



MEDIA RELEASE

OPERATION VOSS: ACLEI investigation report released

*An investigation into corruption issues relating to cargo inspections by a
Department of Agriculture staff member*

Wednesday, 31 March 2021 (immediate release)

Integrity Commissioner Jaala Hinchcliffe has today published her report on Operation Voss, a corruption investigation involving a former staff member of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (the Department of Agriculture) who used their position to assist with the importation of plants into Australia.

Operation Voss was a joint investigation between the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI), the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Agriculture.

Ms Hinchcliffe said the investigation uncovered an association between a company importing flowers from overseas and a former Department of Agriculture staff member, Mr Erol Ibrahim.

“Mr Ibrahim used his position to conduct lenient inspections of plants imported by the company in return for benefits that included cash, overseas travel, part time employment with them and information to obtain overtime shifts with the Department of Agriculture,” said Ms Hinchcliffe.

The investigation also found evidence that Mr Ibrahim provided confidential departmental information to the owner of the company and his son.

Operation Voss commenced in 2016 and concluded in 2020 with the sentencing of Mr Ibrahim’s two co-offenders.

Mr Ibrahim pleaded guilty to receiving a bribe and disclosure of information by a Commonwealth officer. He cooperated with law enforcement, and as a result his sentence was discounted to a total of three years’ imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine, suspended to a good behaviour bond of three years.

The owner of the company was sentenced to eighteen months’ imprisonment and ordered to pay a \$20,000 fine, to be released on a recognizance of \$2,000 to be of good behaviour for two years. The owner’s son was sentenced to seven months imprisonment to be released on a recognizance of \$1,000 to be of good behaviour for one year.

In her report published today, Ms Hinchcliffe found that Mr Ibrahim engaged in corrupt conduct, namely, abuse of office, while he was employed by the Department of Agriculture.

The Operation Voss 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](#) (the LEIC Act). For more information, visit ACLEI's website: www.aclei.gov.au

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