ICS E-mail, Forum and Data Protection Policy

This purpose of this document is to describe the acceptable and unacceptable, but not limited to, use of the ICS e-mail and forum systems. This document also outlines the correct use of the ICS membership database and making contact with other ICS members in relation to Data Protection. In the appendix to this document general e-mail etiquette is outline. All ICS members are encouraged to read and follow these guidelines.

This document is referenced in the ICS Code of Conduct of which all ICS members and staff must adhere to. There will also be periodic review of this document and, if necessary, amendment from time to time. This will be necessary with regard to the expected development of the systems, the operational use of the systems and generally recognised best practice.

Use of email by employees and ICS officials is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the goals and objectives of the business.

Unacceptable E-mail behaviour
- Mass-mailing or spamming the ICS membership by individual members. Spam can be defined as "the mass electronic distribution of unsolicited email to individual email accounts".
- Forwarding of confidential ICS messages to external parties or locations
- Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that might be considered discriminatory, offensive or abusive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered as harassment
- Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that might be considered indecent, pornographic, obscene or illegal
- Accessing copyrighted information in a way that violates the copyright
- Broadcasting unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious or other non-business related matters
- Transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material
- Undertaking deliberate activities that waste staff or ICS officials' effort or networked resources
- Breaking into the company's or another organisation's system or unauthorised use of a password/mailbox
- Introducing any form of computer virus or malware into the corporate network
- Use of company communications systems to set up personal businesses or send chain letters

Full ICS E-mail Policy

All emails and any files transmitted with it by the ICS Trustees, committee and working group members and staff are confidential, may be subject to copyright and are intended solely for the use of the person to whom they are addressed. Any opinions expressed by an individual within the email are those of that individual unless otherwise stated and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ICS. Internet communications including emails cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error free. While ICS has taken steps to control the spread of viruses on its systems it cannot guarantee that an email (including any attachments) is free of any virus or other harmful matter and accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from the recipient receiving, opening or using it.

Forum Use
The following guidelines should be adhered to when posting feedback on the ICS forum

- The guidelines for e-mail etiquette (see appendix) apply when posting feedback on ICS forums
- Avoid posting extremely long forum posts on a regular basis
- Read all of the posts in the thread before posting on the internet forum.
- Avoid derogatory remarks about fellow forum participants
- Be civil at all times
- Keep in mind there will always be differences of opinion. Try to remain objective and to not personalise issues.
- Stay on topic
- Report any abusive forum posts to the ICS office

The ICS office has the right to remove any inappropriate forum posts without referral to the individual and may suspend the forum.

Data Protection

ICS members need to provide their contact details via the ICS website to secure their journal subscription and also so that the ICS office can make contact with them. ICS members have the ability to search for other ICS members to make contact with. All ICS members have the option to make their details private to other ICS members.

It is unacceptable to use ICS member contact details for unsolicited mail as described in this document. Contact is made for professional reasons only. Any canvassing e-mails in relation to ICS elections should come via the ICS office. Use of the ICS database for individual e-mail canvassing is unacceptable.

The ICS office never allows third party access to the ICS database with the exception of the ICS permanent congress organiser (PCO). The PCO is also bound by the same data protection rules and will never release the database to a third party unless the member has provided their consent upon registration of the annual meeting.

ICS Privacy Policy

The full policy can be found here: https://www.ics.org/contact/privacy

ICS statement on Copyright

Please access this here: https://www.ics.org/contact/copyright

Sanctions

Where it is believed that an ICS member has failed to comply with this policy, they will face ICS disciplinary procedure as outlined in the ICS Bylaws.

Appendix

ICS E-mail etiquette guidelines
- Never write in CAPITALS – this comes across as aggressive. Save capitals for emphasis on individual words only.
- Keep ICS e-mails to black Arial size 11 font (or equivalent, e.g. Calibri)
- Avoid over use of punctuation and emoticons
- If you bold your type, know you are bolding your statement and it will be taken that way by the other side
- Use proper structure and layout

- Type in complete sentences. To type random phrases or cryptic thoughts does not lend to clear communication.
- Use cc field sparingly - Overuse can cause your emails to be ignored and bother recipients with unnecessary communications
- Avoid overuse of URGENT and IMPORTANT and of the high priority option. Try to use only when really needed.
- When replying to a bcc mail do not reply to all – there was a reason for you being bcc'd
- Refrain from using the reply to all feature to give your opinion to those who may not be interested. In most cases replying to the sender alone is your best course of action.
- Do not copy a message or attachment or forward without permission – this could be a copyright infringement
- When forwarding a mail be careful about previous communication within the mail which may not be suitable for the individual
- Limit use of e-mails that simply say "Thanks" Or "OK"
- When there is a misunderstanding by email, don't hesitate to pick up the old fashioned telephone to work things out