

Re: The Age/SMH/60 mins investigation

From: Charlotte Grieve <charlotte.grieve@theage.com.au>
To: nmckenzie@theage.com.au
Date: Thu, 01 Oct 2020 20:20:42 +1000

Yep will do.

On Thu, 1 Oct 2020 at 6:40 pm, Nick McKenzie <nmckenzie@theage.com.au> wrote:

Nice
Can we get ABA on record too?

On Thu, 1 Oct 2020 at 5:51 pm, Charlotte Grieve <charlotte.grieve@theage.com.au> wrote:

Hi Bert,

Thank you for your time earlier. Please treat this email, and any further correspondence, as strictly confidential.

Here is the 2015 report I was referencing: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Law_Enforcement/Financial_related_crime/Report

As mentioned, we are investigating the work of Australian accountants and lawyers that encourage clients to cheat the tax system.

This will be part of a wider investigation looking at the international offshore banking industry, and how accountants and lawyers are enabling criminals to launder proceeds of crime through offshore structures.

There has been bipartisan support for bringing accountants and lawyers under the AML-CTF Act for some years now and this investigation is set to reignite those calls.

Given your role in the 2015 report, that also recommended accountants and lawyers are treated as reporting entities under the AML-CTF Act, I thought you would be well placed to provide some comments ahead of publication.

We are writing an investigative feature for *The Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald* newspapers, in collaboration with the *New York Times*, and will also be running a 60 Minutes documentary on the same issue.

Questions would include:

- Do you think accountants and lawyers should be forced to report suspicious financial transactions to AUSTRAC in the same way that banks do?
- Why has it taken so long for tranche two of the proposed AML-CTF reforms to be legislated?
- The ABA has described accountants and lawyers as the "weakest link" in Australia's fight against financial crime. Do you agree with this assessment?


Ideally we would like to interview you for the *60 Minutes* documentary, but at the very least some quotes for the print version.

Please let me know your thoughts. Happy to discuss further over the phone - 0406 305 970.

Regards,
Charlotte

Charlotte Grieve

Journalist

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