

## MEDIA RELEASE

23 February 2022

### Commission records another unexplained wealth 'win'

The Corruption and Crime Commission has today revealed details of another significant success in its bid to disrupt and deter serious and organised crime, using its 'unexplained wealth' powers under the *Criminal Property Confiscation Act 2000* and *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.

The Supreme Court of Western Australia has made an unexplained wealth declaration of just over \$1.7 million and confiscation orders in favour of the Commission for assets including a large property, Mercedes Benz vehicles, designer handbags and clothing, luxury watches and cash.

The matter was referred to the Commission by the Western Australia Police Force who held suspicions that serious crime was funding a lavish lifestyle and significant wealth for the man and his wife, despite no obvious forms of legitimate income. Its investigation did not lead to any criminal charges.

Unexplained wealth law, however, requires a person who lives beyond their apparent means to justify the legitimacy of their financial circumstances and the declaration made by the Supreme Court last week was resolved with the previous owners of the luxury items without the need to go to trial.

The successful negotiations and settlements are the public highlights of intensive work undertaken by the Commission since it took on responsibilities for unexplained wealth investigations in September 2018.

The identification and investigation of unexplained wealth matters are complex and lengthy. The Commission uses the full range of its capabilities in investigating unexplained wealth including financial investigators and analysts, legal officers, physical and technical surveillance and compulsory examinations and notices to produce information. In some instances, they have local, national and international elements, all of which must be pursued.

While funds collected under the *Criminal Property Confiscation Act* are used for purposes including a grants program to prevent crime and to assist victims of crime, and the early resolution of any matter can also save the State by avoiding costly trials, one of the Commission's primary objectives is to assist in the fight against organised crime and corruption by removing the primary motivation - financial gain.

Over the past three years, the Commission has received 128 referrals, completed 14 preliminary investigations and three full investigations. A further seven investigations are in progress.

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#### Contact the Corruption and Crime Commission

Some \$15.7m in assets have been frozen and an estimated \$7.4m in assets have been confiscated.

The Commission has a small team undertaking investigations relating to unexplained wealth but is hoping to expand its capabilities in the year ahead.

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