



the dti

Department:
Trade and Industry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

the dti WARNS ABOUT SCAM TARGETING LIQUOR LICENCE HOLDERS

It has come to the attention of the Department of Trade and Industry (**the dti**), the South African Police Service (SAPS) and provincial liquor authorities that there is a scam that is currently operating within the liquor industry. This comes after a series of investigations that were conducted after complaints were received from people who have been defrauded.

The National Liquor Authority (NLA) of **the dti** has received a number of enquiries relating to suspicious WhatsApp and SMS messages in which both the national and provincial licence holders are requested to deposit certain monies for the renewal of the liquor licences. These messages are sent from this number: 082007229288038. The message reads thus:

PAYMENT REMINDER:

Liquor License admin fee is outstanding with R250.00 for the year 2016.

Payment is due before 01 Sept 2016 to prevent penalties or suspension.

Payment or Deposit must be made to:

Liquor AST SA

Bank: FNB

ACC: 62632838671

REF: License or Permit Number.

The Department has launched an investigation on the matter and confirms that:

- It has no licence categories that require an annual renewal fee of R250.00
- the SMS number 082007229288038 is not a number that is allocated to the Department and such messages have not been circulated from this office;
- the banking details as shown in the SMS are not the banking details used by the NLA

The scam is largely operating in Gauteng. However, more evidence has come to the fore that the scam is also spreading to various provinces. This is posing a challenge and is a costly exercise for both the liquor regulators and the enforcement agencies. As a result, **the dti** and SAPS have identified the need to heighten awareness of these fraudulent activities to the prospective registrants and the South African community at large.

People who receive or have received these messages are advised to contact **the dti** Call Centre on 0861 843 384 or send an email to nationalliquorauthority@thedti.gov.za