



For Immediate Release:

One Year Later: Employers Observe Anniversary of 9/11 Survey Shows Employers See Changes in the Workplace Since Last September

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(Alexandria, VA. – September 2, 2002) – A new survey conducted jointly by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and eePulse finds that many employers have stepped up security since last September and are planning a variety of actions to commemorate the upcoming anniversary of 9/11 in their workplace.

The SHRM®/eePulse survey, *HR Implications of the Attack on America: One Year Later*, included the responses of 7,466 human resource professionals. The survey finds how employers are planning to observe the anniversary of the date of the terrorist attacks last September and also what changes they've seen in the workplace as a result of the attacks. The survey shows a comparison between the current survey and a similar survey conducted one week following the terrorist attacks last year.

The following are highlights of findings from the survey. All percentages are of human resource professionals who responded on behalf of their organization.

Plans for 9/11 commemoration:

- 45% - Nothing is planned yet (as of 8/23)
- 32% - Observing a moment of silence
- 24% - Flying American flag at half mast
- 15% - Giving employees red, white and blue ribbons or pins to wear
- 12% - We do not plan to do anything to commemorate the event
- 6% - Holding a blood drive
- 5% - Allowing employees time off without pay
- 5% - Holding a staff event in conjunction with any televised national observance
- 4% - Allowing employees time off with pay

Organization prepared to return to “business as usual” to a great or very great extent following attacks:

- 73% - in 2001 survey
- 41% - in 2002 survey

“In retrospect, it appears many HR professionals overestimated their organization’s readiness to return to business as usual immediately following the terrorist attacks last year,” said SHRM Director of Research, Debra Cohen, PhD, SPHR. “The reality may have been that the impact on the economy and the emotional effect on employees affected organizations more than they expected in the months following the attacks.”

Organizational efforts toward employees over the past year:

- 59% - Open door policy with management to discuss any concerns
- 56% - Allowing employees to postpone or cancel business travel
- 54% - Offering Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) services and encouraging EAP use
- 52% - Collecting money and supplies to be sent for aid

- more -

- 42% - Organizing a blood drive or providing paid time off for employees to donate blood
- 34% - Establishing a task force to look at safety and security issues
- 20% - Providing diversity training to improve awareness about issues of ethnicity and race
- 17% - Organizing volunteer activities or allowing employees to volunteer on paid time

Changes in the workplace as a result of last year's terrorist attacks:

- 52% - Organizations have put higher security provisions in place
- 43% - Employees have been more caring toward one another
- 42% - There have been higher expectations of employers for security
- 33% - Business travel has been curtailed
- 31% - Employees are reluctant to travel for business
- 29% - Higher stress level in the workplace
- 26% - There has been greater screening of employees for hiring
- 23% - Workers have been more wary of their work environment
- 18% - Greater use of EAP
- 17% - HR is relied upon more for its expertise and input

In addition to the statistics, over 14,000 comments were received from survey respondents around the country. "Regardless of geographic location, respondents cited ways that relationships between people at work changed since September 11th," said Dr. Theresa Welbourne, CEO of eePulse. "Some respondents said their employees were more caring; others said employees were more focused on family and friends, and another group indicated an overall sense of loss that resulted from 9/11, the anthrax scare, and the overall downturn in the economy."

In comparing the opinions of HR professionals from the August 2002 survey to the September 2001 survey, there are some differences between what respondents expected may change in the workplace and what they now say actually changed. For example, 32 percent of respondents in 2001 expected that there would be more training about crisis management as compared to 18 percent in the 2002 survey. In addition, 14 percent of HR professionals predicted that telecommuting would grow at a faster pace as a result of the terrorist attacks, yet only 4 percent say this came to fruition in the current survey. Seventeen percent of HR professionals forecast that workers would have less privacy as a result of the attacks while only 4 percent report that they believe this is so in the current survey.

While more than one-quarter of HR professionals report higher stress levels in their workplace due to the attacks, only 4 percent report that any employees have switched to less stressful positions within the organization and only 3 percent report employees leaving the organization to take a more civic-minded position.

A full report of the SHRM[®]/eePulse poll, *HR Implications of the Attack on America: One Year Later* will be available online at www.shrm.org/surveys or www.eepulse.com on September 6th.

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The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. Representing more than 170,000 individual members, the Society serves the needs of HR professionals by providing the most essential and comprehensive set of resources available. As an influential voice, SHRM is committed to advancing the human resource profession to ensure that HR is an essential and effective partner in developing and executing organizational strategy. Founded in 1948, SHRM currently has more than 500 affiliated chapters within the United States and members in more than 120 countries. Visit SHRM Online at www.shrm.org.