

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Commissioner of Consumer Affairs**

## **Commissioner of Consumer Affairs “wins” \$400,000**

22 November 2011

The Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, Gary Clements, has received an SMS claiming that he has won \$400,000 USD in Lotto, but it’s nothing more than a scam.

Other employees in my office have also received similar messages from off-shore phone numbers claiming that they have won up to \$2 million.

Consumer Affairs is warning anyone receiving the message to delete it and not to reply to any request for personal information.

Consumers are prompted to reply to the SMS via email, and if they do, they are then asked to send more personal information such as bank account numbers, Tax File numbers and birth dates.

“Always remember that you cannot win a lottery that you have not entered,” Mr Clements said.

“The scammers have randomly generated your mobile telephone number, so never respond to a message.

“This scam serves as a timely reminder about their increasingly personal nature. Scammers are finding ways to get information about your personal profile and use this to play on your relationships with people and organisations you know and trust.”

Mr Clements said the effects of scams on victims can be devastating and scammers don’t discriminate – they’ll target anyone, using a myriad of ways to slip under your radar including phone calls, SMS, letter, email, fax, blog, online chat or dating services.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe:

**PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY** - Your personal details are private and invaluable – keep them away from scammers.

DON'T RESPOND - Ignore suspicious emails, letters, phone calls or text messages – press 'delete', throw them out or just hang up.

DON'T LET SCAMMERS PUSH YOUR BUTTONS - Scammers will play on your emotions to get what they want.

RESIST THE PERSONAL TOUCH - Watch out for scammers posing as someone that you know and trust, or pretending to know you. It is important to protect your identity and if you are suspicious that you have been scammed, report it to Consumer Affairs.

Consumers who require any further information should contact Consumer Affairs on 1800 019 319 or email [consumer@nt.gov.au](mailto:consumer@nt.gov.au) or visit [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au)