



## Media release

03 October 2018

### NZ resident sentenced to jail for tax fraud in QLD

A 65-year-old New Zealand resident was today sentenced to five years and 10 months' jail for tax fraud committed while he was living and conducting a business in Brisbane in 2014.

Anthony Lee was sentenced at the Brisbane District Court on charges relating to more than \$820,000 in fraudulent Goods and Services Tax (GST) refund claims he made in Business Activity Statements (BAS) lodged for two separate companies. Mr Lee was also ordered to repay the money he fraudulently claimed.

Mr Lee was the director of a cattle purchasing and exporting business, Agri Beef Cattle Company Pty Ltd, and the director of a business that administered the exports, HQB Exporters Pty Ltd.

As the director of Agri Beef Cattle Company Pty Ltd, Mr Lee lodged five BAS statements in which he fraudulently claimed \$735,049 in GST refunds and attempted to obtain a further \$185,235. He also provided false statements to the ATO to substantiate his fictitious expense claims.

As a director of HQB Exporters Pty Ltd, Mr Lee lodged a BAS statement in which he fraudulently claimed \$85,259 in GST refunds. He had overstated the business expense claims and did not provide any tax invoices to substantiate the claim.

Assistant Commissioner Peter Vujanic welcomed the jail term handed down to Mr Lee and said it was a credit to the persistence and professionalism of the ATO officers involved in the case that justice had finally been served.

"Mr Lee set out to deliberately break the law for his own benefit and, even when caught, refused to take responsibility for his crimes," Mr Vujanic said.

"Contrary to popular belief, tax crime is not victimless: when you claim a refund you're not entitled to you are stealing from the whole community and disadvantaging Australians who do the right thing.

"Intentionally claiming a tax refund by providing false information to the ATO is not just deceitful, it's illegal.

"We have sophisticated data analytics tools and intelligence to assist us to detect potential refund fraud and target those who do the wrong thing.

"As this case demonstrates, if you're caught breaking the law we will hold you accountable, even if it means pursuing you in the criminal judicial system."

Mr Lee was convicted of the following charges:

- five charges of obtaining financial advantage by deception contrary to section 134.2(1) of the *Criminal Code 1995 (Commonwealth)*.
- one charge of attempting to obtain financial advantage by deception contrary to section 11.1 and 134.2(1) of the *Criminal Code 1995 (Commonwealth)*.
- two charges of providing forged documents

If you have any information which may indicate tax fraud or evasion, find out how to report it by visiting [ato.gov.au/reportaconcern](https://ato.gov.au/reportaconcern).