

News releases - John Rau

If it sounds too good to be true...it is.

John Rau

May 24, 2016

South Australians are being urged to keep their money in their pockets and sensitive information safe as the number of scam reports rose by more than 500 in 2015 across the State.

The latest Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's scam activity report reveals Australians have lost in excess of \$229 million to scammers in the last year.

2015 data shows the nation's highest reported scams include phishing - scammers who attempt to get sensitive information to steal a person's identity - and reclaim scams, which involve scammers pretending to be from the government or other well-known entities asking for an upfront payment.

During 2015 South Australians lost more than \$4 million to scammers.

Background

Scams originating from Nigeria have become South Australia's third highest reported loss in 2015 with a total loss of \$543,319.

These scams now operate all over the world. It involves an upfront payment or money transfer that offers you a large share of money that will be released with your payment.

Additionally, losses to investment scams across the nation doubled from \$12.5 million in 2014 to \$24.4 million in 2015.

Follow these tips to protect yourself:

- Do not let anyone pressure you into making decisions
- Get a second opinion
- Always do your own research before investing any money
- Never send money to someone you've never met in person
- Never allow anyone to remotely log onto your computer

For more information about scams and how to protect yourself please visit the [Scamwatch](#) or [CBS website](#).

Quotes attributable to Consumer and Business Services Minister John Rau

While dating and romance scams reduced nationally by 18.5 per cent, this category of scams hit South Australians the hardest with a total loss reported as \$1.1 million.

We tend to hear more and more stories about these types of scams that involve meeting someone online who is often working or living overseas. The scammer establishes a relationship and starts making requests for money.

It is important consumers are made aware of what to look out for so they can spot a potential scam. Don't be a sucker. If it seems too good to be true... it almost certainly is.

Victims often suffer in silence because of the social stigma of falling victim to a scam. Scammers affect individuals financially and emotionally.

We urge South Australians to notify Consumer and Business Services on 131 882 about any suspicious activity or report a scam to Scamwatch. Every report can help to stop scammers affecting you and others in the community.