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AUSTRALIAN TRANSACTION REPORTS AND ANALYSIS CENTRE (AUSTRAC)**

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY SPOKEN QUESTION ON NOTICE

Portfolio Committee No. 5 Justice and Communities

Inquiry into the Illegal Tobacco Trade

20 February 2026

QoN Number: 1

Subject: Identification of numbers relating to regional distribution hubs

Asked by: the Hon Nichole Overall MLC

Question:

The Hon. NICHOLE OVERALL: Just one a little bit more specific, and you may have to take it on notice. Financial intelligence - is there any identification of numbers relating to regional distribution hubs, specifically in relation to illegal tobacco?

JOHN MOSS: I would need to take that on notice, but we could pattern out what our work is showing across State jurisdictions, yes.

Answer:

While AUSTRAC does not hold data on domestic tobacco distribution hubs, suspicious matter reports (SMRs) pertaining to illicit tobacco are reported to AUSTRAC by our regulated entities. SMRs often contain name and address details of people who are the subject of these reports.

AUSTRAC reviewed a sample of SMRs from 2025 that have indicators relating to illicit tobacco, to assist the NSW Inquiry into the Illegal Tobacco Trade. These reports can include references to individuals purchasing illicit tobacco, and tobacconists and convenience stores suspected of selling tobacco, through to networks of individuals that have been reported in the media, or subject to law enforcement requests.

It is vital to note that SMRs are based on the subjective view that the reporting entity forms about the nature of the activity observed, and the likelihood that it may be linked to criminal activity. In many cases, no criminal activity will have occurred. Although the *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006* (AML/CTF Act) requires entities to report complete and accurate data, reports may also contain false or misleading information provided by third parties wishing to obfuscate their activities, or errors accumulated in collection and processing. Therefore, AUSTRAC cannot provide an analysis of raw data representing a complete and accurate picture of the jurisdictional supply of an illicit commodity.

However, we can note at a high level that in the 2025 calendar year, individuals from New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland were most often named in SMRs that referenced illegal tobacco (in order of most to least featured).