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Operation Venari: Investigation Report released by the Integrity Commissioner

Former AFP members accessed and disclosed classified information to associate of a suspect in aggravated robbery investigation

A joint investigation by the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) has found two former AFP members engaged in corrupt conduct.

The sister duo, Ms Thorn and Ms Forrest, accessed and disclosed protected AFP information to a known associate of a suspect of an aggravated robbery in August 2016.

The investigation uncovered that Ms Thorn accessed AFP information without a business need on 445 occasions between September 2016 and January 2017, and improperly disclosed the information to Ms Forrest.

Evidence showed Ms Forrest then disclosed information to her associate, who was a known associate of the suspect in the AFP investigation. Ms Forrest also monitored the AFP case management system, and sought further AFP information from Ms Thorn.

The Integrity Commissioner and head of ACLEI, Jaala Hinchcliffe said, "The primary reason for Ms Thorn's conduct was to benefit Ms Forrest by tipping her off about issues relevant to someone she was associated with."

Ms Thorn and Ms Forrest were aware that improperly accessing and disclosing classified AFP information was contrary to the law and their responsibilities as AFP appointees.

In March 2019, Ms Thorn plead guilty to disclosing information and was convicted without sentence on the basis of entering a good behaviour order for 12 months. After considering the brief of evidence, the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions did not recommend charges against Ms Forrest.

Operation Venari highlights the significant corruption vulnerabilities that arise when Commonwealth employees have access to sensitive information.

"ACLEI continues to work in partnership with its jurisdictional agencies to raise awareness of integrity issues, including information security and unauthorised disclosure."

Since 2016, the AFP has implemented a number of strategies to mitigate the risk of unauthorised access and disclosure of information in its case management system.

For further information, the Operation Venari 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