will fully understand what the issue is and resolve internally – should this escalate further, subsequent external help will be sought. Following this, awareness to the rest of the team will be raised to ensure the same issue is not repeated.

#### Measurement of Outcomes

At this current moment in time Live Union monitors and evaluates performance with a bi-annual review policy for all employees. This regular review period enables employees to address any human rights issues or concerns they may have.

Despite the company increasing its workforce, to date, no issues have ever been raised, therefore Live Union are satisfied with the policies and working environment currently in place.

## **4.2 Labour**

- *Principle 3:* Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- *Principle 4:* the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- *Principle 5:* the effective abolition of child labour; and
- *Principle 6:* the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

#### Assessment, Policy and Goals

Live Union supports the International Labour Organisation's fundamental conventions – All employees are made aware that any forms of forced or compulsory labour are not supported. Live Union believe in the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. All employees have individual contracts of employment therefore are fully aware of the employment terms and conditionals.

As previously mentioned in Section 3.1 of this report Live Union does not condone any forms of child labour or human trafficking. Due to the nature of the business Live Union have not yet had to deal with any issues of this kind - If this was to become apparent Live Union would cease the partnership altogether.



Live Union are fully aware of the Disability Discrimination Act and understand that employees with disabilities share the same general employment rights as other workers. Should a member of the Live Union team become disabled or were to employ an individual with a disability, it would become the managements duty to make reasonable adjustments to employment arrangements or the workplace itself.

Live Union ensures it does not withhold wages and pays them in a timely and regular manner – it will never make deductions from wages for disciplinary measures of other deductions not authorized by national law.

With regards to direct or indirect discrimination Live Union will never advertise a job referencing discriminatory criteria such as race, gender or age. Likewise, Live Union ensures job applicants are not asked to give information about their marital status, pregnancy, intent to have children or similar information which may lead to discriminatory hiring decisions.

#### Implementation

A comprehensive job description is communicated ensuring employees are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, before signing the agreement prior to employment. Employees have the right to leave the company and their contract outlines clear requirements related to this resignation from employment.

As well as bi-annual reviews Live Union assesses the workload of all employees on a weekly basis to ensure tasks are equally weighted between roles.

Through the policies implemented Live Union keep labour risks to a minimum, however if violations were to be made apparent action would be taken. Employees are encouraged to speak with the senior members of the team if they feel overworked or treated unfairly.

#### Measurement of Outcomes

Live Union has not been involved in any investigations, legal cases or other relevant events related to contravention of the Global Compact Labour principles.

Live Union work with regular suppliers therefore have strong working relationships. This enables Live Union to be clear on the requirements and to communicate clearly their expected, reasonable working hours and welfare facilities. If violations of this occur Live Union would deal with the matter internally at a first point of call, should it escalate external help would be sought.

The Live Union team consists of a variety of demographics and is open to a range of ages, ethnicities and genders.

### **4.3 Environment**

- *Principle 7:* Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- *Principle 8:* undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- *Principle 9:* encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

#### Assessment, Policy and Goals

Live Union understands that its day-to-day activities impact on the environment in both positive and negative ways. Being the organisers of live events Live Union recognise that their responsibility to produce events that impact in the most positive way and the further responsibility of informing clients of every green opportunity available for their events.

Live Union started business with an aim to minimise the harmful environmental effects whenever possible. Being a small company ran on low overheads enables Live Union to offer a premium service with minimum effect on the environment. Live Union will continuously monitor and improve their Environmental Management System to ensure all events organised are as environmentally friendly as possible.

As part of the ISO 14001 certification Live Union produced the following Environmental Policy:

#### Environmental Policy

1. Our organisation is committed to providing a quality service in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy workplace for our employees, and minimises our potential impact on the environment.
2. Recognises that we have social responsibilities that go beyond the provisions of the relevant Acts and Regulations, and that we should support and contribute protecting the environment through all aspects of our work and practices. In so doing we will operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and we will strive to use pollution prevention and environmental best practices in all we do.
3. Will promote environmental awareness among our employees and encourage them to work in an environmentally responsible manner as well as train, educate and inform our employees about environmental issues that may affect their work.
4. Will take positive steps to ensure that we promote the following and actively encourage the following principles to our employees, customers and suppliers

In particular, we will:

- Comply with all relevant existing environmental legislation and other requirements
- Reduce harmful emissions wherever possible
- Seek to reduce consumption of materials in our operations and promote recycling and the use of recycled materials
- Manage energy and water usage wisely in all our operations
- Incorporate environmental considerations into the procurement of goods and services
- Inform our clients of the best environmental solutions.

To achieve these we will:



- Allocate sufficient management resources to ensure effective implementation of the environmental policy
- Motivate and educate our employees to conduct their activities in an environmentally responsible manner e.g (print documents only when necessary, recycle, use public transport or cycle. etc)
- Use the most environmental laptops available
- Strive to find and use new environmentally friendly technology, e.g. (solar panels, LED lighting, bio fuels, composting toilets)
- Strive to use materials from sustainable sources and materials that can be recycled (e.g. Timber, fabrics, metals, plastics etc)
- Always aim to use local suppliers to reduce transport miles
- Review our policy on a regular basis to take account of new developments in environmental management and legislation
- Perform periodic audits of our activities to ensure compliance with company commitments, legislation and policy requirements.

Live Union recognises that the effective implementation of the policy represents an opportunity to improve the performance of the company by reducing environmental risks and impacts, and increasing the efficiency of the operations.

Live Union are ISO 14001 certified and all employees and strong believers and contributors to the procedures in place, to ensure the business is as environmentally friendly as possible. Live Union's Environmental Policy and Action Plan consists of the following objectives and targets:

- Staff travel
- Use of paper
- Use of electricity
- Waste disposal
- Purchasing of office consumables
- Purchasing of office equipment
- Staff travel (onsite)
- Equipment (onsite).

The office has a Smart Meter installed which allows staff to monitor the electricity usage and CO2 emissions.

As Live Union operate from a rented building the water usage is difficult to measure, however staff are encouraged to turn taps off fully, only fill the kettle as much as they need to and restrict water consumption when washing up in the kitchen.

Live Union will continue to comply with ISO 14001 regulations and everything stated above. It has recently been announced that this policy will be updated so appropriate actions will be taken to transition into the most recent ISO 14001:2015 standard. Live Union will also strive to seek other opportunities they are currently not doing and integrate these into their Environmental Policy.

#### Implementation

Regular audits carried out by the Environmental Committee, which consists of 3 members of staff, ensure the team are constantly monitored – if performance slips the team will communicate this back and encourage better behaviour. Annual

assessments are also a mandatory requirement with ISO 14001, therefore concrete actions are taken throughout the year in work towards this certificate.

There are a number of promotions used to educate and inform staff of environmental issues and updates in the Environmental Management System. Promotions noted in the latest audit were:

- Signage around the office reminding staff to be aware of turning off all electronics when they are not in use, think before they print, recycle and close windows to keep heat in
- Review meeting minutes available for all staff to read on the shared drive
- E-mails reminding the team of the policy are periodically sent out
- Staff handbook details the Environmental Policy and Environmental Management System.

The following Opportunities for Improvement were suggested as a results of Live Union's ISO 14001 Surveillance Audit:

- A top ten supplier list needs to be created taking into account their environmental credentials and service provision
- Add legal information to the Aspects/Impacts Matrix
- The Management Review agenda should follow the prescribed points within the standard more closely
- The Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan need to be updated to take into account chemical and ink spillages
- A template to document six monthly testing of the Emergency Preparedness and Response needs to be created
- COSHH sheets need to be created to list the cleaning products held at the site and the printer inks used
- Add more detail to the audit form.

These are all currently in progress and will continue to use as guidance moving forward in the following year.

#### Measurement of Outcomes

Live Union passed their ISO 14001:2004 Surveillance Audit 18/03/2015.

Live Union has not had any reportable environmental incidents within the last year and has not been subject to any statutory notices or prosecutions. If incidents were to arise Live Union would deal with the matter internally at a first point of call, should it escalate external help would be sought.

#### **4.4 Anti-Corruption**

- *Principle 10:* Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

#### Assessment, Policy and Goals

Live Union acts in a transparent manner and has in place policies and procedures designed to prevent corruption. Live Union complies with the Bribery Act and all relevant laws – it does not participate or tolerate any corruption, bribery or extortion.





In addition to this, Live Union supports the UN Convention Against Corruption and does not operate in countries or with organisations who are corrupt. All employees must comply within this policy.

#### Implementation

Regular internal and external auditing of financial accounts ensures Live Union's expectations in relation to corporate governance are maintained. The three Directors of the business have regular meetings to ensure they are constantly aware of the latest laws and to keep the business running against risk of corruption.

All staff are aware they can communicate with any of the three Directors should they become concerned for the welfare or operations of the business.

Should any issues arise, Live Union would seek legal advice and deal with them immediately.

#### Measurement of Outcomes

Live Union had not been involved in any legal cases, rulings or other events related to corruption or bribery.

### **5.0 Management**

In addition to last years COP a Management section has been added to the document – This was a section which was highlighted on the Global Compact Self Assessment Tool and it was deemed a crucial section to address as it is an important part of our business which drives all the principals and puts them into practice.

The company complies with all relevant regulation on issues covered by the Global Compact principles in the UK – the primary country in which it operates. Live Union have measures in place which ensure that it is aware of current and new legislative requirements relevant to its activities and services.

Furthermore, Live Union always strive to respect relevant international standards, conventions and agreements.

With regards to assessing risk, opportunity and impact Live Union work with their clients to ensure these are identified before an event is produced. Live Union will always engage stakeholders to identify significant issues and reduce the risk of any impacts where necessary. For example, if a country is corrupt Live Union will not host an event in that location.

Impacts are addressed at regular intervals: prior to a new activity or relationship; prior to major decisions or changes in the operation (e.g. market entry, product launch, policy change, or wider changes to the business); in response to or anticipation of changes in the operating environment (e.g. rising social tensions); and periodically throughout the life of an activity or relationship.

Live Union will always ensure that all information on the potential impacts of its business operations are shared and accessible to potentially impacted individuals or communities.



Live Union use RFP and procurement processes to promote issues covered by the Global Compact principles to suppliers and business partners. Procurement processes usually see them going into detail on various elements such as pricing structures, delivery times and working practices. Live Union continually work with suppliers and business partners to implement continuous improvements and build strong working relationships. Progress is communicated when contracts are up for renewal, to keep up to date with expectations.

## **6.0 Next Year**

Going forward Live Union plan to continue the support and effort engrained in the company, which are based on the Global Compacts 10 principles.

To help Live Union improve and report progress they will continue to speak with more stakeholders of the business. This will give an even wider perspective on the business.

In addition to making an ongoing commitment to integrate the ten principles into Live Union's working strategies and operations, we will continue to offer our consultancy on how to make the most effective use of events in support of the UN Global Compact Network UK Chapter and its members and supporters. This in the past has seen us contribute to running and producing events for the Working Group on Sustainable Agriculture. As well as this we make an annual financial contribution towards the programme as a gesture of good will.

**If you have any concerns over what is written in this report or would like to speak with a member of the Live Union team please contact:**

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