

## Section

# 01

## Agency overview

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### *Who we are and what we do*

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We are Australia's **national criminal intelligence** agency with **investigative** and **information delivery** functions.

# Chief Executive Officer's review

## Michael Phelan APM



Throughout 2018–19 we have taken great strides in supporting our partners to ensure a safer and more secure Australia. This is something we will continue to strive towards as we work within the Home Affairs portfolio as a member of the National Intelligence Community.

It is my vision for the ACIC to be the agency of choice when it comes to law enforcement intelligence. Our goal is for the ACIC to become the trusted partner for fighting organised crime and source of criminal intelligence for our partners. Engagement with our partners has identified areas of opportunity where we must build capability to effectively meet current and future operational and strategic needs.

We are one integrated agency, and building our reputation as the source of criminal intelligence is fundamental to our future. We want to be the 'centre of excellence' for criminal intelligence. Building a comprehensive strategic picture of serious and organised crime activities in Australia is central to our ability to connect, discover, understand and respond to crime impacting Australia.

### Significant developments in 2018–19

The Australian Priority Organisation Target list is a seminal document for our partners both here in Australia and overseas. The list focuses on offshore targets impacting Australia, detailing the top-tier international and transnational targets that play a significant role within Australia's serious and organised crime environment. It has been gratifying to see our state and territory partners work with us to create their own Regional Priority Organisation Target lists.

The development of the National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS) continued to progress throughout 2018–19. This important national capability will give Australia's law enforcement and intelligence agencies the first truly national and unified picture of criminal activity. Its successful delivery is our agency's number one priority.

Full funding to support delivery of the NCIS's Tranche 1 was secured in 2018–19. The first tranche will deliver the foundation of NCIS. It focuses on frontline services and aims to improve officer safety by providing a national view of crime. It will provide targeted, timely, relevant, prioritised national policing information, improving our ability to work together across jurisdictions and agencies.

We are now working in close collaboration with the Department of Home Affairs, which has come on board as our senior supplier. The joint ACIC–Home Affairs Program Team has been working to set up the program, define Tranche 1 in detail, work with partners to develop an integrated work schedule, and establish the technical underpinnings.

The NCIS is just one of the many ways we connect our partners to the information, intelligence and policing knowledge they need. This information is not only crucial in equipping the 70,000 police and non-police users to perform their jobs; it is also critical in keeping them safe while working on the front line.

This financial year we have made many ICT improvements to our internal systems as well as those that support our partners. In addition to meeting our system availability targets for all systems in 2018–19, we delivered enhancements to many national policing information systems and completed several internal infrastructure capability and consolidation projects.

We partner with Australian police agencies to provide the National Police Checking Service (NPCS). The NPCS enhances the safety of the community by providing accurate and timely police information that helps organisations to make informed decisions about the suitability of applicants for a range of employment, registration, licensing and other entitlements. The NPCS Transformation Program has been working with our police partners this year to commence a body of work that will modernise the service to enhance service delivery.

Part of our work this financial year has focused on ensuring that we are the most efficient and effective agency we can be. We needed to ensure that our skills and people were in the locations that best allowed us to deliver on the agency's national and international focuses as Australia's centre of excellence and partner of choice for criminal intelligence. We implemented a new structure with a 'greenfield' approach, which was framed by the question 'If we were creating the ACIC today to deliver on current and future priorities, what would it look like?'

I am confident that our new structure puts us in good stead to better coordinate and build our national capacity and capability across the intelligence continuum, allowing us to better facilitate business outcomes for our partners.

## Outlook for 2019–20

Looking forward, our focus will remain on further strengthening our relationships within the National Intelligence Community and responding to the criminal risks facing Australia, through three key areas of delivery: criminal intelligence capability, national criminal intelligence, and policing information services and the NPCS. You can read more detail about these planned activities in our corporate plan for 2019–20.

Looking back at our achievements over the past year, it is clear that the ACIC is strongly positioned to continue its important work of supporting our partners and creating a safer Australia that is better connected, informed and capable of responding to crime.



Michael Phelan APM  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission

## ▶ About us

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) has a vision of a safer Australia that is better connected, informed and capable of responding to crime.

We work with our partners on investigations and to collect intelligence to combat serious and organised crime, cybercrime and national security threats. We are the conduit for sharing criminal information and intelligence between all state, territory and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies.

We began operating on 1 July 2016. The ACIC is a statutory agency within the Home Affairs portfolio, in which the Department of Home Affairs is the central policy department.

### Purpose

Our purpose is to make Australia safer through improved national ability to discover, understand and respond to current and emerging crime, including the ability to connect police and law enforcement to essential criminal intelligence, policing knowledge and information through collaborative national information systems and services.

### Role

We are uniquely equipped as Australia's national criminal intelligence agency with investigative and information delivery functions. Our role includes reducing serious and organised crime threats of most harm to Australians and the national interest and providing national policing information systems and services.

To perform our role and achieve our purpose, we work closely with national and international partners to:

- ▶ collect, correlate, analyse and disseminate criminal information and intelligence
- ▶ maintain a national database of criminal information and intelligence
- ▶ provide and maintain national information capabilities and services to support policing and law enforcement
- ▶ provide strategic criminal intelligence assessments and advice on national criminal intelligence priorities
- ▶ conduct investigations and intelligence operations into federally relevant criminal activity
- ▶ provide nationally coordinated criminal history checks.

## Approach

Our strategic and corporate plans are framed around four key elements.

- ▶ **DISCOVER**—We generate and collect intelligence about new and emerging serious and organised crime. We integrate and analyse all available information to discover new crime threats.
- ▶ **UNDERSTAND**—Our role as the national criminal intelligence hub enables us to create a full and enriched national picture of crime. Our strategic intelligence assessments and insights inform national decision-making on crime.
- ▶ **RESPOND**
  - **Prevent**—Our information services inform and protect police, the community and potential victims of crime. We work with our partners to make it harder for criminals to operate by informing legislative change and preventative strategies.
  - **Disrupt and protect**—We provide critical intelligence contributions to partners that drive the disruption, disabling and dismantling of serious and organised criminal enterprises. We provide police with timely access to police information when they are investigating crime and safeguarding the community.
- ▶ **CONNECT**—We are a conduit between the states and territories and Commonwealth for the sharing of criminal information and intelligence. We facilitate deconfliction and collaboration among partners. We develop and maintain innovative national information and intelligence sharing services.

## Culture and values

We promote a culture that strives for excellence, enables personal and professional growth, values workplace diversity, models respectful behaviour, and achieves agency unity through collaboration and inclusiveness.

We value our professionally diverse people as our greatest asset. We engage with each other and our stakeholders ethically, and with integrity and respect. We are capable, agile, innovative, adaptable and service focused.

We are committed to the Australian Public Service values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical.

# ► Our organisation

We are a Commonwealth statutory agency, established under the *Australian Crime Commission Act 2002* with roles and functions underpinned by supporting legislation in each state and territory.

## Structure

Figure 1.1 sets out the organisational structure of the agency. Section 3 of the report provides more information on the members of our executive, our staffing and the locations of our activities.

**Figure 1.1:** Organisational structure at 30 June 2019



\* The ACIC Chief Executive Officer is also Director of the AIC.

## Board

The ACIC Board represents Commonwealth, state and territory law enforcement, and key regulatory and national security agencies.

The board is responsible for providing strategic direction to the ACIC, setting strategic priorities and approving our use of special coercive powers. The board is also responsible for determining the ACIC’s special operations and special investigations.

As a powerful law enforcement and national security body, the board provides a significant platform to drive the collegial approach necessary to make Australia better connected, informed and capable of responding to crime.

## Specialist capabilities

The capabilities that enable us to perform our functions include:

- ▶ **National criminal intelligence data holdings**—We collect criminal intelligence and combine it with information and intelligence from partner agencies to create and share a comprehensive national picture of criminality in Australia.
- ▶ **National information and intelligence sharing services and systems**—We provide timely and reliable police and law enforcement information services and, through consultation and collaboration, we develop new and innovative capabilities.
- ▶ **Coercive powers**—Our coercive powers, similar to those of a royal commission, are used in special operations and special investigations to obtain information when traditional law enforcement methods are unlikely to be or have not been effective.
- ▶ **International collaboration**—We work in collaboration with international networks and have deployed ACIC officers to countries of strategic importance in our efforts to counteract serious and organised crime impacting Australia.
- ▶ **Strategic products**—Our strategic intelligence products build a comprehensive picture of criminality in Australia to support our partners in decision-making, strategic targeting and policy development.
- ▶ **National target management framework**—Our national target management framework guides law enforcement in establishing and sharing organised crime priorities and targets. This framework and our Australian Priority Organisation Target list support nationally coordinated operational strategies for dealing with multijurisdictional and transnational serious and organised crime investigations.
- ▶ **Legislative framework allowing appropriate data sharing**—By sharing intelligence, information, resources and expertise with our partners, and with private industry where permitted and appropriate, we maximise the collective impact against crime. We are a conduit between the states and territories and the Commonwealth for the sharing of criminal information and intelligence.
- ▶ **Specialist technology and skills**—Our work is underpinned by sophisticated and tailored intelligence gathering and analysis capabilities.

## Relationship with the Australian Institute of Criminology

We support and collaborate closely with staff of the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC). Our CEO is also Director of the AIC, and AIC staff have transferred to the ACIC under a machinery of government process. The AIC is co-located with the ACIC, and ACIC staff are seconded back to the AIC, to ensure that criminological research and evidence remain central to law enforcement's collective response to crime. The ACIC also provides shared administrative services to the AIC, including finance, people and ICT.

While the AIC operates independently, its high-quality research is important to our work.

## ► Our outcome

Our annual portfolio budget statements detail our outcome and program structure. Within that framework, the ‘outcome’ is the intended result, impact or consequence of our actions. We work towards our outcome through the activities that make up our program.

Our outcome and program structure is shown in Figure 1.2, along with its relationship to our *Strategic Plan 2018–23* and *Corporate Plan 2018–19 to 2021–22*. Both plans and a link to our *Portfolio Budget Statements 2018–19* are at <[www.acic.gov.au/publications/corporate-documents](http://www.acic.gov.au/publications/corporate-documents)>.

**Figure 1.2:** ACIC portfolio, corporate and strategic performance framework 2018–19

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>STRATEGIC PLAN</b>                                  | <p><b>PURPOSE:</b> To make Australia safer through improved national ability to discover, understand and respond to current and emerging crime, including the ability to connect police and law enforcement to essential criminal intelligence, policing knowledge and information through collaborative national information systems and services.</p> <p><b>APPROACH:</b> We connect, discover and understand to improve the national ability to respond to crime impacting Australia.</p>   |
| <b>PORTFOLIO BUDGET STATEMENTS OUTCOME AND PROGRAM</b> | <p><b>Outcome 1</b><br/>To make Australia safer through improved national ability to discover, understand and respond to current and emerging crime threats and criminal justice issues, including the ability to connect police and law enforcement to essential criminal intelligence, policing knowledge and information through collaborative national information systems and services.</p> <p><b>Program 1.1 Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission</b><br/>The ACIC will improve the national ability to respond to crime and criminal justice issues affecting Australia through the discovery and understanding of new and emerging crime threats—working with and connecting partners to build the picture of crime impacting Australia. The ACIC will respond to serious and organised crime threats by developing new prevention and disruption strategies that disable or dismantle criminal groups through enforcement, as well as contributing to or informing regulations, policy or legislative responses that make Australia safe from crime threats. The ACIC will contribute to or lead nationally coordinated actions and activities through board-approved special investigations, special intelligence operations and joint task forces. The ACIC will provide high-quality national policing knowledge and information systems, and services that support the Australian policing community and will ensure controlled access to appropriate information, including by accredited third parties in relation to criminal history checks.</p> |



| CORPORATE PLAN<br>PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES                               | <p><b>DISCOVER</b><br/>We build the picture of crime impacting Australia by: Collecting information; and Combining information; to discover new areas of national focus.</p>                         | <p><b>UNDERSTAND</b><br/>We improve our understanding of the picture of crime impacting Australia by undertaking analysis to guide a better response.</p>   | <p><b>RESPOND</b><br/>We improve the national ability to prevent and disrupt crime and protect the community.</p>   | <p><b>CONNECT</b><br/>We help our partners by: Providing them with systems and services; Sharing criminal intelligence and information, policing and other relevant information; and Connecting partners to us and each other.</p>   |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| CORPORATE PLAN AND PORTFOLIO BUDGET STATEMENTS<br>PERFORMANCE CRITERIA | <p><b>Discover 1:</b><br/>The picture of crime impacting Australia is improving because the ACIC is discovering crime threats, vulnerabilities, patterns, methods and trends previously unknown.</p> | <p><b>Understand 1:</b><br/>The understanding of the picture of crime impacting Australia is increasingly more comprehensive, integrated and relevant.</p> <p><b>Understand 2:</b><br/>The understanding of the picture of crime impacting Australia is increasingly used to influence strategies and responses to crime.</p> | <p><b>Respond 1—Prevent:</b><br/>The ACIC better informs and influences collaborative efforts to harden the environment against crime.</p> <p><b>Respond 2A—Disrupt and protect:</b> The ACIC is conducting investigations and intelligence operations, and producing intelligence with and for partners that is effective in disrupting, disabling and dismantling serious and organised crime.</p> <p><b>Respond 2B—Disrupt and protect:</b> ACIC partners are better informed and enabled to undertake policing and community safeguarding activities through access to national information systems and services.</p> | <p><b>Connect 1:</b> Existing ACIC systems and services are accessible, used and reliable.</p> <p><b>Connect 2:</b> Through effective collaboration, enable the delivery and implementation of new and enhanced ACIC systems and services that satisfy the needs of stakeholders and users.</p> <p><b>Connect 3:</b> The ACIC is sharing increasing volume, breadth and formats (mediums, platforms) of criminal intelligence and information, police information, and other relevant information.</p> |

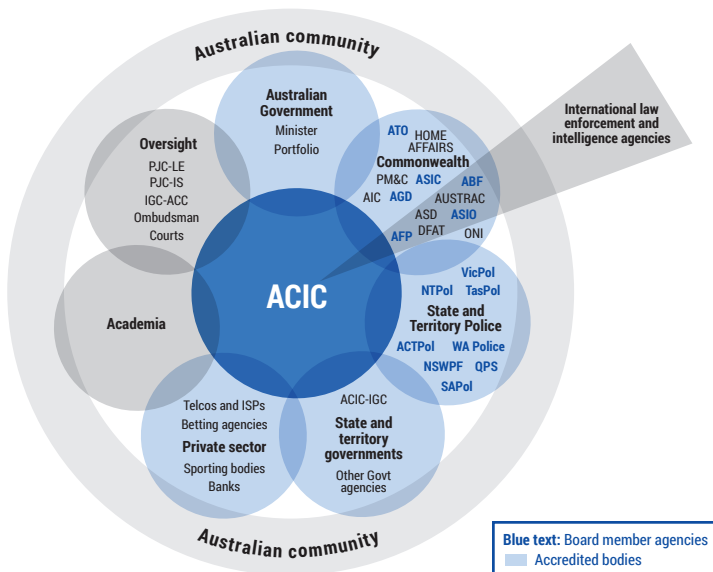
## ► Our stakeholders

We work with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve a shared national outcome of a safer Australia, as shown in Figure 1.3. Our stakeholders include:

- **Australian Government**—National law enforcement and intelligence agencies, national security and border security agencies, national regulators, national service delivery agencies and national policy development agencies.
- **States and territories**—State and territory law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and state and territory regulators and courts.
- **International agencies**—International law enforcement and intelligence agencies.
- **Accredited organisations**—Australian Government agencies, private sector businesses, not-for-profit organisations and screening units for working with children or vulnerable people who access the National Police Checking Service.
- **Private sector and community**—Private industry, research bodies and academia, and the community.

Due to the collaborative nature of our work, our stakeholder relationships are critical to achieving our purpose. Our stakeholders are important to us, so we seek their feedback regularly. Their feedback contributes to our performance measurement and informs our ongoing engagement. Stakeholder research findings for 2018–19 are summarised on page 73.

Figure 1.3: ACIC stakeholders



ABF = Australian Border Force, ACIC-IGC = Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission-Inter-Governmental Committee, ACTPol = Australian Capital Territory Policing, AFP = Australian Federal Police, AGD = Attorney-General's Department, AIC = Australian Institute of Criminology, ASD = Australian Signals Directorate, ASIC = Australian Securities and Investments Commission, ASIO = Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation, ATO = Australian Taxation Office, AUSTRAC = Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre, DFAT = Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, IGC-ACC = Inter-Governmental Committee on the Australian Crime Commission, ISPs = internet service providers, NSWPF = New South Wales Police Force, NTPol = Northern Territory Police, ONI = Office of National Intelligence, PJC-IS = Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence Security, PJC-LE = Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement, PM&C = Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, QPS = Queensland Police Service, SAPol = South Australia Police, TasPol = Tasmania Police, VicPol = Victoria Police, WA Police = Western Australia Police

## ▶ Australia's criminal environment

We operate in a complex environment. Understanding the dynamic and changing criminal environment is critical to determining how Australia responds. Our work is central to ensuring an informed, collaborative and connected national response to serious and organised crime impacting Australia.

The main features of serious and organised crime as it affects Australia are as follows:

- ▶ **Big business**—The Australian Institute of Criminology estimates that serious and organised crime cost Australia up to \$47.4 billion in 2016–17, including \$31.5 billion in direct costs and \$15.9 billion in prevention and response costs. In 2011, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimated that global profits from transnational organised crime in 2009 were around US\$870 billion—a figure that has undoubtedly grown since.
- ▶ **Destructive, pervasive and complex**—Serious and organised crime is touching the lives of Australians in unprecedented ways. Criminal threats are more complex and pervasive than ever before. Criminals seek to exploit vulnerabilities, emerging technologies and perceived gaps in law enforcement. The impact on the lives of Australians is clear, from devastated families and damaged communities to lost income, damage to health, social impacts and the erosion of public trust.
- ▶ **Globalised**—Our intelligence indicates that around 70 per cent of Australia's serious and organised criminal threats are based offshore or have strong offshore links.
- ▶ **Concealed**—Serious and organised criminals corrupt officials, employ professional experts to advise on complex methods and techniques, use violence and intimidation, and blend criminal activity with legitimate business to support and conceal their criminal enterprises.
- ▶ **Resilient**—Criminal groups are enduring and resilient, collaborating for mutual gain and quickly dispersing or shifting focus when disrupted.
- ▶ **Cyber-savvy**—Significant technology advances have offered new opportunities for serious and organised crime. Crime penetrates and capitalises on technology and the cyber environment. Criminal groups can now target thousands of Australians simultaneously from anywhere in the world and use increasingly sophisticated technologies to counter law enforcement efforts.
- ▶ **National security threat**—Enhanced counter-terrorism efforts are being made throughout Australia, but the links between terrorism and broader organised crime and volume crime in Australia are unprecedented. This includes Australians who finance terrorist activities, leave Australia to support terrorist causes or return intending to harm the Australian community. It also includes Australians recruited by organised crime groups that are seeking the skills developed in foreign conflicts. We support our partners in identifying previously unknown individuals and groups, including domestic terrorism threats from 'lone actors'.
- ▶ **Diversified**—New forms of business are emerging in addition to traditional organised crime activities. This diversification into multiple criminal markets provides consistent revenue streams to finance higher risk ventures and enables criminal enterprises to respond to shifts in supply and demand.