2002-2022 TWENTY YEARS OF MODERN



- DECADES IN THE MAKING



CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE COMMISSION

2002-2022 **TWENTY YEARS** OF MODERN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE



CEO FOREWORD

AUSTRALIAN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE COMMISSION CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MICHAEL PHELAN APM 2017–2022

t has been a privilege to lead the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) over the last 5 years. As I reflect on my time with the ACIC, I look back fondly on what has been achieved and look forward to observing what is yet to come.

The history of the ACIC in its modern form dates back 20 years to 2002, with the establishment of the Australian Crime Commission. But the agency has grown from the experiences and developments of its predecessors and partner organisations as they respond to changing criminal threats in the serious and organised crime landscape.

It has been influenced by a series of Royal Commissions in the 1970s and 1980s that recognised the need for coercive powers, similar to those of a Royal Commission, to deal with the investigation of serious and organised crime, when traditional police methods prove ineffective. The ACIC has transformed significantly since I joined in late 2017. We have been formally recognised as an intelligence agency and play an integral part in maintaining our country's national security by targeting serious and organised crime threats. Our shift to ensure examinations and our other capability pillars are at the centre of everything we do, along with our focus on partnerships, positions the agency to continue to deliver into the future.

We have achieved substantial operational outcomes and criminal disruptions working with our law enforcement and intelligence partners across all level of government, including internationally. We continue to support partners and keep them safe on the frontline through provision of national policing information, and importantly, through delivery of the National Criminal Intelligence System.

There have been so many achievements and important developments over the years, it is challenging to highlight just a few – so in marking the agency's anniversary, we have provided a small glimpse into just some of what has been achieved during our rich history.

I believe the ACIC is on strong footing to continue to deliver on its strategic direction and ensure Australia remains hostile to criminal exploitation. I look forward to following the agency's continuing success.

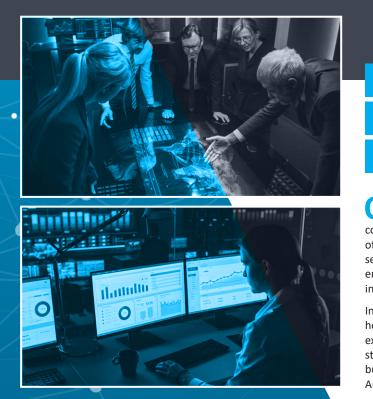
Michael Phelan APM Chief Executive Officer Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission

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INTRODUCTION

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) works with partners across Australia and globally to protect Australia from criminal threats through coordinating a strategic response and collecting, assessing and disseminating intelligence and policing information.





OUR VISION IS 'AN AUSTRALIA HOSTILE TO CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION'.

Our unique coercive powers, similar to a Royal Commission, authorise ACIC examiners to compel people to give evidence for the purposes of special ACIC operations or investigations. This sets us apart from traditional police services and enables us to collect intelligence and generate insights into the criminal environment.

In this anniversary publication, we look back at how the modern-day ACIC is built on decades of experience and developments – shaped by early state-based and Commonwealth intelligence bureaus, Royal Commissions and developments in Australia's serious and organised crime landscape.



THE EARLY YEARS

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMONWEALTH POLICE

Criminal intelligence operations at a national level can be traced back to the First World War and the formation of the Commonwealth Police on 1 December 1917.

THE EARLY YEARS



HUGHES ORDERED A LOCAL QUEENSLAND **POLICE OFFICER TO ARREST THE MAN** FOR A BREACH OF COMMONWEALTH LAW **BUT HE REFUSED, CLAIMING TO ONLY RECOGNISE THE LAWS OF HIS OWN STATE.**

hile this 'federal special branch' was planned as part of precautionary war efforts, the catalyst was an incident where a protestor threw an egg at Prime Minister William Morris (Billy) Hughes while he was in Queensland campaigning for military conscription. Hughes ordered a local Queensland police officer to arrest the man for a breach of Commonwealth law but he refused, claiming to only recognise the laws of his own state. As a result, Hughes vowed to form a police force to enforce the laws of the Commonwealth throughout the country. The Commonwealth Police was formed 2 days later.

Throughout the First and Second World Wars the Commonwealth Police was a small but important contributor to law enforcement, handling matters relating to illegal immigration and administration of Commonwealth law, as well as becoming the channel for state and territory police forces to communicate with federal departments about investigations.

The Commonwealth Police went through several changes in the years that followed, eventually becoming the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in 1979. The AFP has played an important role in the history of the ACIC and is one of our core partners in criminal intelligence and the fight against serious and organised crime.



The infamous egg throwing incident on Prime Minister Hughes forming the (ommonwealth Police two days later



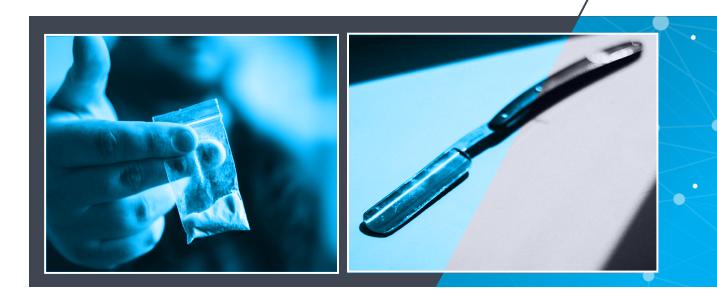
THE EARLY YEARS

1920 - 1970

GROWTH IN ORGANISED CRIME AND CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE

Around the time the Commonwealth Police was formed, state and territory police intelligence bureaus were being established in response to the serious and organised crime threat taking shape in Australia in the early 1900s.

THE EARLY YEARS



This included Sydney's infamous razor gangs of the 1920s, who controlled cocaine, prostitution, sly grog and other criminal enterprises. The gangs used cutthroat shaving blades as weapons, and street violence escalated until the mid-1930s when new laws preventing 'criminal consorting' and prison terms for possessing cutthroat razors without good reason helped reduce the problem.

Other criminal groups came as migrants after the Second World War including the Calabrian mafia, Russian mafia, Vietnamese, Chinese, Colombian and Middle Eastern organised crime groups. Public and political concern was heightened in the mid-1960s by a series of murders and attempted murders at the Queen Victoria Produce Markets in Melbourne, attributed to the Calabrian mafia. By the late 1960s, outlaw motorcycle gangs were also emerging in Australia.

State and territory police forces developed large intelligence holdings, local knowledge and sophisticated tradecraft. However, their criminal intelligence was limited by state and territory borders, whereas organised crime crossed state, territory and international borders. At the national level, in 1975 several specialist areas of the newly created Department of Police and Customs merged to form the Australian Crime Intelligence Centre. The aim was to amalgamate and modernise national crime intelligence, to improve the response to growing organised crime.

The Australian Crime Intelligence Centre will aid in this process by placing the Commonwealth Police, as well as other branches of the Department, in the forefront of current developments in law enforcement and in the use of crime intelligence.

Commonwealth Police Force, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police, year ended 30 June 1975

The centre collected, collated, evaluated and disseminated crime intelligence related to drugs, organised crime and terrorism. It also collated statistics on illicit drug trafficking in Australia and developed its own programs in areas of organised crime of interest to the Commonwealth.



Australian Government Australian Institute of Criminology





ESTABLISHMENT OF AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY

In 1973 the Australian Institute of Criminology started operating as a national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice. THE EARLY YEARS





THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN INFORMING DEBATE

ror nearly 50 years now the Australian Institute of Criminology has been conducting research on a range of crime and justice issues to provide timely, policy-relevant research to the Australian Government and other key stakeholders. Through its research, the Australian Institute of Criminology plays a key role in informing debate on crime and justice issues of national importance. This can include undertaking new projects on emerging issues that extend beyond the research priorities, allowing the Australian Institute of Criminology to be agile in its response to policy concerns. It also plays a role in disseminating research through its library services, as well as through conferences and the media.

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THE EARLY YEARS

1973 - 1983

ROYAL COMMISSIONS INTO ORGANISED CRIME

During the 1970s and early 1980s, a dramatic increase in gang violence and the distribution of illegal drugs prompted a series of Royal Commissions into organised crime.

THE EARLY YEARS



This generated significant public and political concern about the impact of organised crime on the Australian community. It also reinforced the lack of coordination and capacity among existing law enforcement agencies to effectively deal with organised crime, including the lack of Royal Commission type coercive powers needed to secure evidence and documents in such complex cases.

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Around the same time, the drawbacks of a federated policing system began to show in law enforcement intelligence. The 1978 Hilton Hotel bombing in Sydney – Australia's first terrorist attack – revealed the need for better cooperation and intelligence sharing between federal, state and territory police.

THE NEW SOUTH WALES MOFFITT ROYAL COMMISSION (1973–74)

The Moffitt Royal Commission was one of the first to investigate the extent of organised crime in New South Wales. In his final report, Justice Moffitt found there was a real danger that organised crime from overseas would infiltrate Australia. His recommendations included the need for a 'frank and drastic review of the methods of investigation of organised crime of overseas and local origin and that particular procedures be established appropriate to this as a special class of crime'.



The Woodward Royal Commission followed the disappearance of anti-drugs campaigner Donald Mackay. It examined aspects of organised crime related to Australia's drug trade, focusing heavily on the Calabrian mafia in Australia and its links to the New South Wales Police Force. The Commission received evidence of the existence of a secret Calabrian society operating in New South Wales, which was involved in the cultivation and distribution of marijuana, together with money laundering, intimidation and other illicit activities. Recommendations related to policy and administration, as well as the identification and treatment of drug users and promotion of programs to discourage drug use.

THE WILLIAMS ROYAL COMMISSION (1977–80)

The Williams Royal Commission was commissioned by the Australian, Victorian, Tasmanian and Western Australian governments to report on the extent of illegal importation, exportation, production and trafficking in drugs by people who engaged on an organised basis in other illegal activities. It also examined the adequacy of existing laws and law enforcement operations related to drugs. In his report, Justice Williams noted that 'intelligence is the most important single weapon in the armoury of law enforcement generally and of drug law enforcement in particular'. He also said the previous effort to establish a central holding of intelligence within the Australian Crime Intelligence Centre had not achieved much more than a holding of information on drug-related crime of historical interest only. He recommended a central National Criminal Drug Intelligence Centre be set up.

In a joint memorandum, the Woodward and Williams Royal Commissions made recommendations to the Australian and New South Wales governments about the effectiveness of existing law enforcement agencies in dealing with the problems posed by organised crime. They emphasised the critical lack of coordination between state and federal agencies, wasteful deployment of resources and duplication of effort, and recommended that a joint task force be set up to secure the conviction of people trafficking drugs.

THE COSTIGAN ROYAL COMMISSION (1980–84)

The Costigan Royal Commission into the activities of the Federated Ship Painters and Dockers Union at the Williamstown Naval Dockyard was established by the Australian and Victorian governments. The original inquiries broadened to include investigations into drugs, fraud, tax evasion and corruption. Mr Costigan found that existing law enforcement agencies were not appropriately qualified or properly equipped, and also lacked the necessary power to undertake complex analysis and investigations into organised crime. He recommended the establishment of a permanent Crime Commission. The Australian Government's response to the Costigan report acknowledged the 'remarkable evolution of the Costigan Royal Commission, as it pursued the labyrinth of organised crime' in Australia. The government also noted that the Commission had developed a high degree of cooperation with law enforcement agencies, leading to numerous investigations, arrests and prosecutions.

THE **STEWART ROYAL COMMISSION** (1981–83)

The Stewart Royal Commission was set up by the Australian, Queensland, New South Wales and Victorian governments to inquire into drug trafficking and the activities of a criminal group of Australian and New Zealanders involved in the movement of drugs from South East Asia to Australia and New Zealand and also to the United Kingdom. Justice Stewart drew attention to the Williams Royal Commission findings about the fragmented approach by Australian law enforcement agencies to problems posed by organised crime. He endorsed Justice Williams' recommendations for a cooperative approach, noting that investigations into organised crime were long-term, demanding and complex and that the resources, powers, procedures and techniques available to existing law enforcement agencies were inadequate to deal with the problem.



PG 19

The government also noted that the (ommission had developed a high degree of cooperation with law enforcement agencies, leading to numerous investigations, arrests and prosecutions.







TOWARDS A MODERN APPROACH

1981 - 2003

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE

In February 1981, the Commonwealth, states and territories signed an agreement to form the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence (ABCI) – Australia's core agency for the collection of criminal intelligence for the latter part of the 20th century. THE ABCI WAS THE FIRST STATUTORY AGENCY TO BRING TOGETHER STATE AND TERRITORY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, THROUGH A BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS.

A s Justice Williams had recommended, the ABCI was charged with maintaining a repository of criminal intelligence and gathering information of interest to the operations of Australian law enforcement agencies. The small bureau set the foundation for the ACIC's vision today, and was responsible for significant developments in criminal intelligence and technological advancement in law enforcement.

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AN AGREEMENT made the sixth day of February 1981 B E T W E E N : THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA (in this Agreement called "the Commonwealth") of the first part, THE STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES of the second part, THE STATE OF VICTORIA of the third part, THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND of the fourth part, THE STATE OF GUEENSLAND of the fourth part, THE STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA of the fifth part, THE STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA of the sixth part, THE STATE OF TASMANIA of the seventh part, (each of the parties of the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh parts being in this Agreement referred to as a "State" and, except where the context otherwise indicates, the expression "the States" hereinafter The ABCI was the first successful attempt to share intelligence between states, territories and with the Commonwealth. However, it wasn't without failures, experiencing issues such as lack of cooperation and rivalry with state police, allegations of illegal phone tapping, and one of its directors resigning after allegations that ABCI staff gained unauthorised access to secret AFP computer data on criminals. Despite this, the ABCI largely drew praise and facilitated the first truly national repertoire of criminal intelligence, connecting once siloed police forces like never before.

The legacy of an informed, collaborative, national approach to policing continues today.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

AUSTRALIAN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE DATABASE

In 1989, the Australian Criminal Intelligence Database (ACID) was launched as the only national criminal intelligence database in Australia. ACID evolved from the law enforcement component of the Australian Drugs Database and was located on the ABCI's own mainframe computer. All Australian police agencies were connected to ACID through encrypted highspeed lines.

Users could run simple and complex searches of the considerable intelligence holdings to identify a variety of links. The secure database was designed to keep pace with international developments in criminal intelligence, as a significant resource for Australia's criminal intelligence analysts for operational, tactical and strategic planning and policy development. In the early days, there were between 300 and 500 users accessing the system. Over the last 4 years, an average of 2,515 users performed more than 336,000 searches per year.

Today, as we transition to the new National Criminal Intelligence System, ACID remains available to ACIC partners through the Australian Law Enforcement Intelligence Network (ALEIN) secure extranet.

ILLICIT DRUG REPORTS

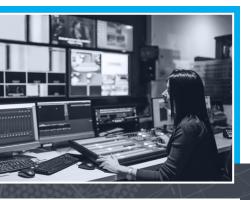
In 1999, the Australian Police Ministers Council tasked ABCI to report on the 4 major illicit drugs in Australia. The Australian Drug Intelligence Assessment report, later renamed the Australian Illicit Drug Report, was designed to present a comprehensive annual review of the origin, volume, trafficking routes, modes of transport and smuggling methods of all significant drugs on the Australian illicit market, as well as associated illicit drug money flow.

The ACIC still releases an annual drug report, the Illicit Drug Data Report (IDDR). The IDDR is the only report of its type in Australia and informs understanding of the illicit drug threat by bringing together data from all state and territory police services, the AFP, the Department of Home Affairs, the Australian Border Force, state and territory forensic laboratories and research centres. Illicit drug data collected and presented in the report includes arrest, detection, seizure, purity, profiling and price data.



NATIONAL MISSING PERSONS UNIT

In 1995, the National Missing Persons Unit was launched within the ABCI. At that time, around 30,000 people were reported missing in Australia each year – one person every 18 minutes – with 86% found within a week. The unit provided critical national coordination and support to state and territory police services in locating long-term missing person cases. It was also involved in education, practical advice and public awareness strategies to improve understanding about missing person issues as well as helping to locate specific cases. Another priority area was specialised grief counselling training and establishing specialised self-help groups for families of long-term missing people. In 2006, following recommendations out of the Inquiry into the Circumstances of the Immigration Detention of Cornelia Rau, the unit was absorbed into the enhanced National Missing Persons Coordination Centre within the AFP.



OLYMPIC INTELLIGENCE CENTRE

In 2000 the ABCI provided 24/7 support to the New South Wales Olympic Intelligence Centre, including media monitoring and reporting for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. ACID/ALEIN was heavily relied on with more than 10,600 hits during the event and close to 23,000 hits recorded that guarter. The same year, ALEIN Mail was launched to enable secure communications between state police forces.





TOWARDS A MODERN APPROACH

NATIONAL CRIME AUTHORITY

While the ABCI was focused on collecting criminal intelligence, the National Crime Authority (NCA) was established to investigate complex, organised criminal activity – continuing the work of the Costigan Royal Commission.

TOWARDS A MODERN APPROACH



he new national agency needed to be equipped with coercive powers, skills and resources to lead the national fight against organised crime. The government considered that giving coercive powers to a body with limited size, special qualifications and the status of a Commission would be more acceptable to the community than giving the same powers to existing police forces.

The NCA was the only Australian law enforcement agency that could investigate both state and Commonwealth offences. The agency's coercive powers included the power to hold hearings (examinations) and receive evidence under oath, require the production of documents, order confiscation of passports and issue arrest warrants for witnesses. The intention was to complement and coordinate with, rather than compete against, Australia's police forces.

The NCA was formally established on 5 June 1984 under the National Crime Authority Act 1984, with powers also from supporting legislation introduced in Australian states and territories.

be effective.

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS

OPERATION SILO TARGETS DRUG SYNDICATE

One of the NCA's most publicised successes was the Operation Silo investigation into the Cornwell/Bull drug syndicate. In 1987, the details of Operation Silo were made public. While police had focused on Bruce Cornwell and Barry Bull previously, no hard evidence had been found. The NCA investigation started in 1984, based on the view that ordinary police methods of investigation were unlikely to be effective, given Cornwell's evasion of earlier investigations. As such, the NCA sought a reference from the Inter-Governmental Committee of Commonwealth and State Ministers who were responsible for approving the NCA to investigate matters, after considering whether ordinary police methods were likely to

The investigations of Operation Silo revealed that Cornwell and, to a lesser extent, Bull had long been major figures in the illegal narcotics trade. Following these investigations, Cornwell was found and arrested in London in November 1985 and Bull was arrested at the Austrian border in April 1986. The investigation led to 33 people being charged with 164 offences. Twenty people were convicted, including Cornwell and Bull, who were sentenced to a total of 23 years and 18 years respectively.

NCA BECOMES PERMANENT

On 23 February 1988, Parliament repealed a 5-year sunset clause that would have closed the NCA on 30 June 1989. An initial evaluation by the Parliamentary Joint Committee, reported that the NCA was demonstrating success in its objective to combat serious and organised crime. The repeal of the sunset provision more than 12 months before it was due to come into effect was a strong vote of confidence in the value of that NCA.

MORE THAN 1,100 EXAMINATIONS CONDUCTED AND \$35 MILLION SEIZED

By 1990 the NCA had conducted more than 1,100 examinations and seized more than \$35 million in proceeds of crime. As a result, 432 people had also been charged with a total of 2,242 offences.

ATTEMPTED MURDER AT THE NCA

On 24 April 1990, an explosive device was thrown under the car of NCA South Australian branch chief Gerald Dempsey at his Adelaide home. The attack was blamed on an insubordinate NCA officer, however, the NCA denied this accusation and the culprit was never found.

NATIONAL EXPANSION OF NCA

Also in 1990, the Australian Government committed an additional \$19 million over 3 years to establish NCA regional offices in Perth and Brisbane, as well as federal funding for the NCA's existing Adelaide office, that had been funded by South Australia. This provided the NCA with a permanent national presence.

TARGETING ORGANISED CRIME PROFITS

In 1991, newly appointed NCA Chief Justice Phillips was appointed President of the Financial Action Task Force. The task force, which still exists today, is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog. It sets international standards that aim to prevent these illegal activities and the harm they cause to society. More than 200 countries and jurisdictions are committed to implementing these standards.

Most NCA investigations had a taxation or proceeds of crime dimension, with a focus on attacking the profit motive in organised crime. In 1990–91, the NCA assisted the Australian Taxation Office in issuing \$47 million worth of tax assessments, an increase of more than \$14 million during the year.



NCA BOMBING

At 9.15 am on 2 March 1994, the NCA Adelaide office was rocked by an explosion. Detective Sergeant Geoffrey Bowen was killed and Peter John Wallis, a lawyer employed at the NCA, was seriously injured in the blast, which caused extensive damage to the building. The package containing the bomb had been collected from the General Post Office by NCA security staff earlier that morning. The explosion was determined to be the result of a pre-meditated attack. The NCA's Regional Manager, Paul Foley, told the Coronial Inquest that staff were heroic, as even though they had no idea what caused the explosion or whether there would be a further explosion, they were undeterred in their efforts to reach and help Wallis and Bowen.

Minister for Justice, Duncan Kerr, said at the time 'I assure the Australian public that the Government and the NCA's resolve to fight organised crime will only be strengthened as a result of this cowardly attack on innocent people'.

After decades of investigation, in 2021 Domenic Perre faced a 7-month long trial before Justice Kevin Nicholson. Perre pleaded not guilty to the murder of Geoffrey Bowen and attempted murder of Peter Wallis. On 30 June 2022, this significant and long-running investigation was brought to a close with Justice Nicholson finding Perre guilty of murdering Detective Sergeant Geoffrey Bowen and attempting to murder Peter Wallis.

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MORE THAN \$420 MILLION IN PROCEEDS OF CRIME SEIZED

As the NCA evolved over the years, it worked to target the financial base of organised crime syndicates using aggressive and coordinated attacks on the profits derived from criminal activity. By 1997, the NCA had seized more than \$420 million in proceeds of crime.



SWORDFISH TASK FORCE FIGHTS MONEY LAUNDERING AND REVENUE FRAUD

In the 1997–98 Federal Budget, the NCA was allocated \$20 million over an initial 3 years to lead a concerted attack on the profit motive of organised crime. The Swordfish National Task Force was established with the aim of disrupting and deterring organised crime involvement in revenue fraud, money laundering and predicate offences (components of larger crimes).

The task force identified, targeted and recovered the proceeds of crime, creating a significant disincentive for organised criminal activity. This involved following the money trail, investigating and prosecuting serious organised tax fraud, money laundering and proceeds of crime offences, disrupting criminal networks and attacking the profit motive for organised crime by raising tax assessment and penalties and confiscating criminal assets. The NCA worked closely with the Australian Taxation Office, Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and all Australian law enforcement agencies to maximise the impact of Swordfish.

Swordfish made extensive use of the NCA's coercive powers such as hearing and notices to produce documents - important tools for progressing investigations and obtaining intelligence. In the first 3 years of the task force, 35 people were convicted of 133 offences and tax assessments for more than \$126 million were issued to individuals and companies. Swordfish also contributed to other high-level outcomes by disrupting drug trafficking and organised criminal enterprises, which depend on money laundering.

COERCIVE POWERS PAY OFF

In 1999, a syndicate in possession of 20 blocks of heroin was shut down in Melbourne. Six people were sentenced to a total of 79 years imprisonment. The NCA's special coercive powers played a key role in the investigation. Notices served on Crown Casino showed one of the major targets had turned over \$260 million in the period under investigation. The gambling and accommodation credits derived from this turnover enabled him to live at Crown Towers effectively free for more than 18 months. Further notices were able to trace the money trail back to Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Narcotics Bureau and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police assisted the investigation and provided valuable information on the major targets. Assets used as part of the heroin exchange were seized and forfeited.



OSCA

TOWARDS A MODERN APPRAOCH

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC CRIME ASSESSMENTS

In March 1994, another agency was established, this time to assess crime trends and likely threats to inform policy development.

The Office of Strategic Crime Assessments (OSCA), in the Australian Government Attorney-General's portfolio, was under the supervision of the new Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board. The board was set up in response to the Review of Commonwealth Law Enforcement Arrangements to coordinate the relationships between the key Commonwealth law enforcement agencies and advise on law enforcement policy issues generally.

The OSCA was tasked with providing strategic assessments of significant crime trends and criminal threats to Australia likely to emerge over the next 3 to 5 years and to assist the government to consider appropriate policy action against such threats. It obtained information from a wide range of sources including intelligence analysis prepared by law enforcement agencies, trend data from other government agencies, academic research and expert opinion, as well as open source data from the public and private sectors.

As an assessment agency providing strategic advice, the OSCA did not directly support operational law enforcement activities.



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ESSENTIAL POLICE INFORMATION

1990 - 2000

NATIONAL EXCHANGE OF POLICE INFORMATION

In parallel to the development of a modern approach to national criminal intelligence, efforts were also underway to coordinate the collection and sharing of essential police information.

ESSENTIAL POLICE INFORMATION

THE NATIONAL EXCHANGE OF POLICE INFORMATION (NEPI) WAS LAUNCHED IN 1990 IN THE NEW SOUTH WALES FERGUSON POLICE CENTRE





t was intended to mirror the successful National Automated Fingerprint Identification System that was established 4 years earlier to store and match fingerprints.

The NEPI initiative was designed to provide substantial benefits to the Australian community by sharing information technology and resources across jurisdictions. C R I M T R A C

ESSENTIAL POLICE INFORMATION

CRIMTRAC

In July 2000 an inter-governmental agreement recognised the need for modern IT systems to meet changing law enforcement needs.

ESSENTIAL POLICE INFORMATION

The agreement between federal, state and territory law enforcement ministers, established CrimTrac and transitioned NEPI's responsibilities and services into the new agency. CrimTrac was charged with modernising the IT systems created by the NEPI and adding new systems required by Australian police, such as biometric identification of persons of interest via fingerprints and DNA. The aim was to provide quick access to the information they need to prevent, detect and reduce crime.

REDUCE CRIME.





NATIONAL POLICE CHECKING SERVICE LAUNCHED

In 2000, the National Police Checking Service (NPCS) was launched, allowing people to apply for a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check. These are often required when applying for employment, Australian citizenship, appointment of positions of trust, and a variety of licensing and registration schemes.

Checking services enhance the safety of the community by providing timely and accurate information to help organisations make informed decisions about the suitability of applicants for a range of employment, volunteering, registration, licensing and other entitlements. As many checks are required as part of pre-employment screening, the volume of checks reflects employment trends in Australia.



NATIONAL AUTOMATED FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM UPGRADED

Also in 2000, the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) was upgraded. It provides fingerprint and guality information services to police jurisdictions throughout Australia. Originally established in 1986, the NAFIS had run out of capacity by 2000 and was being eclipsed by other nations' systems. The upgrade converted more than 2.4 million existing fingerprint records into a new contemporary system format.

In 2015, the NAFIS included tenprint data (finger and palm print images taken in controlled situations, along with corresponding basic biographic information), and latent data (unsolved finger and palm print impressions recovered from crime scenes). Another enhancement, the National Portable Biometric Interface (NPBI), allowed police on the street to capture a person's fingerprints and rapidly connect to NAFIS to identify them, within 90 seconds. The system was now available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By mid-2015, it contained 6.7 million print sets of 3.9 million people, and had supported more than 2 million searches in the past year. The following year, it had grown to include 7.4 million fingerprint sets of 4.3 million people, with more than 2.1 million searches conducted.

In November 2021, NAFIS NextGen was announced, with an upgrade to continue and enhance this critical national law enforcement system. The upgraded, fully supported system includes protected Government cloud capability, advanced latent fingerprint processing and integration with partner agency systems.

Australian police continue to use this system today, to establish a person's identity from fingerprint and palm impressions or prints. It is also used to support Australia's migration program.

NATIONAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DNA **DATABASE DEVELOPED**

In 2001, development began on the National Criminal Investigations DNA Database (NCIDD) to enable DNA profile matching across jurisdictions. The objective was to deliver an effective national DNA system to help Australian police investigate and solve crimes.

The NCIDD enables police to match crime scene DNA profiles with convicted serious offender profiles and match profiles from 2 or more unsolved crime scenes, to link seemingly unrelated police investigations.

The database includes more than a million DNA profiles from samples collected by Australian police from crime scenes, convicted offenders, suspects, items belonging to missing persons and unknown deceased persons.

The development of the NCIDD, including the database, search engine and enabling Commonwealth legislation continued through until the program was fully operational by 2005.

In 2018, the NCIDD functionality was increased to provide police partners and related agencies with a new forensic software to enable familial searching, kinship matching and advanced direct matching across Australia's state and territory borders for law enforcement purposes.

NATIONAL POLICE CHECKING SERVICE UPGRADED

By 2012, the NPCS was processing 3 million checks a year for 117 accredited bodies. Today, the NPCS facilitates more than 6 million checks each year, which can result in more than 8,000 referrals to police each day.

NATIONAL POLICE REFERENCE SYSTEM GOES MOBILE

While law enforcement respects jurisdictional borders, criminals often don't. The National Police Reference System (NPRS) enables Australian police agencies to share essential policing information with one another. This system provides key reference data, such as warrants and bail conditions, to support police officers, investigators and analysts.

During 2014–15, there was increased use of the NPRS as it became more readily accessible to police through a wider range of applications including mobile and tablet devices. In those 12 months alone, 38 million person searches were conducted, and 7 million photos and more than 10 million person records were on file. In June 2016, more than 42.1 million searches were conducted, and more than 11.1 million person records and 8.5 million photos were on file.

A 2010 upgrade to the NPCS transitioned criminal history checks from a largely paper-based system to an electronic one. This was also the first time a CrimTrac system was made available to external, non-law enforcement organisations. This meant all accredited bodies accessing the NPCS could access the system to directly submit check requests and download the results.





A MODERN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

2002 - 2016

AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION

The events of 11 September 2001 had a profound effect across the globe, highlighting the need for true cooperation and information sharing among law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

A MODERN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

egislation to establish the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) was passed in 2002 and came into effect on 1 January 2003. The new ACC merged the NCA, ABCI and OSCA. These 3 organisations had played an important role in Australian law enforcement and merging them integrated their strengths in investigative capability, operational intelligence and strategic intelligence.

The ACC's first Chair, AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, noted that this was the first truly cooperative approach to managing significant crime within Australia's federated legislative system:

The past 12 months have been a period of considerable change for Australian law enforcement as agencies continue to respond to the new threats of the post September 11 environment, develop new ways of tackling entrenched, sophisticated organised crime and maintain capabilities to fulfil the substantial demands of general policing in the community. The scale of change underway is well demonstrated by the formation of the ACC [which] addresses the need to improve the strategic understanding of crime in Australia, with a particular emphasis on nationally significant criminal activity and the development of innovative and effective responses to it.

Letter of transmittal, ACC Annual Report 2002–03

Like the NCA before it, the ACC had special coercive powers for use in what the ACC Board determined to be 'special' operations or investigations. These powers – to summons people to give evidence under oath and demand documents and information – could only be used by ACC Examiners, the independent statutory officers appointed by the Governor-General to conduct examinations and issue notices to produce evidence. PG 43



TARGETING ILLICIT DRUG PRODUCTION

As the internet became a more common enabler for criminal activity, the ACC was also using the web to collect intelligence and develop criminal targets. Project Chillaton was established in 2005 to investigate criminals using the internet to source precursor chemicals and glassware for amphetamine production. Over a couple of years, Chillaton resulted in the seizure of 6 clandestine laboratories, and illicit commodities including precursor chemicals, amphetamines, cannabis, laboratory glassware, tablet presses and tablet punches, and binding agents used in the production of illicit drugs. More than \$1 million in associated proceeds of crime was identified, and 6 people were arrested and charged with 20 serious drug-related offences. Additionally, 4 pharmacists pleaded guilty to charges under the Therapeutic Goods Administration Act and were fined.



DISRUPTING MONEY LAUNDERING

In a development that highlighted the ACC's move towards analysing financial data to identify highrisk money movements and criminal targets, the ACC-led Task Force Gordian was established in 2005. This concerted national effort to disrupt facilitators of money laundering and tax fraud helped expose the threat posed by financial facilitators and the significant funds being transferred both within Australia and overseas as the result of illegal criminal activity. A total of 63 people were charged with 97 offences, and more than 30 kilograms of various drugs and significant volumes of precursor chemicals were seized. The task force also significantly disrupted 17 criminal syndicates over 2 years by dismantling their underlying financial business and infrastructure. Proceeds of crime action included the seizure and restraint of close to \$2.4 million worth of property and cash.

SHUTTING DOWN A MAJOR DRUG SYNDICATE

In 2006, the Queensland Police Service and the ACC ended a well organised and resourced cannabis and amphetamine syndicate in Far North Queensland. In what was considered one of the largest drug syndicate drug busts in Australian history, 32 search warrants led to the seizure of significant quantities of cannabis, more than 18,000 pseudoephedrine tablets, hashish and hashish oil, an amphetamines laboratory, ecstasy, methylamphetamine, more than \$256,000 in cash and 9.5 kilograms of gold. More than \$4 million in assets were restrained and at least 83 people were arrested on more than 365 charges.

FIGHTING OFFSHORE TAX EVASION

Also in 2006, the Project Wickenby cross-agency task force was established to protect the integrity of Australia's financial and regulatory systems. It prevented people from promoting or participating in the abusive use of secrecy jurisdictions. The task force ran through until 2015, leading to more than \$2.2 billion in tax liabilities raised. It also increased tax collections from improved compliance behaviour following high profile investigations, prosecutions and sentencings.

JOINING THE NATIONAL SECURITY COMMUNITY

In December 2008, the Prime Minister's national security statement confirmed that organised crime was an integral part of the National Security Framework. As a result, the ACC became an active participant in key forums on national security and was involved in the development of the Commonwealth's Organised Crime Strategic Framework. The framework was launched in late 2009, with the aim of more effectively combatting and preventing serious and organised criminal activity.

DELIVERING QUALITY INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS

In 2010, the ACC released a new suite of strategic intelligence products that collectively made up the Picture of Criminality in Australia, which provided the basis for the ACC's contribution to the broader national intelligence priority setting process. The suite included the Organised Crime Threat Assessment, Illicit Drug Data Report, National Criminal Target Report and, for the first time, the forward-looking Organised Crime 2020 report, forecasting how organised crime was likely to evolve over the following 10 years.

PREVENTING SERIOUS AND ORGANISED INVESTMENT FRAUD

In 2011–12, the ACC-led Task Force Galilee undertook watershed prevention work. The task force was established in response to the growing concern about serious and organised investment fraud, which had cost some 2,600 Australians more than \$113 million in the previous 5 years. As well as identifying and disrupting these fraudulent activities, the task force used the knowledge gained to raise community awareness, warning people before they become victims.



DISRUPTING MONEY LAUNDERING AND DRUG TRAFFICKING

The Eligo National Task Force was authorised by the ACC Board in December 2012, and within 6 months had disrupted several transnational money laundering and drug networks. Eligo was formed to reduce the money laundering risks inherent in the use of alternative money remittance services – a cash intensive sector that transferred money within and between countries, often outside formal financial and banking systems. More than \$21 million in cash was seized, as well as more than \$140 million in drugs and more than \$6 million in precursor chemicals.





EXAMINING THE LINK BETWEEN ORGANISED CRIME AND SPORT

The ACC's Project Aperio examined the links between organised crime and sport. In 2013 the agency worked with the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority, and a number of other agencies, to complete several assessments that alerted sports oversight bodies and regulatory agencies about examples of organised crime infiltration of their sport, and explained how this was happening. The ACC provided detailed information to relevant law enforcement partners, and briefed key sporting bodies to help harden the sports sector against serious and organised crime exploitation. The agency also released public information to alert the general sporting and wider community about the public safety risks involved, and to support preventative action.

TARGETING OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

Through Task Force Attero, the ACC joined forces with 14 partner agencies representing all state and territory police as well as national law enforcement, border security and regulatory agencies. The task force ran from 2012 to 2014, targeting the Rebels outlaw motorcycle gang (OMCG), one of Australia's highest risk criminal threats. Attero gained significant intelligence about the Rebel's illicit drug offences, money laundering, extortion and violence. Overall, Attero resulted in 4,149 people being arrested or reported (such as breach notices or notices to appear) and 5,756 charges. More than 40 firearms along with cash, drugs and precursor drugs were also seized.

A new multi-agency task force named Operation Morpheus was formed in September 2014 to build on Attero's success. Morpheus had a broader focus on all OMCGs that posed a risk to the community.



HOSTING THE AUSTRALIAN GANGS INTELLIGENCE COORDINATION CENTRE

The ACC-hosted Australian Gangs Intelligence Coordination Centre (AGICC) began operating in December 2013. Part of the government's strategy to combat OMCGs, the AGICC provided law enforcement agencies with previously unknown insights into issues including illicit drug and money laundering activity. It also provided intelligence and shaped national disruption strategies against key members of high threat OMCGs and other known gangs operating across state and territory borders.



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ADDRESSING SERIOUS FINANCIAL CRIME

When Project Wickenby finished on 30 June 2015. the Serious Financial Crime Taskforce was established. Led by the Australian Taxation Office, the Serious Financial Crime Taskforce leverages the capabilities and powers of Commonwealth law enforcement and regulatory agencies to target serious crimes that present the highest risk to Australia's tax and superannuation system. From when it started operating on 1 July 2015 to 31 March 2022, the Serious Financial Crime Taskforce progressed cases that resulted in the completion of 1,543 audits and reviews, the conviction and sentencing of 15 people, raised liabilities of \$1.492 billion, and the collection of \$575 million.

COUNTING THE COST OF SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

In December 2015 the ACC released the first report detailing the costs of serious and organised crime in Australia, estimated to have been at least \$36 billion a year. This was the first time the agency had done such detailed work to measure the costs of serious and organised crime as well as prevention and response costs. It improved national understanding and provided decision-makers with an evidence base and insight into the magnitude of the impact on the community and economy.



PG 48



PILOTING THE NATIONAL CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM

From July 2015, the ACC began piloting the National Criminal intelligence System. This was a significant step towards replacing the 30-year-old criminal intelligence database that underpinned the agency's work. The National Criminal Intelligence System aims to securely connect law enforcement and intelligence agencies to share information nationally in a targeted, timely and relevant way.

The pilot, which involved 20 Commonwealth, state and territory partner organisations, demonstrated the capabilities and real-world value of the National Criminal intelligence System.

After the comprehensive and collaborative development processes, the National Criminal Intelligence System was made available to law enforcement partners to use in active operations for the first time in March 2021.



A MODERN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

2016 – CURRENT

AUSTRALIAN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE COMMISSION

In late 2015, the Australian Government stated that the 'threat to our nation is unprecedented' in terms of national security and criminals exploiting 'emerging opportunities and perceived gaps in law enforcement information to facilitate their crimes and avoid detection'. The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) was formed to strengthen Australia's ability to combat this threat.

A MODERN CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

IN MAY 2016

THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT PASSED LEGISLATION TO BRING THE ACC AND CRIMTRAC TOGETHER AS THE ACIC, OPERATIONAL FROM 1 JULY 2016.

Binstitute of Criminology, created more powerful opportunities to inform and influence the ways in which Australia responds to crime and criminal justice issues, through the unique combination of national criminal intelligence, investigative, research and information delivery functions.

The ACIC supports and closely collaborates with the Australian Institute of Criminology to ensure that criminological research and evidence remain central to law enforcement's collective response to crime. Our Chief Executive Officer is also Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology and the agencies are co-located. While the Australian Institute of Criminology operates independently, its high-quality research is important to our work.

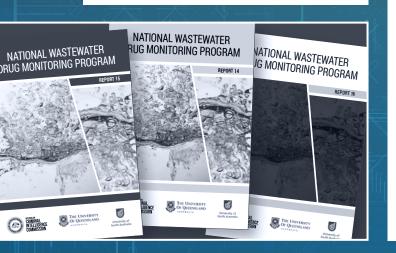


PG 51

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL WASTEWATER DRUG MONITORING PROGRAM

The National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program began in August 2016. It provides coordinated national research and intelligence on illicit drugs, and licit drugs that can be abused, with a specific focus on methylamphetamine and other high-risk substances. The program generates valuable insight into trends in drug consumption across Australia and can also identify new sources of threat.

The first program report was released in March 2017, and report number 17 was released in October 2022. By analysing the findings of the program, government, law enforcement, health, education and community organisations can start a national conversation about drug trends and develop targeted policies. The program is funded through to early 2024.



SUPPORTING FRONTLINE POLICING

Our essential information services help police prevent, detect and reduce crime in our community. In 2016–17 alone, for example, we supported frontline policing by delivering more than 44.3 million National Police Reference System searches relating to people, firearms, vehicles and drugs. We also supported 90,729 crime scene print identifications and 54 crime scene ballistic matches. In addition, we facilitated a record number of more than 4.7 million background checks, helping to ensure the integrity of individuals placed in positions of trust.

ENHANCING COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT HERE AND OVERSEAS

In November 2016, the Vestigo Task Force was formed to provide a framework for enhanced collaboration and engagement with Australian and international partners to share information and intelligence. Vestigo is supported by our Commonwealth, state and territory partners, along with international partners including the Five Eyes Law Enforcement Group. It enables stronger collaboration against the threat posed by high risk serious and organised crime entities based overseas, or with direct links to criminal entities based overseas, that are impacting adversely on Australia.

This reflects our agency's shift from ad-hoc and opportunistic international engagement to ongoing and proactive engagement in response to the changing criminal environment.

JOINING THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

The National Intelligence Community was officially formed after the Australian Government adopted the recommendations of the 2017 Independent Intelligence Review. It comprises the Office of National Intelligence, Australian Signals Directorate, Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation, Australian Secret Intelligence Service, Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, Defence Intelligence Organisation and the ACIC, as well as the intelligence functions of the AFP, the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and the Department of Home Affairs. This community forms the Australian Government's intelligence enterprise, working to collect, analyse and disseminate intelligence information and advice in accordance with Australia's interests and national security priorities.

DISMANTLING AN INTERNATIONAL ENCRYPTED COMMUNICATIONS ENTERPRISE

We worked with partners across Australia, the United States and Canada on an operation to shut down Canadian-based company, Phantom Secure in March 2018. The company is alleged to have been providing secure, encrypted communications to the organised crime market. More than 10.000 devices were sold in Australia, the company's largest customer base.

ESTABLISHING THE AUSTRALIAN PRIORITY ORGANISATION TARGET DISRUPTION UNIT

The Australian Priority Organisation Target (APOT) Disruption Unit was established in 2019. An APOT designation – those who have been assessed as posing the greatest organised crime threat to Australia – triggers a heightened, more directed and coordinated effort by Australia and the international law enforcement and national security community. The APOT Disruption Unit was established to coordinate global to local law enforcement and national intelligence efforts to disrupt APOT networks and investigate APOT-related targets not currently actioned by partners.

DEVELOPING DETAILED SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME RISK ASSESSMENT

In late 2019, the ACIC developed a detailed assessment of serious and organised crime risks posed to Australia. This assessment provided a threat, harm and overall risk rating for a range of crime types and markets, along with an outlook for the next 3 years. This detailed intelligence product allowed law enforcement agencies to better target and prioritise crime threats to Australia to maximise the impact of policing and intelligence activities and better disrupt criminal syndicates.

MEETING THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

During the significant challenges of 2020 the ACIC not only continued to deliver on our core functions, but also delivered high-quality strategic intelligence assessments of the impacts of COVID-19 on the criminal environment. Reports 8, 9 and 10 of the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program included analysis of the increased threat from counterfeit pharmaceuticals and medical equipment during the pandemic, and the impact of COVID-19 on domestic illicit drug markets. Leveraging the program, we were also able to fund a wastewater analysis 'proof of concept' project which successfully detected - for the first time in Australia - the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) virus in wastewater in a number of locations.

We also generated intelligence on illicit drug consumption during the lockdown period and produced intelligence reports to help understand cybercriminal behaviour during the pandemic, including emerging ransomware threats, SMS phishing campaigns, mobile malware, and online criminal infrastructure services on the dark web. In addition, we used our intelligence holdings to develop an assessment of the serious and organised fraud targeting key Australian Government programs responding to COVID-19. This assessment enabled us to target criminal exploitation of COVID-19 government stimulus measures.

During COVID-19 restrictions – particularly the ongoing closure of the Western Australian border – ACIC intelligence led to some of the largest cash seizures as part of disruption activities undertaken by our partners. While Western Australian border crossings were low, serious and organised crime groups tried to gain advantage by transporting larger amounts of physical cash on fewer trucks, identified by ACIC intelligence, that were then stopped and searched.



PREVENTING SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME **BEING FACILITATED THROUGH AUSTRALIAN PORTS**

Following amendments made to the ACC Act by the Transport Security Amendment (Serious Crime) Act 2021, the criminal intelligence assessment capability was established on 22 June 2022. Criminal Intelligence Assessments will help strengthen background checking for Aviation Security Identification Card and Maritime Security Identification Card holders. This will reduce the ability of individuals with links to serious and organised crime to gain access to our airports, seaports, and other Commonwealth sites.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

The ACIC continues to work closely with external partners, both domestic and international, to disrupt the activities of APOTs and other serious and organised crime targets and reduce their impact on Australia. We work side-by-side with the Five Eyes Law Enforcement Group members, and have also established liaison relationships with non-Five Eyes countries. In addition, 15% of our intelligence products are disseminated to international partners.



ACIC officers are also deployed to countries of strategic importance to our efforts to counteract serious and organised crime. At present, these include staff in London, Washington and Dubai. By working collaboratively with our partners in these regions, ACIC officers overseas inform our agency on emerging criminal trends while working to disrupt offshore transnational serious and organised crime and protect Australia and our partners from serious

LOOKING AHEAD

Serious and organised crime threats will continue to affect Australia's society, institutions, markets and economy. In 2020–21, the Australian Institute of Criminology estimated that serious and organised crime now costs Australia up to \$60.1 billion a year. Combatting these threats requires a sustained, coordinated and collaborative approach involving many law enforcement and government partners.

OUR COERCIVE EXAMINATIONS AGAINST HARDENED CRIMINALS AND FACILITATORS OF SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME ARE THE CENTREPIECE OF OUR **OPERATING MODEL.**

hey are supported by technical intelligence, human intelligence and data analytics – together they make up our 4 pillars of core collection capability. These pillars are used to derive strategic intelligence insights and drive disruption strategies and operational opportunities with our partner agencies.

As we continue to transform and uplift our advanced data analytics capability, our understanding of the picture of crime impacting Australia is increasingly more comprehensive, integrated and relevant. We maintain a strategic focus on the priority crime themes while delivering perceptive intelligence assessments into new and emerging issues.

criminal exploitation.



We continue to enhance our national policing information systems to bring together a unified picture across jurisdictions. Projects such as NAFIS NextGen will allow law enforcement agencies across Australia to use our biometric services to help solve crime and keep the community safe. We will work with stakeholders to develop long-term strategies that will help modernise the NPCS and deliver benefits to the ACIC and police.

In addition to nationally coordinated criminal history checks, the ACIC's new criminal intelligence assessments for aviation and maritime transport workers will assist in preventing Australian ports being used to facilitate serious and organised crime. We will continue conducting these assessments progressively over the next 12 months with a full capability in June 2023.

As the world continues to be challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic, those involved in serious and organised crime are forced to adapt quickly. So is the ACIC. We will continue to target those criminals, share timely and relevant intelligence and information with our partners, and focus our efforts on making Australia hostile to

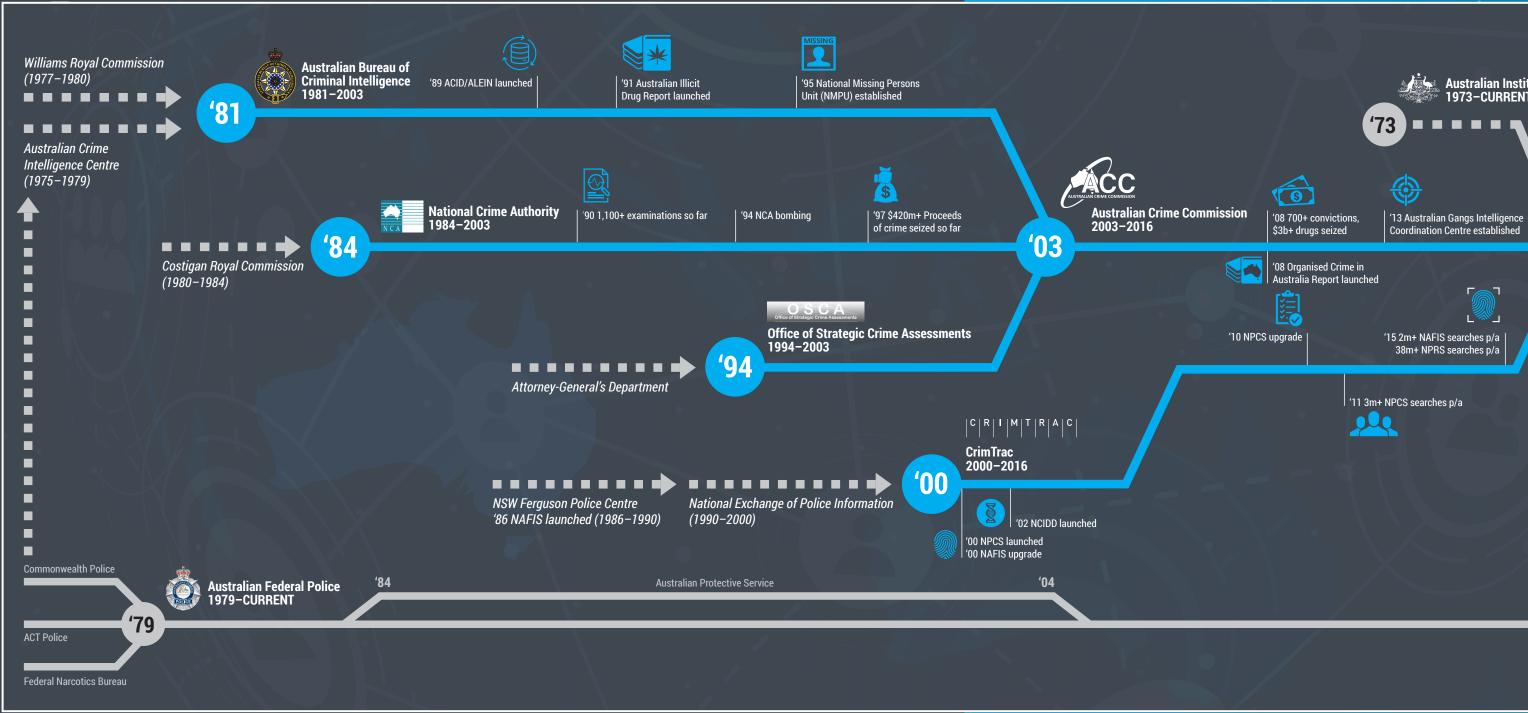
ACIC HISTORIC TIMELINE

The history of the ACIC in its modern form dates back 20 years to 2002, with the establishment of the Australian Crime Commission. But the agency has grown from the experiences and developments of its predecessors and partner organisations as they respond to changing criminal threats in the serious and organised crime landscape.

The ACIC historic timeline was developed in 2021 to commemorate 40 years of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and its predecessors acknowledged in this book.



Michael Phelan APM



Australian Institute of Criminology

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'18 National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS) initial build begins

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'17 Home Affairs Portfolio established



17 National Intelligence Community (NIC) established



'17 National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program Report launched



'19 Australian Priority Organisation Target (APOT) Disruption Unit (ADU) established

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TO BE CONTINUED

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The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission connects, discovers and understands to improve the national ability to respond to crime impacting Australia.

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