

Guideline on worker access to identity documents

Context

The retention of migrant workers' identity documents, such as passports and work permits, can be considered an indicator of forced labour if workers are unable to access them at their discretion and if they feel they cannot leave employment without risking the loss of the documents.

Withholding identity documents of migrant workers may:

- Limit workers' freedom of movement
- Indicate a lack of consent to employment
- Inhibit workers' ability to obtain another job should they want to do so
- In some cases, even limit workers' access to social or health care services to which they might be entitled.

Requirements

Woodside and its suppliers, contractors and their respective personnel are prohibited from withholding the identity or personal documents of its migrant workforce during their term of employment.

If a migrant worker freely requests that personal documents be held for safekeeping, this must be conducted in line with the requirements below:

- Storage of identity documents in any secure location is voluntary
- The employer can either provide:
 - a secure lock box for each worker to store and freely access their identity documents or
 - a communal secure location to store multiple identity documents that is managed by a worker representative, or independent third party elected by the workforce
- A clear, concise and well-communicated procedure for the expedient retrieval of documents is in place
- Individual workers must sign a consent form that clearly describes the procedure in a language they understand
- Copies of the personal document(s), the consent form and procedure for retrieval must be provided to individuals
- Access to workers' documents is unrestricted and can be done in a timely manner (no more than 24 hours) when requested, in line with the retrieval procedure
- No fees or deposits, threats or coercive tactics for storage or retrieval are levied against the workforce or individuals