

# Risk Highlight Report

Prepared by: Employee Relations Specialist, People Operations ♦ Northbridge Advisory Partners Date: 2026-04-07 Review Period: Q4 2025 ♦ Q1 2026 Cases Assessed: 4 Classification: Internal Confidential ♦ Restrict Access

## Case ER-2026-014 ♦ Grievance: Management Absence

### Compliance Risks

Risk	Policy Reference	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Probation review not completed within required timeframe	Performance Management Policy S3.1 ♦ annual review and milestone obligations	High	No documented onboarding plan or probation review in HRIS; Associate Consultant joined August 2025, 6-month review due February 2026 (Case File ER-2026-014, Notes)	Schedule overdue probation review within 10 working days; document gap in case file
Grievance investigation timeline at risk	Grievance Policy S2.3 ♦ investigation within 15 working days	Medium	Formal grievance filed 2026-01-22; investigation has not concluded as of 2026-04-07 (Case File ER-2026-014, Chronology)	Expedite investigation and schedule grievance hearing; document reasons for delay

### Practical Risks

Risk	Impact Area	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Ongoing absence of structured supervision for Associate Consultant	Employee retention, deliverable quality	High	"I have not had a single structured check-in with the Practice Head" (Grievance Statement, 2026-01-22); calendar review shows 68% travel days Nov-Jan (Case Note, 2026-02-14)	Assign interim supervisor or require documented check-in cadence pending grievance outcome
Pattern risk: same Practice Head involved in Case ER-2026-019	Management credibility, team confidence	High	Case ER-2026-014 (management absence) and Case ER-2026-019 (procedural non-compliance) both name the Practice Head, Risk & Compliance Advisory	Assess combined pattern of management concerns; brief HR Director on cross-case implications
Engagement survey correlation	Employee morale, further grievances	Medium	HR17 Engagement Risk Flag #5 ♦ Management Effectiveness score 58% in Risk & Compliance Advisory (-14 pts vs firm avg); Flag #6 ♦ onboarding quality failure; anonymous survey comment RC-FT-07 references "cancelled check-ins"	Document engagement flag correlation in case file per Escalation & Severity Criteria trigger

### Overall Case Risk Rating

- **Rating:** High
- **Basis:** Formal grievance involving a senior leader (Practice Head), compounded by procedural gaps (missing probation review, overdue investigation timeline), and corroborated by engagement survey data.

## Case ER-2026-017 ♦ Workplace Conflict: Post-Acquisition Integration

### Compliance Risks

Risk	Policy Reference	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Early intervention obligation potentially unmet	Workplace Conflict Resolution Policy S5.2 ♦ managers must address conflict promptly	High	Practice Head responded "You are both experienced. Work it out between yourselves" on 2026-01-14 (Email on file); no further action until formal case opened 2026-02-11	Review whether Practice Head response meets S5.2 standard; document finding
Mediation not offered despite policy requirement	Workplace Conflict Resolution Policy S5.3 ♦ mediation should be offered when early intervention fails	Medium	No mediation offered as of case date (Case File ER-2026-017, Notes); conflict has persisted since December 2025	Offer mediation to both parties; document acceptance or refusal

### Practical Risks

Risk	Impact Area	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Project delivery delay	Client revenue, team productivity	High	Project timeline 3 weeks behind original schedule (Case File ER-2026-017, Notes)	Coordinate with Practice Head on project recovery plan independent of ER case resolution
Team morale deterioration	Staff retention, team cohesion	High	Anonymous hotline report: "The tension between the two leads is affecting team morale. People are starting to pick sides." (Ethics hotline, 2026-02-04)	Address team morale in parallel with case resolution; consider team communication from Practice Head
Engagement survey correlation	Cultural integration, further attrition	Medium	HR17 Engagement Risk Flag #4 ♦ post-acquisition cultural fragmentation; Culture & Belonging score 65% in Data & AI Advisory; exit theme #5 cited fragmentation	Document engagement flag correlation in case file

### Overall Case Risk Rating

- **Rating:** High
- **Basis:** Multi-party workplace conflict linked to post-acquisition integration failure, with documented business impact (project delay), morale deterioration (hotline report), and insufficient early intervention by the Practice Head.

## Case ER-2026-019 ♦ Performance: Procedural Non-Compliance

### Compliance Risks

Risk	Policy Reference	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
PIP initiated without completing required pre-PIP steps	Performance Management Policy S3.2 ♦ documented verbal feedback, formal discussion, and improvement period required before PIP	High	Practice Head confirmed "No formal feedback conversations have taken place. I assumed the issues were obvious." (Email, 2026-02-18); none of three required S3.2 steps completed	Void the unauthorised PIP communication; restart performance management process from S3.2 step 1
PIP communicated without Employee Relations Specialist approval	Performance Management Policy S3.4 ♦ written approval from Employee Relations Specialist required before any PIP communication	High	Practice Head informed Consultant of PIP via Teams on 2026-03-10 without consulting Employee Relations Specialist (Screenshot on file)	Document S3.4 breach; brief HR Director; clarify PIP status with Consultant
Evidence gap between last satisfactory review and performance concern	Performance Management Policy S3.1 ♦ reviews must include capability assessment	Medium	"Meets Expectations" rating on 2025-10-15 with no development actions; performance concern raised 2026-01-20 ♦ no documented deterioration in between (HRIS extract; Email on file)	Investigate what changed between October 2025 and January 2026; document timeline

### Practical Risks

Risk	Impact Area	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Consultant may believe they are on a formal PIP when no valid PIP exists	Employee trust, legal exposure	High	Teams message screenshot shows Practice Head informed Consultant of PIP on 2026-03-10 (Case File ER-2026-019, Chronology)	Clarify PIP status with Consultant as a matter of urgency; Employee Relations Specialist to conduct the conversation
Pattern risk: same Practice Head involved in Case ER-2026-014	Management capability, organisational risk	High	Two cases in the same quarter involving the same Practice Head ♦ one grievance (management absence) and one procedural non-compliance (PIP process)	Escalate combined pattern to HR Director for assessment of management support needs
Consultant has not been heard	Fairness, potential counter-grievance	Medium	"The Consultant has not been given the opportunity to provide their account" (Case File ER-2026-019, Notes)	Schedule meeting with Consultant to hear their perspective before any further action

### Overall Case Risk Rating

- **Rating:** High
- **Basis:** Multiple documented breaches of the Performance Management Policy (S3.2 and S3.4), compounded by an unauthorised PIP communication creating immediate remediation urgency and the cross-case pattern with the same Practice Head.

## Case ER-2026-021 ♦ Grievance: Pay Inequity

### Compliance Risks

Risk	Policy Reference	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Pay gap exceeds stated equity commitment	Equal Pay & Compensation Equity S6.1 ♦ comparable compensation for substantially similar work at same grade	High	Grievant at P32, comparator at P58 of market range; 18% gap confirmed by HR Business Partner (Case Notes, 2026-03-11); Compensation Analyst extract confirms \$98,500 vs \$116,200 (Benchmarking extract, 2026-03-25)	Conduct formal pay equity review per S6.2 within 20-working-day timeline
Salary protection terms lack operational transition procedure	Equal Pay & Compensation Equity S6.3 ♦ protected terms must have defined expiry and disclosed rationale	Medium	"Meridian salary protection clause expires at the next annual review cycle (July 2026) but there is no documented process for what happens after expiry" (Benchmarking Note, 2026-03-25)	Develop and document salary protection transition procedure before July 2026 review cycle
Salary protection terms not disclosed to affected employees	Equal Pay & Compensation Equity S6.3 ♦ rationale must be disclosed to HR Director	Medium	"Meridian acquisition salary protection terms were agreed by the HR Director in October 2025 but have not been communicated to non-Meridian employees" (Case File ER-2026-021, Notes)	Review disclosure obligations under S6.3; determine whether broader communication is required

### Practical Risks

Risk	Impact Area	Severity	Evidence Citation	Recommended Action
Wider pay equity exposure in Data & AI Advisory	Compensation fairness, retention	High	"Data & AI Advisory practice has the widest internal pay spread at this grade level" (Benchmarking Note); firm-wide compensation benchmark gap 14% vs 5% target	Commission practice-wide pay equity analysis before July 2026 review cycle
Engagement survey correlation	Retention risk, further grievances	High	HR17 Engagement Risk Flag #1 ♦ compensation competitiveness gap in Data & AI Advisory rated Critical; survey compensation score 49%; exit theme #1 cited 22% market gap	Document engagement flag correlation; assess whether other employees in Data & AI are similarly affected
Reputational risk if pay inequity patterns become visible to wider workforce	Employer brand, trust	Medium	Grievant discovered discrepancy informally; no formal audit conducted post-acquisition (Case File ER-2026-021, Notes)	Proactive firm-wide pay equity audit recommended to identify and address gaps before further informal discovery

### Overall Case Risk Rating

- **Rating:** High
- **Basis:** Confirmed 18% pay gap for substantially similar work at the same grade, with structural causes (acquisition salary protection without transition plan), corroborated by Critical engagement risk flag, and potential for wider practice-level exposure.