



## Property, luxury goods and cash seized in international money laundering investigation

Man allegedly used sophisticated transactions to launder cash and cryptocurrency

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WASHINGTON, DC – The Joint Chiefs of Global Tax Enforcement (J5) commended the Australian Federal Police (AFP)-led Criminal Assets Confiscation Taskforce (CACT) this week, who seized more than \$10 million dollars in assets – including eight Australian Capital Territory (ACT) properties, four high-end vehicles, luxury goods, cash and cryptocurrencies – amid an international money laundering investigation.

The AFP executed search warrants at two homes and a storage unit in Canberra, Australia on July 28, 2022, seizing more than \$1.5 million cash hidden inside one house. A number of documents and electronic devices were also examined and seized for further forensic investigation.

A man, 35, based in the ACT was charged with one count of dealing with property reasonably suspected of being proceeds of crime for an amount of \$100,000 or more. The maximum penalty for this offence is three years' imprisonment.

The individual was granted bail and will face court at a later date, where the AFP will allege he used sophisticated transactions to launder cash and cryptocurrency from the sale of stolen personal identification information, illegal goods plus the proceeds from fraudulent scams and illegal online gambling.

AFP will further allege the man had accumulated a significant number of assets that were suspected to be the proceeds of crime, including eight properties, four luxury cars worth more than \$750,000, 28 bank accounts and about \$175,000 in cryptocurrency.

While the CACT's work under the Commonwealth's proceeds of crime legislation is civil in nature, the CACT nonetheless works closely alongside the criminal investigation, to deliver maximum impact to the criminal environment. Operation Nairana began in late 2020 when the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS), as part of the Joint Chiefs of Global Tax Enforcement (J5), and the FBI reported an Australian-based person was allegedly using crypto-currency to launder money.

The Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) provided support to the initial stages of this investigation, identifying relevant financial data. The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission has also significantly supported this investigation and will continue using intelligence capabilities to assist partners.

“Money laundering is also heavily used to fund further criminal activities that impact our community’s safety,” said AFP Acting Commander Scott Raven. “The AFP has a unique ability to disrupt groups suspected of criminal activity where it hurts them the most; seizing their profits and preventing them from using those funds in future ventures. This case demonstrates that the AFP will be relentless in pursuing those allegedly involved in global money laundering activities, to ensure that those suspected of dealing in the proceeds of crime cannot enjoy the benefits of their illicitly obtained wealth.”

“The days of cryptocurrency being used to anonymously move money for illicit activities are over,” said Jim Lee, Chief of IRS Criminal Investigation and the J5 Chief from the US. “The J5 exists for cases just like this where international partnerships can bring successful investigative outcomes, preventing our jurisdictions from being used as havens for criminal activity.”

“It is because of our collaboration with law enforcement and intelligence partners that outcomes like this continue to exemplify our commitment to protect the integrity of our financial systems,” said FBI Legal Attaché Nitiana Mann.

The CACT brings together the resources and expertise of the AFP, Australian Taxation Office, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, AUSTRAC and Australian Border Force. Together, these agencies trace, restrain and ultimately confiscate criminal assets.

Formed in 2018, the J5 works together to gather information, share intelligence and conduct coordinated operations against transnational financial crimes. The J5 includes the Australian Taxation Office, the Canada Revenue Agency, the Dutch Fiscal Information and Investigation Service, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs from the UK and IRS Criminal Investigation from the US.

For more information about the J5, please visit [www.irs.gov/j5](http://www.irs.gov/j5).

