



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Taxation Office**

# ATO statement regarding release of taxpayer data

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Recently, the ATO received data in relation to a Panamanian law firm containing names of a significant number of Australian residents. Currently we have identified over 800 individual taxpayers and we have now linked over 120 of them to an associate offshore service provider located in Hong Kong.

These cases relate to the release of data by transparency or media organisations in Australia and overseas. ATO intelligence on tax evasion comes from a variety of sources, including from concerned citizens, advisers, partner agencies and international bodies. For example the ATO has raised tax liabilities of around \$400 million from data supplied by confidential informants.

Deputy Commissioner Michael Cranston said that since the completion of the offshore disclosure initiative 'Project DO IT', the ATO has ramped up its compliance work to deal with those taxpayers who have failed to disclose offshore income and assets. Sharing information and coordinating action closely with other tax administrations is a large part of this work.

"We promised the community that following Project DO IT we would continue to build our intelligence base, undertake audits, apply significant penalties and refer the worst cases for criminal investigation" Mr Cranston said.

"We have been analysing the latest data against information these taxpayers had reported to the ATO and against the information we already have. We are also working closely with the AFP, Australian Crime Commission and AUSTRAC to further cross-check the data and strengthen our intelligence. Some cases may be referred to the Serious Financial Crime Taskforce. This Taskforce builds on the success of Project Wickenby where we raised \$2.29billion in tax liabilities and there were 46 criminal convictions.

"The information we have includes some taxpayers who we have previously investigated, as well as a small number who disclosed their arrangements with us under the Project DO IT initiative. It also includes a large number of taxpayers who

haven't previously come forward, including high wealth individuals, and we are already taking action on those cases" Mr Cranston said.

"Through data analysis we have been able to identify patterns such as clusters of individual taxpayer and advisers for further investigation."

"The message is clear - taxpayers can't rely on these secret arrangements being kept secret and we will act on any information that is provided to us" Mr Cranston said.

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