

Tasmanians ripped off in fake lotto ticket scam

By JAMES BRADY

FAKE lottery tickets scammed 20 Tasmanians out of almost \$140,000 in 2013.

Lottery and sweepstakes scams were the fourth-highest rating cheat in Australia that year, pinching more than \$5 million from unwitting victims.

Launceston Skeptics Society president Jin-oh Choi yesterday warned that a new wave of false tickets had reached the state.

Mr Choi said a member of the society, who did not wish to be named, received two "winning" tickets sent from Malaysia.

"They did not register for anything, these were sent to their work address," he said.

"As they say, you don't get anything for free in life.

"They thought it was a bit odd to receive something like this in the mail.

"It sparked warning bells for them."

An Australian Competition and Consumer Commission spokesman told Fairfax Media that people should be wary of parting with their money.

"Scammers will often say these fees are for insurance costs, government taxes, bank fees or courier charges," he said.

"The scammers make money by continually collecting these fees from you and stalling the payment of your 'winnings'.

"You will lose all the money you pay to the scammers."

A total of 9354 counts of sweepstakes and lotto scams were recorded in Australia in 2013; 264 of those were in Tasmania.

Tasmania Police said they had not received complaints about lottery scams in Launceston so far this year.



Launceston Skeptics Society president Jin-oh Choi warns people about fake lottery tickets.

Picture: NEIL RICHARDSON

SCAM TIPS

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission tips for recognising a scam:

- You cannot win a lottery or competition if you did not enter it.
- Always question who you're really

dealing with — scammers pose as legitimate organisations.

- Refuse if anyone asks you to pay money up-front in order to receive money — it will be a scam.

Red devil tattoo on human limb in river

MELBOURNE — The two severed limbs and bag of human flesh found in a Melbourne river have probably been there for less than a week, police believe.

As forensic tests were under way on Friday, police released an image of a red devil tattoo found on a severed forearm to help to identify the male victim.

Detective Inspector Michael Hughes says releasing the tattoo

publicly is an unusual practice, but police hope it will provide an early breakthrough.

"I feel for the family ... they're going to find out by seeing it on the media, but I think it will shorten our investigative time," he said.

The forearm, severed at the elbow and wrist, was found floating near the Boathouse restaurant, on the Maribyrnong River,

on Thursday, sparking a hunt for more body parts.

Another limb and a black plastic bag of human flesh were found further upstream.

Police believe it is possible the man's killer removed his hand to dispose of identifying fingerprints.

The body parts had probably been in the river for less than a week, he said.

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