

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: A respectful workplace
Date: 22 November 2022 16:49:04
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sharing for awareness the message below, which I've just sent out to all EA diversity network leads and executive sponsors.

Kind regards



From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 November 2022 13:31

Cc: EDI Mailbox <EDI.Mailbox@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Chief Executive Office <Chief.Executive@environment-agency.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Curtin, John <john.curtin@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Hunt, Lucy <lucy.hunt@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Lawton, Nicola <nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Sutton, Rob <rob.sutton@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Douglass, Caroline <caroline.douglass@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Leyland, John <john.leyland@environment-agency.gov.uk>

Subject: A respectful workplace

Dear Network Leads and Network Executive Sponsors

You may be aware that a new cross-government diversity network launched recently called SEEN (Sex Equality and Equity Network). SEEN is in early stages of its development and will focus on the protected characteristic of sex, and equality between men and women, from the perspective of what are often termed 'gender critical beliefs'. The new network, which EA staff may join if they wish to, has been set up with the guidance and support of the Civil Service Inclusive Practice Team (a list of other cross-government networks is available [here](#)). SEEN announced its existence on Yammer two weeks ago.

Gender critical beliefs were recently tested by the Employment Appeal Tribunal and was found to be a Protected Belief under the Equality Act 2010. We recognise the right of all groups of staff who share a protected belief to form networks. We are committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive working environment for all our staff. This includes valuing difference and diversity of thought. It is crucial we are an inclusive organisation and representative of all the communities we serve; each of you play a vital role in this.

Please be assured that I understand this is a highly emotive subject for many of you. Our position is clear. There is no place for harassment, bullying or hatred in the workplace and it is therefore important that everyone is careful about how they express their beliefs. We will not tolerate bullying or harassment of our trans colleagues, and neither will we tolerate bullying and harassment of colleagues who share the protected characteristic of holding gender critical beliefs. We are all entitled to our own perspective and beliefs. When it comes to our workplace, we expect everyone to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times. We need to ensure our workplace is a safe place for all our colleagues; our focus is how we can support our people to do this whilst sharing differing views.

Unfortunately over the past two weeks we have seen an escalation of inappropriate and disrespectful engagement on Yammer, some of which has directly related to SEEN. The wellbeing of all staff remains our top priority. Recent developments surrounding these issues have caused distress on all sides, and we are working behind the scenes to support those affected. A range activities are taking place, including the ongoing moderation of

Yammer posts. If you feel you're not getting the support you need, please speak with your line manager in the first instance; I am also very keen to hear from you how things are feeling and to help address any questions you have.

Defra recently published new Principles for Communication, which Network Leads were able to comment on during our weekly drop-in on 1 November: [Spotlight on respectful communication: Respect at Work Week | Defra Intranet](#). These principles make clear that all communications must be respectful, professional, and appropriate for the workplace. The Environment Agency will be publishing our guidelines on Easinet this week, as part of comms celebrating Respect at Work week. They are already available on our EDI Sharepoint site here [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Employee Networks - Principles of Communication EA Nov 2022-Final.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

There is also an All Company post from [REDACTED], Defra Group HR Director, [here](#), which outlined the expected behaviour on Yammer.

In the coming weeks, [REDACTED] and I will be arranging discussions, starting with some Executive Sponsors, to further explore how we can ensure our ways of working avoid harm and/or escalation of conflict.

I appreciate this is a challenging and complex topic, which feels personal for many of you. If you do have any questions or concerns please contact me. I outlined the above at our Network Lead's weekly drop-in session last week and I am happy to do this again at a future session if this would be helpful.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Manager – [REDACTED]

People & Change – Strategy, Planning & People – Chief Operating Officer's Directorate

Mobile: [REDACTED]

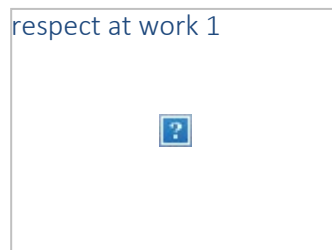
Email: [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk

Location: Brampton, Cambridgeshire (home based)

Please note I work a flexible schedule, with longer hours Mon-Thurs and shorter Fridays (details in my Outlook calendar / out of office message)

Pronouns: [REDACTED] ([why is this here?](#))

[REDACTED] small



How to pronounce my name
([phonetic spelling](#))
[Why is this here?](#)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

