



These documents, examined by the POC unit and the DPP's analysts, may in turn reveal more information and further production orders or search warrants can be sought.

Monitoring orders are also used by the POC unit to trace property and assets. Under this system the POC unit asks the court for an order directing a financial institutions to give information periodically about the person's financial transactions.

The monitoring orders often provide the POC unit with valuable information about the criminal activities of people under investigation.

All affidavits to the courts for such orders have to be extremely accurate.

"In the case of a person who has not been convicted of an offence, we, in effect, need to show a prima facie case against them," Sgt. Clarke said, pointing to a 20 page affidavit with 43 annexures on his desk which took several weeks to compile.

### Specialists

The POC unit is a specialist area.

"It is virtually essential for an officer to have a good knowledge of the banking system, otherwise he won't know what documentation is relevant and what should be requested," Sgt. Clarke said.

"Two of our officers have worked in the special prosecutions section of the Fraud and General Crime Branch, dealing with taxation fraud. Another officer has had a lot of experience in bankruptcy cases and all of us have had at least six years experience in fraud investigations."

The value of the DPP's analytical and legal officers was manifold.

"I like to work with an analyst who is not a police officer because police, through our training, tend to look at information in terms of whether or not it is evidence," Sgt. Clarke said.

"The analysts at the DPP have a different way of looking at information or documentation and they can often point us in a different direction."

"I like to take an analyst with me when I'm executing a POC search warrant in the larger and more complicated matters."

Members of the POC unit try to accompany investigating teams, particularly the Drug Investigation Section, on their searches.

### Investigations

"The drug squad is looking for drugs, money and probably bank books on a raid. We are looking further down the track at property details, shareholdings, overseas payments, names of accountants and solicitors and so on," Sgt. Clarke added.

The POC unit members spend a lot of time at the Corporate Affairs Commission doing company searches, and at the Registrar General's Office checking on property ownership and mortgage details.

### Action

Those sources provide a start for building information about a person's property and assets because one detail or document will usually lead to another. The difficulty arises in deciding what information is relevant.

POC action can be taken up to six months after conviction.

"We may not have found any assets or property when a person was convicted but if they have received a long gaol sentence they may decide after a while to sell their house or dispose of shares etc, that were previously hidden," Sgt. Clarke said.

"If we find out, we can act."

All POC actions being conviction-based, the time taken to complete an action, and ultimately the forfeiture of assets or proceeds of crime, is lengthy. Only two actions have been completed in the Eastern Region POC unit so far.

"We can expect most convicted offenders to challenge our POC actions in the courts," Sgt. Clarke said, "because they are losing everything they have 'worked' for, and that's what really hurts them."

### Recruitment

Acting Commander Sing called for the recruitment of financial analysts to complement the accounting experts used from the DPP and the Tax Office.

He also said the Tax Office experts should be given analytical training so they could chart investigations to make the information more accessible to police investigations.

He added that it would be an advantage to have legislation — similar to that used by the US Secret Service and the US Drug Enforcement agency — under which seized assets such as cars, boats and aircraft could be used by the AFP operationally.

As the assets became redundant they could be sold and the proceeds used to buy other equipment to enhance operational capabilities.

He said the Customs Act would allow the AFP to use seized narcotic-related goods, such as motor vehicles, for its own purposes but administrative problems had stopped this happening. At present the AFP had to pay to maintain and store seized assets, but the proceeds from auction went to public revenue.

### SAILOR

Acting Sergeant Dieter Tietz of the Tuggeranong Station only started sailing in the 1989 season after completing a sailing course in small dinghies at the beginning of 1988.

Shortly afterwards he bought his first boat and began racing at the Canberra Yacht Club.

Dieter recently took out the CYC award for the Most Improved Skipper.



Dieter gets his award from Rear Commodore (Training) Robert Redfern at the Canberra yacht Club.