

Monday 24 August 2026

SCAMS AWARENESS WEEK: QUICK ACTION STOPS IMPERSONATION SCAM IN ITS TRACKS

Quick thinking and strong scams awareness from a Newcastle Permanent branch manager has prevented a Central West woman from losing almost \$10,000 to an impersonation scam.

Occurring in the leadup to Scams Awareness Week (24-28 August), the incident highlights the importance of making sure that you stop, check, protect before sharing personal information or money.

The young woman phoned Newcastle Permanent's Bathurst branch after receiving a call about a fraudulent transaction from a person who claimed to be a representative of the customer-owned bank.

"As soon as I spoke to them, I could hear the panic and urgency in their voice," branch manager Keira Guihot said.

"The customer explained that they had been asked to log on to internet banking, which immediately raised alarm bells for me."

After instructing the customer to immediately hang up on the other call, Mrs Guihot quickly worked with the Newcastle Permanent Fraud Team to block internet banking access, secure the customer's accounts and place stops on their bank cards.

These actions prevented the customer from losing \$9500.

"We do a lot of work in the community to educate people about scams and what to look out for," Mrs Guihot said.

"Education has really paid off here, with this customer using a verified phone number to call us and check the legitimacy of the scammer's claim before things escalated.

"Scammers can place a lot of pressure on their targets to act fast, but the simple act of stopping and checking has prevented a significant financial loss."

Head of NGM Group Financial Crime Operations Grant Williams said bank impersonation scams were becoming increasingly sophisticated.

"Scammers want to take as much money from you as they can, and they will put in a lot of effort to convince you to hand over your details," he said.

"This often starts with a text or a phone call to get your attention, and from there they want you to panic, click on a link quickly or hand over information before you have had time to stop and consider.

"Always take a moment to think before you do anything - a moment of pause could be the difference between protecting your finances and losing money to a scam."

NGM Group's tips to stay safe:

- Never click links in unexpected text messages or emails claiming to be from your bank.
- Do not open or download email attachments without verifying their legitimacy.

- If you receive a suspicious phone call, hang up and contact your bank directly using the official phone number from its website.
- Never share passwords, PINs or internet banking security codes with anyone.
- Monitor your bank accounts regularly and report suspicious activity immediately.

About NGM Group:

Newcastle Greater Mutual Group (NGM Group) is one of Australia's leading customer-owned banks trusted by more than 635,000 Australians through its retail brands, Greater Bank and Newcastle Permanent. Headquartered in Newcastle, NGM Group has a workforce of more than 1,600 people and has total assets of more than \$23 billion.