

The post 9/11 workplace

Of course, the impact of last year's terrorist attacks – in which most victims were at their places of work – has left an indelible scar on the American psyche.

Since 11 September last year, many employers have stepped up security, according to research conducted jointly by the SHRM together with the specialist HR company eePulse⁶. Based on a large-scale survey of 7,466 HR professionals, this found that over half of employers (52%) had put higher security provisions in place. A wide range of other changes in the workplace a result of the attacks have also been introduced. For instance:

- 42% say that there have been higher expectations of employers for security;
- 33% advise that business travel has been curtailed; and
- 26% report there has been greater screening of employees for hiring.

Earlier this month, meanwhile, a conference held in New York addressed the issue of corporate roles in terrorism prevention and national security. The conference was organised by *Ethical Corporation* magazine, a publication founded in 2001 with the aim of providing companies with practical advice and examples of how to successfully integrate responsible corporate practice – including social and environmental policies – into their management systems⁷.

According to this publication, while consumer groups have long pressed US firms to behave in a more socially responsible fashion, they have yet to really push on anti-terrorism engagement – but this could well be set to change.

“The US government cannot deal effectively with the sheer level and planning required to prevent terrorist attacks alone”, according to Michael W Doubleday, vice-president for communications with the organisation Business Executives for National Security.