

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN CRIME COMMISSION

**Question No. 13**

**Senator Crossin asked the following questions at the hearing on 16 October 2012:**

**CHAIR:** Mr Lawler, a report from the ACC and the AIC earlier this year indicated that more than 2½ thousand Australians may have lost more than \$113 million to serious and organised investment fraud in the last five years. Can you tell us what is happening to educate people about the risks of this type of fraud?

**Mr Lawler:** ...One of the things that you may be aware of is that for the first in Australia's history, to my knowledge, there has been a mail-out to every household in Australia. That was a partnership done through the ACC board but with Australia Post as a strong supporter. Commissioners of police, the head of ASIC, Mr Greg Metcalf, myself and Ahmed Fahour from Australia Post jointly co-signed a letter out to residents to alert them to the risk.

...

**CHAIR:** Can I take you back to your answer about organised investment fraud. Perhaps I might get you to provide this committee with a copy of that letter you sent to every household so that we have it on our records as a committee. Would that be all right?

**Mr Lawler:** Certainly.

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

The letters are attached for the Committee's records.



Dear Householder

The Australian Crime Commission Board has recently warned that organised criminal groups are targeting the savings of Australians through investment frauds. Many Australians, including experienced investors who undertake research, have lost their entire retirement savings to these investment frauds.

Law enforcement advises that the criminals offering these investment opportunities use persuasive cold-calling tactics, sophisticated websites and legitimate-looking brochures.

Australia Post is partnering with the Australian Crime Commission, the Australian Securities & Investments Commission and every state and territory police force in the country to further raise awareness of these investment frauds and provide information on how to prevent becoming a victim. Please be aware of this risk if you are called at random by someone offering an unsolicited investment opportunity. To protect yourself you can:

**Visit** [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au) or call 1300 300 630 for further information or advice.

**Alert** your family and friends to these investment frauds, especially those who may have savings to invest.

**Report** suspected investment frauds to the Australian Securities & Investments Commission, via [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au) or 1300 300 630, or your local police. *Any information that can be provided such as company name, location and contact details will assist with subsequent investigations and enquiries.*

**Hang up** on unsolicited telephone calls offering investments.

**Check** any company you are discussing investments with has a valid Australian Financial Services Licence at [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au)

**Seek** independent financial advice before making an investment.

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Victim support in the Australian Capital Territory is available through the SupportLink referral service. Contact ACT Policing on 131 444. Please be wary of anyone who claims they can recover your losses for a fee—no legitimate Australian law enforcement or regulatory agency will seek a payment for this action.

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John Lawler AM APM  
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Chief Police Officer  
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**NSW Police Force**

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Victim support in New South Wales is available through the Fraud & Cybercrime Squad Helpdesk on (02) 8835 7320. Please be wary of anyone who claims they can recover your losses for a fee—no legitimate Australian law enforcement or regulatory agency will seek a payment for this action.

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**Andrew Scipione APM**  
Commissioner of Police  
New South Wales Police Force



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Victim support in Northern Territory is available through *Victims of Crime NT* on 1800 672 242 (freecall). Please be wary of anyone who claims they can recover your losses for a fee—no legitimate Australian law enforcement or regulatory agency will seek a payment for this action.

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This group is coordinated through the Fraud and Corporate Crime Group, Queensland Police Service, to assist and provide support to victims of these types of offences.

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Victim support in South Australia is available through South Australia Police on (08) 7322 3354.

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Victim support in Tasmania is available through Victim Support Services on 1300 663 773. Please be wary of anyone who claims they can recover your losses for a fee—no legitimate Australian law enforcement or regulatory agency will seek a payment for this action.

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Victim support in Victoria is available through the Victims Support Agency Helpline on 1800 819 817. Please be wary of anyone who claims they can recover your losses for a fee—no legitimate Australian law enforcement or regulatory agency will seek a payment for this action.

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