



Western Australia Police: Proceeds of Crime Unit

Context

The Proceeds of Crime Unit is part of the Crime Investigation Support portfolio of the Western Australia police service. The service is responsible for policing the largest single police jurisdiction in the world, an area covering 2.5 million square kilometres. Its 6,318 employees include 4,993 sworn police officers providing services to a population of 1.9 million, through a structure comprising three regions, 14 districts and 162 police stations.

Crime Investigation Support is divided into many specialist divisions, comprising specialist units that investigate offences such as: Commercial Crime, E-Crime, Forensics, Major Crime and Organised Crime.

Proceeds of Crime unit has operated under the Criminal Property Confiscation Act since 1st January 2001. This civil forfeiture legislation empowers police to seize confiscable property. Once the property has been forfeited to the crown, it can then be sold and the proceeds are deposited into the Confiscation Proceeds Account. The intent of The Act is to enable cost neutral investigations and The Act specifically provides for confiscated proceeds to be put back into law enforcement. This can happen in a number of ways including covering the expense of conducting Proceeds of Crime and meeting the costs of storing, seizing and managing frozen property.

Case Study

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Challenge

Investigations of the type managed by the Proceeds of Crime Unit tend to generate vast volumes of evidence, from many different sources in a variety of formats. The storage and management of the evidence is in itself a significant task. To then analyse this evidence and determine whether assets have been acquired illegally proves to be a mammoth task for the Unit's Investigators and Forensic Accountants.

Fast analysis of evidence is essential to the success of investigations in the Proceeds of Crime Unit. Suspects are frequently involved in multiple cases and successful asset seizure and prosecution often leads to additional allegations and offences.

Solution

After a thorough evaluation of available solutions the unit selected the GEMS™ application. Already equipped with a scan-enabled document centre, the Unit has the ability to scan all of its evidence onto the network at high speed. After running Optical Character Recognition (OCR) across all of the scanned documents, the application then enables the Investigators to piece together the case, using the powerful search engine, drag and drop linking and flexible document structures.

The Forensic Accountants then take over and analyse all of the evidence to determine how assets were acquired and whether illegally obtained funds were used for the acquisition. If the analysis results in prosecution, the brief of evidence is automatically generated by GEMS™ and exported in electronic format to the Director of Public Prosecutions and other case stakeholders.

Results

Through the implementation of GEMS™ this relatively new Unit is now able to efficiently store and manage its evidence. Information can be shared amongst team members in real-time, analysis performed quicker and briefs generated and delivered to the Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecution (DPP) in much shorter periods of time.

About Siemens

Our world is rapidly changing due to four global megatrends – climate change, urbanisation, globalisation and demographic change. The pressures brought on by these four global megatrends can affect businesses and individuals significantly. Siemens has a portfolio of technology-based solutions to help tackle such challenges.

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The information in this document contains general descriptions of the technical options available, which do not always have to be present in individual cases. The required features should therefore be specified in each individual case at the time of closing the contract.