

FBI Announces New Focus on FCPA Violations - Foreign Corrupt Practices Act

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An official of the **Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)** recently reported that the Agency has established three new squads of enforcement officials and stands ready to deploy them to the FBI's three largest field offices. Jeffrey Sallet, the head of the Agency's public corruption and civil rights section, stated that under the new initiative, roughly 30 agents will be assigned to squads based in New York, Washington and Los Angeles, where a supervisor will manage investigators drawn from multiple cities. The goal of this initiative is to identify and prosecute additional violations of the **Foreign Corrupt Practices Act**, a statute that makes it illegal to bribe foreign government officials and can be prosecuted in U.S. courts, and to strengthen the FBI's expertise in the area.

This FBI initiative follows the *U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ)* renewed focus on FCPA enforcement as reflected both by its 2012 Guidance: [A Resource Guide to the FCPA U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act](#), and by the DOJ's strong track record of enforcement in 2014. Notably, Justice Department enforcement data reflects that **since 2009 more than 50 people have been convicted of FCPA violations** and related crimes and **some 50 corporations have paid more than \$3 billion in penalties and forfeitures during that same time period.**

The DOJ's focus on enforcement, coupled with a ramping of up federal investigative resources is a clear signal to the senior management of organizations as well as to the board of directors of these organizations that now is the time to review organizational compliance structures, including FCPA compliance and control mechanisms, to increase monitoring and investigation capabilities, and to be vigilant of global business practices by employees as well as third-party agents. Companies that do business abroad must be sensitive to the commercial environment of foreign jurisdictions and they must have controls in place to safeguard against bribery and related corruption. As important, organizations must be devoted to continuous improvement efforts of these compliance systems.

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