



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

THE HON PETER DUTTON MP

Minister for Defence

SENATOR THE HON LINDA REYNOLDS CSC

Minister for Government Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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Protecting Australians from scam texts

The Morrison Government has successfully blocked scammers from sending text messages appearing to come from legitimate government sender IDs, including Centrelink, myGov, and the Australian Taxation Office.

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher, welcomed the success of the initiative and said the Morrison Government is committed to reducing phone scams.

The blocking of scam texts follows the success of a pilot program to capture “phishing” texts appearing to originate from government agencies that blocked more than 2,500 scam texts over the past 12 months.

In addition, as a result of the Morrison Government’s Reducing Scam Calls Code, more than 214 million scam calls have been blocked since December 2020.

“I am very pleased that so many scam texts appearing to come from legitimate government sender IDs, including Centrelink, myGov and the ATO are being blocked,” Minister Fletcher said.

“The success of this initiative is timely, given the use of MyGov has increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have written to NBN Co, Australia Post and the banks strongly encouraging them to apply the same process to text messages they send.”

Minister for Defence, the Hon Peter Dutton, said that phishing messages were one of the most common ways for cybercriminals to compromise users and the initiative had been successful in preventing such messages from getting through to phones.

“This collaboration between the Australian Cyber Security Centre, Services Australia and Telstra and the telecommunications sector is an excellent example of the Australian Government and industry working together to develop solutions to stop cybercriminals from exploiting Australians en masse,” Minister Dutton said.

“The Australian Cyber Security Centre is continuing to work with the telecommunications sector for an industry-wide solution to increase that protection.”

Minister for Government Services, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC, said the success of the pilot is an important milestone upon which the Government could now build.

“One year on from the pilot’s launch, 2,500 SMS scams that would have otherwise circulated in the community have been blocked,” Minister Reynolds said.

“Services Australia is continuing to develop and refine security measures to prevent against scams, which have the potential to cause such enormous harm, particularly to those not overly familiar with technology.

“This is a welcome step as we continue to work with law enforcement agencies and industry to keep Australians safe from harm.”

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