



WHY CORRUPTION MATTERS: HOW IT AFFECTS YOU

Corruption in law enforcement agencies impacts everyone – not just the individuals and agencies involved.

This document explains how preventing corruption can benefit everyone.

Corruption in law enforcement agencies

Unless there are appropriate counter-measures in place, there is particular risk of corruption arising in law enforcement agencies.

Law enforcement agencies and their staff are at risk of being compromised by criminals. Through their duties, they may have opportunities to use their authority or access to gain benefits for themselves or other people. They may be well-versed in detection and investigation methods, and therefore skilled at countering them.

Impacts of corruption

When a member of a law enforcement agency engages in corrupt conduct, there are serious and far-reaching impacts:

<p>The individual</p> <p>Potential impacts of corruption include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • criminal prosecution • loss of job or income, demotion, and/or • loss of official entitlements such as superannuation. 	<p>The community</p> <p>Potential impacts of corruption include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less funds available for the delivery of public goods and services • enabling other criminal activity, including organised crime, and • risks to public health and safety and the environment.
<p>The department or agency</p> <p>Potential impacts of corruption include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • damage to reputation and credibility • loss of resources • loss of sensitive information • damage to operations and activities, and • decreased morale among staff. 	<p>The Australian Government</p> <p>Potential impacts of corruption include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss of public confidence • undermining the integrity of government information and services • weakening of government programs, and • loss of resources.

The impacts of corruption can be devastating for all Australians.

The harm caused by corruption-enabled border crime can be particularly significant.

Case study: Operation Zeus

Operation Zeus uncovered evidence that an Australian Border Force (ABF) Officer received a bribe and aided and abetted in the importation of tobacco products.

The Integrity Commissioner made one finding of corrupt conduct against the ABF Officer, finding the ABF Officer abused his office by conducting unauthorised searches of ABF systems to provide that information to a criminal syndicate to facilitate the importation of illicit tobacco products.

In this example, the impacts of corruption are:

The individual

During the investigation, the ABF Officer who engaged in corrupt conduct was suspended without pay, and their employment was later terminated.

In addition, the ABF Officer was sentenced to imprisonment, and ordered to forfeit property and assets with a gross value of \$1.8 million to the Commonwealth.

The community

The corrupt conduct assisted a criminal syndicate by facilitating the importation of undeclared tobacco into Australia. This poses risks to public health and safety and reduces the funds made available through tax for the delivery of public goods and services.

The department or agency

The corrupt conduct had potential to damage the agency's operation and activities by interfering with its ability to detect and prevent the importation of illicit tobacco products.

Operation Zeus provides an example of how corrupt conduct can compromise the integrity of a workplace and facilitate inappropriate and illegal behaviour.

The Australian Government

By facilitating the importation of illicit tobacco products through unlawful access to government computer systems, the corrupt conduct undermined the integrity of government information and services. It also had the potential to undermine public confidence and trust.

We all have a role to play

Detecting, investigating and preventing corruption is key to ensuring public trust and confidence in the Australian Government.

ACLEI

ACLEI's purpose is to make it more difficult for corruption in designated law enforcement agencies to occur or remain undetected.

Our role is to detect, investigate and prevent corruption, and assist designated law enforcement agencies to maintain and improve the integrity of staff members.

We do this by:

- receiving and assessing notifications and referrals of alleged corrupt conduct,
- conducting investigations into serious and systemic corrupt conduct,
- supporting others to conduct their own investigations, and
- preventing corruption through engagement, support and identification of vulnerabilities.

Law enforcement officers

Law enforcement officers can help prevent corruption by knowing their roles and responsibilities as members of their agencies.

Always act in accordance with your agency's internal policies as well as the APS code of conduct (and/or your agency's specific code of conduct).

Acting with honesty, transparency and integrity is vital for all public servants in order to ensure Australians have trust and confidence in Australian government.

Designated law enforcement agencies:

- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
- Australian Federal Police (including ACT Policing)
- Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission
- Australian Taxation Office
- Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)
- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- Department of Home Affairs (including the Australian Border Force)

What to do if you suspect corrupt conduct

Law enforcement agencies

If you suspect corrupt conduct within a designated law enforcement agency, contact us via email at contact@aclei.gov.au or use the reporting forms on the ACLEI [website](#).*

Other agencies

If you suspect corrupt conduct within an agency that is not a designated law enforcement agency, refer to the agency's website for information about how to report this behaviour.

If you are a current or former public official, you might also consider making a Public Interest Disclosure (PID) under the PID scheme, overseen by the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

*The information you provide to ACLEI will be handled in accordance with relevant privacy laws and the Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner Act 2006 (Cth) (LEIC Act).

Please be aware that the Integrity Commissioner may be required under the LEIC Act to provide information about your complaint to the head of the agency it refers to. If you have concerns about your information being shared, please email contact@aclei.gov.au to clarify prior to sending your complaint.

To find out more, visit www.aclei.gov.au