

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **How the CCC exposed the corrupt activities of Paul Whyte**

The Corruption and Crime Commission has tabled in State Parliament a report detailing how Australia's biggest corruption by a public servant was uncovered.

The report relates to the behaviour of Mr Paul Whyte, who has pleaded guilty to 564 charges of corruption and money laundering and is to be sentenced in the Supreme Court. The report's real focus is how the corruption was exposed and the chain of inquiry set in motion by a single piece of information.

Four of Mr Whyte's associates who have been charged with various offences are yet to be dealt with by the courts. Discussion of the alleged activities of Mr Whyte and these others could be prejudicial and are therefore not covered in the report.

The Commission's report reveals how information it received in 2018 was enough to raise questions about Mr Whyte's behavioural and lifestyle habits. The subject of apparently simple information, Mr Paul Whyte was a very senior public officer who held a position of considerable influence and oversaw large-scale government procurement, so the Commission believed it important to look further into his lifestyle and his finances.

Red flags abounded and the preliminary investigation yielded rich information – expensive property, interests in 87 racehorses and even more syndicates since 1998, heavy gambling and big losses, and mysterious payments into Mr Whyte's bank accounts.

The Commission has limited resources and more than 7,000 allegations a year to manage but, even though the early stages weren't delivering the evidence or conclusions required, this investigation had to continue. The dogged investigations included painstaking reviews of terabytes of data and mountains of files digging back more than a decade.

The breakthrough came in August 2019 when the analysis of Mr Whyte's Government credit cards matched payments into a company he controlled. Operation Taurus was launched in full force. The Commission's investigative strategies won't be revealed in detail but the team included investigators, analysts, intelligence analysts, digital forensic analysts, covert surveillance teams and lawyers, all of who were involved.

By October 2019 it was clear swift action was needed to protect State funds and WA Police Force established Operation Tangmere, executing search warrants and arresting Mr Whyte and an associate. At the same time, the Commission used its newly acquired powers of unexplained wealth and criminal benefits to freeze Mr Whyte's major assets.

It was a very successful joint effort. Millions of dollars will be returned to the State as a result.

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#### Contact the Corruption and Crime Commission

While Mr Whyte's sentencing draws one chapter to a close, there may yet be further Commission reports dealing with culture within departments that allowed his corruption to flourish.

In the meantime, what is clear is that the smallest piece of information or evidence can eventually lead to the discovery of serious and significant corrupt and criminal activity, in the hands of the Corruption and Crime Commission.

Reporting suspected misconduct is never easy, especially when the subject of those suspicions holds high office and influence. But it is the right thing to do, always.

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### **Read the report**

[Exposing corruption in Department of Communities](#)

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