The Australian Investigation Industry Report 2026

A CCS Industry Intelligence Paper

Executive Summary

1.1. Australia's investigation industry sits at the intersection of legal disputes, insurance claims, workplace misconduct, fraud prevention, corporate risk, government accountability and digital intelligence.

1.2. Although "private investigation" is often thought of narrowly as surveillance or factual enquiries, the modern investigation market is significantly broader. It includes corporate investigations, insurance investigations, workplace investigations, fraud detection, asset tracing, witness location, due diligence, digital evidence preservation, open-source intelligence, missing persons enquiries, skip tracing and litigation support.

1.3. In Australia, the broader Investigation and Security Services industry is estimated to be worth approximately $13.9 billion. This figure includes security, protection and private enquiry services and reflects a market driven by commercial risk, insurance obligations, crime prevention, regulatory compliance and increasing reliance on professional evidence-gathering services.[1]

1.4. For Complete Corporate Services, the investigation industry is not a single service line. It is a gateway market. Investigation work regularly connects with debt recovery, business risk management, online reputation management, litigation support, fraud control and enforcement strategy. This creates a strong commercial foundation for a scalable licensing model.

[1] IBISWorld – Investigation and Security Services in Australia: https://www.ibisworld.com/australia/industry/investigation-security-services/572/
IBISWorld – Investigation and Security Services Market Size: https://www.ibisworld.com/australia/market-size/investigation-security-services/572/
IBISWorld – Investigation and Security Services Employment Statistics: https://www.ibisworld.com/australia/employment/investigation-and-security-services/572/

1.5. CCS operates in a market where demand is generated by multiple client sectors at once:

- lawyers;
- insurers;
- self-insured employers;
- small and medium businesses;
- large corporates;
- government departments;
- local councils;
- regulators;
- insolvency practitioners;
- human resources teams;
- risk and compliance managers;
- online reputation and cyber response clients.

1.6. This report explains the size of the Australian investigation industry, the major sources of demand, the client sectors most likely to use investigators, the categories of investigation work, the issues driving industry growth and why CCS is positioned to expand nationally.

Key Findings

The investigation market is much larger than traditional private investigation	The modern investigation industry includes surveillance, insurance claims investigation, factual enquiries, workplace investigations, fraud investigations, skip tracing, asset tracing, witness location, open-source intelligence, corporate due diligence and digital evidence services. This means the addressable market for CCS is broader than “private investigator” work alone.
Australia’s broader investigation and security services market is substantial	The broader Australian Investigation and Security Services industry is estimated at approximately $13.9 billion. The market includes private enquiry services, security services, protection services and related risk-management activities.

	For CCS, this market size is strategically important because many investigation services overlap with adjacent industries, including legal services, insurance, debt recovery, workplace risk, fraud management and online reputation management.[2]
Lawyers are a major source of recurring investigation demand	Australia has approximately 97,500 practising solicitors and approximately 6,000 barristers. The Australian legal services industry is estimated at approximately $35.8 billion.[3] Lawyers engage investigators for litigation support, asset tracing, witness location, surveillance, factual enquiries, enforcement support, fraud enquiries, estate disputes, family law disputes, insurance matters, defamation matters and commercial litigation.
Insurance is one of the strongest investigation markets	Insurers require investigation services to assess claims, detect fraud, verify liability, obtain witness evidence, conduct surveillance, investigate causation and support recovery action. Investigation work is relevant across general insurance, workers compensation, life insurance, CTP, income protection, property claims, liability claims and self-insured claims.[4]

[2] eSafety Commissioner – Online Abuse Resources: https://www.esafety.gov.au
[3] Law Society of NSW – 2024 National Profile of Solicitors: https://www.lawsociety.com.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/2024%20National%20Profile%20of%20Solicitors%20-%20Final.pdf
Queensland Law Society – National Profile of Solicitors Release: https://www.qls.com.au/news-media-advocacy/law-society-of-nsw-releases-national-profile-of-solicitors
Australian Bar Association: https://austbar.asn.au/for-members/national-brief/
IBISWorld – Legal Services in Australia: https://www.ibisworld.com/australia/industry/legal-services/560/
[4] Insurance Council of Australia: https://insurancecouncil.com.au
APRA – General Insurance Statistics: https://www.apra.gov.au/quarterly-general-insurance-performance-statistics
APRA – Insurance Industry Publications: https://www.apra.gov.au/insurance-publications

Workplace investigations are a major growth area	Workplace complaints involving bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, misconduct, fraud, psychosocial hazards, discrimination, whistleblower reports and code of conduct breaches are creating substantial demand for independent factual investigations.[5]
Fraud and cyber-enabled misconduct are increasing demand	Fraud risk is now a mainstream business issue. Fraud can arise through employees, suppliers, contractors, customers, insurance claims, identity misuse, cyber-enabled scams[6], procurement misconduct, false invoicing, asset concealment and online impersonation.[7]
Government and local councils are significant investigation users	Government agencies and local authorities manage complaints, procurement issues, employee misconduct, fraud, corruption risks, conflicts of interest, regulatory breaches, public liability claims and internal reviews.[8] This creates opportunities for external investigation support.
The future of investigation work will be more digital,	The investigation industry is moving toward a blended model combining field enquiries, surveillance, digital intelligence, open-source intelligence, evidence

[5] Safe Work Australia – Key Work Health and Safety Statistics Australia: https://data.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/insights/key-whs-statistics-australia/latest-release
Safe Work Australia – National Data Set for Compensation-based Statistics: https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/statistics-and-research
Fair Work Commission Annual Report: https://www.fwc.gov.au/about-us/annual-reports
Fair Work Commission Statistical Reports: https://www.fwc.gov.au/about-us/research-and-statistics
[6] Australian Cyber Security Centre: https://www.cyber.gov.au
eSafety Commissioner: https://www.esafety.gov.au
[7] ACCC Scamwatch Annual Statistics: https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/research-and-resources/scam-statistics
ACCC Scamwatch: https://www.scamwatch.gov.au
Australian Signals Directorate – Cyber Threat Reports: https://www.cyber.gov.au/about-us/view-all-content/reports-and-statistics
[8] National Anti-Corruption Commission: https://www.nacc.gov.au
Commonwealth Ombudsman: https://www.ombudsman.gov.au
Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission: https://www.ccc.qld.gov.au
NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption: https://www.icac.nsw.gov.au
Australian Local Government Association: https://alga.com.au

more regulated and more evidence-driven	preservation, compliance awareness and litigation-ready reporting.

1.7. The findings outlined above demonstrate that the Australian investigation industry is supported by multiple client sectors, diverse service offerings and a growing demand for independent evidence gathering and factual enquiry services. Far from being a niche profession, investigation services now form an important part of the broader legal, insurance, risk management and compliance landscape.

1.8. This report examines the Australian investigation industry in greater detail, including its size, structure, key client groups, major service categories and future growth drivers. It also considers the challenges and opportunities facing the industry and the increasing role investigators play in helping organisations manage risk, resolve disputes, detect fraud and make informed decisions.

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Chapter 1

1. Understanding the Australian Investigation Industry

What is an investigation?

1.1. An investigation is a structured process for finding, verifying, preserving and reporting facts. In a commercial context, investigations are usually undertaken to answer questions such as:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- When did it happen?
- What evidence exists?
- Can the evidence be verified?
- Can the evidence be used in a legal, insurance, employment or commercial decision?
- Is there fraud, misconduct, concealment or reputational risk?
- Can a person, asset, witness or debtor be located?
- Can a claim, allegation or suspicion be confirmed or disproved?

1.2. Modern investigations are no longer limited to physical surveillance. They may involve interviews, database enquiries, open-source research, social media review, factual analysis, document review, scene inspections, surveillance, asset searches, background checks, corporate searches, digital evidence preservation and liaison with legal or insurance professionals.

The role of licensed investigators

1.3. Private investigators assist clients by obtaining information that is relevant, reliable and capable of being used for a lawful purpose.

1.4. Their work may support:

- litigation;
- insurance claims;
- employment decisions;
- recovery action;

- fraud prevention;
- risk management;
- compliance reviews;
- internal disciplinary processes;
- asset recovery;
- reputation management;
- regulatory referrals;
- commercial negotiations.

1.5. Investigators are particularly valuable where clients need independent evidence rather than assumptions, suspicion or informal commentary.

Investigation as a business infrastructure service

1.6. Investigation services are best understood as part of the infrastructure that supports commercial decision-making.

1.7. Businesses, lawyers, insurers and government agencies all make decisions based on facts. Those facts may relate to liability, misconduct, risk, reputation, fraud, assets, identity, employment conduct or contractual performance.

1.8. Where the facts are unclear, disputed, hidden or deliberately concealed, investigation services become essential.

1.9. This is why the investigation industry is closely connected to several other major industries:

- legal services;
- insurance;
- debt recovery;
- risk management;
- compliance;
- workplace relations;
- cyber security;
- online reputation management;
- insolvency; and
- government administration.

1.10. For CCS, this overlap is strategically important. It means that an investigation client may also need debt recovery, online content removal, litigation support, reputation protection, fraud response or risk-management services.

Chapter 2

2. Categories of Investigation Services

Corporate investigations

2.1. Corporate investigations involve enquiries into issues affecting companies, directors, employees, suppliers, contractors, customers or business partners.

2.2. Typical corporate investigations include:

- employee fraud;
- theft of stock or cash;
- false invoicing;
- misuse of company resources;
- breach of restraint obligations;
- confidential information misuse;
- conflicts of interest;
- supplier fraud;
- procurement irregularities;
- internal misconduct;
- director misconduct;
- sham contracting;
- asset concealment;
- undeclared related-party dealings;
- business partner due diligence; and
- competitor misconduct.

2.3. Corporate clients often need investigators because internal staff may lack independence, specialist skills or capacity. In some cases, the matter may involve senior employees or sensitive internal allegations, making an external investigation more appropriate.

Workplace investigations

2.4. Workplace investigations are one of the strongest growth categories. They may involve:

- bullying complaints;
- sexual harassment complaints;
- harassment;
- discrimination;
- workplace violence;
- psychosocial hazard complaints;
- code of conduct breaches;
- conflict of interest allegations;
- misuse of IT systems;
- inappropriate communications;

- fraud;
- theft;
- time-sheet falsification;
- secondary employment conflicts;
- drug and alcohol issues;
- whistleblower complaints; and
- retaliation or victimisation allegations.

2.5. Employers increasingly need defensible investigation processes. Poorly handled complaints can create legal, reputational and operational risk.

2.6. A professional investigation can assist an employer to:

- identify the allegations;
- gather evidence;
- interview witnesses;
- test competing accounts;
- make factual findings;
- support disciplinary or risk-management decisions;
- demonstrate procedural fairness; and
- reduce the risk of later challenge.

Insurance investigations

2.7. Insurance investigations are a core part of the investigation industry. They may include:

- claimant surveillance;
- liability enquiries;
- accident scene inspections;
- witness statements;
- social media reviews;
- fraud detection;
- causation enquiries;
- factual investigations;
- recovery and subrogation enquiries;
- policy breach investigations;
- exaggerated claim investigations;
- staged event investigations;
- income protection claim reviews;
- workers compensation investigations;
- CTP investigations;
- public liability investigations; and
- property damage investigations.

2.8. Insurance investigation work must be carefully managed because privacy, surveillance, proportionality and evidentiary issues can arise.

Fraud investigations

2.9. Fraud investigations seek to identify whether a person or organisation has acted dishonestly for financial or personal gain. Common fraud types include:

- employee theft;
- false invoices;
- payroll fraud;
- procurement fraud;
- insurance fraud;
- identity fraud;
- online scams;
- internal financial manipulation;
- asset concealment;
- false expenses;
- misuse of corporate credit cards;
- phoenix activity;
- sham transactions;
- false workers compensation claims;
- supplier kickbacks; and
- cyber-enabled fraud.

2.10. Fraud investigations often overlap with legal action, debt recovery, insurance claims, insolvency, employment law and criminal referral.

Surveillance

2.11. Surveillance remains a recognised investigation tool, particularly in insurance, family law, workers compensation and employment matters. Surveillance may be used to:

- verify claimed incapacity;
- confirm a person's location or activities;
- test factual assertions;
- identify patterns of conduct;
- observe property use;
- support insurance claim assessment;
- assist in family law evidence gathering; and
- document breach of obligations.

2.12. Surveillance must be lawful, proportionate and appropriate. It is not suitable for every matter and should be used as part of a broader investigation strategy.

Asset tracing

2.13. Asset tracing is the process of identifying assets, ownership interests, corporate structures, related entities and financial indicators.

2.14. It may be required in:

- commercial litigation;
- debt recovery;
- insolvency;
- family law;
- estate disputes;
- fraud matters;
- enforcement proceedings;
- judgment recovery;
- director misconduct investigations; and
- phoenix activity enquiries.

2.15. Asset tracing is particularly valuable where a person or company appears to be avoiding payment, hiding assets, transferring property, using related entities or engaging in suspicious transactions.

Skip tracing and debtor location

2.16. Skip tracing involves locating a person who cannot be found through ordinary contact details. It is commonly used in:

- debt recovery;
- process serving;
- litigation;
- family law;
- estate administration;
- enforcement proceedings;
- insurance recovery;
- missing person enquiries; and
- fraud matters.

2.17. For debt recovery and legal clients, locating a debtor or defendant can be the difference between an unenforceable claim and a commercially useful outcome.

Witness location and witness enquiries

2.18. Witness evidence is critical in litigation, insurance claims, workplace disputes and regulatory matters. Investigators may assist by:

- locating witnesses;
- taking preliminary statements;
- identifying additional witnesses;
- verifying witness accounts;

- attending scenes;
- collecting contemporaneous evidence; and
- preparing factual reports for lawyers or insurers.

2.19. Witness enquiries are particularly important where the event occurred months or years earlier, staff have moved on, contact details are outdated or memories are contested.

Due diligence and background enquiries

2.20. Due diligence investigations help clients assess whether a person, company or opportunity carries unacceptable risk.

2.21. They may involve:

- director background checks;
- adverse media checks;
- litigation history;
- insolvency history;
- corporate structure review;
- beneficial ownership enquiries;
- sanctions and watchlist checks;
- reputation checks;
- employment history verification;
- qualification checks;
- supplier due diligence;
- investment due diligence; and
- franchisee or licensee suitability checks.

2.22. Due diligence is increasingly important in a business environment where reputational risk, fraud, cyber risk and regulatory exposure can arise quickly.

Digital and open-source intelligence

2.23. Digital intelligence and open-source intelligence are now central to modern investigation work. They may involve reviewing:

- websites;
- social media;
- online reviews;
- business directories;
- public databases;
- court listings;
- corporate records;
- domain records;
- digital advertisements;
- online marketplaces;

- cached content;
- public images and videos;
- online identities and aliases.

2.24. This area overlaps strongly with online reputation management and content removal. Digital evidence must be preserved carefully so that it can be relied upon later.

Chapter 3

3. Industry Size and Market Overview

The broader market

3.1. The Australian Investigation and Security Services industry is estimated at approximately $13.9 billion.

3.2. This figure is important but should be interpreted carefully. The broader industry includes security services, protection services, private enquiry services, guard and patrol services, monitored security services and related activities. Private investigation is therefore part of this larger market rather than the whole market.

3.3. For CCS, this is commercially useful because CCS is not confined to traditional private investigation. The business model sits across investigation, risk, debt recovery and reputation management, all of which intersect with the broader security and investigation market.

Employment and industry participation

3.4. The broader Investigation and Security Services industry employs tens of thousands of people nationally. Employment in the industry reflects the large number of individuals engaged in security, monitoring, protection, patrol, enquiry and investigation-related services.

3.5. Investigation work itself includes licensed investigators, surveillance operatives, enquiry agents, factual investigators, claims investigators, workplace investigators, fraud investigators, intelligence analysts, process servers, skip tracers and administrative support staff.

Why the industry is growing

3.6. Several factors are driving demand for investigation services in Australia:

3.7. Increased business risk: Businesses face more complex risks involving fraud, cyber-enabled crime, employee misconduct, reputational harm, supplier misconduct and regulatory exposure.

3.8. Increased insurance scrutiny: Insurers need to verify claims, manage fraud risk, control claims costs and assess liability.

3.9. Growth in workplace complaints: Bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, psychosocial hazards and misconduct complaints require employers to undertake defensible factual enquiries.

3.10. Litigation complexity: Lawyers need evidence to support claims, defend proceedings, locate witnesses, trace assets and enforce judgments.

3.11. Digital evidence growth: Online conduct, reviews, posts, messages, websites and digital identities now play a major role in disputes.

3.12. Fraud and scam activity: Fraud has become more sophisticated, often involving digital platforms, identity misuse, social engineering and cross-border actors.

3.13. Compliance expectations: Boards, executives, government agencies and regulated entities are expected to detect, investigate and respond to misconduct.

3.14. Reputation risk: Businesses can suffer significant damage from false reviews, defamatory publications, cyber incidents and online attacks.

Investigation as an adjacent market

3.15. The investigation industry should not be viewed in isolation. Investigation work frequently triggers or supports:

- legal action;
- employment advice;
- disciplinary action;
- debt recovery;
- insurance claim decisions;
- regulatory reporting;

- police referrals;
- online content removal;
- crisis management;
- insolvency recovery;
- governance reform.

3.16. This makes investigation services a valuable entry point into wider professional services relationships.

Chapter 4

4. Legal Sector Demand

Size of the Australian legal market

4.1. The Australian legal sector is one of the most important client markets for investigation services.

4.2. Australia has approximately 97,500 practising solicitors and approximately 6,000 barristers. The legal services industry is estimated at approximately $35.8 billion.

4.3. This makes lawyers a major source of recurring demand for investigation services, particularly where evidence is needed for litigation, dispute resolution, enforcement, asset tracing, family law, insurance, employment law, criminal defence, defamation and commercial disputes.

Why lawyers use investigators

4.4. Lawyers use investigators because legal matters often depend on evidence that cannot be obtained through ordinary correspondence or client instructions alone.

4.5. Investigators assist lawyers to:

- locate witnesses;
- locate defendants;
- locate debtors;
- serve documents;
- trace assets;
- verify allegations;
- collect factual evidence;
- preserve digital evidence;

- conduct surveillance where lawful and appropriate;
- identify corporate structures;
- investigate fraud;
- test credibility;
- obtain background information;
- support enforcement strategy;
- prepare litigation-ready factual reports.

Commercial litigation lawyers

4.6. Commercial litigation lawyers are one of the most important investigation user groups.

4.7. They may need assistance with:

- asset tracing;
- fraud enquiries;
- director background checks;
- locating evasive defendants;
- identifying related entities;
- tracing beneficial ownership;
- investigating breach of contract;
- investigating breach of restraints;
- evidence gathering;
- witness location;
- enforcement support;
- insolvency-related enquiries.

4.8. Commercial disputes often involve significant sums, making professional investigation commercially justifiable.

Family lawyers

4.9. Family lawyers may use investigators in matters involving:

- hidden assets;
- lifestyle evidence;
- cohabitation issues;
- parenting disputes;
- family violence concerns;
- location of parties;
- service of documents;
- property settlement disputes;
- business ownership and control;
- surveillance where lawful and proportionate.

4.10. Family law matters can involve highly sensitive facts, so investigators must act lawfully, ethically and carefully.

4.5 Insurance lawyers

4.11. Insurance lawyers use investigators for:

- claimant surveillance;
- factual investigations;
- witness statements;
- causation enquiries;
- liability assessment;
- social media review;
- recovery action;
- fraud investigation;
- public liability claims;
- workers compensation claims;
- CTP claims;
- income protection claims.

4.12. Insurance litigation often turns on factual detail. Independent investigation evidence can assist both pre-litigation assessment and formal proceedings.

Employment lawyers

4.13. Employment lawyers may require investigation support in matters involving:

- bullying;
- harassment;
- sexual harassment;
- workplace misconduct;
- breach of confidentiality;
- misuse of company property;
- theft;
- fraud;
- whistleblower complaints;
- adverse action;
- restraint breaches;
- secondary employment;
- surveillance in appropriate cases;
- social media misconduct.

4.14. Employment matters require careful handling because procedural fairness, privacy and workplace law obligations are often central.

Criminal defence lawyers

4.15. Criminal defence lawyers may use investigators to:

- locate witnesses;
- obtain statements;
- inspect scenes;
- identify CCTV sources;
- test prosecution evidence;
- investigate alternative suspects;

- verify alibis;
- review timelines;
- identify inconsistencies;
- preserve exculpatory evidence.

4.16. Independent investigation can be particularly important where a client disputes allegations and factual enquiries are needed urgently.

Defamation lawyers

4.17. Defamation lawyers may need investigators to:

- identify anonymous publishers;
- preserve online publications;
- trace digital accounts;
- investigate publication pathways;
- assess reputational spread;
- identify witnesses;
- verify factual allegations;
- support takedown or pre-litigation strategy.

4.18. Defamation work increasingly overlaps with online reputation management.

Estate lawyers

4.19. Estate lawyers may use investigators to:

- locate missing beneficiaries;
- trace estate assets;
- investigate suspicious transfers;
- investigate undue influence;
- verify asset inventories;
- locate witnesses to wills;
- investigate executor misconduct;
- identify overseas assets;
- find family members.

4.20. Estate disputes often involve historical facts and incomplete records, making investigation support valuable.

Intellectual property lawyers

4.21. IP lawyers may use investigators for:

- counterfeit goods investigations;
- trade mark infringement enquiries;
- copyright infringement enquiries;
- undercover test purchases;
- online marketplace monitoring;
- identifying sellers;

- tracing supply chains;
- preserving online evidence;
- investigating trade secret misuse.

4.22. IP investigation work may involve both physical and digital evidence.

Strategic implication for CCS

4.23. The legal sector is not simply a client category. It is a referral engine.

4.24. A single law firm may generate investigation work across:

- litigation;
- insurance;
- employment;
- family law;
- criminal defence;
- estate disputes;
- debt recovery;
- insolvency;
- reputation matters.

4.25. For CCS, lawyers should be treated as a priority business development channel because they can refer recurring work across multiple investigation categories.

Chapter 5

5. Insurance Sector Demand

Insurance as an investigation-intensive industry

5.1. Insurance is one of the most investigation-intensive sectors in Australia.[9]

5.2. Insurers must assess whether claims are valid, whether policy conditions are satisfied, whether loss occurred as alleged, whether liability exists and whether fraud or exaggeration is present.

5.3. Investigation services assist insurers to make evidence-based decisions.

[9] Insurance Council of Australia: https://insurancecouncil.com.au
APRA – General Insurance Statistics: https://www.apra.gov.au/quarterly-general-insurance-performance-statistics
APRA – Insurance Industry Publications: https://www.apra.gov.au/insurance-publications

Types of insurance investigations

5.4. Insurance investigations may involve:

- workers compensation;
- motor vehicle claims;
- compulsory third party claims;
- public liability;
- professional indemnity;
- property damage;
- business interruption;
- income protection;
- life insurance;
- total and permanent disability;
- travel insurance;
- marine claims;
- construction claims;
- product liability;
- recovery and subrogation.

5.3 Claims verification

5.5. Claims verification is a core investigation function.

5.6. Investigators may assist by:

- interviewing witnesses;
- reviewing the accident scene;
- confirming timelines;
- obtaining photographs;
- reviewing public information;
- checking business records;
- confirming employment history;
- reviewing activity levels;
- identifying inconsistencies;
- preparing factual reports.

Surveillance and activity checks

5.7. Surveillance may be used in insurance matters where there is a lawful basis to verify claimed incapacity, activity levels or factual assertions.

5.8. Surveillance is most common in:

- personal injury claims;
- workers compensation claims;
- income protection claims;
- total and permanent disability claims;
- motor accident claims;

- public liability claims.

5.9. Surveillance evidence must be obtained lawfully and proportionately. It should be used to inform claim assessment, not as a substitute for proper medical or legal analysis.

Fraud detection

5.10. Insurance fraud may involve:

- staged accidents;
- exaggerated injuries;
- false property claims;
- non-disclosure;
- fabricated loss;
- false income claims;
- inflated repair costs;
- duplicate claims;
- identity misuse;
- organised fraud rings;
- collusion between claimants and service providers.

5.11. Investigation services help insurers identify fraud indicators and gather evidence.

Recovery and subrogation

5.12. Insurers often need to recover money from third parties after paying a claim.

5.13. Investigators may assist by:

- locating third parties;
- identifying assets;
- confirming ownership;
- locating witnesses;
- obtaining evidence of liability;
- supporting litigation or settlement strategy.

Self-insured employers

5.14. Self-insured organisations manage their own workers compensation or liability exposures. They often have internal claims teams but may still require external investigators for sensitive, complex or high-value matters.

5.15. Self-insured employers may need investigation support for:

- workplace injury claims;
- psychological injury claims;

- alleged bullying or harassment;
- return-to-work disputes;
- surveillance;
- claimant activity checks;
- witness enquiries;
- workplace incident reconstruction;
- fraud concerns;
- internal misconduct linked to claims.

Strategic implication for CCS

5.16. Insurance clients offer recurring and scalable investigation demand.

5.17. A strong CCS insurance offering should emphasise:

- lawful surveillance;
- factual investigations;
- witness enquiries;
- social media evidence;
- claims verification;
- fraud indicators;
- fast reporting;
- national coverage;
- litigation-ready evidence.

Chapter 6

6. Government and Regulatory Investigations

Government as an investigation client

6.1. Government agencies manage large workforces, public funds, procurement processes, grants, regulatory responsibilities and public complaints.

6.2. This creates a broad need for investigation services.

6.3. Government-related investigation work may include:

- employee misconduct;
- fraud;
- corruption risk;
- procurement irregularities;
- conflicts of interest;
- grant misuse;
- workplace complaints;
- whistleblower disclosures;
- public liability claims;
- regulatory evidence gathering;

- compliance inspections;
- complaint triage;
- local council investigations;
- contractor misconduct.

Federal government

6.4. Federal agencies may require investigations in areas such as:

- grant administration;
- procurement;
- workplace conduct;
- contractor compliance;
- fraud control;
- regulatory enforcement;
- cyber incidents;
- misuse of public resources;
- conflicts of interest;
- public interest disclosures.

State and territory government

6.5. State and territory agencies may require investigation support for:

- public sector misconduct;
- workplace complaints;
- education complaints;
- health and human services complaints;
- transport incidents;
- correctional and youth justice incidents;
- procurement issues;
- public liability;
- fraud and corruption risks.

Local government

6.6. Local councils manage large volumes of community-facing services and regulatory functions. Investigation support may be required for:

- employee misconduct;
- procurement complaints;
- planning and development issues;
- illegal dumping;
- animal management;
- local law breaches;
- contractor disputes;
- public liability incidents;

- workplace claims;
- conflicts of interest;
- fraud allegations;
- councillor conduct complaints;
- community complaints.

Crown Solicitors and government litigation

6.7. Crown Solicitors and government legal offices are important indirect users of investigation services because government litigation often requires factual evidence, witness location, scene inspection, document collection and historical reconstruction.

6.8. Investigation services may support:

- civil litigation;
- employment litigation;
- public liability claims;
- administrative law matters;
- regulatory prosecutions;
- coronial matters;
- workers compensation disputes;
- contractor disputes;
- fraud recovery.

Regulatory investigations

6.9. Regulators may require or trigger investigation work involving:

- workplace safety;
- consumer protection;
- environmental breaches;
- building and construction;
- professional conduct;
- financial services;
- health and disability services;
- privacy breaches;
- cyber incidents;
- licensing breaches.

6.10. Private investigators do not replace regulators, but they can assist private clients, lawyers or organisations to gather facts before, during or after regulatory engagement.

Strategic implication for CCS

6.11. Government and local authority work can be high-value and reputation-enhancing. It also supports the credibility of a national licensing model.

6.12. A CCS government-focused investigation offering should emphasise:

- independence;
- confidentiality;
- procedural fairness;
- defensible reporting;
- lawful evidence gathering;
- experience with sensitive matters;
- ability to work with lawyers and internal decision-makers;
- capacity to manage matters across locations.

Chapter 7

7. Workplace Investigations

Workplace investigations as a growth market

7.1. Workplace investigations are now a major source of demand for professional investigation services.

7.2. Employers are under increasing pressure to respond properly to complaints involving:

- bullying;
- harassment;
- sexual harassment;
- discrimination;
- victimisation;
- psychosocial hazards;
- unsafe work practices;
- fraud;
- theft;
- drug and alcohol issues;
- misuse of confidential information;
- inappropriate workplace relationships;
- workplace violence;
- whistleblower complaints;
- conflicts of interest;
- code of conduct breaches.

Why employers need external investigators

7.3. Employers may need external investigators where:

- the complaint is serious;
- the allegations involve senior staff;
- internal HR lacks capacity;
- independence is required;
- the matter may lead to dismissal;
- legal proceedings are likely;
- the issue involves multiple witnesses;
- there is reputational risk;
- the workplace is divided;
- the organisation needs a defensible factual report.

Bullying and harassment complaints

7.4. Bullying and harassment complaints often involve competing accounts, informal conduct, historical events and workplace culture issues.

7.5. An investigator may need to:

- identify specific allegations;
- interview the complainant;
- interview the respondent;
- interview witnesses;
- review emails, messages and documents;
- assess consistency;
- make factual findings;
- prepare a clear report.

Sexual harassment complaints

7.6. Sexual harassment investigations require particular care. Issues may include:

- sensitivity and trauma;
- confidentiality;
- procedural fairness;
- power imbalance;
- witness reluctance;
- digital messages;
- workplace culture;
- risk of victimisation;
- legal exposure.

7.7. A properly conducted investigation can assist an employer to respond lawfully and safely.

Fraud and theft in the workplace

7.8. Workplace fraud and theft investigations may involve:

- cash theft;
- inventory theft;
- false invoices;
- payroll fraud;
- time-sheet fraud;
- expense fraud;
- misuse of company cards;
- unauthorised discounts;
- fake refunds;
- conflict of interest;
- supplier collusion;
- data theft.

7.9. Investigators can assist by gathering evidence before confrontation or disciplinary action occurs.

Psychosocial hazards

7.10. Psychosocial hazards are increasingly important in workplace risk management.

7.11. Complaints involving stress, bullying, workload, occupational violence, poor support, conflict and harassment may lead to workers compensation claims, employment disputes, WHS scrutiny and reputational harm.

7.12. Investigations can assist employers to identify what occurred and whether controls need to be improved.

Fair Work Commission relevance

7.13. Workplace disputes may lead to Fair Work Commission proceedings, including unfair dismissal, general protections, bullying and sexual harassment applications.

7.14. Investigation reports can become important evidence in later proceedings. This means workplace investigations must be conducted carefully, with attention to fairness, relevance and documentation.

Strategic implication for CCS

7.15. Workplace investigations are a strong growth opportunity because they sit between investigation, employment law, risk management and insurance.

7.16. A CCS workplace investigation offering should emphasise:

- independence;
- procedural fairness;
- trauma-informed process where appropriate;
- clear allegation framing;
- careful witness interviews;
- evidence-based findings;
- litigation-aware reporting;
- fast turnaround;
- confidentiality;
- ability to support SMEs and larger organisations.

Chapter 8

8. Fraud in Australia

Fraud as a national business risk

8.1. Fraud is no longer a niche issue. It is a mainstream commercial, personal and government risk.

8.2. Fraud can affect:

- individuals;
- SMEs;
- large companies;
- insurers;
- government agencies;
- charities;
- NDIS providers;
- professional firms;
- landlords;
- investors;
- employers;
- online businesses.

Types of fraud relevant to CCS

8.3. The fraud categories most relevant to CCS include:

- employee fraud;
- supplier fraud;
- procurement fraud;
- invoice fraud;
- payroll fraud;
- identity fraud;
- online scams;
- insurance fraud;
- workers compensation fraud;
- false injury claims;

- asset concealment;
- phoenix activity;
- director misconduct;
- false credentials;
- business partner fraud;
- grant fraud;
- cyber-enabled fraud;
- romance and investment scams;
- fake online reviews;
- impersonation.

Employee fraud

8.4. Employee fraud may include:

- stealing cash;
- stealing stock;
- issuing false refunds;
- creating false suppliers;
- inflating hours;
- misusing company cards;
- diverting business opportunities;
- leaking confidential information;
- misusing customer data;
- manipulating accounts.

8.5. Employee fraud can be difficult to detect because the person involved may understand internal systems and weaknesses.

Procurement fraud

8.6. Procurement fraud may involve:

- inflated quotes;
- undisclosed relationships;
- supplier kickbacks;
- false invoices;
- split contracts;
- sham tenders;
- conflicts of interest;
- collusion;
- overcharging;
- work not performed.

8.7. This is particularly relevant to government, councils, construction, facilities management and large corporates.

Insurance fraud

8.8. Insurance fraud may involve:

- staged events;
- exaggerated injuries;
- fabricated losses;
- false property claims;
- fraudulent medical certificates;
- non-disclosure;
- misrepresentation;
- organised claims fraud.

8.9. Insurance fraud creates direct demand for surveillance, factual enquiries, interviews and evidence gathering.

Cyber-enabled fraud

8.10. Cyber-enabled fraud increasingly overlaps with investigation work. It may include:

- business email compromise;
- invoice redirection;
- phishing;
- identity theft;
- fake investment platforms;
- fake websites;
- impersonation;
- online extortion;
- data theft;
- cryptocurrency scams.

8.11. Investigators may assist by preserving evidence, identifying digital footprints, tracing entities, documenting loss and supporting legal or recovery strategy.

Fraud and reputation

8.12. Fraud also creates reputational risk.

8.13. A business accused of fraud may need to investigate quickly to determine whether:

- the allegation is true;
- an employee or contractor is involved;
- public statements are required;
- customers are affected;
- regulators must be notified;
- content removal or reputation management is needed.

8.14. This is another example of the convergence between investigation, risk and online reputation management.

Strategic implication for CCS

8.15. Fraud investigation should be a core CCS growth pillar.

8.16. The strongest commercial positioning is:

8.17. CCS helps businesses move from suspicion to evidence.

8.18. That evidence can then support:

- dismissal;
- recovery action;
- insurance decisions;
- police referrals;
- legal proceedings;
- internal controls;
- reputation management;
- licencee service expansion.

Chapter 9

9. Digital Evidence and Online Investigations

The rise of digital evidence

9.1. Most modern disputes now involve some form of digital evidence.

9.2. This may include:

- emails;
- text messages;
- social media posts;
- online reviews;
- photographs;
- videos;
- website content;
- digital advertisements;
- domain records;
- marketplace listings;
- public profiles;
- metadata;
- screenshots;
- search results;
- cached pages.

9.3. Digital evidence is relevant to legal disputes, employment matters, defamation, fraud, insurance, family law, IP enforcement, reputation management and cyber incidents.

Online identity investigation

9.4. Online investigations may involve identifying:

- anonymous publishers;
- fake accounts;
- review authors;
- impersonation accounts;
- scam websites;
- marketplace sellers;
- infringing traders;
- hostile former employees;
- competitors;
- fraudulent businesses.

9.5. This requires careful evidence preservation and lawful enquiry methods.

Online reviews and business harm

9.6. Online reviews can materially affect business reputation and revenue. Investigations may be needed where reviews appear to be:

- false;
- defamatory;
- malicious;
- coordinated;
- posted by competitors;
- posted by former employees;
- connected to extortion;
- part of a broader campaign.

9.7. This area overlaps directly with online reputation management.

Defamation and harmful content

9.8. Online defamation and harmful content can involve:

- false allegations;
- anonymous posts;
- social media attacks;
- review bombing;
- fake news pages;
- impersonation;
- doxxing;
- harassment;
- edited images;
- deepfakes;
- malicious videos.

9.9. Investigators can assist lawyers and reputation specialists by preserving evidence, identifying publication patterns and tracing digital actors where possible.

Strategic implication for CCS

9.10. Digital investigation is a major opportunity because it connects three CCS markets:

- investigation;
- legal support;
- online reputation management.

9.11. A CCS digital investigation offering should emphasise:

- online evidence preservation;
- open-source intelligence;
- anonymous publisher tracing;
- review investigation;
- social media investigation;
- litigation support;
- reputation protection.

Chapter 10

10. Future of the Investigation Industry

The industry is becoming more sophisticated

10.1. The future of investigation work will be shaped by:

- digital evidence;
- artificial intelligence;
- online fraud;
- cyber-enabled misconduct;
- regulatory expectations;
- workplace complaints;
- psychosocial safety obligations;
- litigation complexity;
- insurance cost pressure;
- reputational risk;
- data protection obligations.

10.2. Clients will expect investigators to provide more than field observations. They will expect structured intelligence, clear reporting, lawful evidence gathering and commercially useful recommendations.

Artificial intelligence

10.3. Artificial intelligence will affect investigation work in several ways.

10.4. It may assist with:

- document review;
- pattern identification;
- open-source research;
- fraud detection;
- image and video analysis;
- report drafting;
- timeline reconstruction;
- data analysis.

10.5. However, AI also creates new risks, including:

- deepfakes;
- synthetic identities;
- fake documents;
- automated scam content;
- impersonation;
- false reviews;
- manipulated images;
- fabricated evidence.

10.6. This means human investigation judgment will remain essential.

Open-source intelligence

10.7. Open-source intelligence will continue to grow as more personal, commercial and reputational activity occurs online.

10.8. However, investigators must distinguish between:

- publicly available information;
- unlawfully obtained information;
- unreliable online content;
- misleading profiles;
- fake accounts;
- edited or manipulated material.

10.9. The future investigator must be both digitally capable and legally careful.

Regulation and compliance

10.10. Investigation work is likely to face increasing scrutiny in relation to:

- privacy;
- surveillance;
- data handling;
- workplace fairness;
- evidence reliability;
- licensing;
- cyber security;
- artificial intelligence;

- vulnerable persons;
- anti-discrimination obligations.

10.11. This creates an advantage for professional, well-managed investigation businesses.

Increasing client expectations

10.12. Clients will increasingly expect:

- fast response;
- national coverage;
- clear pricing;
- lawful methods;
- professional reports;
- digital capability;
- communication with lawyers;
- evidence preservation;
- discretion;
- confidentiality;
- strategic insight.

10.13. This favours investigation providers with systems, training, licensing, supervision and brand credibility.

Chapter 11

11. Why CCS is Positioned for Growth

CCS operates across converging markets

11.1. CCS is not limited to traditional investigation services.

11.2. Its strongest market position is the convergence of:

- Investigations
- Business risk
- Debt recovery
- Online reputation management

11.3. These four areas increasingly overlap. For example:

- a fraud investigation may lead to debt recovery;
- a workplace investigation may create reputational risk;

- an online defamation matter may require digital investigation;
- an insurance claim may require surveillance and legal support;
- a debtor matter may require asset tracing;
- a business dispute may require investigation, litigation support and reputation protection.

11.4. This convergence gives CCS a broader value proposition than single-service providers.

CCS solves evidence problems

11.5. The core CCS promise can be expressed simply:

CCS helps clients obtain facts, evidence and intelligence so they can make better decisions.

11.6. This applies whether the client is:

- a lawyer;
- insurer;
- business owner;
- HR manager;
- risk manager;
- government agency;
- council;
- insolvency practitioner;
- creditor;
- reputation management client.

CCS has multiple client entry points

11.7. CCS can enter a client relationship through:

- surveillance;
- factual investigation;
- debt recovery;
- skip tracing;
- asset tracing;
- workplace investigation;
- online content issue;
- fraud concern;
- insurance claim;
- legal support;
- reputation issue.

11.8. Once a relationship is established, the client may require additional CCS services.

CCS is suited to licensing

11.9. The investigation industry is well suited to licensing because clients often require local presence, fast response and practical field capability.

11.10. A national CCS licensing model can offer:

- local service delivery;
- central brand;
- shared systems;
- shared training;
- shared marketing;
- quality control;
- national client opportunities;
- scalable service categories;
- consistent reporting standards;
- cross-referral across service lines.

The licencee opportunity

11.11. Potential CCS licensees are not simply buying a job. They are entering four connected markets.

11.12. A licensee may build revenue through:

- investigation work;
- debt recovery;
- risk and compliance support;
- online reputation services;
- lawyer referrals;
- insurer relationships;
- business clients;
- government opportunities.

11.13. This creates a stronger business case than a single-service private investigation model.

Market positioning statement

CCS is a national investigation, risk, recovery and reputation services provider helping lawyers, insurers, businesses and government organisations obtain evidence, manage risk and protect commercial outcomes.

Conclusion

12. Industry Outlook

12.1. Australia’s investigation industry has moved well beyond the traditional image of private enquiry work. It is now a substantial and increasingly sophisticated professional services market, supporting lawyers, insurers, employers, businesses, government agencies and individuals who require reliable information, factual verification and evidence-based decision-making.

12.2. Demand for investigation services is being driven by the increasing complexity of legal disputes, insurance claims, workplace complaints, fraud, cyber-enabled misconduct, asset concealment, regulatory scrutiny and reputational risk. As these issues continue to grow, clients are increasingly seeking investigators who can provide lawful, discreet, well-documented and commercially useful outcomes.

12.3. This creates a significant opportunity within the Australian investigation industry. The market is not confined to one client type or one service category. Investigation work can arise from litigation, insurance, employment disputes, commercial risk, fraud prevention, debt recovery, government complaints and online conduct. This diversity gives the industry resilience and creates multiple pathways for recurring work.

12.4. For CCS licensees, the opportunity is particularly strong. A CCS licence provides access to a broad and expanding market where clients need practical investigation support, local capability, professional reporting and trusted service delivery. As demand for investigation services continues to grow across legal, insurance, workplace, government and commercial sectors, well-supported licensees are positioned to build valuable businesses within a market that is becoming more important, not less.