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Compliance, ethics, and a spy balloon

By Matthew Silverman

The presence of a “spy balloon” originating from China that was first spotted over the skies of Montana back in February may not have been given much thought from a compliance and ethics perspective—stories like these seem more relevant to geopolitics and national security. However, this event and others like it should be of particular importance to our industry.

Spy balloons are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to recent geopolitical tensions between the United States (US) and China. In the past few years alone, the US has imposed more restrictive export controls and sanctions against Chinese companies, as well as increasing tariffs (or refusing to remove existing tariffs) on many Chinese goods. The US has continued to see China’s theft of intellectual property, as well as its human rights abuses of the Muslim Uyghur population. The US and the rest of the world have remained on alert after recent Chinese war games near Taiwan, accompanied by ominous statements that an invasion could be forthcoming. And, while much of the world continues to create more space between themselves and Russia, we see evidence of a *closer* China–Russia alliance.

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