

National Anti-Scam Centre Advisory Board

Communiqué

4 April 2024

The National Anti-Scam Centre Advisory Board (the Advisory Board) met on Tuesday, 19 March.

The Advisory Board discussed two case studies:

- The first case study involved a bank impersonation scam where the scammer had remote access to the consumer's computer. The scammer was blocked by the bank's detection tools enabling the bank to block the transfer of funds. The Advisory Board noted the effectiveness of friction in the transaction which enabled the bank to stop this payment and discussed adjustments to the algorithm to increase ability to block suspect transactions. The bank acknowledged the need to balance the customer's inconvenience with protecting them.
- The second case involved a business email compromise during a property settlement. The consumer unknowingly transferred funds into the scammer's account, however the bank was able to recover the funds by lodging a report with the Fraud Reporting Exchange. The Advisory Board noted the importance of improvements in processes enabling all parties (consumer, sending and receiving banks) to respond more quickly than in the past resulting in this positive outcome.

Members of the Advisory Board provided updates on various scams awareness and disruption activities they are undertaking and discussed opportunities for collaboration and coordinated responses. The Advisory Board noted an update on the National Anti-Scam Centre's disruption and intelligence sharing activities. For example, in January the National Anti-Scam Centre continued to refer URLs to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission for website takedown and shared reports to the Australian Financial Crimes Exchange. The National Anti-Scam Centre also conferred with experts in the banking sector in relation to emerging scam methodologies and provided social media warnings to consumers in relation to these new scam tactics.

The Advisory Board engaged with the Singapore Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) on its SMS Sender ID Registry initiative:

- IMDA provided an overview on how the system works, the implementation and enforcement processes. Members were very interested in key learnings and challenges which may be applicable to Australia. Members noted early results of the mandatory scheme as encouraging.

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

- attendance at the Global Fraud Summit in London where Ministers across the globe made a public commitment to tackle fraud, and a National Anti-Scam Centre official attended bilateral meetings with UK government agencies and industry to build relationships, share learnings and identify opportunities for collaboration in the global fight against scams;
- the upcoming Scam Awareness Week with the Members endorsing the date 26 August – 1 September 2024; and
- the second Quarterly Update, highlighting the National Anti-Scam Centre and partner anti-scam activities and scam trends including the quarter-on-quarter decrease in losses (Scamwatch data).

The next meeting of the Advisory Board will be on 16 April 2024.

This communique is jointly released by 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
- Gareth Downing, A/CEO, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network
- Scott Lee, Assistant Commissioner, Australian Federal Police represented by Sue Evans
- Andy White, CEO, Australian Payments Network, represented by Toby Evans
- Simon Callaghan, CEO, Blockchain Australia
- Rosie Thomas, Director, CHOICE representing Consumers' Federation of Australia
- John Stanton, CEO, Communications Alliance
- Michael Lawrence, CEO, Customer Owned Banking Association
- Stephanie Tonkin, CEO, Consumer Action Law Centre
- Peter Gartlan, National Coordinator, Financial Counselling Australia (apology)
- David Lacey, Managing Director, IDCARE (apology)

- Sunita Bose, Managing Director, Digital Industry Group Inc (DIGI)

