



Real estate scam alert

Consumer Protection urges settlement agents to remain vigilant after a new scam email was reported by real estate agencies in Perth, Mandurah and Geraldton.

In each of the recent incidents, the email address in the "From:" field appears to be identical (or very close) to that of a WA-based real estate agent. However, while the sender's address appears authentic, the scammers have actually spoofed it.

Spoofing is the creation of email messages with a forged sender address. That is, the scammers hide their own email address 'beneath' the seemingly authentic sender's address to ensure all replies are directed to themselves.

The current scam email reads:

Morning (name of recipient inserted)

Hope you are having a nice time at work today?! I have a few transactions which I will want you to take care of for me today. What are the required information you will need to process an Electronic wire transfer?

Please confirm the receipt of this email.

(Signed with name of the agent whose email address has been spoofed)

Agents or other staff members should not reply to these emails as doing so will more than likely encourage scammers to contact you in the future.

Agents and staff members should also note that scam emails often contain revealing features such as poor English, incorrect grammar, an absence of agency logos and offers that appear too good to be true.

As you are aware, real estate agent and settlement agent email addresses are easily found via a number of avenues. These fraud attempts are therefore an important reminder of the need for settlement agents to apply rigorous scrutiny to all potential property transactions.

Further information and advice on scams can be found on the WA ScamNet website at www.scamnet.wa.gov.au. Enquiries or scam reports can be made via email at wascamnet@commerce.wa.gov.au or by phone on **1300 30 40 54**.

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