

Helpline Calls and Incident Reports

The Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics and the Health Care Compliance Association
April 2014

OBJECTIVE:

The survey was conducted in order to determine if increased attention paid to whistleblowing has led to the increased reporting of incidents. The survey also explored the trustworthiness of anonymous reports.

METHODS USED:

A total of 677 Responses were collected during April 2014 from compliance and ethics professionals in the database of the Health Care Compliance Association and the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics. The responses were collected and analyzed using SurveyMonkey.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Although 51% reported that the volume of calls to their helplines has remained the same over the last two years, there does appear to be a trend towards more reporting.
 - For publicly traded companies, 56% reported an increase in reporting.
- 58% reported that incident reporting directly to supervisors has increased even more so than through helplines.
- Only 6% of respondents reported an increase in claims against the company. 58% reported that they stayed about the same.
- 39% reported that anonymous reports were substantiated at about the same rate as non-anonymous reports. However, 35% reported that the substantiation rate was higher for those who gave their names when reporting.
- Fears of a stampede of whistleblowers reporting to the government appear to be overblown. Data indicates that companies are not experiencing a dramatic spike in qui tam lawsuits.

CONCLUSION:

- Employees are reported to have grown more likely to come forward and raise concerns both through whistleblower helplines and directly to management and/or compliance officers.
- Increase in calls to the helpline is not always a sign of trouble. It is indicative of greater awareness of the helpline and increased trust in the compliance department.
- It will be critical for organizations to respond effectively to increased reports of wrongdoing in order to prevent employees from losing faith in the employers and turning to outsiders such as the government and qui tam attorneys.

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