



AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION MEDIA RELEASE



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Operation Wickenby target summonsed on criminal charges

A 59-year-old man has been summonsed to appear in the Melbourne Magistrates Court tomorrow in relation to a number of criminal charges of defrauding the Commonwealth.

The man, from the Sydney suburb of Wahroonga, was issued a summons earlier this month following investigations by the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) led Operation Wickenby. The summons relates to three counts of defrauding the Commonwealth under the *Crimes Act 1914* and one count of dishonestly obtaining a gain under the Criminal Code. The maximum penalty for these offences ranges from 5 to 10 years imprisonment.

Operation Wickenby investigators allege the man established an off-shore corporate structure of trusts and companies for the benefit of another person. It is alleged the man then assisted this person in avoiding paying tax on \$400,000.

ACC Chief Executive Officer Alastair Milroy said the ACC together with other Operation Wickenby partners are continuing to target and prosecute those allegedly involved in schemes to fraudulently evade taxation responsibilities.

“The ACC, in conjunction with other Operation Wickenby partner agencies, is continuing to vigorously pursue promoters and participants who allegedly fraudulently evade their taxation obligations by falsifying deductions or concealing substantial taxable income through off shore transactions and financial structures,” Mr Milroy said.

“By combining our resources, expertise and investigative tools the ACC and its partner agencies have considerable power to investigate and prosecute those allegedly participating in these schemes.”

The Operation Wickenby investigation commenced in 2004 following intelligence obtained in ACC Operation Duxford, an investigation which began as a result of a referral from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). The estimated value of the revenue at risk through the type of tax fraud schemes being investigated under Operation Wickenby is in excess of \$300 million.

Operation Wickenby partner agencies include the ACC, ATO, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP). The operation is also supported by the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC).

The broader Project Wickenby, Australia’s largest investigation into tax evasion, is being led by the ATO and involves the ACC, AFP, ASIC and CDPP. This is the first time that these five agencies have brought their expertise and considerable powers together to deal with tax avoidance and evasion.

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