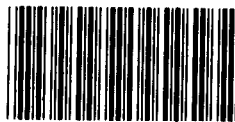


July 1992

# WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

## Survey of Federal Employees on Misconduct and Protection From Reprisal



147240



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General Government Division

B-249141

July 14, 1992

The Honorable Gerry Sikorski  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
the Civil Service  
Committee on Post Office  
and Civil Service  
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This fact sheet is a partial response to your request that we review the federal government's processing of whistleblower reprisal complaints and the Office of Special Counsel's (OSC)<sup>1</sup> effectiveness in protecting whistleblowers from reprisals. As part of our review, we surveyed a sample of randomly selected federal employees governmentwide to determine their awareness of whistleblower protection and their willingness to report misconduct.<sup>2</sup>

As agreed with the Subcommittee, we are providing the survey results now to assist Congress in its deliberations on the reauthorization of OSC. The agency's authorization expires at the end of fiscal year 1992. In addition to our survey of federal employees, we are requesting and will be reporting information from 19 departments and agencies with 6,000 or more employees on their implementation of and views on the whistleblower statute.

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<sup>1</sup>The Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 separated OSC from the Merit Systems Protection Board and established OSC as an independent agency. OSC's mission is to protect federal employees, especially whistleblowers, from prohibited personnel practices and to act in the interest of employees seeking assistance.

<sup>2</sup>Misconduct is a summary term we use to define a protected disclosure under law (5 U.S.C. 2302 (b)(8)(A)). It is a violation of any law, rule, or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; abuse of authority; or acts of substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.

We received responses to our questionnaire from 1,055 employees (78 percent of those surveyed). The results of our survey are representative of all employees covered by the whistleblower statute (at the 95-percent confidence level, plus or minus 5 percent). Our sample size was not large enough to report the results for individual departments or agencies. Appendix I provides the details of our objectives, scope, and methodology.

## BACKGROUND

Congress first provided statutory protection for whistleblowers in the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (P. L. 95-454). The act was designed to encourage the disclosure of misconduct by protecting whistleblowers. In the years following passage of the act, Congress found that it had little impact on encouraging federal employees to blow the whistle and did not protect them from reprisals.

One source of information to Congress on the failure of the 1978 act regarding whistleblowers was an October 1984 report of the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB).<sup>3</sup> The report summarized the results of two employee surveys conducted in the early 1980s.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of the MSPB report and information from other sources, Congress considered changes to the law in the years following 1984 and did so with the passage of the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (P. L. 101-12). The 1989 act was designed to strengthen and improve protection for whistleblowers. Besides making OSC independent of MSPB, the 1989 act lowered the burden of proof for employees who allege that reprisal had been taken against them for whistleblowing and expanded employees' rights to go before MSPB for an independent hearing if they could not obtain relief through OSC for an alleged reprisal.

The 1984 MSPB report showed that between 1980 and 1983 no measurable progress was made in overcoming employee resistance to reporting misconduct. MSPB found in 1983 that 69 percent of employees with knowledge of misconduct did not report it. The main reason given by employees (53 percent) for not reporting was that nothing would be done to correct the problem. Fear of

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<sup>3</sup>Blowing the Whistle in the Federal Government: A Comparative Analysis of 1980 and 1983 Survey Findings, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, Washington, D.C., 1984.

<sup>4</sup>Under 5 U.S.C. 1205 (a)(3), MSPB is responsible for doing special studies relating to the federal merit system.

reprisal was cited (37 percent) second most frequently as the reason for not reporting.

### RESULTS

Although most federal employees said that they would be willing to report misconduct, a sizeable number said they were either undecided about reporting or unwilling to report misconduct if they become aware of it. Fear of reprisal for reporting misconduct continues to be a concern for many federal employees. Furthermore, many employees did not know whether their agencies would support whistleblowers and most had minimal knowledge about their right to protection from reprisal.

More specifically, the results of our survey showed the following:

- Most employees, while generally aware of a law to protect them from reprisals, lacked knowledge about their right to protection. About 83 percent of the respondents told us that they were at least somewhat aware that there is a law to protect federal employees who "blow the whistle" by reporting misconduct. However, about 73 percent of the respondents said that they had some or no knowledge about how the law protects them, and about 70 percent said they believe that they did not have enough information about where to report misconduct.
- Most employees who had knowledge said that the source of information about their right to protection was not their agency. About 76 percent said they had not received, or did not know if they had received, such information from their agency. About 46 percent of the respondents said they received information from other sources such as newspapers, radio, TV, and word of mouth.
- Many employees lacked knowledge about their agency's commitment to protect whistleblowers from reprisal. About 49 percent said they did not know or had no basis to judge the extent to which their agency supported whistleblower protection. Further, about 33 percent said they either did not know or had no basis to judge how their agency would respond if they reported misconduct. Only about 15 percent of the respondents thought their agency supported to a great extent the federal policy of protecting employees from reprisal who report misconduct.
- About 93 percent of the respondents said they supported from a moderate to very great extent the idea of employees in their agency reporting misconduct. Although about 26 percent said

they believed misconduct was a moderate to serious problem at their agency, about 38 percent said they were undecided about whether to report, or would be unwilling to report, misconduct if they were to become aware of it. Fifty-seven percent said they would be willing to report misconduct.

- Fear of reprisal was a concern to many employees. About 36 percent of the respondents believed protection for federal employees against reprisal was inadequate while only about 13 percent thought it was adequate. Another 43 percent said they did not know or had no basis to judge the adequacy of protection for federal employees. About 25 percent believed their agency would take reprisals against them if they reported misconduct while about 24 percent believed they would be supported. And 33 percent did not know or had no basis to judge their agency's likely action.
- More encouragement could help in reporting misconduct. Most respondents believed there were four factors of great to very great importance that would encourage them to report misconduct: (1) that something would be done to correct the problem reported--90 percent stated this belief, (2) the problem was very serious--88 percent, (3) the employee would be protected from reprisal--84 percent, and (4) the employee would remain anonymous--68 percent.

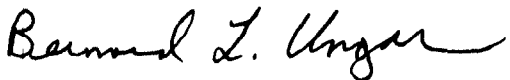
Detailed questionnaire responses are presented in appendix II.

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As agreed with the Subcommittee, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days after its issue date, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier. At that time, we will send copies to OSC, MSPB, the departments and agencies that participated in the survey, and other interested parties. We will also make copies available to others upon request.

The major contributors to this report are listed in appendix III. If you have any questions about this report, please contact me on (202) 275-5074.

Sincerely yours,



Bernard L. Ungar  
Director, Federal Human Resource  
Management Issues

C O N T E N T S

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ABBREVIATIONS

|      |                                |
|------|--------------------------------|
| MSPB | Merit Systems Protection Board |
| OPM  | Office of Personnel Management |
| OSC  | Office of Special Counsel      |

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Civil Service, House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, asked us to review the government's processing of whistleblower reprisal complaints and the Office of Special Counsel's (OSC) effectiveness in protecting whistleblowers. As part of our initial effort, our objectives were to (1) find out whether federal employees covered by the whistleblower statute are aware of their right to protection from reprisal when reporting misconduct and (2) determine how willing employees are to report misconduct in federal sector operations. Misconduct, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2302 (b)(8)(A), is a violation of any law, rule, or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; abuse of authority; or acts of substantial and specific danger to public health and safety. To answer the questions raised concerning awareness of rights and willingness to report, we designed and pretested a questionnaire that we later sent to a random sample of federal employees; all responses were anonymous.

This report expresses the viewpoints and attitudes of federal employees who responded to the questionnaire. We did not determine if their views accurately reflected situations that existed at the individual departments and agencies included in our survey.

The universe of federal employees eligible for inclusion in the sample was 2,177,330. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provided us with a random sample of 1,500 federal employees selected from that agency's Central Personnel Data File. We did not verify the randomness or accuracy of the sample provided by OPM. Those agencies and employees not covered by the whistleblower statute were excluded from the file before the sample was drawn. The sample size was sufficient to provide universe estimates at the 95-percent confidence level with an error rate not to exceed +5 percent.<sup>5</sup> However, the sample size was not large enough to allow us to generalize from the results about individual departments and agencies.

Because the Central Personnel Data File did not contain addresses for the employees, we sent all questionnaires to the appropriate agency personnel offices shown on the file. Due to problems associated with the delivery of the questionnaires, it was necessary to reduce the sample size by 147 employees (leaving 1,353 in our sample) to reflect the personnel offices' inability to locate some individuals. (See table I.1.)

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<sup>5</sup>A 95-percent confidence level can be interpreted as stating that there is a 95-percent probability that the "true" value for the universe will fall within the upper and lower limits of the interval.



Table I.1: Reasons for Adjustments to Survey Sample

| Reason             | Sample reduction |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Resigned           | 24               |
| Retired            | 15               |
| Transferred        | 14               |
| On extended leave  | 7                |
| Deceased           | 1                |
| Outside U.S.       | 2                |
| Other <sup>a</sup> | 84               |
| Total              | 147              |

<sup>a</sup>Includes employees who could not be located, whose appointments expired, and who were terminated.

We received 1,055 responses from the adjusted sample of 1,353 for a response rate of 78 percent. We projected the sample results of respondents to the universe of federal employees covered under the whistleblower statute with a weight of 2,064. In other words, each employee who responded to our survey represents 2,064 employees.

Our work was done between March and June 1992 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

**RESPONSES TO SURVEY OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES  
ON WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION**

United States General Accounting Office



**Survey of Federal Employees on  
Whistleblower Protection**

**Introduction**

The U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), an agency of the U.S. Congress, is gathering information on the 1989 Whistleblower Protection Act. Our purpose is to (1) find out whether federal employees are aware of their rights to protection against reprisal when reporting misconduct and (2) determine how willing they are to report misconduct in federal sector operations, should they become aware of it.

The act was enacted to strengthen and improve protection of employees' rights, prevent reprisal against employees who have blown the whistle, and help eliminate wrongdoing in government. The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) serves as an independent investigative and prosecutorial agency to protect employees, former employees, and applicants for employment from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing. A whistleblower also has the right to go to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) in certain circumstances for protection against reprisal.

We are surveying federal employees covered by the act. You were randomly selected to complete the survey. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your frank and honest answers will help GAO advise Congress on employee protection under the act.

This questionnaire is anonymous. There is nothing in this form that can identify you or any other individuals who respond. In order to ensure your privacy, we ask that you return the enclosed postcard separately, indicating that you have completed your questionnaire. We need these cards returned so that we can follow up with those who do not respond to our mailing.

The questions can be easily answered by checking boxes or filling in blanks. The questionnaire can be completed in about 15 minutes. Space has been provided at the end of the questionnaire, and additional pages may be added for any comments you may want to make.

Please remember to return the postcard separately from the questionnaire to protect your privacy. Return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed preaddressed, prepaid envelope within 10 days of receipt. In the event that the envelope is misplaced, our return address is:

U.S. General Accounting Office  
Portland Suboffice  
Attn: Bill Wolter  
Rm 414, 1500 N.W. Irving St.  
Portland, OR 97232

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please call Bill Wolter at (503) 235-8500.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

\* \* \* \* \*

- PLEASE READ -

Definitions

Whistleblower - A commonly used term describing a federal employee who reports misconduct within or related to (e.g., contractors) federal operations.

Misconduct - A summary term used to indicate the violation in federal sector operations of any law, rule, or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; abuse of authority; or acts that are of substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.

Reprisal - Taking or threatening to take a personnel action against an employee for reporting misconduct.

I. Awareness

1. Before receiving this questionnaire, how aware, if at all, were you that there is a law to protect federal employees who "blow the whistle" on misconduct? (Check one.)

N=1,039

- 1.  Very greatly aware } 28.9 %
- 2.  Greatly aware } 29.8 %
- 3.  Moderately aware } 24.0 %
- 4.  Somewhat aware } 17.3 %
- 5.  Not aware

2. To what extent, if at all, are you aware of how the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 protects employees against reprisal? (Check one.)

N=1,038

- 1.  Very great extent } 7.4 %
- 2.  Great extent } 19.9 %
- 3.  Moderate extent } 72.7 %
- 4.  Some extent }
- 5.  Little or no extent

3. Have you received any information from your agency about your right to protection from reprisal when reporting misconduct in your agency? (Check one.)

N=1,036

- 1.  Yes (Continue to Question 4.) 23.8 %
- 2.  No } 51.3 %
- 3.  Don't know } (Skip to Question 6.) 25.0 %

4. How did your agency present this information? (Check all that apply.)

N=244

- 1.  Agency presentation/training 15.6 %
- 2.  Memo, pamphlet, or regulation 65.6 %
- 3.  Article in agency newsletter 13.5 %
- 4.  Discussion with managers/supervisors 5.3 %
- 5.  Other (Please specify.)

5. Did the above source(s) provide information about the roles of each of the following in protecting you from reprisal? (Check one box in each row.)

N=235

| ROLES OF . . .                            | Yes (1) | No (2) | Don't know/don't remember (3) |
|---|---------|--------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Agency supervisors or other management | 49.2 %  | 12.0 % | 38.8 %                        |
| 2. Your agency Inspector General          | 36.2 %  | 14.0 % | 49.8 %                        |
| 3. Office of Special Counsel              | 23.0 %  | 17.9 % | 59.2 %                        |
| 4. The Merit Systems Protection Board     | 23.8 %  | 17.5 % | 58.7 %                        |

6. Have you heard from sources other than your agency about your right to protection from reprisal when reporting misconduct in your agency? (Check one.)

N=1,036

- 1.  Yes (Continue to Question 7.) 45.8 %
  - 2.  No 47.2 %
  - 3.  Don't know 7.1 %
- } (Skip to Question 9.)

7. What was the source(s) of this information? (Check all that apply.)

N=484

- 1.  Newspaper(s) 58.5 %
- 2.  Magazine(s) 2.9 %
- 3.  TV, radio coverage 12.4 %
- 4.  Union source 6.2 %
- 5.  Word of mouth 11.4 %
- 6.  Other (Please specify.) 8.7 %

8. Did the above source(s) provide information about the roles of each of the following in protecting you from reprisal? (Check one box in each row.)

N=463

| ROLES OF . . .                           | Yes (1) | No (2) | Don't know/don't remember (3) |
|--|---------|--------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Agency supervisor or other management | 28.0 %  | 38.8 % | 33.3 %                        |
| 2. Your agency Inspector General         | 17.7 %  | 44.2 % | 38.2 %                        |
| 3. Office of Special Counsel             | 13.2 %  | 46.2 % | 40.6 %                        |
| 4. The Merit Systems Protection Board    | 18.5 %  | 43.9 % | 37.6 %                        |

9. To what extent, if at all, do you feel you have enough information about where to report misconduct, if such activities should come to your attention? (Check one.)

N=1,036

- 1.  Very great extent 11.9 %
- 2.  Great extent 18.5 %
- 3.  Moderate extent 61.3 %
- 4.  Some extent 8.3 %
- 5.  Little or no extent
- 6.  Don't know/no basis to judge

II. Climate Regarding Reporting Misconduct

10. In your opinion, how adequate or inadequate is the protection against reprisal for federal employees who report misconduct? (Check one.)

N=1,034

- 1.  Very adequate 12.8 %
- 2.  Generally adequate 8.4 %
- 3.  Neither adequate nor inadequate 35.7 %
- 4.  Generally inadequate 43.1 %
- 5.  Very inadequate
- 6.  Don't know/no basis to judge

*For Questions 11 through 20, please refer to the definition of misconduct on page 1. Examples of misconduct are stealing federal funds or property, violations of federal laws or regulations, or waste caused by buying unnecessary or defective goods. For the purpose of this survey, please consider only matters that are serious rather than trivial.*

11. To what extent, if at all, do you support the idea that employees at your agency should report misconduct if they become aware of it? (Check one.)

N=1,038

- |    |                          |                     |   |        |
|----|--------------------------|---------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very great extent   | } |        |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Great extent        |   |        |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Moderate extent     |   | 83.3 % |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some extent         | } |        |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Little or no extent |   | 10.1 % |
|    |                          |                     |   |        |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | No opinion          |   | 5.0 %  |
|    |                          |                     |   |        |
|    |                          |                     |   | 1.5 %  |

12. To what extent, if at all, do you currently consider misconduct to be a problem at your agency? (Check one.)

N=1,036

- |    |                          |                              |   |        |
|----|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Little or no extent          | } |        |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some extent                  |   |        |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Moderate extent              |   | 62.6 % |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Great extent                 | } |        |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very great extent            |   | 15.9 % |
|    |                          |                              |   |        |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know/no basis to judge |   | 9.7 %  |
|    |                          |                              |   |        |
|    |                          |                              |   | 11.8 % |

13. Overall, in your opinion, to what extent, if any, does your agency support the federal policy of ensuring that employees who report misconduct are protected from reprisal? (Check one.)

N=1,036

- |    |                          |                              |   |        |
|----|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very great extent            | } |        |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Great extent                 |   |        |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Moderate extent              |   | 15.4 % |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some extent                  | } |        |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Little or no extent          |   | 10.6 % |
|    |                          |                              |   |        |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know/no basis to judge |   | 24.6 % |
|    |                          |                              |   |        |
|    |                          |                              |   | 49.4 % |

14. If you became aware of misconduct in your agency, and reported it, in your opinion, would your agency support you, reprimand you, or neither? (Check one.)

N=1,026

- |    |                          |  |   |        |
|----|--------------------------|--|---|--------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly support me                      | } |        |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Support me                               |   |        |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither support nor reprimand against me |   | 23.8 % |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reprimand against me                     | } |        |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly reprimand against me            |   | 17.9 % |
|    |                          |  |   |        |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know/no basis to judge             |   | 25.4 % |
|    |                          |  |   |        |
|    |                          |  |   | 32.9 % |

15. Currently, if you became aware of misconduct in your agency, how willing or unwilling would you be to report it? (Check one.)

N=1,032

- |  |                              |        |
|--|------------------------------|--------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Very willing                 | } (Continue to Question 16.) | 56.8 % |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Generally willing            |                              |        |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided                    |                              |        |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Generally unwilling          | } (Skip to Question 17.)     | 14.2 % |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Very unwilling               |                              |        |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/no basis to judge |                              |        |

16. Employees may report misconduct within or related to (e.g., contractors) federal operations to the places listed below.

To what extent, if at all, would you be willing to report misconduct to each of the following places? (Check one box in each row.)

| POSSIBLE PLACES TO REPORT MISCONDUCT                | Little or no willingness (1) | Somewhat willing (2) | Moderately willing (3) | Greatly willing (4) | Very greatly willing (5) | Don't know/no basis to judge (6) |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Your agency supervisor or other management N=822 | 32.6 %                       |                      | 20.6 %                 | 43.1 %              |                          | 3.8 %                            |
| 2. Government hotlines N=828                        | 20.3 %                       |                      | 21.6 %                 | 50.4 %              |                          | 7.7 %                            |
| 3. Agency Office of Inspector General N=824         | 27.1 %                       |                      | 25.9 %                 | 32.3 %              |                          | 14.8 %                           |
| 4. U.S. General Accounting Office N=821             | 30.1 %                       |                      | 23.5 %                 | 27.4 %              |                          | 19.0 %                           |
| 5. Office of Special Counsel N=817                  | 29.7 %                       |                      | 20.8 %                 | 25.6 %              |                          | 23.9 %                           |
| 6. Federal Bureau of Investigation N=822            | 36.0 %                       |                      | 18.7 %                 | 28.8 %              |                          | 16.4 %                           |
| 7. U.S. Attorney's Office N=817                     | 36.0 %                       |                      | 20.2 %                 | 24.5 %              |                          | 19.3 %                           |
| 8. Member of Congress N=822                         | 47.2 %                       |                      | 18.0 %                 | 21.4 %              |                          | 13.4 %                           |
| 9. News media N=818                                 | 67.6 %                       |                      | 8.9 %                  | 12.0 %              |                          | 11.4 %                           |
| 10. Other (Please specify.) N=29                    | 13.8 %                       |                      | 3.5 %                  | 51.7 %              |                          | 31.0 %                           |

17. Do you think management or others in your agency would or would not take the following actions if you were to report misconduct? (Check one box in each row.)

| POSSIBLE ACTIONS                                       | Definitely would not (1) | Probably would not (2) | Uncertain (3) | Probably would (4) | Definitely would (5) | Don't know/ no basis to judge (6) |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Deny expected cash award or bonus N=1,030           | 29.8 %                   |                        | 21.1 %        | 29.0 %             |                      | 20.1 %                            |
| 2. Deny expected promotion N=1,028                     | 29.9 %                   |                        | 21.7 %        | 30.4 %             |                      | 18.0 %                            |
| 3. Dismissal N=1,020                                   | 52.1 %                   |                        | 20.5 %        | 8.9 %              |                      | 18.5 %                            |
| 4. Duties/responsibilities reduced or lowered N=1,019  | 37.4 %                   |                        | 20.8 %        | 25.2 %             |                      | 16.6 %                            |
| 5. Harassment N=1,025                                  | 31.5 %                   |                        | 25.0 %        | 26.6 %             |                      | 16.9 %                            |
| 6. Lower next performance appraisal N=1,025            | 25.9 %                   |                        | 24.9 %        | 33.8 %             |                      | 16.1 %                            |
| 7. Positive recognition by management N=1,021          | 37.2 %                   |                        | 30.0 %        | 14.5 %             |                      | 18.3 %                            |
| 8. Positive support by your peers N=1,021              | 21.5 %                   |                        | 32.5 %        | 29.7 %             |                      | 16.3 %                            |
| 9. Promotion N=1,024                                   | 52.9 %                   |                        | 21.9 %        | 6.2 %              |                      | 19.0 %                            |
| 10. Reassignment of work location N=1,025              | 28.0 %                   |                        | 31.9 %        | 22.3 %             |                      | 17.8 %                            |
| 11. Social isolation by peers N=1,022                  | 37.1 %                   |                        | 30.3 %        | 15.8 %             |                      | 16.8 %                            |
| 12. Other (Please specify.)<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |                          |                        |               |                    |                      |                                   |

18. How important, if at all, would the following be in encouraging you in reporting misconduct in your agency? (Check one box in each row.)

| IF I THOUGHT THAT . . .   | Very great importance (1) | Great importance (2) | Moderately important (3) | Somewhat important (4) | Little or no importance (5) | Don't know/ no basis to judge (6) |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. I could report it and remain anonymous N=1,028                         | 67.9 %                    |                      | 15.2 %                   | 12.7 %                 |                             | 4.2 %                             |
| 2. Something would be done to correct the activity I reported N=1,028     | 89.7 %                    |                      | 3.6 %                    | 3.4 %                  |                             | 3.3 %                             |
| 3. I would be protected from any sort of reprisal N=1,028                 | 84.2 %                    |                      | 7.4 %                    | 3.9 %                  |                             | 4.6 %                             |
| 4. The problem was something I considered very serious N=1,028            | 88.0 %                    |                      | 6.0 %                    | 2.8 %                  |                             | 3.2 %                             |
| 5. I could report it without people thinking badly of me N=1,028          | 42.6 %                    |                      | 24.4 %                   | 28.5 %                 |                             | 4.5 %                             |
| 6. I would be positively recognized by management for a good deed N=1,028 | 23.9 %                    |                      | 17.3 %                   | 54.3 %                 |                             | 4.5 %                             |
| 7. I could receive some kind of a cash award N=1,028                      | 9.4 %                     |                      | 8.7 %                    | 76.2 %                 |                             | 5.7 %                             |
| 8. Other (Please specify.) N=1,028  | 38.9 %                    |                      | 0.0 %                    | 5.6 %                  |                             | 55.6 %                            |

19. Which two of the above would most encourage you in reporting misconduct in your agency? (Enter the item numbers.)

1. Item number: N=929

2. Item number: N=920

- Question 18, Item 2. 42.2 %
- Question 18, Item 1. 32.9 %
- Question 18, Item 4. 13.5 %
- Question 18, Item 3. 7.4 %
- Question 18, Item 7. 1.6 %
- Question 18, Item 5. 1.0 %
- Question 18, Item 6. 1.0 %
- Question 18, Item 8. .5 %

- Question 18, Item 2. 33.7 %
- Question 18, Item 3. 26.9 %
- Question 18, Item 4. 22.0 %
- Question 18, Item 1. 8.3 %
- Question 18, Item 5. 3.4 %
- Question 18, Item 6. 3.0 %
- Question 18, Item 7. 2.8 %



20. How important, if at all, would the following be in discouraging you from reporting misconduct in your agency? (Check one box in each row.)

| IF I THOUGHT THAT . . .   | Very great importance (1) | Great importance (2) | Moderately important (3) | Somewhat important (4) | Little or no importance (5) | Don't know/ no basis to judge (6) |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Reprisals had previously been taken against whistleblowers at my agency<br>N=1,029 | 67.9 %                    |                      | 8.8 %                    |                        | 8.9 %                       | 14.4 %                            |
| 2. I would be identified even though I requested anonymity<br>N=1,028                 | 71.2 %                    |                      | 12.2 %                   |                        | 11.8 %                      | 4.9 %                             |
| 3. Nothing would be done to correct the activity I reported<br>N=1,030                | 85.7 %                    |                      | 6.7 %                    |                        | 3.8 %                       | 3.8 %                             |
| 4. I would not be protected from various types of reprisal<br>N=1,031                 | 79.3 %                    |                      | 8.9 %                    |                        | 6.8 %                       | 5.0 %                             |
| 5. People would think badly of me<br>N=1,024  | 26.3 %                    |                      | 23.0 %                   |                        | 45.6 %                      | 5.2 %                             |
| 6. Other (Please specify.)<br>_____<br>_____<br>N=23                                  | 34.8 %                    |                      | 0.0 %                    |                        | 8.7 %                       | 56.5 %                            |

III. Background

21. How long have you been employed by the federal government as a civilian employee? (Check one.)

N=1,039

- |                             |                  |   |        |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---|--------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than 1 year | } | 21.9 % |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 to 5 years     |   |        |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 to 10 years    |   | 18.1 % |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 to 15 years   |   | 17.6 % |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> | 16 to 20 years   |   | 14.9 % |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> | 21 to 25 years   |   | 12.8 % |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> | 26 to 30 years   | } | 14.7 % |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 30 years    |   |        |

22. What is your pay category or classification? (Check one.)

N=1,035

- |                             |  |        |
|-----------------------------|--|--------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | General Schedule or equivalent (GS, GG, GW)    | 73.6 % |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | Wage System (WG, WS, WL, WD, WN, etc.)         | 14.6 % |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> | Performance Management Recognition System (GM) | 10.2 % |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> | Executive (ST, EX, ES, etc.)                   | .3 %   |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Please specify.)                        | 1.3 %  |

23. What is your pay grade? (Check one.)

N=1,035

- |                             |                   |          |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 - 4             | 7.8 %    |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 - 8             | 23.1 %   |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> | 9 - 12            | 44.7 %   |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 - 15           | } 24.3 % |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 15 (SES)     |          |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> | Over 15 (not SES) |          |

IV. Comments

24. If you have any comments regarding any of these questions or other concerns about reporting serious misconduct, please use the space provided below. If necessary, attach additional pages.

N=255

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

GGD/MS/6-92

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