



Minimizing risk of illegal business activity

How we developed a specification to help businesses introduce or assess their anti-bribery management system

Challenge

Under the Bribery Act 2010, businesses must prevent their employees and representatives from committing bribery on their behalf. Serious legal consequences can be avoided if the business can prove it has an adequate anti-bribery system in place.

Solution

Recognizing the need to help businesses manage bribery-related risks, in 2011 we published the *Specification for an anti-bribery management system*, BS 10500. The standard cannot stop bribery, but it can show that a business took reasonable steps to prevent it.

We began the process by speaking to a broad spectrum of organizations to ask what solution would best serve their needs.

We then brought together a committee of experts from industry, trade associations, professional and academic bodies, government and non-governmental agencies.

They came from such organizations as the City of London Police, National Audit Office, Public Concern at Work and others. Drawing

from such a broad range of interests and expertise helps to ensure the standard's independence. The draft standard also underwent public consultation.

Major infrastructure business, Balfour Beatty, one of the world's leading construction companies, was involved in creating BS 10500. Balfour Beatty's Head of Ethics and Compliance, Andrew Hayward, was a member of the BS 10500 drafting panel. "Balfour Beatty was fully behind the creation of BS 10500. We wanted to make a positive contribution to the development of international anti-corruption best practice."

Balfour Beatty has more than 50,000 employees and is active in more than 80 countries. The company maintains the highest ethical standards, but having anti-bribery measures provides extra assurance.

Its existing management system was used in a pilot study of BS 10500. The idea was to see how the standard could be applied in a real-world situation, not to test Balfour Beatty's system, which nonetheless stood up extremely well to the standard's requirements.

"We have a clear anti-corruption policy, which has been communicated to all our people, our suppliers and clients. Our board and senior management lead on implementing the policy and training is provided to employees. Tight controls are in place with regard to transactions, gifts and hospitality, while facilitation payments are strictly prohibited."

Outcome

The pilot study proved that BS 10500 works well in practice and provides a useful tool for organizations seeking to assess their anti-bribery management system. "There were no major differences between the requirements of BS 10500 and our own anti-corruption system," Hayward adds.

"The standard isn't unduly prescriptive and its requirements are sufficiently generic. BS 10500 can be an important tool in the fight against corruption and it could help promote and improve consistent best practice."

To find out more about BS 10500 and anti-bribery please visit bsigroup.com/bs10500

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