

Media Releases 2009

SARS cautions taxpayers on fraud scams

Pretoria, 9 February 2009 -- The South African Revenue Service (SARS) would like to caution taxpayers against a number of scams currently underway which seek to defraud taxpayers of money or to obtain their bank and other personal details.

Two scams have been brought to the attention of SARS in recent days. The first involves emails being sent to unsuspecting taxpayers informing them that they are owed an income tax refund and requesting them to complete a refund form in order to get the fictitious refund. This "refund form" – which copies the SARS eFiling logo and website style - requires taxpayers to provide their debit or credit card number and pin numbers.

The second scam is aimed at VAT vendors and also uses a copied SARS eFiling letterhead. It requests that VAT vendors make all VAT payments into a fraudulent bank account.

Both scams have been referred to the South African Police Service and SARS's criminal investigation divisions for further investigation.

SARS would like to remind taxpayers that they should never divulge personal details and banking details to anyone over the telephone, email, fax or internet without establishing the true identity of the recipient.

SARS eFilers are only notified via email or SMS that their income tax assessment has been processed. To access their IT34, the eFiler is required to log in to their unique profile on eFiling using their username and password. The IT34 will then reflect whether the taxpayer is due or a refund or additional tax on assessment.

If a refund is due to the taxpayer SARS automatically pays the refund into the taxpayer's bank account; provided that the details are correct. If banking details are not correct the taxpayer must visit a SARS branch office with supporting documents to correct the bank account details.

To prevent fraud, SARS last year did away with issuing of refund cheques and will only pay refunds into verified bank accounts. In this regard SARS has contacted approximately 150 000 taxpayers whose bank account details were not provided on their income tax return or who bank account details could not be verified to request that they correct these to receive refunds due. To prevent fraud or "phishing", these taxpayers are required to correct their details in person at a SARS branch.

The SARS Anti-Corruption and Fraud Hotline is 0800 002870

[More info on the phishing attack, please click here.](#)

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