

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon **David Hawker** MP

Federal Member for Wannon



7 December 2009

WARNING TO STUDENTS – DON'T GET CAUGHT BY MULE SCAMS

The Australian Bankers' Association (ABA) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) have produced a fact sheet warning university students about money mule scams when seeking holiday employment.

The fact sheet, 'Warning to students – don't get caught by mule scams' warns of the scams which trap people into laundering money for criminals by becoming a money mule, Federal Member for Wannon David Hawker said today.

"A money mule is someone who allows their bank account to be used to receive stolen funds which are transferred to a designated account (domestic or offshore) using a money-remitting or wire service, minus a commission payment. The mule is usually approached online via email, instant message or criminals may advertise on legitimate employment websites and publications," Mr Hawker said.

"These scams involve people in a criminal enterprise and there are serious penalties under Australian and international laws for laundering money.

"These criminals know that the prospect of making easy money may appear attractive to some students, but there are some real ramifications for anyone who gets involved in a mule scam. For example, any 'commission' payments can be recovered (as proceeds of crime) and the money mule could become the subject of a police investigation that could lead to a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment."

Mr Hawker said the fact sheet also advises that bank customers who participate could face prosecution, have banking facilities withdrawn and they could have their identity stolen by the criminals as well.

"The fact sheet also contains some useful tips on how to avoid these scams including being cautious about accepting job opportunities that offer anyone the chance of making money simply by moving money in and out of any bank account, never providing confidential banking details to anyone and taking steps to verify the background of any company or person that make you a job offer.

For a copy of the fact sheet, contact Mr Hawker's office on 1300 131 692.

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