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UPDATE: Second man in SMS phishing scheme charged in Sydney



Tuesday, 8 December 2020, 11:01am

This is a joint media release between the Australian Federal Police and New South Wales Police.

A second man arrested as part of an Australian Federal Police (AFP)-led cybercrime investigation into malicious SMS phishing communications has been charged with fraud, drugs and proceeds of crime offences. He is scheduled to appear in Downing Centre Local Court today (Tuesday, 8 December 2020).

The 36-year-old man was initially arrested in September 2020, as part of Operation Genmaicha – [SMS phishing fraudster charged in Sydney](#)

AFP Cybercrime Operations teams in Sydney and Melbourne worked closely with NSW Police during this investigation to arrest the alleged offenders responsible for sending large-scale SMS phishing attacks via a number of ‘SIM boxes’ located throughout Sydney.

One man was charged in September 2020 for his alleged role in the phishing attacks, while the second man was re-arrested yesterday afternoon (7 December 2020).

The 36-year-old man has been charged with:

- One count of using a telecommunications network with the intention to commit a serious offence, contrary to section 474.14 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth), where the serious offence is fraud, contrary to section 192E of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW);
- One count of traffic in a substance, the substance being a controlled drug, namely methamphetamine, contrary to subsection 302.4(1) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth); and
- One count of recklessly deal with the proceeds of crime, money/property value \$10,000 or more, contrary to subsection 400.6(2) of the *Criminal Code* (Cth).

Police will allege the men had access to and control over several SIM boxes used to send bulk text messages to tens of thousands of recipients. The text messages claimed to be from Australian banks and telecommunications companies to lure recipients into clicking on various URLs and provide their personal or financial account information.

AFP Detective Acting Superintendent Tom Walker said partnerships were crucial to this investigation.

“The close working relationships with NSW Police and banking and telecommunication partners enabled cybercrime investigators to identify the alleged offenders and victims of this SMS phishing scheme,” he said.

“One Australian bank identified more than 700 of its customers had received fraudulent text messages with approximately \$37,000 stolen from one account and approximately \$20,000 from another account.”

NSW Police Force Cybercrime Squad Commander, Detective Superintendent Matthew Craft, said this investigation is an excellent example of specialist detectives working together to ensure that crimes which are committed across our state and territory borders will be thoroughly investigated.

“Cybercrime presents a unique challenge for police, and the only way we can tackle these national issues, is through the collaboration of our law enforcement and industry partners.”

“The investigation also highlights that by combining the tools, expertise, and investigative capability of law enforcement experts with industry experts and professionals, we can have a real and lasting impact on cybercrime.”

For tips on identifying a scam (phishing) message, visit [cyber.gov.au](https://www.cyber.gov.au/acsc/view-all-content/programs/stay-smart-online/scam-messages). [⟨https://www.cyber.gov.au/acsc/view-all-content/programs/stay-smart-online/scam-messages⟩](https://www.cyber.gov.au/acsc/view-all-content/programs/stay-smart-online/scam-messages)

If you are a victim of cybercrime, you can report it [online](https://www.cyber.gov.au/acsc/report) [⟨https://www.cyber.gov.au/acsc/report⟩](https://www.cyber.gov.au/acsc/report) or contact the Australian Cyber Security Hotline on 1300 CYBER1 (1300 292 371).

Note to media:

[Initial vision of the arrests from September are located via Hightail. ⟨https://spaces.hightail.com](https://spaces.hightail.com)

[/receive/8Yzp6yQaDc>](#)

Interview opportunities available on request with AFP Detective Acting Superintendent Tom Walker.

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