



# **NSTF SURVEY ON PERCEPTIONS OF ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY IN SET**

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Summary  
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# BACKGROUND

This is an informal survey conducted online through the National Science & Technology Forum (NSTF) newsletter and website, prior to the announcement of the Discussion Forum of 19 March 2015. The answers were submitted anonymously.

The NSTF newsletter is distributed by email to a database of about 7000 subscribed individuals.

The NSTF has addressed issues of Ethics in Science, Engineering and Technology sporadically over the years, mainly through gatherings organised to address these issues.

# OUT OF 56 RESPONSES -

Question: DOES YOUR ORGANISATION/ INSTITUTION  
HAVE MEASURES IN PLACE, SUCH AS AN ETHICS  
COMMITTEE?

47 (84%) ANSWERED 'YES'

# ARE EXISTING MEASURES EFFECTIVE?

28 (50%) ANSWERED 'YES'

15 (27%) ANSWERED 'PARTIALLY'

# ARE THE EXISTING MEASURES SUFFICIENTLY ENFORCED?

26 (46%) 'YES'

17 (30%) 'PARTIALLY'

# IS THERE UNNECESSARY RED TAPE, WHICH CAUSES DELAYS?

24 (43%) 'YES'

14 (25%) 'NO'

14 (25%) 'PARTIALLY'

# ARE THERE ENOUGH TRAINING AND COURSES AVAILABLE?

10 (18%) 'YES'

26 (46%) 'NO'

15 (27%) 'PARTIALLY'

# IS THERE ENOUGH AWARENESS AMONG STEM PROFESSIONALS?

11 (20%) 'YES'

24 (43%) 'NO'

19 (34%) 'PARTIALLY'

# IS THERE ENOUGH AWARENESS OF CRITICAL ISSUES AMONG THE PUBLIC?

35 (63%) 'NO'

9 (16%) 'PARTIALLY'

8 (14%) 'DON'T KNOW'

# CONCLUSIONS

1. The overwhelming majority of organisations associated with the respondents are reported to have structures and measures in place to promote ethical practices.
2. There is not the same level of certainty about the effectiveness & enforcement of such existing measures.
3. Opinion about unnecessary red tape around procedures to promote ethical practice is divided. However, a majority of respondents (68%) thought either that this was indeed an issue of concern or that it was partially an issue of concern.

# CONCLUSIONS (CONT.)

Opinion is divided on the availability of suitable training courses, as well as the level of awareness of issues of Ethics among science, engineering and technology professionals.

There is clear agreement however, that there is not enough awareness among the public in this regard, with 63% of respondents agreeing, and a further 16% partially agreeing.

The audience suggested that a further survey be conducted, making a clear distinction among the various types of organisations.