“We try to be very ethical and fair worldwide. We apply the same conduct guidelines and hold employees to the same standards across the entire business.”

Ruth Sturm
Global Compliance Office

Primetals Sets Global Cultural Standards

Solution

Highlights

INDUSTRY
Metals & Mining

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
7,000

BEFORE
Global operations reveal need to better understand potential business risks.

AFTER
EthicsPoint provides management with transparency into global compliance and risk.
Challenge: Operations in 20 Countries with Unique Risks

As a company with more than 40 company offices, engineering, workshop and service centers in close to 20 countries, Primetals faces a variety of potential business risks. In emerging markets, for example, some employees encounter different cultural practices that can open up supply chain risks such as bribery, corruption and kickbacks. Because of these risks, Primetals saw the need to gather input from employees to adhere to their values of transparency and compliance.

While the company encourages employees to report potential issues through their open door policy, Primetals also understood that employees needed to have more options — including an anonymous hotline and case management system. So they began working with NAVEX Global to find a solution that could support an international business in their heavily regulated industry.

Solution: Addressing Regional Issues with EthicsPoint®

Because NAVEX Global’s EthicsPoint Hotline and Case Management Solution meets Europe’s strict data privacy requirements, Primetals chose NAVEX Global as their provider of choice, and set up the system to be available in 22 languages to meet the needs of the close to 20 countries in which they have operations. “Knowing that NAVEX Global’s call centers could handle intake in all of the local languages we needed was key to our decision,” said Ruth Sturm, Global Compliance Officer.

The process for managing multinational risk is extensive, which is why having effective tools in place is essential. In addition to the hotline reporting and case management software, Primetals chose to add an online report form. This allows supervisors and HR representatives to include more information in the case management database, giving Primetals a more complete picture of cases around the world.

Every report that’s received goes directly to the centralized compliance team, led by Sturm. The report is then assigned to one of 15 compliance officers to be analyzed, evaluated for veracity, investigated and then resolved. “It’s not easy. We need full support of the board and management. We have to enforce standards and make sure employees feel that they live by these standards.”

When employees are getting started in emerging markets, the compliance team briefs them on what issues may arise, so they’re trained to know how to react. “This is made for the safety and well-being of our employees. There are gray areas in some markets, so we make sure they know what to do and who to call.” Having the ability to report issues anonymously is a major benefit, according to Sturm.

An organization’s hotline reporting system serves many purposes, such as providing:

» A confidential place for employees to clarify policy and discuss or report concerns
» A communications channel beyond the rumor mill
» A way to direct employee questions to the appropriate resource
» An opportunity to provide guidance before a poor decision is made
» An early warning of issues or problem areas brewing in the organization
» A last internal stop for whistleblowers before they take an issue outside the organization to a regulator or attorney

Download the Definitive Guide to Incident Management to Learn More
Whistleblower Hotline Intake

Trusted by thousands of clients around the world, our hotlines help employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders quickly and easily report potential ethics and compliance issues. Our hotlines also provide you with the E&C data you need to inform your program, helping you spot trends and take corrective action before minor issues become major.

Incident Management: EthicsPoint®

Capture and investigate E&C reports from across your organization in a centralized database. Our EthicsPoint Incident Management solution gathers data from all of your reporting channels—including your ethics hotline, web intake, and reports forms for open door conversations—to create a systematic approach to documenting case assignments and streamlining workflow.

Awareness Solutions

Raise awareness of key E&C program components, including your hotline and key training messages, with NAVEX Global’s proven awareness materials.

Results: A Complete Picture in One Place

Primetals now has a centralized system that can receive reports from employees who suspect any issues based on calls, online reports and open-door discussions, the compliance team has a centralized database that offers a clear vision into what issues are being raised in specific regions, particularly areas with high risk of bribery, corruption and related issues. “Having a robust set of intake methods gives us a bigger picture view and helps better assess the risks we face. EthicsPoint gives us an effective way of showing management the full picture of any problem areas we're facing, or how we’re handling topics in any given country,” said Sturm.

Informed by trends seen in the reporting available from EthicsPoint, Primetals leadership can conduct preventive training and coaching, implement controls and have discussions with local management on how to improve the situation. “Using EthicsPoint is much more efficient because I have one database for all the information my team needs. I don’t have to get updates from each compliance officer since we’re all working together in the same system. I can quickly see how many reports have been resolved or are still open. That helps me a lot in coordinating across the around 20 countries we have operations in.”

When Sturm’s team reports to senior management, she can now show them a country-by-country overview of which issue types are being brought up, giving Primetals’ leadership insights into which issues need attention to protect their global cultural standards. “This system gives us really good transparency to management on risk, compliance and HR. We use hotline reports in our business risk assessment, analyzing potential issues across departments and along the supply chain.”

About Primetals

Primetals Technologies, Limited headquartered in London, United Kingdom is a worldwide leading engineering, plant-building and lifecycle services partner for the metals industry. The company offers a complete technology, product and service portfolio that includes integrated electrics, automation and environmental solutions, covering every step of the iron and steel production chain, extending from the raw materials to the finished product. Primetals Technologies is a joint venture of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) and Siemens. The company employs around 7,000 employees worldwide.