



The Hon Christian Porter MP
Attorney-General

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30 JUL 2019

Mr Michael Griffin AM
Integrity Commissioner
Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity
GPO Box 605
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear ~~Mr Griffin~~ 

I write to refer allegations that may raise corruption issues to you under section 18 of the *Law Enforcement Integrity Commissioner Act 2006*.

You may be aware of recent reporting by the Nine Network and Fairfax media in relation to interactions between the Department of Home Affairs and Crown Casino (see, for example, the enclosed article). These reports contain a number of allegations that may give rise to corruption issues, including with respect to Australian visa and immigration processes.

I would appreciate your consideration of the allegations in these reports and any other related matters.

I would appreciate your advice on the outcome of your consideration of these matters in due course.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Christian Porter MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Industrial Relations

Encl. Media clip



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Border Force official worked for Crown junket agent, fugitive

Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney



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ABF official worked for casino agent

An Australian Border Force official moonlighted to provide security for a criminal fugitive who worked with Crown Resorts to bring Chinese high rollers into Australia. [NEWS PAGE 8](#)



SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

Border Force official worked for Crown junket agent, fugitive

**Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano
Grace Tobin**

A serving Australian Border Force official moonlighted to provide security for an international criminal fugitive who has worked with Crown Resorts to bring Chinese high rollers into Australia.

Border Force official Andrew Ure worked at least once for Tom Zhou, a Crown high-roller junket agent who is wanted by Interpol for serious crimes and is involved in Chinese government influence activities in Australia.

Leaked Crown data also reveals

how the casino company warned their staff not to abuse the gaming company's "hotline" to consulates and Australian immigration officials in China because it might reduce the firm's ability to expedite visas for its Chinese VIP gamblers.



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Security officials speaking on the condition of anonymity have also confirmed that discussions are under way between state and federal agencies about the information emerging from Crown's internal documents.

Mr Ure is the second law enforcement official to be revealed as having worked for Mr Zhou. Mr Ure and a Victorian police officer, Greg Leather, had dealings with him after Crown had earlier arranged for a former detective to protect Mr Zhou and his business.

Records reveal that Mr Ure travelled from Australia to Vanuatu in 2017 with Mr Zhou, who is a suspected money launderer and runs several Chinese Communist Party influence organisations in Melbourne. Also on the Vanuatu flight was Mr Zhou's business partner and Crown "VVIP" Ming Chai, the cousin of Chinese President Xi Jinping and a figure of intense interest to Australia's security and police agencies. Mr Chai has faced publicly reported corruption allegations and is a business partner of suspected Australian-Chinese criminals.

A security firm run by a former detective introduced Mr Leather to Mr Zhou in 2016, according to sources involved in the arrangement. Mr Leather is now working as a detective at a suburban Melbourne police station.

A police spokesman said yesterday that VicPol had been "made aware of allegations that a member took secondary employment without authorisation, whilst suspended and under investigation".

"Professional Standards Command have been notified and will investigate the claim. At this stage it is not appropriate to comment further," the spokesman said.

Former Border Force chief Roman Quaadvlieg said it was extremely high risk for police and

Border Force officers to moonlight for high-roller junket agents because of the well-documented risks that many are linked to organised crime.

But there is no suggestion that Mr Ure or Mr Leather were involved in any wrongdoing or knew about the allegations against their employer.

The apparent cosiness between Crown and visa and consulate officials in China raises serious questions for the federal government, including Immigration Minister Peter Dutton, although it is unclear whether it was under Labor or the Coalition that these dealings were first given the green light.

State-based casino regulators are also under fire for apparently failing to combat Crown's partnership with alleged criminal entities.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said, and the department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

But the internal emails reveal Crown used Mr Zhou to vouch for a number of high rollers as they sought visas to travel to Australia to gamble. Crown's emails also reveal staff lobbied Australian officials to expedite the provision of hundreds of visas for a second junket operator, SunCity, which is accused of organised crime links.

"I will be asking the consulate to give these [applications] special and prompt attention," Crown's president of international marketing, Michael Chen, wrote in a September 2014 email about helping SunCity obtain visas.

Crown appeared to be conscious of the security risks posed by some of its high rollers. In one exchange from late 2015, a senior Crown manager raised concerns about a

group of 13 Chinese nationals that Crown wanted to bring to Australia. Five had already been blocked by the Australian consulate because they provided false paperwork on their visa applications.

"My concern is the 8 more people with valid visa travelling to Australia and over stay?? How do we know if they are genuine punters, and will not over stay?" Crown senior manager Alfreed Gomez wrote in an email to a colleague. He also queried if his colleague had ever personally met the visa applicants.

Emails relating to the same case revealed a senior Australian migration official, Brett Elliott, warning Crown that its "applicants provided fraudulent documents" and that the company "may wish to review your processes for vetting clients prior to providing support".

In another case, Crown intervened on behalf of Chinese high roller Chen Rongsheng, who had a criminal conviction for insider trading.

Crown's Mr Chen told Australian visa officials in Guangzhou that their client was "one of [our] key target patrons"

who would be part of a group of punters prepared to gamble millions of dollars at Crown.

"I'm happy to submit this with [Crown's] full support on the basis his application [was] initially rejected," Mr Chen wrote.

Other emails described how Chen Rongsheng had been "found guilty of insider trading on [sic]

2007, sentenced to 2 years and suspended for 2 years, the case already close on 2009". However, he had "not provided some sensitive information ... when he last applied for an Australian visa".

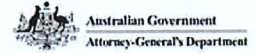
Crown staff appeared in their exchanges to be especially anxious to Chen Rongsheng a visa because of his vast wealth.



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He "had arranged the dinner on board his private yacht Aurora... one of the well known Super Yachts," the email said. "I estimate the yacht to be worth around USD10-15m."

In Crown emails written in July 2013, it appears some Crown staff shopped around between different consulate offices on the basis that some had weaker vetting procedures.

One email said applicants likely to be blocked by a certain Australian visa office in China because they did not "have good reputation or [have a] visa refusal record" should apply to a different consulate.

Emails from September 2014 reveal how a Crown senior manager pushed an Australian consulate office to overturn a decision to deny a visa to a high roller. The consulate ruled the man was likely to breach the conditions of the visa he had applied for.

"I understand from my colleague in Guangzhou that your office have some concern with above applicant on the type of visa he is applying?? Please let me know how we can assist further on this application in order for him to get a valid travel visa to Australia," the email stated.

"My colleague in Shenyang... met [the visa applicant] recently to collect his documentation and did some background check... Please advise [sic] urgently?"

Australia's consular offices overseas are partly staffed by foreign nationals to save money, and senior security sources said cases of weak or fast-tracked vetting involving Crown applicants in China was replicated

in other countries. In late 2014, Mr Chen, Crown's then president of international marketing, wrote to colleagues advising them about when Crown should "activate the emergency line" to Australian immigration officers.

It was to be used "only for critical cases (i.e. big customers)" and not abused, wrote Mr Chen, who left Crown in late 2016.

"The purpose of the 'special line' is not for last minute girlfriend additions [on trips to Australia]... we should try to avoid using our emergency channel unless it is critical [because] it diminishes our ability to use it in the future," his email states.

In another email from November 2014, Mr Chen advised colleagues there was a risk that consulate staff "will view us as abusing the hotline" and said it should only be used "where we may have hundreds of millions of dollars of turnover at stake".

"In those situations, the consulate is very understanding and will do everything they can to help us. But, we should not be using our terrific relationship to speed up normal processing of normal applications."

Mr Quaadvlieg said Crown's facilitation of Chinese VIP gamblers into Australia, including on private jets, raised major security concerns.

"My immediate reaction was there was an enhanced risk... Who was coming on these flights? They were being co-ordinated, organised, through junket operators which are widely known, not just in the public sphere but certainly within the law enforcement context, as being triad-affiliated," Mr Quaadvlieg said. In a statement through his

lawyer, former Crown Resorts chairman James Packer said he "adamantly" insisted that he had "no... knowledge" of the company's conduct in China that had led to the prosecution of 18 of its employees in 2016 for illegally selling gambling products in China. He had played a "passive role" at Crown, according to the lawyer's letter.

Mr Quaadvlieg, who was sacked from the Australian Border Force last year for helping his partner obtain a job at the agency, revealed on *60 Minutes* on Sunday that he and other senior agency figures had been lobbied by federal MPs to make it easier for Crown high-rollers to pass through Customs.

"I spoke to a sitting member of Parliament in addition to two ministers," he said. "It's very clear that there was a powerful constituency behind the entreaty."

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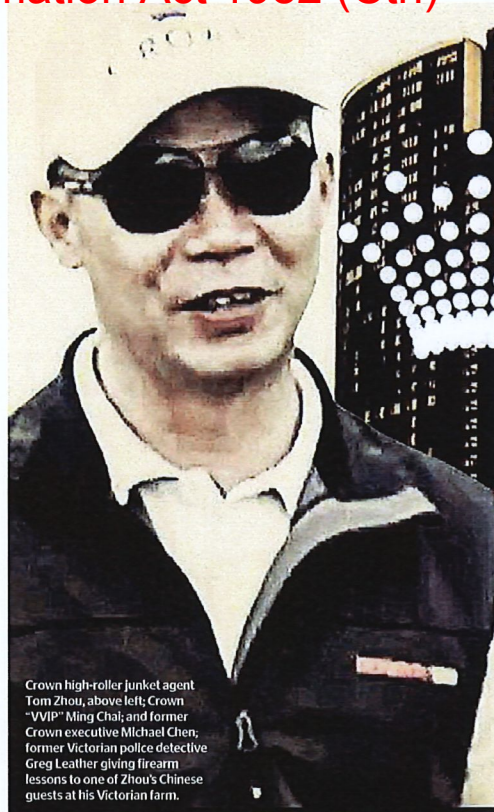
Australian Government
 Attorney-General's Department

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Former Border Force chief
 Roman Quaedvlieg



Crown high-roller junket agent Tom Zhou, above left; Crown "VVIP" Ming Chai; and former Crown executive Michael Chen; former Victorian police detective Greg Leather giving firearm lessons to one of Zhou's Chinese guests at his Victorian farm.



Crown high-roller junket agent Tom Zhou, above left; Crown "VVIP" Ming Chai; and former Crown executive Michael Chen; former Victorian police detective Greg Leather giving firearm lessons to one of Zhou's Chinese guests at his Victorian farm.



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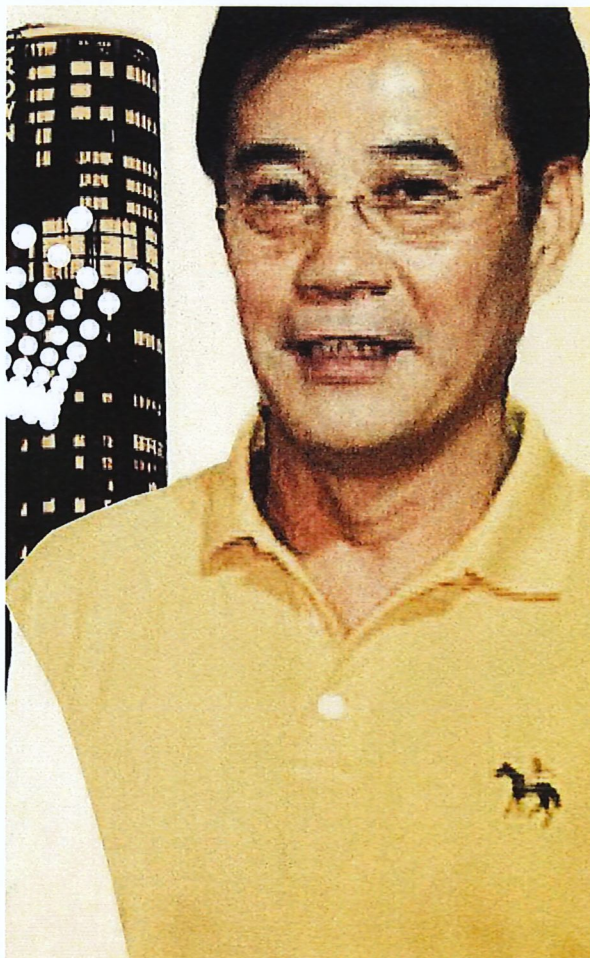


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The series of stories that has appeared in the Herald and The Sun-Herald.



Late 2014, Crown's then president of international marketing Michael Chen in an email to colleagues advising them about when Crown should "activate the emergency line" to immigration officers.