



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

Programme partner:



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

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.

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

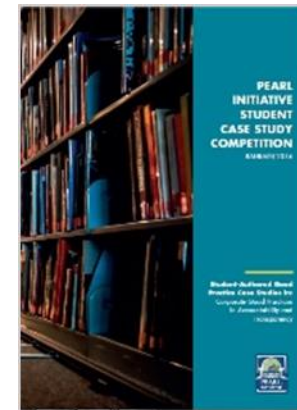


Appendices

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.

Whistleblowing: A Pillar to Sound Corporate Governance

RSVP TODAY !

Join our speakers at an upcoming roundtable to discuss the implementation of whistleblowing mechanisms

Shangri-La Hotel
Dubai

29 January
2019

9:30 AM to
12:00 PM

Amine Antari, Managing Director, Kroll
Mahmoud Selim, Legal Director, Pinsent Masons

Whistleblowing: A Pillar to Sound Corporate Governance

On average, a typical organisation lose 5% of its revenues to fraud each year. Whistleblowers are twice as likely to expose frauds in private companies than professional auditors.

RSVP Today!

Shangri-La Hotel
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29 January
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Whistleblowing: A Pillar to Sound Corporate Governance

AMINE ANTARI
Managing Director, Kroll

MAHMOUD SELIM
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الإبلاغ عن المخالفات: إحدى ركائز الحوكمة المؤسسية الرشيدة

احجز مقعدك الآن!

انضم إلى متحدثينا لمناقشة كيفية تنفيذ آليات الإبلاغ عن المخالفات (أو ما يعرف بنفخ الصافرة)

فندق شانغريلا دبي

٢٩ يناير ٢٠١٩

٩:٣٠ صباحاً - ١٢:٠٠ ظهراً

أمين عنتري، العضو المنتدب، كرويل
محمود سليم، مدير الشؤون القانونية، بينسنت ماسونز

الإبلاغ عن المخالفات: إحدى ركائز الحوكمة المؤسسية الرشيدة

في المتوسط، تتعرض المؤسسات إلى خسارة ٥% من إيراداتها بسبب حالات الاحتيال كل سنة، تزيد احتمالية الكشف عن الاحتيال عبر الإبلاغ عن المخالفات (نفخ الصافرة) داخل الشركات الخاصة بمعدل الضعف مقارنة بشركات التدقيق المتخصصة.

احجز مقعدك الآن!

فندق شانغريلا دبي

٢٩ يناير ٢٠١٩

٩:٣٠ صباحاً - ١٢:٠٠ ظهراً

الإبلاغ عن المخالفات: إحدى ركائز الحوكمة المؤسسية الرشيدة

أمين عنتري، العضو المنتدب، كرويل

محمود سليم، مدير الشؤون القانونية، بينسنت ماسونز

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٢٩ يناير ٢٠١٩

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Appendix 4: Post-Event Coverage

Press Release

Whistleblowing pillar of business transparency and success: Forum

RIHA – Pearl Initiative, a foundation for non-profit organizations promoting a corporate culture of transparency and integrity, held a significant event on Thursday evening titled “Whistleblowing: A Pillar of Sound Corporate Governance.” The event, held at the Strategic Hotel, Dubai, featured reports from Presenters Hassan and Khalid.

Over 40 participants, including senior professional and industry leaders from a number of public and private companies in the UAE and the region, took the opportunity to reflect on current practices, valid the importance and how new ways in which to do so are necessary practices.

A leading objective of the evening was to help participants understand whistleblowing and its role in the public sector in preventing waste, corruption, fraud, and abuse.

Amr Amer, Managing Director, Kroll visited off the continent as he provided the attendees with a brief background of his experience with whistleblowing programs and highlighted the role of studies of a particular whistleblowing program.

Mahmoud Selim, Legal Director, PwC also discussed the importance of whistleblowing and why educating people about whistleblowing programs and their responsibilities are key to success. “The biggest issue with whistleblowing is it is not widely understood. Most know about it as necessary on the internet, but that’s not what it is. It’s the role of a whistleblower,” Selim said.

Amer added to Selim’s point about the lack of public knowledge about whistleblowing and mentioned a need for a “change in the culture” surrounding whistleblowing.

Selim and Amer spoke about best practices and policies they have seen in practice that sup-



port the prevention of corruption while encouraging an open and honest business environment.

Selim talked about whistleblowers as an “invisible, essential” element for combating fraud and corruption with it being recommended a 2017 report by Kroll that identified key chal-

lenges to implementing a whistleblowing program. The priorities about right on how these can be addressed by offering key public-ly to complete several potential pitfalls.

Selim further said, “No company is immune from an occurrence of some form and legal consequences in the UAE and across the

region, especially in the financial sector. These new provisions are not only reinforcing the transparency in being professional and private institutions, but also protecting the liabilities and reputational risks of millions of staff members operating in large-scale and multi-state private business across the Gulf Region.”

Nasser Omer, Executive Director of the Pearl Initiative, said, “Whistleblowing mechanisms not only offer a platform for business stakeholders to report genuine concerns, but also create an authentic source of information that helps management identify issues in a proactive that it may otherwise be unable to detect.”

Amer closed the panel by reminding the room why safeguarding whistleblowers benefits everyone. “Whistleblowing is a key method of detecting fraud, corruption and employee wrongdoing. It is imperative that organizations protect this valuable resource. The whistleblowers.”

The evening part of the Pearl Initiative’s Anti-Corruption Best Practices program, supported by the Siemens Integrity Institute, it aligns with the organization’s mission to promote a corporate culture of accountability and transparency as a key driver of success across the Gulf Region.

The Pearl Initiative has developed the Gulf Integrity Institute as a free tool to ensure ongoing practices within an organization, and best overall reports reports available for access on the Pearl Initiative’s Integrity Center, in Arabic and English on the website. www.pearlinitiative.com has also ongoing policies and initiatives.

The Pearl Initiative has confirmed that they will be holding similar events in the future across the Gulf Region to provide greater awareness the opportunity for business about integrity practices in business.

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

Released by the Pearl Initiative