The Evolving Role of the Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer

Objective:
This survey’s objective was to assess the impact that external forces have had on the compliance office, and the job protection that is being afforded to the compliance officer.

Methodology:
This survey of compliance and ethics professionals in the database of the Health Care Compliance Association and the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics was conducted in September and October of 2010.

Key Findings:
- Compliance officers have little protection when it comes to severance, with 71% of respondents reporting that they had no severance package
- 54% of respondents from publicly traded companies reported having a severance package, compared with 25% at non-profits and 30% at privately-held organizations
- 26% of respondents reported that compliance was housed in the general counsel's office
- 93% of companies that run compliance out of the general counsel's office plan on continuing to do so
- 83% of respondents who said that compliance is not part of the general counsel's office said that it never had been
- Only one half of publicly traded companies reported that compliance had never been a part of the general counsel's office

Conclusion:
While some progress is being made, more compliance and ethics professionals need severance packages to act in a truly independent manner and act without fear of retaliation. Despite several indications that the US Government is not pleased with compliance officers reporting to the general counsel, there is little movement to change the organizational structure.

Full Report