



Global Tax Chiefs and SFCT build capability to combat crypto crime

J5 deliver crypto asset investigation training to over 50 members of Australia's Serious Financial Crime Taskforce.

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Last week, specialists from across Joint Chiefs of Global Tax Enforcement (J5) jurisdictions delivered crypto asset investigation training to over 50 members of Australia's Serious Financial Crime Taskforce (SFCT).

This collaboration between the J5 and SFCT comes at a critical time, as crypto assets are increasingly utilised in criminal activities, including to launder the proceeds of tax crime. Criminals are drawn to trading in crypto assets due to perceived anonymity and the ease and speed with which they can be traded anywhere in the world.

The training provided the opportunity to explore real-world case studies and emerging technologies to support the identification, investigation, and prosecution of cyber targets related to tax crime and money laundering. Participants enhanced their skills in crypto asset analysis and investigation, and increased their knowledge of the technologies and tools to support this.

“The ATO has an expert team of staff who are equipped to detect and identify tax crime activities, and these capabilities continue to strengthen,” said John Ford, Deputy Commissioner at the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and SFCT Chief. “Specifically, this training has further enhanced SFCT partner agencies’ understanding of the resources and platforms available to share leads, support case development and further enhance information sharing around crypto assets.”

“Global problems require global solutions and participating in the SFCT training serves as an opportunity to increase cooperation and collaboration,” said U.S. Chief Guy Ficco. “IRS Criminal Investigation developed specialised cybercrime units 10 years ago, and we pride ourselves on being able to share our expertise with partners across the globe to dismantle criminal organisations at the root.”

Richard Las, United Kingdom (UK) Chief and Director of HMRC’s Fraud Investigation Service, said, “We know criminals are adept at exploiting new technologies for their own nefarious ends and crypto assets are no different. Sharing our expertise and understanding is vital in tackling this cross-border threat, so I’m delighted the J5 have been able to deliver this vital training to our Australian partners.”

“Since tax crime is a global problem that requires a global solution, it is important to expand on this work and continue to look for ways to collaborate further,” said Eric Ferron, Canada’s J5 Chief, and Director General of the Canada Revenue Agency’s Criminal Investigations Directorate. “Our work doesn’t stop here. It is essential that we continue to strengthen the key partnerships necessary to keep pace with the evolving global challenges of combatting transnational tax crime.”

"As FIOD, we are proud to collaborate with our J5 partners to jointly investigate with more effect and impact" said Niels Obbink, Director General, Dutch Fiscal Information and Investigation Service.

"Technological developments play a major role in enabling us to do this. For that reason, we share expertise on intelligence and investigations with cryptocurrencies. By sharing knowledge with like-minded countries, we manage to collectively keep up, generate leads and select the best investigations to achieve our goals."

This opportunity showcases how we share experience and expertise at both the transnational (J5) and domestic (SFCT) levels, tackling organised criminals and tax cheats who try to manipulate the tax and superannuation system for personal gain.

For more information on the J5, an alliance between tax and law enforcement experts from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and the Netherlands, visit www.irs.gov/compliance/joint-chiefs-of-global-tax-enforcement 

For more information on the SFCT, an Australian joint-agency taskforce led by the ATO to address serious financial crime, visit ato.gov.au/sfct.

For more information on the ATO's collaboration with the J5, visit ato.gov.au/J5.

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