

MEDIA RELEASE

Acting Commissioner of Consumer Affairs

3 March 2009

Scams target you

One in 20 Australians is the victim of a scam each year. This is the message Acting Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, Gary Clements, wants to pass onto consumers during National Consumer Fraud Week March 2-8 2009.

National Consumer Fraud week aims to educate consumers about how to recognise and avoid scams. This initiative is part of a scams awareness initiative organised by the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce.

Scams are designed to trick you into giving away your money or your personal details. Scammers are manipulative. They know how to push your buttons to produce the response they want.

Scams come to you in many forms – by SMS, mail, email, telephone, on the internet or at your doorstep.

“This has a real impact at a personal level,” Acting Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, Gary Clements said. “For example in the last 12 months Territorians have been affected by scams such as

- Indigenous art sales online
- Holiday telemarketing scam
- Internet rental property scam
- Fake airline ticket email scam

In some cases people have lost large sums of money to the scammers. “

Mr Clements said Consumer Affairs staff receives complaints from consumers who have been targeted by scammers and provides appropriate advice and assistance. They also alert consumers to the latest scams and warn people of activities in the Territory as they become aware of them.

Anyone can be the target of a scam. Remember, scams target you, protect yourself.

As part of National Consumer Fraud Week consumers can read about other people’s stories and learn about how easy it can be to get scammed – these people have lost money to scams.

One of the best ways to fight the scammers is to learn how scams work and how you can protect yourself.

“Consumers can also fill out a scams survey on the Australian Institute of Criminology website at www.aic.gov.au/research/fraud/acft/survey.html “ Mr Clements said.

Gathering this information will help to improve the prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of scam offenders.

The Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce is a group of 19 Australian and New Zealand government agencies. The aim of the Taskforce is to work together to reduce the incidence and impact of frauds and scams, and each year it creates a co-ordinated information campaign for consumers, timed to coincide with global consumer fraud prevention activities.

Further information on scams is available at www.scamwatch.gov.au

Anyone who has concerns about scams should contact SCAMwatch on 1300 795 995

MEDIA CONTACT Gary Clements 8935 7735 Mobile 0401 116 821

AUSTRALASIAN
CONSUMER FRAUD
TASKFORCE

AN INITIATIVE OF THE STATE, TERRITORY AND
AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENTS