

## **The Catsadoption.Com Scam – How To Lose Your Money And Lose Your Kitty As Well!**

We have received numerous emails about a new cat adoption scam, some of which is running through a website called, which was first reported as a scam in Jan 2013. There is an Australian variant <http://au.catsadoptions.com/>

### **Why are we suspicious that this is a scam?**

- There are breeds advertised as “free to good home” that are not present in Australia. Some are not legal in Australia.
- A surprisingly large number of these supposedly purebred, rare breed kittens are advertised from NT or even Arnhem Land (NOT to say that this isn’t possible, but it is very unlikely)
- One of the people who responded to a “Sydney” advertisement offering to pick up the kittens was told by email that it was not possible because “I have a doctor’s appointment all week” (gee, glad we aren’t paying *that* bill!)
- One of the people who responded to a “Sydney” based advertisement was told that it was not possible to talk on the phone “because of illness” - email was the only form of communication available.
- One of the people who responded to a “Brisbane” based advertisement was told the kitten had moved and a transport fee was now payable.
- The grammar of the communications is not what would be expected from either a native born Australian or a person who was familiar with Australian English (again, not to suggest that “correct” English is an indicator *per se*, must be taken in to account with the other elements).
- There appear to be an extraordinarily large number of “identical” kittens posted on the same dates with the same photos of the same aged kittens, but apparently from widely different parts of Australia! (They clearly aren’t from the same litter! What a coincidence!)
- The breeds posted are breeds that people would ordinarily pay substantial money for, in an age bracket (3-6 months) that would normally be readily able to be sold (so why give them away “free”?)
- The “regions” of location of these pets are not the terms that Australians would normally use. For example, we would tend to say “Wagga area” rather than “South West Slopes” or “Townsville area” rather than “Capricorn region”.
- there seem to be more free purebred and rare breed kittens “free” than would normally be expected in all of Australia!
- there is an identical website <http://www.kittensforadoption.us/> which has similar issues.

*This advice is of a general nature and is not a substitute for professional assistance.*

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**BEWARE!**

Normally Nigerian/Cameroon internet scams are notable by the suffix on the end of the email address eg “.ng” . THESE email addresses are “yahoo.com” or “google.com” so they are harder than usual to detect

When there is an email conversation between a potential buyer and the “vendor” the language is pretty sophisticated. It would be easy to think it was real.

They ask for your HOME address for delivery of the kittens – which leaves you at further risk. They have no intention of delivering kittens to you, but they have your email address, your home address and your name (and possibly your payment details as well) – not a bad start on an identity theft racket!

**References:**

<http://www.catsofaustralia.com/forums/lofiversion/index.php?t6238.html> searched 11/11/13

<http://www.scambook.com/company/view/107433/CatsAdoptionscom> searched 11/11/13

<http://www.fraudwatchers.org/forums/showthread.php?t=55791> searched 12/11/13

<http://www.kittensforadoption.us/> searched 12/11/13