Post Event Report
Whistle Blowing: A Pillar of Sound Corporate Governance

Date: 29 January 2019
Location: Shangri-La Hotel, Dubai, UAE

Programme Overview

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Anti-Corruption Best Practices

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Building communities and resources to encourage the implementation of better integrity and transparency practices in the Gulf Region.

Programme partner:

SIEMENS
Ingenuity for life

Activities:

- **Gulf Integrity Indicator** – A tool that provides a comprehensive, yet straightforward framework for companies to measure their performance relative to international benchmarks and regional best practices.

- **Collective Action Community** – Convene roundtable events across the Gulf Region sharing and promoting best practice integrity systems and policies within organisations.

- **Student Case study Competition** – Hold a student Case Study Competition for University business students in the Gulf Region to submit Case Studies of corporate good practices in accountability and transparency.

Event Overview

Whistleblowing and corporate governance are closely linked; in an open and transparent corporate environment where policies on wrongdoing and whistleblowing are well defined and communicated, it is easier to prevent, monitor and detect malpractice, reducing the risk of any incidents that may be potentially disastrous for a business.

The objective of the roundtable was to bring senior executives together to engage in discussions and share ideas, experiences and knowledge on the practical implementation of whistleblowing measures within organisations.

Key topics of discussion were:

- A starting guide to implement a whistleblowing programme for an organisation in the Gulf Region.

- Areas for consideration when implementing a successful whistleblowing programme and the challenges that can be expected during implementation.

- Awareness of whistleblowing programmes and promotion of protection mechanisms available to whistleblowers.

Key Information

Number of Attendees: 20 Attendees

Profile of Attendees: Senior Executives from Compliance, Legal, Audit, Governance and Finance.

Attendee Feedback*:

- Event quality – Excellent

- Content and networking – Excellent

*Data captured through attendee feedback
  forms

Panellists

Amine Antari, Managing Director, Kroll, UAE

Amine Antari is a Managing Director in Kroll's Intelligence and Investigations practice and Head of the Dubai office covering the Middle East. Amine has extensive experience working with multinational companies, financial institutions, and consulting firms in the Middle East, North Africa and North America. He has particular expertise in investigations and internal audit, with a strong knowledge of international regulatory requirements (e.g., UK Bribery Act, Foreign Corrupt Practices Act) as well as obligations with monitorship and debarments. Over his career, Amine has assisted diverse financial institutions, governmental agencies, development organizations, manufacturing and engineering companies with their fraud and corruption investigations, fraud and corruption risk assessments and internal audit initiatives.

Mahmoud M. Selim, Legal Director, Pinsent Masons, UAE

Mahmoud is a former investigations magistrate, and is admitted to practice law in Egypt, Dubai and the Dubai International Financial Centre. As an attorney, Mahmoud advises local, regional and international clients in matters relating to legislative drafting, investigations, corporate governance, employment, dispute management, conflict of laws, fraud, combating corruption, sanctions, asset tracing, compliance, risk management, regulatory enforcement proceedings, extradition and international judicial cooperation. Mahmoud regularly appears on regional television and on the radio as a commentator on legal developments in the Arab World. Mahmoud is also frequently invited as a keynote speaker on the laws and regulations of the Middle East.

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Roundtable Discussion

The roundtable discussion covered the following topic areas:

- Standard whistleblowing best practices and programme setups within organisations, with process examples.

- Effective tools and methods of assessing whistleblower allegations and assigning a priority level for them.

- How a region's cultural landscape shapes its whistleblower policies, and how organisations can actively be sensitive to the effects, especially in the Region.

- The importance of securing trust by introducing whistleblower exercises that encourages employees with information to speak up, thus highlighting established routes for anonymous disclosure.

Roundtable Discussion

"It is important to understand the culture within organisations to implement effective external and internal reporting mechanisms."
Mahmoud Selim, Pinsent Masons

The more extensive and established whistleblowing policies that organisations have in place, the more employees are encouraged to report violations.
Amine Antari, Kroll

A well-established escalation process is essential for companies to handle whistleblowing-related reporting.
Amine Antari, Kroll

Closing Remarks

The closing remarks for the seminar were delivered by Carla Koffel, Executive Director, the Pearl Initiative. Ms. Koffel introduced the Gulf Integrity Indicator as a tool to review internal integrity policies within an organisation and highlighted the value it can bring to organisations.

Ms. Koffel concluded by thanking Amine Antari and Mahmoud Selim for sharing their experiences and expertise on the topic.

On-Site Impressions

Appendices

Appendix 1: About Siemens Integrity Initiative

The Anti-Corruption Best Practices Programme has been developed in an effort to influence the mindset and behaviour of business leaders and students across the Gulf Region. This is achieved through education, incentivisation and by further building a local community that is developing and sharing good integrity practices.

As part of this programme, the Pearl Initiative has developed the Gulf Integrity Indicator ("GII"), a tool designed to promote and improve business integrity practices amongst Private Sector organisations operating in the Gulf Region. It provides a comprehensive, yet straightforward framework for companies to measure their current performance relative to international benchmarks and regional leading practices.
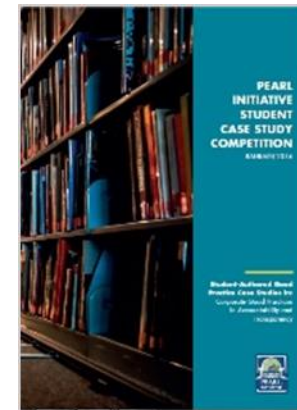
Appendix 2: Event Agenda

09:30am – 10:00am Registration: Coffee & Tea

10:00am – 11:30am Panel Discussion

An overview of the whistleblowing policies implemented in the Gulf Region and shed light on how a truly effective whistleblowing programme is achieved.

Insights from the speaker's experience and expertise on implementation of integrity best practices.

11:30am– 12:00pm Audience Q&A with the panelists

12:00pm Coffee & Networking

Appendix 3: Pre-Event Coverage
Social Media Coverage

A comprehensive social media campaign using the following posts was rolled out for two months the Pearl Initiative on our social media accounts.

Appendix 4: Post-Event Coverage
Press Release

[Saudi Gazette](#) Press Release (31 January, 2019)

Released by the Pearl Initiative