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Australian Crime Commission disrupts major South East Asian money laundering & drug trafficking operations.

The Australian Crime Commission led Task Force Gordian has achieved further success in its fight against money laundering with the arrest of five members of a South East Asian crime syndicate in Sydney.

In a related operation in Melbourne, a 47 year old woman has been arrested and charged with laundering in excess of \$1.4 million dollars.

Task Force Gordian has, over the past 3 weeks, arrested and charged a total of 57 people for laundering what is alleged to be in excess of \$93 million Australian dollars and for drug and other related offences.

The Task Force is made up of the Australian Crime Commission, Australian Federal Police, Victoria Police, New South Wales Police, New South Wales Crime Commission, Australian Taxation Office, Australian Customs Service and AUSTRAC.

Australian Crime Commission Chief Executive Alistair Milroy says Task Force Gordian's sharp focus on money laundering is achieving excellent results.

"We have disrupted the activities of over 6 separate syndicates and various financial facilitators relating to the laundering of what is alleged to be approximately \$93 million dollars. Our focus has been on dismantling the business and infrastructure of organised crime groups and these money launderers. The results are most encouraging."

Mr Milroy says it's important to recognise the contribution and commitment of the Australian Crime Commission's partner agencies in Task Force Gordian.

"It really has been a team effort. All partner agencies share intelligence, knowledge and resources in order to get the best results for the Australian community. I'd also like to especially thank the teams who are in the field undertaking this difficult and important work.

Since it began in March 2005, Task Force Gordian has led to the arrest of 57 people who have been charged in relation to laundering \$93 million dollars and serious drug trafficking offences. The Task Force has also seized over 33 kilograms of a variety of drugs including in excess of 17 kilograms of heroin and 8 kilograms of Ice, with an estimated street value of \$30 million dollars, along with the seizure of 5 firearms, 9 vehicles, over \$2 million in cash and the restraint of several millions of dollars worth of assets.

Chair of the ACC Board, Mick Keelty said "This operation has significantly disrupted the activities of organised syndicates allegedly involved in a range of criminal activities. By seizing proceeds of crime we remove the incentive to commit further offences and reduce the syndicates operating resources."

For further information about the ACC, and its body of work known as its Determinations, visit:
<http://www.crimecommission.gov.au>

ACC Media:

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Task Force Gordian Background

- Task Force Gordian was established by the Australian Crime Commission Board in March 2005 to investigate the money laundering activities of a number of Asian Crime syndicates.
- Task Force Gordian is led by the Australian Crime Commission but includes the Australian Federal Police, New South Wales Police, Victorian Police, New South Wales Crime Commission, Australian Taxation Office, Australian Customs Service and AUSTRAC.
- Task Force Gordian followed an earlier ACC investigation into Asian Crime syndicates in 2003 (Operation Katakana). That operation revealed the involvement of accountants, financial advisers, money remitters, electronic transfers and human couriers in laundering the proceeds of crime.
- A priority for Task Force Gordian is to target the financial infrastructure and networks that assist the Asian Crime syndicates.
- On October 6, 2006, 18 search warrants were executed in Sydney and Melbourne. Two men and three women were arrested and charged with money laundering \$93 million dollars, alleged to be the proceeds of drug trafficking. 4 people were charged with serious drug offences. \$730,000 in cash, 2 firearms, and \$1.6 million in assets were seized. These searches were conducted by the Australian Crime Commission in concert with Australian Federal Police, Victoria Police, NSW Police, NSW Crime Commission and the Australian Customs Service.
- On October 12, 2006, 12 search warrants were executed in Sydney and Melbourne. These searches resulted in the seizure of 1.1 kilograms of Ice and \$362,000 in cash. 8 men were arrested for serious drug offences. The searches were conducted by the Australian Crime Commission, Australian Federal Police, Victoria Police, NSW Police, NSW Crime Commission and the Australian Customs Service.
- Also on October 12, 2006 following the arrest of a person in Melbourne, who was in possession of a kilogram of Ice that he'd carried from Sydney, 4 search warrants, 1 in Sydney and 3 in Melbourne were executed. Another 4 persons were subsequently charged with serious drug offences. These search warrants resulted in the seizure of a further 400 grams of cocaine, \$167,500 in cash and 3 vehicles.
- On October 18, 2006, 550 grams of MDMA was seized in Sydney following a joint investigation with NSW Police. 2 men were charged with serious drug offences.
- On October 25, 2006, one man was arrested at Sydney Airport as he attempted to leave the country. He has been charged with attempting to launder in excess of \$1 million Australian dollars.
- On October 26, 2006, six search warrants in were executed in Sydney and one in Melbourne. Four people were arrested. Subsequently one woman was charged in Melbourne with laundering in excess of \$1.4 million, whilst in Sydney a man was charged with money laundering in excess of \$1.5 million. Two other men, also arrested in Sydney, were charged with serious drug offences. The searches resulted in the seizure of 180 grams of what is believed to be Ice, a heroin press, a loaded handgun and \$34,000 in cash. The searches were conducted by the Australian Crime Commission with the assistance of NSW Police, Australian Federal Police and the NSW Crime Commission.

During the life of Task Force Gordian -

People charged: 57

Dollar value laundered: Alleged \$93M

Drugs seized: Approximately 33 kilograms of various drugs, street value approximately \$30M

Cash seized: \$2,225,250