



Second General Counsel Survey Sponsored by FTI Consulting Finds That Most Organizations Have Crisis Plans, but Few Feel Ready for Crises

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Only 17% of organizations have a proactive and continuously tested approach to identifying and managing emerging risks

More than 80% of organizations wait too long to engage external crisis support

Less than half of surveyed organizations use AI or other advanced technologies to scan for emerging risks

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- FTI Consulting, Inc. (NYSE: FCN) today announced the results of a [global survey](#) which found that nearly 70% of organizations surveyed have a written crisis plan, but only 17% have a proactive and continuously tested approach for identifying and addressing emerging threats before they become full-scale crises.

The findings are detailed in "*Steady Advisers for an Unsteady Age: Realising the Full Potential of the General Counsel in a Polycrisis*," the second edition of an independent report produced by Economist Enterprise and sponsored by FTI Consulting. Building on the [2024 research](#) into the evolving strategic role of the general counsel ("GC") in crisis management, this year's report examines that role more closely in an age of polycrisis, in which risks increasingly overlap, reinforce one another and have wide-ranging consequences across different parts of a business. The research reflects the perspectives of 1,100 primary legal decision-makers across North America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa and Asia Pacific.

While crisis planning is widespread, crisis readiness is not. Responsibility for determining whether an issue is deemed a crisis is shared across leadership teams, with GCs increasingly taking on the important role of identifying emerging threats, assessing legal, regulatory and reputational considerations and shaping response across surveyed organizations.

Too Little, Too Late

According to the findings, more than 80% of organizations wait until risks have escalated before accessing external support, either seeking assistance after an internal assessment identifies elevated legal or reputational risk or waiting until a crisis is already underway. This delay not only costs organizations valuable time to get ahead of emerging risks but also limits access to the specialist expertise needed to contain them.

Acting early also depends on having as timely and thorough information as possible. Fewer than half of surveyed organizations use advanced tools to scan for new and emerging risks, including third-party risk intelligence, predictive analytics, scenario modelling and AI-enabled monitoring. Use is higher among organizations with a proactive crisis-management approach, where, for example, 61% use AI-enabled monitoring of external signals, compared with 46% overall.

"The successful management of crises rarely sits neatly within one part of a company or one jurisdiction," said [Steven H. Gunby](#), Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of FTI Consulting. "They cut across legal, regulatory, operational and reputational considerations, often before leaders have all the facts. A written plan matters, but real preparedness means recognizing the signals early, bringing the right experts together, determining what is really happening across multiple layers of an organization and making difficult decisions while there is still time to shape the outcome. General counsel are increasingly central to that effort."

The Impact of False Alarms and Budget Cuts

Organizations often must respond to an emerging threat well before all the facts are available. Responding too slowly can increase an organization's legal, regulatory and financial exposure. That said, repeatedly responding to alarms on issues that ultimately prove manageable also carries a cost. These false alarms divert resources, weaken confidence in future warnings and make decision-makers more hesitant to act.

Of the GCs surveyed, 40% said false alarms reduce the credibility of future warnings, while 42% said concerns about overreacting or credibility loss made them hesitant to escalate serious issues. Boards can be valuable partners in these early decisions, with 57% of surveyed GCs reporting that they engage with their boards early to frame the issue and consider the available options and trade-offs before positions are set.

That preparedness is not always protected when financial resources are constrained. Only 27% of surveyed respondents said their crisis spending budget was protected, while others scaled back.

"Preparedness budgets need to be spent smartly, particularly when resources are constrained," said [Jean-Werner de T'Serclaes](#), EMEA Co-Chair at FTI Consulting. "It is about making sure the capabilities needed to handle a crisis are there when it hits, particularly when enterprise value, reputation and stakeholder trust are on the line. When the stakes are high and the facts are still emerging, the GC is often one of the first people that leaders turn to and one of the few expected to answer the most difficult questions. That is why GCs need a seat at the table, working alongside management and the board to assess risks and make informed decisions when it matters most."

Report Availability

Read the report and explore the complete survey findings [here](#).

Research Methodology

FTI Consulting sponsored the independent research and report produced by Economist Enterprise. Economist Enterprise conducted the survey online and by telephone between March and April 2026.

The research included 1,100 general counsel and equivalent primary legal decision-makers: 200 in North America; 600 in Europe, the Middle East and Africa; and 300 in Asia Pacific. Respondents had direct involvement in risk-management decisions and primary responsibility for legal decisions. Except for respondents in Saudi Arabia (minimum \$500 million), all participants worked for organizations with annual revenue of more than \$1 billion.

About FTI Consulting

FTI Consulting, Inc. is a leading global expert firm for organizations facing crisis and transformation, with more than 8,100 employees located in 32 countries and territories as of June 30, 2026. In certain jurisdictions, FTI Consulting's services are provided through distinct legal entities that are separately capitalized and independently managed. The Company generated \$3.8 billion in revenues during fiscal year 2025. More information can be found at www.fticonsulting.com.

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