

# Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and  
Business Affairs

## Education and Information Services

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27 February 2006

## Phishing For Trouble

Don't even think about parting with your password, PIN or other personal details if the request comes from a phone call or email out of the blue. It may appear to come from a legitimate source, but it could be part of a money-making hoax known as "phishing".

Phishing scams have one thing in common - they trick people into disclosing their personal details by enticing them to click on a link that directs them to a hoax website where personal information is captured. Often the emails and the fake websites are designed to replicate the appearance of a bank or company's legitimate website, and the website address can also be very similar.

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat, said "Don't fall for the line that the bank is carrying out a security upgrade or investigating an irregularity with your account. Financial institutions simply do not contact their customers in this way."

Phishing is one of the scams being addressed as part of a four week campaign by the Australasian Consumer Taskforce to help people protect themselves from becoming a scams victim.

"One of the other dangers with clicking on a dubious link or opening an email is that a 'trojan' virus may secretly be installed that allows scammers to monitor your computer and access your accounts" said Mr Bodycoat.

"The best defence is to hang up or hit the delete key."

Consumers are advised to:

- Install and keep up-to-date protection on your computer
- Only go to the official website for your financial institution using your 'favourites' or by typing the URL in the address bar of your browser. Avoid using computers at public places such as internet cafes for online banking.
- Keep private information out of chat rooms or email.

If a consumer has responded to something "phishy" they should contact their financial institution as soon as possible.

To report a suspected scam contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs on 8204 9777 (or 131 882 for regional callers). A list of scams is available at [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au) or [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au)

## **Background**

As part of a whole of Government approach to combat consumer fraud and scams targeted at consumers, the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce was established in March 2005 and comprises 18 government regulatory agencies and departments in Australia and New Zealand.

Agencies participating in the Taskforce are:

### **Australian Government:**

Attorney General's Department  
Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Australian Communications and Media Authority  
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission  
Australian Federal Police (represented by the Australian High Tech Crime Centre)  
Australian Institute of Criminology  
Australian Securities & Investment Commission  
Department of Communications, Information Technology & the Arts

### **New Zealand Government:**

NZ Commerce Commission  
Ministry of Consumer Affairs

### **State and Territory Governments:**

Australian Capital Territory – Office of Fair Trading  
Consumer Affairs Victoria  
New South Wales – Office of Fair Trading  
Northern Territory – Department of Justice  
Queensland – Department of Tourism, Fair Trading and Wine Industry Development  
South Australia – Office of Consumer & Business Affairs  
Tasmania – Office of Consumer Affairs & Fair Trading  
Western Australia – Department of Consumer & Employment Protection.