

Policy 3200

Member Conduct Policy

Approved April 29, 2012



marine technology
SOCIETY

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1 PURPOSE

This policy is intended to provide guidance for the MTS Board of Directors (Board) in dealing with an “errant individual“, that is an individual whose behaviors are destructive or detrimental to other MTS members, MTS staff, or the normal conduct of MTS business

The key elements of this policy are:

1. an overall definition of behaviors that are construed as destructive or detrimental to other MTS members, MTS staff, or the normal conduct of MTS business;
2. a process by which a complaint about the “errant individual” can be vetted;
3. the process of appointing the appropriate MTS leaders to investigate the complaint and counsel the “errant individual” if the complaint is found to have merit;
4. a check list of counseling activities;
5. and prescribed outcomes.

2 DEFINITION OF “ERRANT INDIVIDUAL”

An individual whose behaviors are destructive or detrimental to other MTS members or MTS staff in matters related to MTS activities, or the normal conduct of MTS business:

1. verbally or physically threatening, aggressive, angry or hostile;
2. perceived as harassment;
3. in direct violation of MTS approved policy; or
4. in direct violation of MTS Bylaws.

3 VETTING A COMPLAINT

All complaints shall be presented in writing to the President unless the complaint is regarding the President, in which case it shall go directly to the Immediate Past President. The officer receiving the complaint shall inform, in writing, the subject of the complaint that a complaint has been made and will be investigated by a counseling committee as prescribed in MTS Policy 3200.

4 APPOINTING A COUNSELING COMMITTEE

An ad-hoc counseling committee consisting of a minimum of two (2) counselors shall be appointed by the President or Immediate Past President on a case by case basis, according to the guidelines provided below. Whenever possible, the two counselors should be in close geographic proximity to the “errant individual,” allowing for face-to-face meetings.

1. If the “errant individual” is in a leadership position at the local section level, one of the counselors shall be the Vice President (VP), Section affairs.
2. If the “errant individual” is in a leadership position at the professional committee level, one of the counselors shall be an appropriate VP.
3. If the “errant individual” is in a leadership position at the Board of Directors level, the President shall be the lead counselor and shall appoint a second counselor. If the President is the “errant individual,” the Immediate Past President shall be the lead counselor and shall appoint a second counselor.
4. If the “errant individual” is in an appointed or elected leadership position, the appointer shall be the lead counselor and shall appoint a second counselor, with approval by the MTS President.
5. If the “errant individual” is on an appointed committee, the committee chair shall be the lead counselor and shall appoint a second counselor, with approval by the MTS President.
6. If the “errant individual” is the Executive Director, the President shall be the lead counselor and shall appoint a second counselor, preferably the Immediate Past President.
7. If the “errant individual” is a member in good standing only, the President shall appoint two counselors.

5 COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Counselors shall:

1. accept, review and investigate complaints by MTS members or staff;
2. conduct appropriate counseling if the complaint is found to have merit;
3. document all counseling sessions and forward the documentation to Headquarters for safekeeping; and
4. present the outcome of counseling and make recommendations to the Board regarding further required action.

6 COUNSELING PROCEDURES

Counseling should be done in a face to face meeting. When this is impossible, it should be conducted by phone. At no time shall counseling be done electronically.

Counseling shall be done by a minimum of two appointed counselors. At no time shall only one person counsel an “errant individual” or have a one-on-one dialogue or confrontation.

7 PRESCRIBED OUTCOMES

1. The “errant individual” understands the complaint and accepts the resolution. Behaviors are corrected.
2. The “errant individual” does not accept the complaint or its resolution. The “errant individual” is removed from any leadership or volunteer position with the approval of the Board of Directors. The individual may appeal to the Board, in writing, within thirty (30) days of receiving written notification of the Board’s decision to take such action.
3. Under extreme conditions, the “errant individual’s” membership may be revoked. This action shall be conducted in strict compliance with the Society’s Bylaws.

8 CONFIDENTIALITY

All MTS members and staff must exercise care not to disclose any confidential information acquired in connection with the status or conduct of the complaint, and counseling. At all times, all members of the Board of Directors and all involved committee or section members shall respect the confidentiality of the complaint, the committee or section, and the members involved. All related documents shall be kept in a confidential file at Headquarters as prescribed by law.

A person who has made a complaint shall not participate in, nor be permitted to hear, the Board’s discussion of the matter except to disclose material facts and to respond to questions. Such person shall not attempt to exert his or her personal influence with respect to the matter, either at or outside the meeting of the Board.