



Specialised
Security Services



PROJECT:

WARNING!
CAR SCAMS!

***STOLEN IDENTITIES/
FAKE IDENTITY DOCUMENTS/
FAKE BANK ACCOUNTS AND FAKE
PROOF OF PAYMENTS***

Once again, Specialised Security Services needs to remind the unwitting public of numerous new and second-hand car scams.

The perpetrators are part of organised crime groups and should not be underestimated.

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- Perpetrators see a vehicle for sale on social media.
 - In our latest case, it was a vehicle on the dealership's floor and the preparators claimed they wanted to buy the vehicle from the dealership.
 - Documents presented in such scams are falsified:
 - Identity documents of the so-called buyers.
 - Bank accounts.
 - The payment was made, and a falsified proof of payment was sent to the dealership.
 - The car was handed over and it was assumed it was a done deal.
 - But the payment was never made, and, therefore the dealership contacted Specialised Security Services.

Specialist Investigator, Mr. Cecil Benadé was instructed to recover the vehicle.

This was accomplished within only a few hours.

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1. There are several applications available to check the validity of identity numbers:
 - <https://www.fic.gov.za/Documents/130328%20GUIDANCE%20NOTE%203A.pdf>
 - <https://www.checkid.co.za/>
 2. Never accept any proof of payment until you have verified with the bank itself, that the purchase amount is actually in your account.

The internet has become an important tool in the hands of those scamsters wishing to hide behind anonymity when targeting the vehicle buyer and seller.

TECHNIQUES TO BE AWARE OF IN TYPICAL VEHICLE SCAMS:

- *As soon as a vehicle is advertised for far less than its usual price, be wary!*

- Check the prices of similar vehicle types, the model and year – if it is too good to be true, it usually is!
 - Scammers may demand the full price of the car, or a deposit, to be transferred immediately.
 - Once they have received money, they fail to release the vehicle and become difficult to contact – that is, if there *is* a vehicle.
 - Scammers often just take a photo from the internet and sell the vehicle as if it is their own.
 - The scammer may also ask for money in smaller amounts rather than all at once. At first, it's a deposit and then an additional payment.
 - Most often scammers hide behind bogus email accounts that provide no information about their whereabouts.
 - They will refuse to provide sufficient contact details. The phone number provided is either faulty, remains unanswered or goes directly to voice mail.
 - Scammers will usually make an excuse for not being available via telephone.
 - *Scams are effective and succeed because of the victim's own eagerness to close a deal they think is an opportunity not to be missed.*
 - Pricing of the vehicle is usually well below the market value.
 - Scammers often use sad stories to gain sympathy or encourage the buyer to make a snap decision based on a hard-luck story. These include claiming to be deployed by the military, claims that they have lost their jobs and will not be able to pay rent without selling their car.
 - Vehicles that do not actually exist are presented for sale. Scammers will copy and paste images from a real posting, then make fake listings in dozens of cities.
 - Identical photos are found to be listed on dozens of sites across the country as scammers use the same photo over and over, with multiple victims.
 - The more advanced scammer will create a false sense of security by referring to sites that are designed to protect the consumer.
 - Buyers are tricked into thinking that they are entering a safe agreement with the seller who spoofs an existing escrow site or sets up their own.
 - An escrow website is a secure payment site which safeguards both the buyer and seller.
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- Scams are not limited to the buying and selling process but also have found their way into acquiring insurance.
 - Victims are targeted via social media and the ghost brokers forge insurance documents, change details on real insurance policies, or even cancel a holder's policy without their knowledge and pocket the refund.
 - Vehicle matching scams - scamsters approach owners who are selling their cars and promise falsely to match them with 'definite buyers'.
 - While advertising a car for sale in a magazine, newspaper or online, the seller is cold called by telephone. The caller promises that they already have buyers lined-up who are looking to buy the same model – all the seller must do is pay a matcher's fee up-front before the buyer is introduced and the sale completed.
 - Turning back the clock. Rolling back the odometer is one of the oldest tricks in the books.
 - The number of kilometres a car has driven is a good indicator of how much wear and tear it has gone through, so skimming mileage off the top tricks buyers into thinking they have bought a practically new vehicle.
 - Incorrect or Hidden Vehicle History. There may be damage from an old accident or any other major mechanical problems that the seller is purposefully trying to hide.

- Denying the vehicle buyer a proper test drive. Where the seller allows the buyer a test drive that can only be described as a drive around the block in an area where the speed limits are quite low.
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IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS WHEN BUYING OR SELLING A CAR:

1. Get to know the buyer or seller:
 - Be cautious of a seller who is hesitant to meet in person.
 - Do not pay or spend any money on a car that you have not seen for yourself.
 - Arrange a face-to-face meeting with the buyer/seller.
2. Identify the vehicle to be bought:
 - Check the vehicle history.
 - Make sure the vehicle identification number (VIN) matches the number on the owner registration and roadworthy documents.
 - Ensure the VIN on several locations of the vehicle is the same to identify whether the car has undergone major reconstruction or even whether it had been stolen.
 - Check that the seller's address matches the address on the registration and roadworthy documents.
 - With online listings, copy the picture of the vehicle and do a reverse image search on Google. If the car that you were thinking of buying shows up on multiple sites and in different areas, be wary.
3. Check the odometer:
 - If the tyres and seats are worn, the odometer should show the same.
4. Payment:
 - Never meet alone to hand over cash or a car if you are the seller.
 - Meet in a safe public space preferably with surveillance cameras.
 - Never pay for anything you have not seen.
 - Never pay for any roadworthy tests/registration documents/number plates or repairs of a car which is not on your name.
5. Do not be greedy:
 - Do thorough vetting.
 - Do not be pressured into anything.
 - Even if the buyer/seller might have an emergency or any other emotional story.
 - Never give your banking details/credit card details.
 - Be sceptical of marketing phrases such as:
 - There are immediate buyers available for your car.
 - Finance has already been arranged.
 - Buyers are willing to pay any asking price.

***REMAIN VIGILANT!
ALWAYS DO THOROUGH VETTING!***

RELEVANT NEWS ARTICLES:

- <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2021-07-29-how-not-to-be-duped-by-a-car-recall-scam/>
- <https://businesstech.co.za/news/trending/507596/beware-these-two-scams-on-the-rise-in-south-africa/>
- <https://www.iol.co.za/pretoria-news/news/public-warned-about-fraudsters-in-online-car-auction-scam-3005579f-cbb0-41c1-ac93-5c5ae1218a68>
- <https://www.702.co.za/articles/420258/alert-facebook-car-scams>
- <https://www.arrivealive.mobi/safety-from-vehicle-scams-and-fraudsters-when-buying-and-selling-vehicles>
- <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/local/ud-news/social-media-car-scam-do-not-fall-prey-20210407>

RELATED PROJECT DOCUMENTS:

- <https://mailchi.mp/0c6f2a347554/interview-sabc1-online-car-scams>
- <https://mailchi.mp/mikebolhuis.co.za/project-knocks-and-scams-part-22>

Visit our Facebook page and our website for similar and other current "KNOCKS AND SCAMS" to be wary of.

ALL INFORMATION RECEIVED WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENTIALITY AND EVERY IDENTITY WILL BE PROTECTED.

You may forward this document.

Regards,

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Follow us on Facebook to view our projects -
<https://www.facebook.com/MikeBolhuisOfficial>

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT: Our biggest enemy is disinformation. If you receive any information regarding my organisation that concerns you, please contact me, Mike Bolhuis, directly to confirm whether the information is indeed factual or not.

STANDARD RULES APPLY: Upon appointment, we require a formal mandate with detailed instructions. Please take note that should you not make use of our services – you may not under any circumstance use my name or the name of my organisation as a means to achieve whatever end.

POPI ACT 4 of 2013 South Africa: Mike Bolhuis Specialised Security Services falls under Section 6 of the act. [Read more here.](#)

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Specialised Security Services



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