

Police warn people not to be victimized by internet fraud

OPP in Central Region regret that they have seen an increase in internet related frauds.

Police report these incidents often begin as innocent long-distance relationships and end with large sums of money being electronically sent, never to be seen again.

This faceless interaction is very disturbing as police have learned of life savings being sent to assist in trying to get someone to Canada or, as in some cases, the ploy is focused upon them being detained at an entry point or border crossing where entry is denied over an unpaid fine.

OPP strongly warn against long distance relationships that evolve from the internet. Giving specific details about yourself is not only dangerous, it equips an unknown person, who often misrepresents himself or herself in such a way that they are able to pull heartstrings in order to get to your purse strings. Once money is transferred or sent, it is gone and cannot be replaced.

These fraudsters are very good at what they do and are very convincing. Police suggest that potential victims need to ask themselves, 'is this too good to be true?' because in most cases, it is.

Persons who find themselves in this unfortunate and precarious position often have little recourse. Not only is their money lost, but attempts to locate the fraudster responsible becomes very difficult. Real names are seldom used, accurate details about the person are seldom used and internet addresses can be easily shut down once the fraud has taken place.

OPP acknowledges that the internet is a great resource and those who use it don't always do so in a respectful and responsible manner. It has been used by opportunistic individuals in the past and this will continue in the future.

Remember that information is power and with this information, people have the power to simply say 'no' and keep what they have worked a lifetime for. Police urge people to protect themselves, and if they are in doubt about anything that may be internet based, contact the local authorities, Police Service or internet provider for assistance.