Australian Government
AUSTRAC

Fintel Alliance
an AUSTRAC initiative

2025–26 FINTEL ALLIANCE ANNUAL REPORT EXTRACT



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Acknowledgement of Country

AUSTRAC would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing spiritual, social and cultural relationship with the land, waters, skies and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and to their community leaders, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

AUSTRAC's Protecting Country artwork represents our vision and purpose, fighting financial crime together to protect Australians from criminal abuse, both in Australia and beyond its borders.



Protecting Country

Artwork by **Riki Salam**, We Are 27 Creative.



The background is made up of a fishing net that represents capturing criminals. The dotted patterns represent different Country across Australia. The main theme is teamwork, and how AUSTRAC works together with industry and its partners to fight financial crime.

The symbol found central to the artwork shows people seated in a yarning circle to represent AUSTRAC's organisational culture – united, accountable, empowered, courageous and inclusive.

There are also symbols that represent AUSTRAC's strategic objectives: to discover, understand, strengthen, disrupt and optimise. Surrounding these symbols are innovative tools used in everyday life:

- the fighting shields represent protecting the community
- the boomerang represents innovation and the different ways that AUSTRAC is fighting financial crime.

2025–26 AUSTRAC YEAR IN REVIEW

AUSTRAC collects a large volume of data from industry and transforms it

SMR
574,024
Suspicious matter reports (SMRs)
27% INCREASE from 2024–25

TTR
1,861,321
Threshold transaction reports (TTRs)
9% DECREASE from 2024–25

IFTI
285,970,886
International funds transfer instruction (IFTI) reports
23% INCREASE from 2024–25

50,366
REPORTING ENTITIES
as at 30 June 2026



into actionable financial intelligence for the benefit of law enforcement,

ANALYST WORKBENCH (AWB)



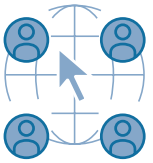
Partner agencies with the highest number of searches:

- **Department of Home Affairs**
- **Australian Federal Police**
- **NSW Police**

Over **5,000** users



44 agencies



trusted private sector partners, national security operations,

FINTEL ALLIANCE



31 members (incl. AUSTRAC)

SMR
41,122
SMRs relating to Fintel Alliance
118% INCREASE from 2024–25

INTELLIGENCE



586 products disseminated to core partners

Member of **20** commonwealth taskforces



and both domestic and international counterparts.



memoranda of understanding (MoUs)



54 domestic



107 international



5 STAFF deployed overseas



Total international information exchanges

USA	UK	CANADA	NZ	UAE
208	110	78	69	57

AUSTRAC worked with industry to prepare them for reforms

Preparing together for Tranche 2



1 July 2026 marked a major milestone in Australia's landmark reforms to strengthen the nation's anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing laws (AML/CTF).

133 speaking engagements (> two per week)

83 webinars and workshops delivered

82% of attendees understood their obligations

10,000+ Reporting Entity Induction Program Series attendees

Representatives from the following sectors:

- Lawyers
- Accountants
- Trust and company service providers
- Real estate agents
- Dealers in precious metals and stones

Tools and resources to support compliance and confidence

134 guidance and education publications

5 world-leading program starter kits

87 reforms resources

22 educational guidance

17 guidance materials

3 risk assessment guides

which translated into improved visibility and public understanding.

"Public trust depends on transparency and understanding. We are committed to setting newly regulated businesses up for success. We want to work with you to build a resilient and effective regime. We are on this journey with you."

Brendan Thomas, **AUSTRAC CEO**

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

218 media enquiry responses

55 media releases published

196 references used by news media

8

PART 2 – FINTEL ALLIANCE

FINTEL ALLIANCE

YEAR IN REVIEW

The year was marked by collaborative initiatives that moved intelligence into action.

Across mortgage fraud, micro-laundering, community harm and operational support, Fintel Alliance brought together government, law enforcement and industry partners to generate insights that no organisation could develop alone and translate those insights into practical outcomes. These efforts were complemented by intelligence products, threat alerts and operational support activities that helped turn intelligence into practical action.

Fintel Alliance also continued to strengthen public-private collaboration and analytical capability. The ongoing maturation of the Collaborative Analytics Hub (CAH), work to explore improvements to suspicious matter reporting, and the contribution of working groups and roundtables provided partners with better shared visibility of risks, stronger detection indicators and more scalable ways to identify and address emerging threats. These activities reinforced the importance of trusted relationships, shared expertise, practical information sharing and collective problem solving in responding to increasingly sophisticated financial crime threats.

The partnership's work also helped to protect the community from serious and emerging financial crime risks, including mortgage fraud, financial exploitation, child sexual exploitation and other forms of community harm. These efforts demonstrated how financial intelligence can help identify indicators of harm, support operational decision-making and contribute to earlier intervention and community protection outcomes.

Together, these activities demonstrate the value of public-private partnership in supporting Australia's response to financial crime.

COLLABORATIVE ANALYTICS HUB

Financial crime increasingly occurs across multiple institutions, sectors and platforms, making it difficult for any single organisation to see the full picture.

Over 2025–26, the CAH continued to mature as a core Fintel Alliance capability, enabling government agencies, law enforcement and industry partners to combine data, expertise and analytical techniques to better understand and respond to complex financial crime threats.

By bringing together information and insights from multiple sources, CAH helps identify patterns, risks and networks that are not visible from one organisation's data alone. Building on previous years, CAH evolved into a repeatable collaborative analytics capability supporting multiple intelligence priorities across the partnership.

Through recurring analytical exercises and collaborative action, participants worked to examine complex financial crime problems, test new methodologies and develop intelligence that would not have been possible through institution-specific analysis alone.

As the capability continues to evolve, CAH is increasingly supporting the transition from information sharing to intelligence co-development. Through collaborative analytics, cross-sector expertise and shared problem solving, CAH is helping Fintel Alliance develop a more complete picture of financial crime and strengthening Australia's ability to detect, disrupt and respond to emerging threats.

The capability provides an important foundation for future expansion of the Fintel Alliance operating model and the next generation of collaborative intelligence capabilities.

COLLABORATIVE ANALYTICS HUB IN ACTION



Cash-Related Money Laundering Large-scale cash transaction datasets were analysed to identify unusual patterns, high-risk behaviours and criminal networks not visible to individual organisations working independently. Outcomes informed law enforcement referrals and future industry guidance.



Operation CLAW Collaborative analytics supported the examination of mortgage fraud methodologies and behaviours across multiple financial institutions, helping develop a system-wide understanding of mortgage fraud risk and identify indicators to support detection and disruption activities.



Micro-Laundering CAH supported collaborative analysis examining emerging micro-laundering methodologies, contributing to a broader understanding of how criminal networks use high-volume, low-value transactions and mule accounts to move illicit funds.



Child Sexual Exploitation AUSTRAC and industry analysts worked together to identify suspicious transactions linked to the purchase of child sexual exploitation material, generating actionable intelligence for law enforcement and helping protect children and young people.

By combining data, technology and specialist knowledge, Fintel Alliance creates a more complete picture of financial crime than any single organisation could achieve alone.

Figure 2: Collaborative Analytics Hub in action

OPERATION CLAW – DEVELOPING A SYSTEM-WIDE RISK PICTURE

Operation CLAW demonstrated how Fintel Alliance can rapidly bring partners together to examine an emerging financial crime issue and determine broader systemic risk. The project was initiated following concerns of suspicious lending activity and brought together government agencies, law enforcement and 10 participating banks representing approximately 90 per cent of Australia's residential mortgage lending market. This enabled partners to test whether indicators identified by one institution were present across the sector and develop a system-wide understanding of the risk.

Through collaborative analysis and intelligence sharing, Fintel Alliance examined mortgage fraud methodologies, vulnerabilities and indicators across the lending system. Our efforts identified common indicators of potentially fraudulent lending activity, including falsified documentation, inflated income declarations and repeated involvement of facilitators and intermediaries. It strengthened understanding of vulnerabilities, and improved detection and prevention.

The intelligence generated through Operation CLAW was translated into practical outcomes for government and industry partners. AUSTRAC has worked with participating banks to identify practical controls that lenders can use to prevent, detect and disrupt mortgage fraud. This included sharing mortgage fraud indicators with banks and non-bank lenders to strengthen detection capability, support refinement of controls and inform referrals where suspicious activity warranted further investigation. The project also demonstrated an adaptable approach to address future financial crime challenges.

OPERATION CLAW AT A GLANCE



10
Participating banks



90%
Residential lending market coverage



140
Organisations received indicators and threat information

Combating mortgage fraud through system-wide collaboration.

Figure 3: Operation CLAW at a glance

UNDERSTANDING MICRO-LAUNDERING

Micro-laundering is designed to hide illicit funds in plain sight by fragmenting activity across large volumes of low-value transactions. During 2025–26, Fintel Alliance examined how this methodology intersects with illegal online gambling, scams and money mule networks to better understand its role in facilitating criminal activity and community harm.

Micro-laundering presents a unique challenge because individual transactions often appear low risk when viewed in isolation. However, collective analysis across institutions revealed broader patterns, recurring funds flows and network behaviours that would not have been visible to any single organisation acting alone. The work strengthened understanding of how criminals exploit digital payment environments and disperse activity across multiple institutions, making broader criminal networks more difficult to identify.

A significant project outcome was the public report Scambling: the nexus between scams, money mules and micro-laundering.[1] Developed with Fintel Alliance members, the Australian Communications and Media Authority and Financial Counselling Australia, the report provides a clear explanation of how illegal online gambling activity, scams, money mule networks and micro-laundering interact to facilitate criminal activity and community harm. It built broader awareness of scambling activity and the risks it presents to industry, government and the community.

Our findings translated a complex financial crime methodology into a public report and indicators that help industry, government and the community better understand an emerging harm and pursue more informed detection and disruption efforts.

The project contributed to broader discussions about financial intelligence reporting and future approaches to identifying and responding to high-volume, low-value financial crime typologies. It has also formed the basis of ongoing work on scambling by AUSTRAC and other areas of government.

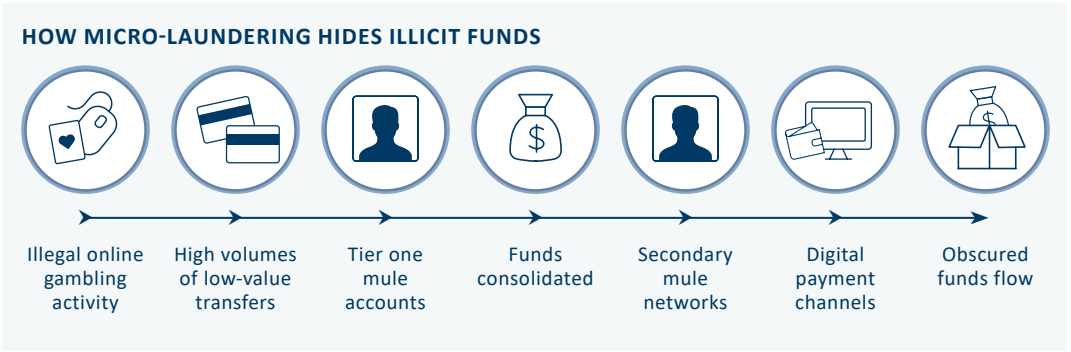


Figure 4: How micro-laundering hides illicit funds

1 austrac.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-12/Scambling%20-%20the%20nexus%20between%20scams%2C%20money%20mules%20and%20micro-laundering.pdf

RETHINKING REPORTING FOR EMERGING THREATS

Building on insights generated through collaborative activity on micro-laundering and illegal online gambling, Fintel Alliance brought together government and industry partners to explore how financial intelligence reporting can better support intelligence outcomes, strengthen risk understanding and contribute to a more resilient financial system. Our approach drew on operational intelligence, industry experience and real-world examples of detecting and responding to emerging financial crime threats. Together, partners explored more targeted and proportionate approaches to emerging typologies that balance intelligence value, operational realities and regulatory reporting obligations.

The work recognised that regulated businesses play a critical role in providing timely intelligence to AUSTRAC while navigating increasingly complex financial crime typologies. It also highlighted how high-quality intelligence can support AUSTRAC's broader shift toward intelligence-led regulation, helping identify systemic vulnerabilities, improve risk visibility and inform efforts to harden the financial system against criminal exploitation. The discussion considered the volume and complexity of reporting across different entities, crime types or operating environments, and the potential value of alternative reporting approaches in certain circumstances.

Importantly, this work was exploratory rather than prescriptive. It was designed to encourage discussion, challenge conventional thinking and identify opportunities to improve intelligence outcomes across the financial crime ecosystem. By bringing together operational intelligence, industry expertise and regulatory perspectives, Fintel Alliance demonstrated how collaboration can build the evidence base, shared understanding and practical momentum needed to strengthen intelligence-led approaches, support system hardening and drive longer-term capability across Australia's financial crime framework.

INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS AND THREAT ALERTS

Financial crime threats continue to evolve rapidly, with offenders adapting methodologies, exploiting new technologies and targeting emerging vulnerabilities across the financial system. To help industry and government detect, disrupt and respond to these threats, Fintel Alliance develops and disseminates a wide range of intelligence products, including threat alerts, intelligence reports and strategic assessments.

Throughout 2025–26, Fintel Alliance produced intelligence products across a range of priority crime themes, including mortgage fraud, micro laundering, organised crime, elder financial abuse and trade-based money laundering.

Threat alerts remain an important mechanism for rapidly sharing intelligence with partners. By providing practical indicators, red flags and emerging typologies, these products help regulated businesses enhance monitoring processes, identify risks earlier and improve suspicious matter reporting, which in turn generates more intelligence. Additionally, our intelligence products support investigative activity by providing law enforcement and government agencies with a richer understanding of criminal methodologies and vulnerabilities.

Fintel Alliance products transform operational insights into practical action by providing partners with timely intelligence on criminal methodologies, emerging risks and indicators of concern. This ongoing cycle of intelligence development, dissemination, operational response and continuous refinement enables partners to collectively strengthen Australia's ability to detect, disrupt and deter financial crime.

Our intelligence products help partners identify emerging risks, strengthen controls, improve reporting and support operational action across the financial system.

HIGHLIGHTS

Mortgage Fraud Indicators

The Operation CLAW threat alerts translated collaborative analysis into practical indicators that reporting entities use to identify suspicious lending activity, strengthen controls and improve detection of mortgage fraud.

Scambling: The Nexus Between Scams, Money Mules and Micro-Laundering

This public report helped build understanding of emerging micro laundering methodologies and their connection to scams, money mule recruitment and illicit online gambling activity.

Indicators of Elder Financial Abuse

This threat alert provided financial and behavioural indicators to help identify, detect and report suspected elder abuse and financial exploitation.

Organised Crime Financial Indicators

Project-based intelligence products supported partner understanding of organised crime methodologies, including financial indicators, payment-reference analysis and emerging criminal behaviours.

FROM INTELLIGENCE TO ACTION

A core function of Fintel Alliance is assisting government agencies and law enforcement partners translate financial intelligence into operational action. By combining industry insights, financial data and investigative expertise, the partnership supports identification of criminal activity, development of investigative leads and responses to complex threats impacting the Australian community.

During 2025–26, Fintel Alliance supported a range of operational priorities through intelligence generation, industry engagement and collaborative analytical activities. This work helped government agencies and law enforcement partners progress investigations, identify emerging risks and access intelligence that may not otherwise have been available through traditional investigative approaches. By connecting industry information, financial intelligence and operational expertise, Fintel Alliance continued to support law enforcement and government priorities across a range of threat environments.

EXAMPLES OF SUPPORT PROVIDED DURING 2025–26 INCLUDED:

Fugitive apprehension and offender location – supporting intelligence-led efforts to identify and locate individuals linked to serious crime through collaboration with the Australian Federal Police Fugitive Apprehension Strike Team. Financial intelligence helped develop investigative leads, identify movements and support operational activities both domestically and internationally.

Domestic and family violence investigations – applying financial intelligence to identify indicators of escalating risk, support operational enquiries and assist agencies responding to domestic and family violence matters. This work demonstrated how suspicious matter reporting, industry information and collaborative analysis can contribute to earlier intervention and community protection outcomes.

Serious and organised crime investigations – facilitating information sharing and intelligence generation to support investigations into criminal networks, money laundering and other high-harm criminal activity. These collaborative efforts helped agencies access intelligence relevant to operational priorities and enforcement activities.

These examples show how financial intelligence supports operational decision-making, helps agencies identify people and networks of interest and contributes to action against serious crime and community harm.

WORKING GROUPS AND ROUNDTABLES

Effective collaboration relies on more than information sharing. It requires trusted forums where government agencies, law enforcement and industry partners can exchange insights, discuss emerging threats and identify opportunities for coordinated action. Fintel Alliance working groups and roundtables provide the foundation for trusted collaboration, bringing together diverse expertise to address complex financial crime threats and strengthen collective responses across the partnership.

Throughout 2025–26, specialist working groups brought together subject matter experts to examine sector-specific risks, emerging criminal methodologies and changing threat environments. These forums provided a practical mechanism for testing ideas, sharing operational insights and shaping future collaborative activity.

Complementing these specialist forums, weekly roundtables provided a regular and less formal environment for partners to exchange intelligence, discuss operational priorities and identify opportunities for collaboration. These discussions often act as the starting point for new projects and intelligence activities by helping partners identify shared concerns, emerging risks and intelligence gaps.

Together, working groups and roundtables help ensure that intelligence is shared effectively, emerging threats are identified early, and collaborative solutions are developed to address increasingly complex financial crime challenges. By connecting operational, strategic and technical expertise across sectors, these forums remain a critical component of the Fintel Alliance operating model.

KEY COLLABORATION FORUMS

Casino Working Group
Brings together government, law enforcement and casino sector representatives to share intelligence, discuss emerging risks and strengthen collaboration across the gambling sector.

Virtual Asset Working Group
Provides a forum for partners to examine emerging risks involving digital assets, virtual currencies and rapidly evolving financial technologies.

National Security Working Group
Supports collaboration and information sharing on terrorism and proliferation financing, foreign interference and sanctions-related risks impacting Australia's financial system.

Weekly Roundtables
Enables partners to rapidly exchange intelligence, discuss operational priorities and identify opportunities for collaborative projects and intelligence development.

PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY

Financial crime is not a victimless activity. Behind many suspicious transactions are individuals, families and communities experiencing financial exploitation, coercion and other forms of harm. Throughout 2025–26, Fintel Alliance continued to apply financial intelligence, industry expertise and cross-sector collaboration to help identify, understand and respond to issues affecting the Australian community.

Fintel Alliance supported early detection, referral, intervention or disruption pathways across a range of community harm-focused issues, including elder financial abuse, child sexual exploitation, domestic violence and scam-related financial exploitation.

Key areas of focus included:

Elder financial abuse: identifying financial and behavioural indicators associated with exploitation and strengthening approaches to detection, reporting and intervention.

Child sexual exploitation: improving understanding of financial indicators linked to offending and supporting intelligence-led responses to serious community harm.

Domestic violence and coercive control: exploring how financial intelligence can assist partner agencies to identify harm, locate high-risk offenders and better understand the financial dimensions of abuse.

Scams, money mules and micro laundering: improving understanding of how individuals can be recruited or exploited through scam-related criminal methodologies.

Our activities demonstrate how financial intelligence continues to aid understanding and response to harms that extend beyond traditional money laundering and financial crime. By combining intelligence, operational expertise and partner collaboration, Fintel Alliance supports efforts to protect the community and reduce the impact of financial crime on Australians.

LOOKING AHEAD

As Fintel Alliance approaches our tenth anniversary, our purpose remains unchanged: bringing together government, industry and law enforcement to identify threats, share intelligence and support action against financial crime.

Financial crime continues to evolve in complexity, scale and sophistication, making collaboration between government, industry and law enforcement more important than ever. During 2025–26, Fintel Alliance exemplified the value of public-private partnerships in responding to emerging threats, generating actionable intelligence sharing and supporting outcomes that no single organisation could achieve alone.

Looking ahead, Fintel Alliance will continue to mature as a core AUSTRAC capability, strengthening collaboration, expanding intelligence-led approaches and identifying new opportunities to apply financial intelligence against shared priorities. This includes leveraging enhanced data capabilities, collaborative analytics and innovative partnership models to better understand risk, disrupt criminal activity and address community harm.

Australia's expanded AML/CTF regime will further strengthen the intelligence picture and create new opportunities for collaboration across sectors. As new regulated entities join the regime, Fintel Alliance is well positioned to foster new partnerships, strengthen collective understanding of emerging risks and support a more resilient financial system.

During the year, Fintel Alliance refreshed our strategic priorities to ensure the partnership remains focused on protecting Australia's national security and the community, hardening the financial system and uplifting capability. These priorities provide a clear framework for future collaboration and support AUSTRAC's broader shift towards intelligence-led regulation, system resilience and proactive risk management.

As we enter our second decade, Fintel Alliance remains committed to harnessing the collective expertise, intelligence and capabilities of its partners to strengthen Australia's response to financial crime. The achievements of 2025–26 demonstrate what can be accomplished through trusted collaboration and provide a strong foundation for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

PARTNERS

Fintel Alliance consists of 31 member organisations who leverage their resources and expertise to address risks across the Australian financial ecosystem requiring a multi-lateral approach.

Our current membership consists of:

Department of Home Affairs
AUSTRAC
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited
Australian Border Force
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
Australian Federal Police
Australian Financial Crimes Exchange Ltd
Australian Government Treasury
Australian Securities and Investments Commission
Australian Taxation Office
Bendigo Bank Ltd
Commonwealth Bank of Australia
Crown Resorts
HSBC Bank Australia Limited
Macquarie Bank Limited
MoneyGram Payment Systems Inc.
National Australia Bank Limited
National Crime Agency (UK)
New South Wales Crime Commission
New South Wales Police Force
New Zealand Police Financial Intelligence Unit
PayPal Australia Pty Limited
Queensland Police Service
Services Australia
South Australia Police
Tabcorp Ltd
Victoria Police
Western Australia Police Force
Western Union Financial Services (Australia) Pty Ltd
Westpac Banking Corporation


Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs


Australian Government
AUSTRAC


Australian Government
The Treasury


Australian Government
Australian Taxation Office


Australian Government
Services Australia






ACCC
AUSTRALIAN COMPETITION
& CONSUMER COMMISSION


AUSTRALIAN
CRIMINAL
INTELLIGENCE
COMMISSION


AFP
AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE






ASIC
Australian Securities &
Investments Commission


NEW ZEALAND
POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa


NCA
National Crime Agency


NSW
GOVERNMENT
New South Wales
Crime Commission


NSW Police Force








WA
POLICE


ANZ


Bendigo Bank


CommonwealthBank


HSBC


MACQUARIE


nab


Western
Union


Westpac GROUP


CROWN


FINANCIAL
CRIMES
EXCHANGE


MoneyGram
money transfer


PayPal


Tabcorp

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