

# Media Release

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## “You’ve won!”

Unsuspecting consumers are answering the telephone to be told they’ve won a large cash prize. At first it sounds legitimate as “winners” are allocated a personalised account and pin number to claim their prize, but consumers are warned against responding to this latest scam.

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) has started receiving complaints about the Universal Trust Network calling consumers to say they have won a prize from Kansas, USA. In order to claim their prize consumers are asked to phone the prize line and quote their personalised account and pin number, but the catch is that consumers are also asked for their bank account details so that the cash can be deposited.

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat says, “Too many consumers want it to be real, but they really need to ask themselves ‘what it it’s not?’.”

Scam artists continually try new approaches to lure unsuspecting consumers. This twist of a personalised account and pin number is an attempt to mask the fact that this is yet another overseas lottery scam.

“Giving your personal details to someone who contacts you out of the blue is fraught with danger.”

OCBA is also concerned about two old scams that have re-emerged. There are complaints about the “El Gordo” Spanish lottery and it appears that a second wave of “David Rhodes” chain letters is circulating. OCBA has previously issued warnings about these scams and even took action with the interstate fair trading offices to intercept thousands of David Rhodes chain letters.

Mr Bodycoat said “Information about any new participants in the David Rhodes scheme will be data matched with previous information and any repeat offenders can expect more than just a warning this time.”

“If you’re not sure if something is legitimate, please phone Consumer Affairs for advice. It’s better to check it out first than respond and lose your hard earned money, or to face penalty for participating in an illegal activity such as chain letters.”

“Remember, if it sounds too good to be true it probably is, particularly when they ask for your bank account or other personal details.”

For further information about such scams, contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs on 8204 9777 or 131 882 for regional callers. The OCBA website [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au) provides a list hundreds of scams that have come to our attention.



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of South Australia**