Objective:
The objective of this supplemental analysis of the National Business Ethics Survey (NBES) was to help determine factors related to reporting rates within companies and to help determine actions that could be taken to increase employee reporting.

Methods:
The NBES is conducted biennially via telephone questionnaire. In 2009, the survey had 3010 respondents, of which 158 were removed due to being government employees, since the survey was attempting to survey only employees of for-profit businesses, for a revised total of 2852 respondents. Calls were made to randomly sampled residential households within the contiguous 48 states.

To be eligible for participation in the 2009 survey, respondents had to be:
- Eighteen years of age or older;
- Currently employed;
- Working for a company that employs at least two people; and
- Working at least 20 hours per week for their primary employer.

Results of the survey were weighted based on gender and age, according to statistics obtained from the 2000 U.S. Census data. Only 12% of all non-demographic questions had a difference of two or more percentage points between un-weighted and weighted results.

Key Findings:
- Women are more likely to report observed misconduct than men (66% vs 60% in 2009), and this trend has been consistent since NBES began in 1994
- Non-union workers are more likely to report than union workers (65% vs 55%)
- Managers tend to report more frequently than do non-managers (67% vs 58%), though the gap has been closing fairly steadily for the past several years
- Reporting rates are lower in foreign-owned companies with U.S. operations than in U.S. domestic companies
- Reporting rates are similar at privately-held and publicly-traded companies
- A very small percentage (3%) of reports are made to the hotline
- Most reports are made to management (75%)
- Reporting to direct supervisors increases in more positive cultures
- Reporting to higher management increases in less positive cultures and ones in which pressure is higher
Employees with stricter personal standards of workplace conduct are more likely to report than those who find questionable behaviors (such as personal internet use and dating a coworker) acceptable.

Reporting is higher among employees who own stock than among those who do not (72% vs 60%).

When an ethics and compliance program includes a useful code and meaningful training, as demonstrated by employees’ willingness to consult standards and their feeling prepared to address difficult situations, reporting rates are significantly higher.

Top management culture is related to the biggest increase in reporting.

**Conclusion:**

The report recommends that training geared towards increasing reporting is aimed at middle managers and first line supervisors, as they are among the groups that are not very likely to report (relative to higher level managers). This same group is also very likely to receive reports from lower level employees, and should be trained in how to effectively manage those reports and in behavior around their receipt.

Also recommended are frequent training sessions and revisions of the employee code of conduct that make adjustments for the types of situations likely to be faced by different levels and functions within the company. Make the goal of these sessions to make employees aware of their importance within the company as reporters of misconduct.

Finally, it is crucial that top management set a culture of ethics that will impact the whole company. As the “tone at the top” is a critical element of overall workplace ethical behavior, it will help improve all areas of company ethics, including reporting rates.

[Full Report]