

# 'Anonymous' company secretaries move centre-stage due to increased compliance and regulatory requirements

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New research reveals just 15% of UK employees know who the company secretary is in their firm

17 May – New research has revealed the company secretary to be one of the least recognised board members amongst UK firms, with just 15% of UK employees able to identify the company secretary in their organisation.

Yet a new whitepaper by technology firm eShare (<http://www.eshare.net/>) – 'Under pressure: the company secretary and the growing need for effective governance' (<http://boardpacks.com/support/white-papers/under-pressure-the-company-secretary-and-the-growing-need-for-effective-governance>) – has revealed that the role of company or corporate secretary is becoming harder than ever before, and becoming more high profile as a result.

"The role of the company secretary is fast becoming one of the hardest roles in the organisation," said Alister Esam, CEO, eShare. "Changes in the business and economic landscape over the past few years have meant there are more governance and compliance requirements than ever before, and the penalties for not meeting those requirements are severe, with enormous fines for those found guilty. The responsibility for this lies mostly with the CoSec."

The new eShare white paper has contributions from a number of CoSecs in the UK and US, and explores how the role has changed over the past decade or so, and what tools and technologies are now available to help CoSecs. The whitepaper finds that what was once an important but relatively low profile position, concerned with internal checks and balances, has become one of the most exposed, with overall responsibility for the organisation's corporate governance.

"The biggest challenge for company secretaries is doing more with less," said James Menzies, Director EMEA Tax Centre, Corporate Secretarial Support Services, Ernst & Young LLP. "The increasing profile of corporate governance, more reporting and more transparency, opposed by a steady pressure on budgets and headcount mean that the company secretary of the future will need to be able to work ever smarter, embrace change and new challenges in order to succeed."

With governance and good corporate behaviour increasingly important to business success, the role of the CoSec has broadened further still, setting the agenda for that organisation's governance and overall corporate culture, according to eShare's Alister Esam:

"Good governance entails knowing what you are and why you exist, being well-run from top to bottom and having internal values and behaviours that are perpetuated externally across the world. Much of this stems from the company secretary role – if all this is addressed at a senior level it filters down through the organisation much more effectively."

To download the whitepaper 'Under pressure: the company secretary and the growing need for effective governance', [click here](#)

(<http://boardpacks.com/support/white-papers/under-pressure-the-company-secretary-and-the-growing-need-for-effective-gove>

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#### About the research

An online survey of 1,000 employees within UK companies with a minimum headcount of 500 was undertaken by TLF Research (<http://www.tlfresearch.co.uk/>) in February and March 2017.

For further information visit [www.eshare.co.uk](http://www.eshare.co.uk) and [www.boardpacks.com](http://www.boardpacks.com)

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