

AUSTRALASIAN CONSUMER FRAUD TASKFORCE

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



ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD



Results from Scam Awareness Month held during February and March have shown that lottery scams continue to be one of the biggest threats of fraud facing the general public.

The Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce, chaired by the ACCC and involving 18 Australian and New Zealand government agencies and departments found more than half the reports to the dedicated Scamwatch infoline related to some form of lottery scam.



Lottery scams work by fooling consumers into thinking they have won a large prize in a lottery. Often one that they never entered! The scammers tell their victims they need to pay some form of processing fee to release their winnings, which never arrive.

Some of the more common lottery scams that have been circulating recently rely on the good name of legitimate overseas lotteries such as the Spanish El Gordo or Lotería Primitiva while others such as the Princess Diana or EuroMillions lotteries attempt to fool victims with genuine sounding names.



Most lottery scams reported were delivered through the letterbox, with email also making up a large proportion.

Other scams that featured prominently in the reports to the taskforce were bogus holiday or prize offers and suspicious business offers.

Of the 97 respondents who took part in a survey when reporting scams, 82 people reported not losing any money, while one unfortunate victim admitted to handing over \$100 000. Those others who did lose money to scammers reported losing between \$50 and \$6000.

Taskforce chair and deputy ACCC chair, Louise Sylvan, said many of the reported scams had been around for years or were variations on well-known types of scams. The results showed that consumers should stay alert to the possibility of scams.

According to Ms Sylvan the best defence remains to delete suspicious emails, destroy suspicious letters or hang up the phone on them.

**when a SCAM comes calling
destroy or delete it**