



Australian Government



Fraud fusion in action – strengthening integrity across government

Presented by Kitsa Papadopoulos, General Manager NDIA
and Peter de Cure, TPB Chair

Welcome

'In the spirit of reconciliation, we respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their cultures, and Elders past, present and emerging.'

Access the presentation slides: tpb.gov.au/webinar-hub

What we will cover today

- ✓ Fraud and integrity across Government Payment programs
 - ✓ Fraud Fusion Taskforce (FFT) overview and objectives
 - ✓ Key FFT outcomes and data
 - ✓ FFT strategic prevention initiatives
 - ✓ Why the FFT is important
 - ✓ Where to get help
 - ✓ The TPB's role in the Taskforce
 - ✓ How tax practitioners can help
 - ✓ Case studies
 - ✓ Q&A
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Fraud and integrity across Government payment programs

- Fraud against Government payment programs (GPP) is a long-standing issue.
- Centrelink, Family Day Care, Child Care, Vocational Education and Training sector and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) are targets for fraud or serious and organised crime.
- The impacts of fraud can be substantial for anyone involved and goes beyond financial loss. It impacts people, organisations and government.
- The government has zero tolerance for fraud, which is why the Fraud Fusion Taskforce was created, for government agencies to all work together to combat fraud or serious organised crime.

Key vulnerabilities undermining the integrity of Government payment programs

- Illegitimate or 'ghost' entities.
- Real clients made eligible for supports that they should not have been.
- Funds claimed in circumstances where client was ineligible or unable to receive.
- Behaviour that potentially affects client being able to receive the supports they need.
- Multi-jurisdictional mischief.
- Cyber vulnerabilities reflecting proliferation of data in dark web & systems.

Exploiting Government payment programs

From the latest ACIC report: Opening the Books: the impact of serious and organised crime on Australia in 2025

- **Organised crime is evolving fast** – modern criminal networks operate like global businesses: digital, connected and adaptive.
- **Crime is big business** – criminals exploit any opportunity for profit, harming communities, legitimate businesses and vulnerable people.
- **Australians pay the price** – organised crime steals taxpayer money, corrupts government programs like the NDIS and erodes public trust.
- **A united response is vital** – tackling organised crime needs ongoing collaboration across government, industry and the community.

“ These greedy organised fraudsters have no regard for the harm they cause, the vulnerable individuals they exploit, or the broader impact they have on these essential government programs. ”

Heather Cook, CEO ACIC

Fraud Fusion Taskforce

- The Fraud Fusion Taskforce (FFT) is co-led by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and Services Australia and started in November 2022, as a partnership between 15 government agencies. It has since grown to 24 agencies.
- The FFT includes NDIA, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, Australian Federal Police, Australian Tax Office, Tax Practitioners Board and other Commonwealth partners all working together to find, stop and prevent fraud and serious organised crime affecting Government Payment Programs.
- There are two focus areas of the FTT:
 - **Operations:** detect, investigate and act against fraud cases across government programs.
 - **Strategy:** improving integrity across government programs, by strengthening systems, policies and processes making it easier to get it right, harder to get it wrong.

Fraud Fusion Taskforce membership continues to grow

Original FFT Members (Since Nov 2022)

- Attorney-General's Department (AGD) – Commonwealth Fraud Prevention Centre (CFPC)
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC)
- Australian Federal Police (AFP)
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)
- Australian Taxation Office (ATO)
- Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)
- Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP)
- Department of Education (DoE)
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)
- Department of Health and Aged Care (DHDA)
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NQSC)
- Services Australia

Joined in 2023

- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

Joined in 2024

- Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC)
- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
- Professional Standards Review
- Tax Practitioners Board (TPB)

Joined in 2025

- Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
- Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC)
- Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO)

The Fraud Fusion Taskforce working together

Inter-Departmental Committee

Provides overall leadership and governance for FFT activities and ensures all committees work toward shared goals.

Strategic Prevention Committee

Develops prevention strategies and provides scalable advice to Government on assurance and prevention approaches.

Intelligence and Operations Committee

Oversees all FFT intelligence and operational matters.

Reform and Advocacy Working Group

- Shares agency expertise and intelligence to identify improvements and support scalable advice to Government on assurance and prevention.

Data Sharing Working Group

- Strategic data sharing across FFT agencies and provides advice, assurance and reporting on data-sharing arrangements.

Fraud Fusion Centre Advisory Group

- FFC workload and prioritisation.

Operational Working Group

- Prioritises operations and assesses FFT capacity to understand and disrupt fraud and serious criminal activity.

FFT Operations

Fraud Fusion Taskforce | NDIA key outcomes

As of September 2025



more than

635

Investigations
underway



more than

1,900

Providers
have been
disrupted



more than

100

NDIA-led Warrants
(with FFT support)
have been executed



more than

72,000

NDIS Fraud
Tip-offs
assessed
since the FFT
started

\$50 million commonwealth fraud disrupted

From the AFP Media Release: “\$50 million in Commonwealth claims targeted during AFP-coordinated week of action”

- FFT partner agencies, collaborating with the Financial Crime and Money Laundering Working Group, carried out a national crackdown, **disrupting more than \$50 million in suspected fraud.**
- More than **75 investigators** across multiple agencies worked together in the coordinated, intelligence-led operation, with **33 search warrants executed.**
- A major investigation uncovered a criminal network allegedly claiming millions in NDIS funds for services never delivered.
- Another investigation involved a recipient making claims while failing to declare their involvement with five other companies and trying to hide this from the ATO.
- Organised criminals exploiting government programs are on notice, with continued joint action and operations still to come.

“Members of our community have allegedly been targeted, exploited and threatened by groups looking to fill their own pockets and steal public funds set aside for Australians who are reliant on this support.”

Jason Kennedy
AFP Commander

Tax agent defrauding government systems

Joint efforts from FFT agencies – NDIA, NDIS Commission and Tax Practitioners Board

- Through the FFT, Tax Practitioners Board (TPB) are actively disrupting non-compliant tax practitioners.
- One case involved a Tax Agent who was both a Chartered Accountant and a NDIS Plan Manager.
- The agent had problematic ATO issues and NDIS claiming behaviours, impacting the safety of NDIS participants.
- Joint FFT action included **bans** by the TPB and the NDIS Commission.

“Tax agents hold a trusted professional position and are expected to act with the utmost honesty and integrity.

We will continue to work with our FFT partners to swiftly remove any tax practitioners who engage in illegal behaviours in the interests of improving integrity of government systems”

Mr Peter de Cure AM
TPB Chair

FFT Strategic Prevention

Strategic prevention initiatives

- There are many FFT Strategic Prevention Initiatives underway.
- These initiatives are aimed at building effective systems and scalable solutions across government to better prevent fraud and improve the integrity of government programs and payments.

Government Payment Tax Reporting Communications

- To encourage reporting of GPP income by GPP service providers and their tax agents through ATO online notifications.
- “Making it easier to do the right thing and hard for those who choose not to.”
- “Assisting taxpayers by providing timely information and guidance to meet their tax obligations.”

Professional Sector Disruption

- To disrupt the ability of professionals who knowingly contribute to defrauding the Commonwealth, from engaging with GPPs. Exploring innovative ways of referrals and data sharing. Developing joint communications, collaboration, education and awareness initiatives.

Publication Standards

- Standardising the way agencies, report publicly on non-compliance and/or banning orders. Increasing the visibility of bad actors operating across GPPs.

Reflections

- Strong collaboration across FFT agencies is delivering real results and is essential for tackling fraud and integrity risks in the NDIS and other government payment programs.
- The FFT is progressively strengthening Australia's ability to prevent, detect and respond to fraud, including organised crime and large-scale fraud.
- Sharing data, intelligence and expertise ethically across agencies helps identify the biggest risks and focus efforts where they matter most.
- A coordinated, multi-agency approach to prevention is helping government improve laws, systems and processes, **“making it easier to get it right, and harder to get it wrong”**
- The ongoing work of the FFT is protecting Australians by ensuring government payments and services are reliable, safe and not misused.

Where to get help

For tax professionals

ATO website

- Resources to help tax professionals interact with the ATO, keep up to date and find latest information.

TPB website

- Resources including factsheets, papers and guidelines to support all tax practitioners.

For NDIS providers

NDIS Provider compliance

- Detailed information to support provider compliance is available on both the NDIS and the NDIS Commission websites.

Working together to combat fraud

NDIS related concerns

- If you think someone is doing the wrong thing with NDIS funds, please report it to the NDIA using the [online form](#) or calling **1800 650 717**

Tax professional related concerns

- If you think a tax practitioner is participating in poor conduct or fraud, report this to the TPB using the [online form](#).

Our role in the Taskforce

Our role in the taskforce



- The TPB is committed to working across government to:
 - keep the tax profession honest
 - strengthen services
 - ensure government funding goes where it's supposed to.
- We share information, analyse data, and spot patterns that may signal fraud.
- We are building stronger fraud controls and take action when tax practitioners help facilitate fraud.

How tax practitioners can help

Report suspicious behaviour



- Report suspicious behaviour using the National Disability Insurance Agency Fraud Reporting Form.
- If you know of a tax practitioner involved in poor conduct or fraud, make a complaint through our online form
- You play a vital role in keeping our services fair, trustworthy, and accountable.
- Every report matters, your actions help us maintain a level playing field and ensure everyone is held to the highest standards.

Reporting a breach



- Breach reporting obligations apply from 1 July 2024.
- There are 2 types of breach reporting:
 - self-reporting
 - reporting another tax practitioner.



The registered tax practitioner must have reasonable grounds for the belief that they, or another tax practitioner, have breached the Code and that the breach is significant.

Consequences for failing to comply



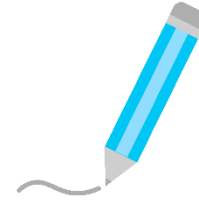
Termination



Suspension



Order



Written
caution

Case studies



Case study 1



NDIS scammer removed from the tax profession

- We terminated Kahtan Al Hassan with a 5-year ban for unethical conduct.
- He breached the Code and was no longer fit and proper when he failed to:
 - correctly prepare and lodge business activity statements
 - notify the TPB he was permanently banned by the NDIS
 - lodge several income tax returns and pay debts on time
 - notify the TPB his company was in external administration
 - complete continuing professional education
 - maintain appropriate professional indemnity insurance.

Case study 2



TPB takes down tax agent for defrauding government systems

- We terminated the registration of tax agent, Mr. Raheel Chaudhry with a 5-year ban.
- He was found to have misled the TPB and failed to comply with his tax obligations.
- Mr Chaudhry's tax debt, including penalties amounted to almost \$1.5 million.
- We also considered the evidence that led the National Disability Insurance Scheme Commission to ban him from delivering NDIS Services for 5 years.



Questions

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