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# Operation Barnett: Investigation report released by the Integrity Commissioner

## Investigation into the sending of sensitive taxpayer information by a former Australian Tax Office employee to a personal email address

The Integrity Commissioner and head of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI), Ms Jaala Hinchcliffe, has today published the investigation report on Operation Barnett.

Operation Barnett was an investigation into the conduct of a former Australian Taxation Office (ATO) employee who sent sensitive taxpayer information to their personal email address on their final day of employment.

The ATO proactively identified the issue through its regular monitoring.

The joint investigation involved analysing emails and other contact the employee had around the time of the incident, interrogating ATO policies, reviewing financial records and conducting interviews with ATO employees.

While the investigation confirmed that the former ATO employee emailed sensitive taxpayer information to their personal email, it did not find evidence that the employee engaged in corrupt conduct in doing so. Instead, the evidence revealed that the employee sent the information to their personal email address to enable them to answer questions by another ATO employee about an investigation they had worked on, after they departed from the ATO.

As the investigation did not uncover any evidence to support a conclusion that the employee engaged in corrupt conduct, Ms Hinchcliffe made no findings of corruption.

The investigation report for Operation Barnett is available on the [ACLEI website](#).

### **About the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI)**

ACLEI is committed to preventing and investigating corruption issues relating to Commonwealth law enforcement agencies. ACLEI supports the Integrity Commissioner to provide independent assurance to government about the integrity of prescribed law enforcement agencies and their staff members. The office of the [Integrity Commissioner](#) and ACLEI are established by the [Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner Act 2006](#). For more information, visit ACLEI's website: [aclei.gov.au](http://aclei.gov.au)