



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Braddon Electorate: Scams**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 20 June 2011**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Monday, 20 June 2011  
**Page** 50  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Mr SIDEBOTTOM

**Source** House  
**Proof** Yes  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

(Braddon) (NaN.NaN pm)

Mr SIDEBOTTOM (Braddon) (21:44): Good job to Fair Work Australia on its deliberations. Over the last couple of weeks I have dealt with a number of fellow north-west coasters who have supposedly won large sums of money from overseas 'businesses' who have conducted 'raffles' and 'lotteries'. Two that are doing the rounds—this experience may be shared by other members here—are Solaris Holiday and Oceania Tourism.

Opposition members interjecting—

Mr SIDEBOTTOM: Some people have received 'scratchies' type tickets which, once scratched open, just so happen to be the winning ticket for one of the main prizes on offer. All the 'winners' have to do is verify they are indeed the ticket holder and contact one of several numbers overseas to do so. Some were led to a genuine-looking website, which adds to the authenticity of the scam. None of my callers had ever purchased a ticket in these raffles or lotteries. So there is a surprise! Some of the 'winners' were asked to provide proof that they were indeed the ticket holder and were asked to provide bank details, licence details et cetera as part of the verification process. The person on the other end of the phone states, 'I will put you through to our legal team to whom you can confidentially give your personal details.' Of course, there is no legal team, rather just a person in the same or adjoining room, adding to the authenticity of the scheme.

While this may have started off as a somewhat jovial matter for members opposite, I am sure they share with me concern about this whole issue of scams. Unfortunately, the number of people fooled by these scams is beyond a joke. We say to people, 'Beware', and that is why I am raising this matter tonight.

Our 'winners' are asked to wait until they receive a letter from Solaris, then to proceed to the post office or other place which has Western Union transfers available. In the instances raised with me, they were requested to pay \$3,900 in processing, administration and court fees and to contact Solaris immediately the transfer had taken place, preferably by mobile phone, as this is quicker than waiting until you get home to contact them. It is all very chatty. It seems the quicker you

call after depositing the money, the quicker \$130,000 will be placed into your account—and, remember, it is never the first prize; it is the third prize—as well as refunding the \$3,900 you just transferred to them. Of course, no money will be received—indeed, the opposite: the scammers will have the money you transferred to them and, in some cases, your bank account details so that they can fleece your account.

Unfortunately there are many, many scams doing the rounds at any given time, of which fellow colleagues here are no doubt aware and remind their constituents. It is a very serious issue. With technology the way it is now, it is getting harder and harder to pick these scams. I recommend that people, particularly those listening to this broadcast, regularly check out the SCAMwatch website, which has lots of information relating to scams and how to pick them and what to do if you are approached by scammers. As well as that, you can request to have scam alerts sent to you. If you go to [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au) you can actually become a subscriber to SCAMwatch—when you determine they are not a scam!—and they will keep you updated on the number of scams that are about.

I rang and spoke to someone from Solaris, who advised that the Solaris scam is indeed circulating Australia at the moment, with variations of the business names used but always using the same types of scenarios. If you have not done so already, jump online and see what other scams are currently around. One which has started recently is a 'Centrelink' scam, where you are told that Centrelink owes you money and that, if you give your details, they will give it to you.

When you look at the online material on these websites you see that some of it is quite ordinary, with poor grammar and punctuation, while other material looks very professional. You have to be very careful. I know one constituent of mine who lost a lot of money. Beware: get onto the SCAMwatch website and take care.

(Braddon) (NaN.NaN pm)