

Case 9 – Laundered funds linked to multiple ATM thefts

Over a one-month period, approximately AUD714,000 was stolen in separate thefts from five Sydney automatic teller machines (ATMs). AUSTRAC information helped law enforcement officers track the various transactions undertaken by two individuals suspected to be involved in the theft.

At the time of the thefts, suspect A was an employee of a cash transit company, working as a member of a crew responsible for emptying and replenishing ATMs. Soon after the thefts occurred, suspect B (an associate of suspect A) made a number of substantial cash deposits totalling approximately AUD70,000 into the account of one of the companies he owned. At the time, suspect B was an employee of a law enforcement agency and also the owner of several businesses.

Suspect B then purchased a AUD60,000 boat, of which AUD30,000 was paid for in cash. The balance was paid by a cheque drawn from a company bank account. A month later, suspect B deposited a further AUD10,000 cash into a company bank account. Suspect B later travelled to Melbourne and delivered AUD250,000 cash to an associate to be used to purchase real estate.

Additionally, suspect B bought a property in the name of one of his companies (company A):

- He paid an initial deposit of AUD37,400 for the property. Most of this deposit was funded by a bank cheque drawn on the account of another of his companies, (company B).
- He then settled the purchase of the property with another bank cheque for AUD39,000, which was also drawn on the bank account of company B.
- Finally, suspect B made two further cash deposits into company B's bank account, worth AUD12,000 in total.

As a result of the investigation, both suspects were charged with various offences, including making or using false instruments contrary to the provisions of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW), giving false testimony under the *Crimes Act 1914* (Cwth), and obtaining money by false or misleading statements under the NSW Crimes Act.

Offence	Money laundering Theft
Customer	Individual
Industry	Non-financial banking services
Channel	Physical
Jurisdiction	Domestic
Designated service	Account and deposit-taking services Cash carrying/payroll services Chequebook access facilities
Indicators	Business undertaking transactions that appear to be inconsistent with its profile and/or transaction history: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large cash deposits to company account • purchase of high-value assets with cash and company cheques Co-mingling of illicit funds with legitimate sources of income [†]

[†] While this particular customer behaviour may not be directly observable by reporting entities, it is an activity commonly used to facilitate or hide money laundering and other offences.

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