Australian government moves to protect NDIS from organised crime

22 April 2021

Minister for Home Affairs Karen Andrews and Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme Linda Reynolds say the arrests of six people in relation to alleged fraud against the NDIS shows the Government's commitment to protecting the Scheme.

Operation Pegasus is a months-long NDIS Fraud Taskforce investigation into an alleged criminal syndicate accused of defrauding the NDIS.

Following a series of searches across 11 properties in Western Sydney on Tuesday, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) took six people into custody – with each arrested and set to face charges of alleged multi-million dollar fraud against the NDIS.

Minister Andrews said the Government is committed to tracking down those looking to defraud assistance programs such as the NDIS.

"The AFP and its partners have successfully dismantled an organised criminal syndicate allegedly stealing money from NDIS participants and defrauding the NDIS of millions of dollars – money that could have been used to help Australians living with a disability," Minister Andrews said.

"This coordinated multi-agency operation involved more than 150 AFP and partner agency members, with more than $2 million in assets – including lavish cars, cryptocurrency assets and even gold bullion – being seized back from the alleged criminals stealing funds from people who genuinely need the support."

"We all need to ensure the Scheme is there for generations to come, so any eligible Australian with a disability can receive the supports they need," Minister Reynolds said.

"The National Disability Insurance Agency has zero tolerance for fraud against the NDIS and its participants.

"After this week's swift action by the Taskforce, every participant, as well as their families and carers, should feel confident that the NDIA and this Government is serious about protecting the NDIS."

The NDIS Fraud Taskforce is a multi-agency partnership between the AFP, National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and Services Australia. The Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) was also involved in Operation Pegasus.

Anyone with concerns that fraud is being committed against the NDIS should contact the NDIS fraud hotline on 1800 650 717 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

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