

News Release

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'Hi Mum, it's me' – ANZ encourages families to stay scam safe this Mother's Day

With scams remaining a significant threat, ANZ is reminding families to be hyper-aware of text messages from loved ones claiming to need financial help in the lead-up to Mother's Day.

Known as 'Hi Mum' scams, online criminals get in touch via text message or WhatsApp, claiming to be a loved one who has lost or broken their phone followed by a request for money to solve an urgent problem.

These scams typically play on the vulnerabilities of people wanting to help their family members. They usually see individuals transfer money into accounts belonging to cyber criminals.

ANZ Head of Customer Protection Shaq Johnson said it's important to have constant conversations with family to stay on top of the ever-changing scam environment.

"Scammers are becoming more sophisticated every day, it's important to know what to look out for before engaging with any SMS, email or phone request, even if you think it's coming from a loved one," he said.

"Scams can fool even the most aware among us, the more open the discussion is, the more chance people have to beat the scammers."

ANZ Customer Protection reports a 104 per cent increase in scams in 2023 compared to the year prior. Remote access scams were the most common at around 30 per cent, followed by investment, inheritance and romance scams which together make up about 50 per cent of total cases.

"Often scammed funds are transferred into crypto wallets and in these instances it becomes incredibly difficult to trace and recover those funds," Mr Johnson said.

In the 12 months to February 2023, the Australian Banking Association (ABA) reported there were 256,842 scams worth \$596 million – an average of \$49.6 million each month.

To encourage the public to stay scam safe, ANZ will today launch its Screen Savers awareness campaign.

The campaign encourages the younger generation to play an active part in helping their loved ones to be vigilant against scams; utilising these simple tips to create a screen saver on the mobile phones and tablets of their parents and grandparents;

- Use a family code word
- Pause and verify before acting on an SMS, email or phone request
- When in doubt, stop and call an official number

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