

Is there a duty to listen to whistleblowers?

Wim Vandekerckhove, University of Greenwich, UK

RMIT School of Accounting Seminar, 21 November 2018



Any person may address a complaint or report an alleged breach of the Code to the Ethics Commission. The Secretariat shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint or denunciation, although the person submitting the file shall have no entitlement for proceedings to be opened, to be a party to proceedings or to be informed of any decision passed. The Ethics Commission will have free discretion to consult this person or any other person and request his participation in proceedings.

Only the persons who are alleged to have committed a violation of the provisions of the Code and against whom proceedings have been initiated shall be considered as parties before the Ethics Commission.



Australia & NZ: 40% (Brown, Olsen & Lawrence, 2018)

UK: 74% - 63% - 44% (Vandekerckhove, James & West, 2013)



Whistleblowing

'the disclosure by organisation members (former or current) of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organisations that may be able to effect action' (Near & Miceli 1985:4)



Epistemic injustice

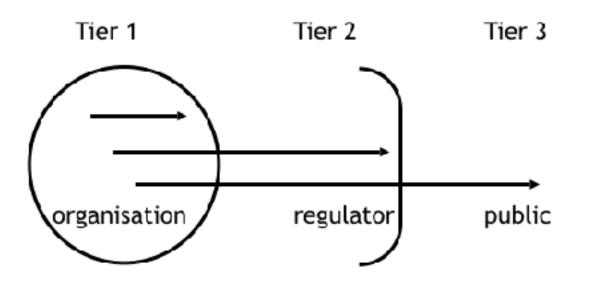
Miranda Fricker

- hermeneutic injustice
- testimonial injustice

A person in wronged in their capacity as a knower, a capacity essential to human value.



3-tiered whistleblowing (Vandekerckhove)





Tier		Listen	Problems
1 Organisation	1st order perfect duty	 explain involve investigate inform 	anonymous WBachieving closure
2 Regulator	2nd order perfect duty	 explain engage investigate inform 	 anonymous WB piece of the puzzle referral achieving closure
3 Journalist	2nd order imperfect duty	 if information is valuable / newsworthy 	confidentiality of source IDsupport high profile WBer



Thank you.

Dr Wim Vandekerckhove Reader in Business Ethics University of Greenwich Business School

University of Greenwich is a charity and company limited by guarantee, registered in England (reg. no. 986729). Registered office: Old Royal Naval college, Park Row, Greenwich, London SE10 9LS

