



Organised crime group cultivation of Victorian public sector employees

INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES

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Did you know organised crime groups are grooming public sector employees to access information, influence decisions and manipulate systems?

Criminal groups have been identified targeting all levels of government including council workers, departmental officers and law enforcement employees.

Could you be at risk?

Your access to databases, physical assets, buildings and decision-making processes could be very valuable to organised crime groups.

Understanding the threat helps to protect you and your public sector agency from organised crime and allows you to recognise when you could be targeted.

What is organised crime?

Organised crime involves two or more offenders engaged in serious ongoing criminal offending that requires substantial planning and organisation for the purpose of obtaining profit or influence.

Although outlaw motorcycle gangs attract significant attention, organised criminal groups vary greatly in size and structure. They can include networks based on family ties, social links, ethnicity, language or shared criminal purpose.

How you could be targeted

Organised crime groups may try to develop relationships with public sector employees using some of the following tactics:



targeting risk-taking behaviour by public sector employees such as illicit drug use or problem gambling. These activities can leave public sector employees vulnerable to being coerced or manipulated by organised crime groups



utilising social media in innovative ways, such as using Facebook to identify vulnerable people who are public sector employees



using pre-existing relationships to shift public sector employees' loyalties away from their employer. Members of crime groups might develop these relationships and seek to persuade the targeted employee that helping a friend is the right thing to do



through shared interests. Evolving interests associated with organised crime group members and the broader community have created new areas where organised criminals and public sector employees can interact. Organised crime group members now increasingly mix with broader community groups at fitness clubs, tattoo parlours, and body building and martial arts venues.

Organised crime groups are becoming more sophisticated in their approaches to public servants. In many cases it may be difficult to identify that you are dealing with an organised crime group member or that they are attempting to cultivate you.

Why do criminal groups target public sector employees?

Public servants are entrusted with information, assets and decision-making responsibilities that can be of enormous value to organised criminal groups. You could be targeted because of your access to:

- databases, particularly those with personal identification information that could facilitate identity fraud, debt collection, witness intimidation, extortion, or that could be sold to other criminal groups
- decision-making processes including contracting and tendering and the regulation of particular industries
- property and goods with high resale value or that facilitate criminal activity.

The cultivation of public sector employees is an attractive way for organised crime groups to facilitate their criminal activities. Where a public sector employee can be persuaded to cooperate with a criminal group, they offer the group ongoing access to information or assets while using their inside knowledge of that public body's systems to avoid detection. Manipulating public sector employees is an efficient and cost-effective means of facilitating major criminal enterprises.

You could be particularly vulnerable if you work for a law enforcement agency, government department, regulatory body or a local council.

Consequences of becoming a target

Consequences include:

- embarrassment
- physical harm
- threats to you and your family or friends
- loss of employment
- potential loss of reputation
- you could increase your vulnerability to identity theft
- investigations or penalties associated with criminal activity.

Ways you can protect yourself and your agency



Become familiar with your organisation's declarable association and/or security policies.



Regularly check if you have personal interests or associations that may conflict with your public service obligations.



Familiarise yourself with social media security protections.



Be alert for individuals seeking details of your access to information, assets or decision-making processes.



If you suspect you are being targeted, report it immediately to your manager or your human resources department for advice on what to do.

For more information or advice call IBAC on 1300 735 135 or visit our website www.ibac.vic.gov.au

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IBAC also has a broad oversight role in relation to police personnel misconduct and an important education function to proactively assist public sector agencies to improve their systems and processes to prevent corrupt conduct.

To report corruption phone 1300 735 135 or visit www.ibac.vic.gov.au