

Urgent Warning to Suppliers: Fraudulent Purchasing & Procurement Activity

Rutledge AV has recently become aware of fraudulent activity that is targeting a range of suppliers both in and outside the AV Industry.

The scam involves email contact with a person purporting to be a Rutledge employee (we know of a specific impersonation of Andrew MacDonald) followed by requests for credit, filling out of supplier credit reference forms, providing a fake Rutledge AV letter of support which ultimately leads to a fraudulent purchase order being issued. There have been instances where the requested goods have actually been shipped. Note that the shipping address is typically a Freight Forwarder. So far the two freight forwarders have been targeted. The scammer has provided onward shipping instructions which involve the received goods being shipped overseas. The two freight forwarders that we are aware of are XTREME Freight and Bluebee Logistics. Note also the current name being used is Frank Gordon, see below:

FRANK GORDON
C/O: XTREME
UNIT 36, 1 INTERNATIONAL DR
WESTMEADOWS VIC 3043

FRANK GORDON
C/O: BLUEBEE LOGISTICS
UNIT 2/23 THE CONCORD
BUNDOORA, VIC 3083

Both freight forwarders have been notified of the scam. It is likely that alternative freight forwarders will be targeted in the future.

NOTE: Rutledge AV would never request goods to be shipped to a freight forwarder. We are not an exporter.

Any request for goods to be shipped to a non-Rutledge office should be treated with suspicion and you should contact the Purchasing Department on 03-9488-1500.

The main ways contact with suppliers has been established are:

- Contacting via on-line chat.
- An online request for information/quotation through the supplier's website.
- Contacting suppliers directly via email.

The scam is quite advanced and involves the:

- Establishment of an email address with a domain similar to Rutledge AV's:
 - Our domain is rutledge.com.au
 - The scam is using rutledgeav.com
- A trading reference form which looks like it would come from Rutledge AV with all details close to accurate. We believe this information has been gleaned from our website.
- The signing of credit application forms using a fake signature purporting to be from Rutledge AV.
- Establishment of verbal contact via a satellite phone with a number that looks similar to our main office number i.e. some digits are the same
 - Our main number is +6134881500
 - Scammer number is +61488897336
- Using a Rutledge AV employee's name as the purchaser i.e. Andrew MacDonald who is our NSW Branch Manager. The scammer is currently stating his title as Director of Operations and providing our Northcote address.
- Nominating a delivery address which is a freight forwarding company.

Rutledge AV has contacted law enforcement including the Victoria Police and Border Watch; and has submitted a complaint to the Australian Cybercrime Online Reporting Network (ACORN)

To date we have taken the following actions:

- Sent an urgent warning to all of our suppliers that this scam is occurring.
- Reported all instances where suppliers have come directly back to us to report the scam.
- Educated staff internally about this scam occurring and to remain vigilant.
- Tried to get the registered domain name cancelled. Note that Victoria Police has emailed the domain provider requesting information as well as the removal of the domain.
- Notified the known freight forwarders of the scam.

We are currently aware of over 100 instances of this scam which has tried to use our company as the purchaser. We obviously cannot tell how many of these scam enquiries have actually been successful and goods have been delivered. Also we do not know how many of these fraudulent emails there are, as we rely on the suppliers to tell us that they have been scammed or attempted to be scammed.

Rutledge AV appreciates your assistance and cooperation in reporting any suspected fraud you may encounter and will continue to work hard to prevent further attempts.

[Get in touch to discuss any of your concerns](#)