

# WhatsApp Usage Policy

## Introduction & Scope

This policy sets out the NAO position on the use of WhatsApp for personal use on an NAO device and the use of WhatsApp to carry out NAO work or business transactions on a user's personal device.

## Audience

All NAO employees.

## Use of WhatsApp on an NAO device

It is expected that NAO systems and hardware are only used for business conducted by this organisation using NAO approved software.

Any business transaction or work for the NAO must be conducted on a NAO system especially with the generation and managing of records or information.

The use of WhatsApp for personal or business use on an NAO device is therefore prohibited, except for the exceptions outlined below.

## Use of WhatsApp on a personal device

WhatsApp should only be used for informal communication when other NAO channels cannot be used at the time (such as due to access issues) and should not be used for the creation, storage or sharing of corporate records or information including information created or generated as part of an Audit. Where informal conversations lead to a decision relating to the NAO or our work, this should be documented via usual NAO channels.

There are no restrictions on the use of WhatsApp messaging for informal conversations on personal devices, between colleagues who have opted to join a group and share their telephone number. A definition of "Informal" with examples would always be incomplete, but an informal conversation would not include any sensitive or confidential NAO content and would not be damaging to the NAO were it to be made public.

Informal Conversations should under no circumstances happen on NAO devices, when used through the NAO WhatsApp web interface as we will have no visibility as to what data is exchanged.

Where WhatsApp is used by teams informally it is essential that all staff members participating have given explicit consent for their personal mobile numbers to be shared.

## Exceptions for use of WhatsApp

Where exceptions are agreed for using WhatsApp, e.g. with external partners, on a personal device, any content shared must be managed within the in-line of the NAO security, records and information management policies. Both of these exceptions apply to the use of WhatsApp on an NAO device or only personal devices.

WhatsApp will be permitted for use on an NAO device:

- in the event of a Business Continuity activity
- in support of work with The Public Accounts Committee.

For queries relating to this policy please direct them to our [Info Sec team](#).

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