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Macquarie-Backed ATM Firm Pulls Out of Tobacco Stores

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Australian ATM provider Next Payments, backed by Macquarie Group, is removing more than 40 machines from stores linked to illicit tobacco sales. The decision follows an ABC investigation that exposed how some ATMs were installed in shops allegedly involved in the illegal tobacco trade.

The report revealed that several ATM companies had unknowingly partnered with retailers suspected of selling untaxed cigarettes. These businesses, often cash-heavy, benefit from easy access to ATMs, raising concerns about the potential facilitation of criminal activity.

Next Payments CEO Tim Wildash said the company had not been fully aware of the problem's scale but responded immediately once the findings became public. "The ABC's investigation brought to light the size and rapid spread of this issue," Wildash said, adding that the company is now reviewing its ATM placement policies.

While Macquarie Group has not issued a public statement, Next Payments confirmed it is working with authorities and conducting internal reviews to avoid future links with unlawful operators.

The case highlights the need for stronger due diligence in the financial services sector, particularly in industries vulnerable to illegal activity.