

## Minister Gail Gago

Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills  
Minister for Science and Information Economy  
Minister for the Status of Women  
Minister for Business Services and Consumers

Saturday, 14 February, 2015

### Don't become a victim of a love scam today

Lonely hearts looking for a soul mate are being warned not to fall for a scammer today.

Minister for Business Services and Consumers Gail Gago said Valentine's Day was a timely reminder about scammers, who prey on people during emotionally charged periods.

Over the last two years, there were more than 350 reports relating to dating and romance in South Australia – with losses totalling more than \$2.3 million.

“Scammers will go to extraordinary lengths. They will create fake profiles and invest months or even years building ‘relationships’ with you,” Ms Gago said

“Once your defences are down, scammers will ask for money. I strongly urge that before you give your heart and your money away – stop and ask yourself, ‘do I really know who I’m dealing with?’”

The State Government's Consumer and Business Services recommends that:

- Before even thinking about sending money to someone you have met online, talk to an independent friend, relative or fair trading agency.
- Never give credit card or bank account details to anyone by email.
- Be very careful about how much personal information you share on dating and social media sites. Scammers can use your information and photos to create a fake identity.
- If you agree to meet a romantic prospect in person, tell your family and friends where and when you are going.
- Avoid arrangements with a stranger that require up-front payments via money order, wire transfer or international transfer. It is very hard to recover money sent this way.
- If you have provided your account details, contact your bank immediately.

For more information on dating and romance scams visit [SCAMwatch.gov.au/](http://SCAMwatch.gov.au/) or [www.cbs.sa.gov.au/wcm/consumers/scam](http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/wcm/consumers/scam)