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**SCOTTISH
CRIME &
DRUG
ENFORCEMENT
AGENCY**



Scottish Business Crime Centre Liaison Unit

Bulletin 3/2011

Advance Fee Fraud

August 2011

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Overview

The intention of this bulletin is to promote and support effective business crime information/intelligence sharing between the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency and the Scottish business community. Our aim is to reduce the harm caused by serious organised crime and to make Scotland a hostile environment for serious organised criminals.

Advance Fee Fraud

Advance fee fraud is the term used when an individual is required to provide payment in advance on the promise of wealth, gifts, prizes or employment. Contact can be by mail, phone, fax or email.

A recent number of frauds have been targeting individuals via telephone claiming to be from the Ministry for Justice / the Government / Office of Fair Trading or a loan company.

Examples of claims are:

- A financial company providing a loan requiring an administration fee
- The recipient has won a sum of money in a lottery
- An insurance policy has been discovered in the recipients name
- Time share refunds
- Payment protection insurance refunds
- Bank charges refund

In some cases individuals have used a loan comparison website providing their details, a telephone call is received shortly thereafter promising a loan.

In order to receive any financial reward the recipient is required pay an administration fee via an electronic money service such as Western Union, Moneygram or exchange Ukash voucher numbers to receive the amount the fraudsters claim to hold.

Ukash is an electronic money solution which allows the user to perform transactions online without using payment cards. Users pay for the voucher using cash or card payment at convenience store or retailer displaying the PayPoint / Epay / Payzone facility. Each voucher is worth the amount of money it is purchased for, there are no extra fees. The voucher can be used in different ways, the voucher value can be spent online to buy goods and services on websites where Ukash is accepted. To realise the voucher value all that is required is the 19 digit voucher code.

The fraudster will obtain the Ukash voucher number(s) via telephone, however the money promised is not paid to the individual and the amount used to purchase the voucher is stolen.

Ukash provide advice on their website as follows:

DO NOT send Ukash to anyone cold-calling you to offer a tax rebate, personal loan or any other inducement. This is a fraud and you will lose your money. They may claim to be from the Ministry of Finance, Money Saving Expert or a loan company but in ALL cases are fraudsters who will ask you to send them a fee in the form of a Ukash voucher code by email or over the telephone. Only spend Ukash online and at genuine merchants listed at www.ukash.com/spend

Never email vouchers or give voucher codes in full or part by email or over the telephone to anyone as you will lose your money. Ukash advice is never to provide any voucher details to a third-party by any method as it should be treated just like cash. Participating Ukash Merchants will never ask for payment to be made by sending voucher details over the telephone or by email.

If you suspect that you have been subject to such a fraud please report the matter to your local Police force.

Your feedback is welcomed, for this and other enquiries please do not hesitate to contact:

Scottish Business Crime Centre Liaison | Scottish Intelligence Co-ordination Unit
Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency
Direct dial: 01506 524 548 | Email: SICU-DESK@scdea.pnn.police.uk

Our Vision

To protect Scotland's communities from serious organised crime

Our Mission

Working every day for the people of Scotland - dismantling serious organised crime

Our Organisational Values

Trust, Commitment and Respect

Disclaimer

Whilst every care has been taken in developing and compiling this document, the SCDEA accepts no liability for any loss or damage caused, arising directly or indirectly, in connection with reliance on its contents.