



**Senator Stephen Parry**  
Chief Opposition Whip in the Senate  
Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate  
Liberal, Tasmania

---

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

---

**Friday January 22, 2010**

### **Call for action as scammers reap an ill-gotten harvest**

THE Australian Government must do more to protect Australians from scams, Tasmanian Liberal Senator Stephen Parry said today.

Since warning earlier this week that fraudsters were targeting those advertising goods to sell online and through newspaper classifieds, Senator Parry said he had been told of people stung, people almost stung and of another scam that works in reverse.

“Unfortunately, the warning of this new scam came too late for at least one Tasmanian gentleman, who I understand lost as much as \$700,” he said.

“In what appears to be a similar con, another Tasmanian man has told of almost falling victim to a scam when he replied to an ad for a vehicle for sale at a price that, as it turned out, was too good to be true.

“A common thread seems to be that the scammers ask for payments through an online service. The online services may be reputable – as the fraudsters claim – but they are also immediate, meaning that once you have paid money to someone there is no getting it back.

“Another favoured tactic is first text messaging their intended victims, which gives an illusion of greater credibility as opposed to simply an email.

“The mobile phone numbers do appear to originate from the United Kingdom, which is another claim that seems to be commonly made by those behind these fraudulent activities – that they either live there or have recently returned there from Australia.”

Senator Parry said aside from the ACCC’s SCAMwatch website, which was launched under the previous Howard government, there seemed to be little serious action against scammers.

“Those most vulnerable to scammers are often those that can least afford the losses,” he said.

“At the minimum there needs to be greater community awareness to encourage people to be more cautious, more on the lookout.

“The Australian Government should also detail what action it is taking on the international law enforcement front to deal with those responsible for what amount to crimes of fraud.”

**Ends**