

National Anti-Scam Centre Advisory Board

Communique

10 October 2023

The National Anti-Scam Centre Advisory Board (the Advisory Board) held its third meeting on Wednesday 20 September 2023.

The Advisory Board discussed a case study that highlighted the significant emotional impact that scams can have on people even where the financial loss is relatively small. The Advisory Board noted the need for clear information for the public about support services that are available.

The Anti-Scam Centre presented on a range of domestic and international scam disruption initiatives. The Advisory Board agreed to further consideration of international scam disruption initiatives that could be adopted in Australia.

The Advisory Board heard a presentation about scams prevention and consumer behaviour. It highlighted that while ongoing communications approaches can help overcome 'optimism bias', the use of more targeted frictions at the right point in time can be more effective when consumers are in a 'hot state'. The Advisory Board noted the challenge in driving behaviour change through scam prevention messaging and noted that 'point in time' messaging may be more effective.

The Anti-Scam Centre also updated the Advisory Board on:

- the Investment Scam Fusion Cell which is exploring initiatives aimed at preventing and breaking contact with scammers and blocking payments to investment scammers. Many investment scam websites have been taken down.
- Scamwatch data and intelligence for August which showed the significant increase in financial loss to job and employment scams.
- Actions to combat threatening scams targeting Mandarin speaking people. This included a September media release, sharing of information with law enforcement and working with universities to target messages to Chinese students.

- Planning of Scams Awareness Week which will run from 27 November and focus on the theme of impersonation scams.

The next meeting of the Advisory Board will be on 16 October 2023.

This communique is jointly released by the members of the Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board is Chaired by ACCC Deputy Chair – Consumer, Catriona Lowe and comprised of:

- Anna Bligh, CEO, Australian Banking Association represented by Nicholas Giurietto
- Andrew Williams, CEO, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network
- Scott Lee, Assistant Commissioner, Australian Federal Police represented by Brad Marden
- Andy White, CEO, Australian Payments Network
- Simon Callaghan, CEO, Blockchain Australia
- Alan Kirkland, CEO, CHOICE representing Consumers' Federation of Australia represented by Andrew Kelly
- John Stanton, CEO, Communications Alliance
- Michael Lawrence, CEO, Customer Owned Banking Association
- Sunita Bose, Managing Director, Digital Industry Group Inc. (DIGI)
- Stephanie Tonkin, CEO, Consumer Action Law Centre
- Peter Gartlan, National Coordinator, Financial Counselling Australia
- David Lacey, Managing Director, IDCARE