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Operation Cane: Former Department of Home Affairs employee sentenced for unlawful access of information following ACLEI investigation

A former Department of Home Affairs employee was sentenced for unlawfully accessing restricted information at the Downing Centre Local Court in Sydney yesterday.

The former employee entered into a recognizance in the amount of \$500 on the condition that he be of good behaviour for a period of 12 months.

This matter was the result of an investigation by the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) that found the offender, unlawfully accessed information.

The offender was charged with accessing restricted data without authorisation between 2 June 2010 and 23 April 2020, pursuant to s 478.1(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth).

It was alleged the offender unlawfully accessed information about members of his local community known to him.

The Department of Home Affairs initially received information regarding the offender's alleged conduct and referred it to ACLEI. The offender formally resigned his employment with the Department in April 2021.

During the course of the investigation, ACLEI found that the offender's mother, also a former employee of the Department of Home Affairs, had accessed information associated with her relatives, including her own file. The mother was convicted last week with a recognizance order to be of good behaviour for 12 months. The offender formally resigned her employment with the Department in April 2021.

The Integrity Commissioner and head of ACLEI, Ms Jaala Hinchcliffe welcomed the findings, "The offender used his position to obtain restricted information without a valid reason."

"As the information was in relation to people known to him, it was clearly inappropriate for him to access this information and it constitutes an abuse of his position."

"This finding is a timely reminder to all Commonwealth employees of the importance of acting with the utmost integrity, particularly when it comes to the privileged access public servants have to personal information."

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