

MEDIA RELEASE

25 July 2023

CCC delivers close to \$1 million in unexplained wealth

The Corruption and Crime Commission has obtained two unexplained wealth declarations in the WA Supreme Court equating to almost \$1 million.

The unrelated successful cases follow investigations undertaken into the accumulation of unexplained wealth dating back more than a decade.

Mr Ronald Whyte

This month, Mr Ronald Whyte consented to an unexplained wealth declaration for \$450,000. His unexplained wealth was received in connection with the criminal offending (corruption and property laundering) of his brother, Mr Paul Whyte.

Mr Ronald Whyte will forfeit \$350,000 cash and his entire interest in his late father's estate. The recovery of \$450,000 is in addition to the \$131,972 that Mr Whyte voluntarily repaid in separate prosecution proceedings in 2022.

Mr James Villa

Assets with a total value of more than \$520,000 were confiscated in May 2023 after an unexplained wealth case against Mr Villa. A significant amount of property including funds of \$415,000 from five separate bank accounts, cash, motor vehicles, and jet skis were forfeited.

By law, the onus is on those being investigated to justify their financial position. Neither Mr Whyte or Mr Villa could reasonably explain or account for their wealth.

Corruption and Crime Commissioner, John McKechnie KC, said, "These matters are often complex and require detailed and lengthy investigation and litigation. The Commission's unexplained wealth function is an important tool in the fight against crime and corruption by removing the primary motivation, financial gain."

Funds confiscated in unexplained wealth matters are used by the State Government for purposes including grants for crime prevention projects, and to assist victims of Crime in Western Australia.

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Contact the Corruption and Crime Commission