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Operation Adelaide: Investigation Report released by the Integrity Commissioner

Former ABF officer engaged in corruption by abusing his office with the intention of dishonestly obtaining benefits

The Integrity Commissioner and head of the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) Jaala Hinchcliffe has published her report on Operation Adelaide.

Operation Adelaide was an investigation into the misuse of a Commonwealth credit card and the use of forged medical certificates and statutory declarations by a former Australian Border Force (ABF) officer.

The joint investigation by ACLEI and the Department of Home Affairs found the former ABF officer, Pablo Olivares, engaged in corrupt conduct by abusing his office.

Evidence uncovered that Mr Olivares made 134 unauthorised cash withdrawals, several unauthorised hotel bookings and unauthorised car rental bookings on his Commonwealth credit card totalling \$93,898.75.

Ms Hinchcliffe said, "Mr Olivares deliberately used his official powers and discretions for an improper purpose in numerous instances."

Operation Adelaide found that Mr Olivares also uploaded 13 false medical certificates to cover periods of sick leave which he was not entitled to and submitted two false statutory declarations to substantiate charges made to his Commonwealth credit card.

"Mr Olivares attempted to avoid detection by forging statutory declarations. This strongly indicates that Mr Olivares was aware his conduct was improper, and acted with the intention of dishonestly obtaining significant benefits for himself."

As a result of Operation Adelaide, Mr Olivares was convicted and sentenced to 2.5 years imprisonment, to be released after 5 months served conditional on entering a recognisance of \$1,000 and being of good behaviour for a period of 3 years. Mr Olivares was also ordered to repay the total of \$93,898.75.

The conduct investigated under Operation Adelaide highlights a number of well-known corruption risks associated with the use of Commonwealth credit cards and out-posted roles, and the need for active identification and management of behavioural 'red flags.'

Since this investigation was undertaken, Home Affairs has implemented a number of new and/or modified credit card fraud mitigation strategies including changing and improving processes for Commonwealth credit cards and cash withdrawals, and introducing a new compliance monitoring program.

For further information, the Operation Adelaide Investigation Report 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