

Analysis of Air Force Office of Special Investigations Agents' Knowledge of the Contract Management Process



NAVAL
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Overview

The Department of Defense has an annual budget of approximately \$495 billion. With so much fiscal resources being spent on supplies, services, and weapons systems, auditability becomes vital to protecting against fraud, waste, and abuse. One of the main components that make an organization auditable is competent personnel. To defend against and identify procurement fraud, a competent workforce must include both acquisition personnel as well as procurement fraud investigators.

The purpose of this research was to assess the Air Force Office of Special Investigation's procurement fraud agents' knowledge of the contract management process and procurement fraud schemes, as well as evaluate their perception of knowledge in these areas. To collect knowledge and perception data on procurement fraud agents, the research incorporated the use of an online assessment tool. Results from the assessment indicated that, despite having a high perception of knowledge, agents generally scored low in each of the knowledge-based questions categories on the contract management process. Based on the results of the analysis, implications were identified and recommendations were presented.



AFOSI Organizational Shield and Badge



Research Questions

- What are AFOSI procurement fraud agents' knowledge levels of the phases of the contract management process?
- What are AFOSI procurement fraud agents' knowledge levels of contracting as related to procurement fraud schemes?
- What are AFOSI procurement fraud agents' perceptions of their knowledge of the contract management process and procurement fraud schemes?

Methods

Data for this research was collected using an online assessment tool made up of knowledge-based questions used to assess AFOSI procurement fraud agents' knowledge levels of each phase of the contract management process and procurement fraud schemes. The assessment also included perception questions where agents assessed their perception of their knowledge using a Likert Scale.

The data collected from the assessment tool was analyzed using descriptive statistics according to each of the demographic categories in order to identify any patterns or potential relationships. Additionally, the results of the agents' on knowledge-based questions was compared to the agents' perception of their knowledge in order to identify any patterns and determine level of understanding of the contract management process and procurement fraud schemes.



Conclusions

The average overall score on the knowledge-based questions for all procurement fraud agents participating in this research varied among the different phases of the contract management process. Despite the agents' perceptions that they had sufficient knowledge of each phase of the contract management process, their knowledge scores on the assessment indicated they may not have sufficient knowledge to investigate procurement fraud. Additionally, agents' knowledge of procurement fraud was fairly consistent and the results of the assessment indicated that agents did have adequate knowledge of procurement fraud schemes to investigate procurement fraud.

This was reflected in the agents' scores for the procurement fraud scheme knowledge questions on the assessment. Additionally, agents that were certified by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) scored 14 percent higher overall on the assessment compared to those without the CFE credential.

Based on these findings and because procurement fraud agents are supposed to be knowledgeable of the contract management process in order to investigate procurement fraud, agents may benefit from having more training focused on the contract management process.