



### **Media Release**

## **FCCC Partners with Global Anti-Scam Alliance to Protect Vulnerable Consumers in Fiji Friday 09 August 2024**

The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) is proud to join hands with the Global Anti-Scam Alliance (GASA) to bolster consumer protection against scams in Fiji. This collaboration comes at a critical time when the vulnerability of consumers in Fiji has significantly increased due to the growing sophistication of fraudulent schemes.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications, Honourable Manoa Kamikamica, commended the new initiative, stating that the partnership would significantly bolster current anti-scam efforts in Fiji and the workings of the Anti – Scam Taskforce.

“The commitment we have made to protect Fijians against scams and fraud through our Anti-Scam Taskforce will be immensely bolstered thanks to this initiative by FCCC. Scams today know no borders, and it is extremely valuable for an international organization like GASA to provide their expertise to a Fijian regulatory agency. This collaboration will enhance our capability to combat scams more effectively and protect our citizens,” said the Honourable DPM.

FCCC Acting CEO, Pranil Singh, highlighted how consumers in Fiji are increasingly becoming targets of scams that exploit their trust and lack of awareness.

“Our joining of GASA, particularly the Oceania Chapter, is a proactive step towards creating a safer marketplace for all Fijians and, potentially, other island nations in the region. This partnership will allow us to leverage global expertise and resources,” said Mr Singh.

“Vulnerable members of society, particularly the elderly, or those with limited digital literacy, are at high risk of falling victim to scams. Scammers are also constantly evolving their tactics, making it imperative for us to stay ahead by equipping our consumers with the necessary knowledge and tools,” added Mr Singh.

FCCC and GASA will collaborate on several critical fronts to bolster consumer protection against scams. A lack of awareness often plays a huge role in why people get scammed in the first place. To start off, educational materials and resources aimed at raising awareness about common scams and preventive measures will be jointly developed and disseminated by FCCC and GASA.

“In addition, GASA will provide technical support to FCCC, enhancing our capacity to detect and combat scams using advanced technologies and methodologies. For example, as part of the

partnership, FCCC will gain access to ScamAdviser, an essential tool that helps identify and assess the legitimacy of online businesses and websites. This will significantly enhance our ability to protect consumers from fraudulent online activities and will be pivotal in strengthening FCCC's regulatory framework and operational efficiency," said Mr Singh.

Regular surveys will be conducted to gauge the current state of scams in Fiji. Members of the public are urged to participate in the first state of scam survey, now live at [bit.ly/stateofscamsurvey2024](https://bit.ly/stateofscamsurvey2024). These state of scam surveys will provide data-driven insights that will inform policy and consumer education initiatives, ensuring that strategies are based on the latest information and trends.

Collaborative efforts between FCCC and GASA will also focus on identifying emerging scam trends and developing strategies to mitigate their impact. By staying ahead of scammers' evolving tactics, the partnership aims to safeguard consumers more effectively. Furthermore, a system of early alerts will be established to warn consumers about new scams as soon as they are detected, helping to prevent potential losses.

FCCC is committed to upholding the rights of consumers and ensuring a fair and transparent market. By joining forces with GASA, we aim to enhance our efforts in protecting consumers from deceptive practices and financial harm.

In this regard, FCCC and other members of the Taskforce like the Consumer Council of Fiji and the Ministry, are preparing for the National Scam Awareness Week to be held on 26 to 30 August 2024. Public are encouraged to take full advantage of the event and arm yourself with all the necessary information needed to protect from yourself from scams.

For more information visit the FCCC website at [www.fccc.gov.fj](http://www.fccc.gov.fj). To report any scams, email [scams@fccc.gov.fj](mailto:scams@fccc.gov.fj).

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