As part of the methodology development process for the 2024 CSA, we kindly invite you to review a draft proposal for new and updated questions impacting your industry.

Please review this document and provide your feedback by completing the online survey.

The question texts and methodology presented may be subject to change at any time before the end of March 2024. In addition, questions may look different in the Online Assessment Tool in terms of question structure and layout.
Introduction

Criterion Rationale

Business ethics are at the crux of a well-functioning business. By establishing integrity across business lines and amongst employees, this not only builds trust with key stakeholders but also safeguards employees and the general public. The criterion evaluates the Codes of Conduct, their implementation and the transparency surrounding reporting on breaches.

Reason for update and summary of changes

Aerospace and Defense companies’ controversial weapons production involves ethical, moral and legal consequences. Human Rights concerns are one of the most significant as controversial weapons can often be used indiscriminately (e.g., where military targeting is not a possibility and civil casualties and injuries are of high probability), their use causes unnecessary pain and suffering, disproportionate harm and can remain a threat long after the conflict has been resolved.

The “Controversial Weapons” question shall be applied to all Aerospace and Defense companies producing weapons, components of weapons or services to the defense industry.
NEW QUESTION

Question: Controversial Weapons

INDUSTRIES IMPACTED:

ARO – Aerospace & Defense

QUESTION RATIONALE

It is generally accepted that democratic states have the right to use armed force to safeguard national security and secure peace. There are, however, several weapons that cause disproportionate harm and remain a threat long after a conflict has been resolved. Although there is no official definition of what constitutes a “controversial weapon”, and different countries, regions, and institutions hold varying views, it typically possesses one or more of the following characteristics:

- Indiscrimination: the weapon is indiscriminate in nature, i.e., it does not distinguish between military and civilian targets.
- Proportionality: the weapon is considered to be excessively harmful, i.e., it causes an inordinate amount of pain and suffering relative to the anticipated military advantage; and/or
- Illegality: the production and use of the weapon is prohibited by international legal instruments.

With this question we aim to understand if a company has a publicly available policy about controversial weapons’ production and its associated commitments.

KEY DEFINITIONS

**Biological weapons:** are controversial owing to the potentially widespread and indiscriminate impact they have on a population. They are also called germ weapons, any of several disease-producing agents—such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, toxins, or other biological agents—that may be used as weapons against humans, animals, or plants.

**Chemical weapons:** are controversial due to their indiscriminate and unpredictable nature, leading to long-lasting effects on both military personnel and civilians. Wind can carry chemical substances for great lengths, affecting areas beyond the target and leading to unintended harm.

**Anti-personnel mines:** are considered controversial owing to their indiscriminate nature, as they are triggered by their victims, whether military personnel or civilians, and because the danger of undetonated anti-personnel mines remains many years following the end of a conflict. Anti-personnel mines not only cause death and injury but also prevent civilians from accessing food, water, and medical care both during and after a conflict.
Blinding Laser Weapons: are controversial as their use leads to long-lasting unnecessary suffering and consequences; they can be indiscriminate and affect both military personnel and civilians. As they can be reflected on some surfaces, their indiscriminate nature can be exacerbated.

Incendiary weapons: are considered controversial as they cause unnecessary or unjustifiable suffering to military personnel or affect military personnel and civilians indiscriminately. Incendiary weapons cause extremely painful and cruel burn injuries that are difficult to treat. They also start fires that can destroy civilian objects and infrastructure.

Depleted uranium: is considered controversial due to concerns about potential long-term health effects. When a depleted uranium missile combusts, depleted uranium particles spread over a wide area and potentially affect civilians and military personnel through inhalation and exposure to skin. Additionally, it is a toxic metal that can contaminate water and food sources.

Cluster munitions: are considered controversial owing to the indiscriminate nature of the weapon system, i.e., the sub-munitions are not specifically targeted but, instead, when released, they impact a wide area without differentiating between military and civilian targets. As sub-munitions often fail to function as intended, huge quantities can land undetonated on the ground, remaining a fatal threat and obstructing economic and social development long after a conflict ends.

Nuclear weapons: are considered controversial owing to their enormous destructive capabilities. They are indiscriminate, considered a weapon of mass destruction and excessively harmful due to the potential for radioactive fallout and the long-term health impacts on populations.

DATA REQUIREMENTS
This question requires supporting evidence from the public domain. The information provided must be included in your public reporting (e.g., annual report, sustainability report, integrated report, company publications) or corporate website.

Please note that each aspect needs to be covered explicitly in the company’s controversial weapons policy.

REFERENCES
- Biological and Chemical Weapons Convention
- The Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention; Ottawa Convention
- International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW)
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT);
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
- Convention on Cluster Munitions
Does the company have a policy in place establishing the company’s position on producing weapons, components of weapons, or services to the defense industry considered under any of the below-mentioned international treaties and coalitions?

- Yes, we have a public policy or commitment in place on “controversial” weapons, prohibiting the production of weapons, components of weapons, or offering of services.

**References (max 3 allowed, public URLs only)**

- Biological and chemical weapons (Biological and Chemical Weapons Convention)
- Anti-personnel mines (The Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention, Ottawa Convention)
- Incendiary weapons (1980 Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons (Protocol III to the CCW))
- Depleted Uranium (International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW))
- Nuclear weapons (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW))
- Cluster munitions (Convention on Cluster Munitions)

- No, we do not have a public policy referencing “controversial” weapons.
- Not applicable, we do not produce weapons, components of weapons, or services to the defense industry.
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