



Philippine Consulate General Sydney

PRESS RELEASE

WARNING AGAINST EMAIL AND SMS SCAMS

The Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines is cautioning the general public against a new email scam that uses the name of a Philippine Embassy or overseas Philippine representation to target overseas Filipinos.

A Filipino expatriate in Saipan received an email from a certain Terry Martins of the Philippine Embassy in Muscat, Oman, which informed him that he had won GBP 500,000 and instructed him to provide personal information. The said Embassy has no personnel by that name and had not issued any such advisory.

Fraudulent email scams are a recurring problem and disguise themselves by taking on the name and email addresses of contacts in the recipient's email list. Last year, a scammer used hacked e-mail accounts of Filipino-Australians to send fraudulent messages to their contacts, alleging that the sender was stranded in Europe, her passport and luggage stolen, while on vacation and asked friends to send her an amount of money so that she could purchase a return ticket home.

Another scam that surfaces from time to time involves a text message informing receivers that they had won a PHP 5 million jackpot prize in a special Philippine Government Lottery for overseas Filipinos. The message is convincing, as it cites specific government bureaus – such as the Office of the President, the Department of Trade and Industry, or Department of Tourism – and provides official-looking yet bogus promotional codes. The receivers are urged to send through Western Union Money Transfer a few hundred dollars that will be used to transfer the prize money to the receiver's bank account. However, the Philippine Government holds no such lotteries.

The public is advised to ignore these messages.

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