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Minister for Justice
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Research finds links between consumer fraud and age

Today, I released an Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) report that reveals age and the probability of falling victim to consumer fraud are clearly linked.

The Relationship between age and consumer fraud victimisation report was developed using the results of the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce online surveys, conducted by the AIC on behalf of the taskforce in 2011 and 2012.

Findings indicate that people are at risk to different kinds of consumer fraud at various points in their life.

Previous research has indicated those aged 60 years or more were predominantly vulnerable to consumer fraud, as they are seen as attractive targets with potential access to life savings, while the younger population are at greater risk due to their wide ranging use of technology.

The present study found respondents aged 65 years and over were indeed significantly more likely to send money as a result of a fraudulent invitation than other age groups. They were also more likely than other age groups to be the victim of a computer support scam.

In contrast, respondents aged between 18 and 24 years were more likely to provide personal details in response to a fraudulent invitation than other age categories.

For individuals aged between 45 and 54 years, their highest risk of falling victim to consumer fraud was through dating and romance fraud.

The survey also found a relationship between age and how fraudulent invitations were delivered, with younger people more likely to be approached online or via sms.

Scam disruption remains a priority for the Australian Government to ensure the identity and welfare of all Australians is protected. By continuing our efforts to raise awareness and educate the community on all types of fraud, we hope to reduce the number of individuals affected.

For information on reporting scams or steps you can take to assist in recognising a scam, please visit www.scamwatch.gov.au

The Relationship between age and consumer fraud victimisation is available at:
<http://aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/501-520/tandi519.html>

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