

Bank Fees Refund Scam

Use this Fact Sheet if:

- You have received an unsolicited phone call from someone claiming to be from Consumer Action or a similar organisation; AND
- They claimed that the bank has overcharged you; AND
- They asked you for your bank details; AND/OR
- They asked you to transfer money to them.

Phone Scam

In recent months scammers have been making unsolicited calls and falsely claiming to be a representative of Consumer Action Law Centre or a similarly named organisation. The phone scammers usually claim to have identified incorrectly charged bank fees on the victim's account and offer a service to have these monies refunded.

The scammer may then 'confirm' the consumer's bank details and ask the consumer to provide more personal information.

No matter how legitimate these calls may sound, no reputable company will ever ask you to provide personal or bank details over the phone.

Many consumers have been asked to transfer money, often via Western Union, to the scammers as an "upfront payment" in order to claim back the allegedly overcharged bank fees.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you ever send money to strangers via Western Union. Once your money leaves Australia it is next to impossible for even our regulators to track it let alone retrieve it.

What can you do if you believe you have given your bank details and/or have sent money to a scammer?

If you believe that you may have sent money to a scammer, and you made the transfer through Western Union then contact Western Union immediately on 1800 173 833. If the transfer has not been processed then you may be able to stop the payment.

If you believe that have given your bank account details to a scammer or the scammer had your bank account details, then contact your financial institution immediately to let them know that your bank account's security may have been compromised.

Warning: This fact sheet is for information only and should not be relied upon as legal advice. This information applies only in Victoria and was updated on 13 July 2010.



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Who should you report any calls to?

There are a number of authorities who you may report the scam to:

Crime Stoppers

You can report any crime including scams to Crime Stoppers anonymously by phone or online.

Ph: 1300 888 000

www.crimestoppers.com.au

Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC)

ACCC runs the SCAMwatch website which provides useful information on how to protect yourself from scams and how to report a scam. If you are affected by an interstate or an overseas scam then you can report it to the ACCC by phoning their Infocentre:

Ph: 1300 302 502 Mon - Fri 8:30 am - 6 pm

<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au>

Consumer Affairs Victoria

You can either call Consumer Affairs' hotline or use the online 'dob in a scam' form to report the scam.

Ph: 1300 55 81 81

<http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/CA256EB5000644CE/page/Scams-Dob+in+a+scam?OpenDocument&1=910-Scams~&2=010-Dob+in+a+scam~&3=~>

Australian Securities & Investment Commission (ASIC)

ASIC's MoneySmart website is a useful source of information on how to protect yourself from scams and how to report them.

<http://www.moneysmart.gov.au/scams>

Local Police

If you believe you have transferred money to a scammer then you may report it to your local police. You can find your local police station and the relevant contact number at: <http://www.police.vic.gov.au/>

Western Union

If you have been asked to make payment via Western Union, you can notify Western Union of the details of the scam:

<https://www.westernunion.com.au/WUCOMWEB/contactus.do;jsessionid=E7kH7qXD8U1F1rIKPpWtUXK?method=load&countryCode=AU&languageCode=en&nextSecurePage=Y>

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