

News Release

4% of New Zealanders admit to paying a bribe

Transparency International has just released its 2010 Global Corruption Barometer which presents the main findings of a public opinion survey on corruption and bribery around the world, including New Zealand. This latest report shows political parties followed by Parliament and the private sector are viewed as the most corrupt institutions in New Zealand, with the military perceived to be the least corrupt. While an amazing 73% of New Zealanders believe corruption is increasing.

An alarming 4% of New Zealanders admitted they had paid a bribe in New Zealand in the last 12 months. This compares with 9% in Singapore and nil (0%) in Denmark. The New Zealand figure was higher than the countries we traditionally benchmark against – Australia (2%) and the UK (1%).

Alex Tan, Transparency International NZ director says “this is truly an alarming result but, in some ways, not surprising. We have traditionally tended to rest on our laurels and think we are above corruption and bribery practices which are common place in the rest of the world. In fact, this can be a naïve assumption and we need to stay on our game and be vigilant about these matters. ”

To support further the findings of the Barometer, Mr Tan points out the Serious Fraud Office has recently announced arrests in relation to two high-profile corruption investigations.

Participants in the survey were also asked if they thought corruption had increased, decreased or stayed the same in the last three years. 73% of New Zealand respondents felt corruption had increased over the period. This compared to 38% in Singapore and 29% in Denmark.

Mr Tan adds “one possible explanation for this perception is due to the fact most cases of corruption in New Zealand tend to get quite a bit of publicity which could keep the matter in the public eye.”

When it comes to fighting corruption, 54% of New Zealand respondents believed the Government was doing an effective job and it is encouraging to note 93% would report an incident of corruption. It is these positive behaviours that enhance New Zealand’s reputation and its brand, making it a good place to visit and a place where future generations of our children want to live and work.

The Global Corruption Barometer is in stark contrast to the Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released in October this year, in which New Zealand retained top spot as the country perceived to have the lowest level of domestic public sector corruption. The top spot was shared with Singapore and Denmark.

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Notes to editors:

The Barometer surveyed a total of 1,291 people (weighted to 1,000) in New Zealand about their views on corruption.

About Transparency International:



Transparency International is the global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption. The Barometer, now in its seventh edition, covers 86 countries and is the first time that New Zealand has been included. It was carried out between 1 June 2010 and 30 September 2010. There were a total of 1,291 respondents in New Zealand.

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