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Beware: Cruise Ship Scams Still 'Afloat'

Hagatna, Guam-With the recent arrival of the cruise ship Sun Princess, Attorney General Leonardo M. Rapadas would like to warn residents of possible scams that may re-circulate as a result of the ship's arrival and departure.

Periodically, over the last few months, island residents have been contacted by various pseudo travel agencies- largely Malaysian based- inviting them to "promotion parties" at various beach locations around the island, where "promotion tickets" and "cash prizes" will be awarded to them.

Some of the bogus travel companies named are Asia Pacific Travel, Classical Traveling, Crystal Line Tourism and Viva Travel Agency; with FaiFai, Family, Gun, Hagåtña Harbor, Port Authority and Tagåchang beaches named as a meeting place.

"I will reiterate: the name and places will change, but the scam remains the same; they want to steal your identity to take your hard-earned money or to use your personal information for scams later on down the road," said AG Rapadas.

"I cannot stress this point more; if it sounds too good to be true, it is. You are strongly advised not to comply with such solicitations; it could put you in a terrible financial situation. Hang up immediately if it sounds too good to be true," he continued.

The Consumer Protection Unit of the OAG received two phone calls from consumers who were contacted by an alleged representative of Aloha Travel Cruise Ship who relayed that the consumers had won \$130,000. The representative purported that the Aloha Travel Cruise Ship was set to dock at the Hagåtña Harbor, commonly known as Boat Basin.

"It is not possible for a cruise ship to dock at Boat Basin," said Bernie Alvarez, Consumer Protection Unit Advocate for the OAG.

"The only port of entry for cruise ships is at the Port Authority of Guam."

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The Port Authority of Guam advises the public to log onto their website at www.portguam.com and click on “shipping schedule” located at the bottom left hand corner of the homepage to verify cruise ships scheduled to port on Guam. The community can also call the Harbor Master’s Office at 477-5937 ext. 330 or 331 to verify shipping schedules.

The OAG continues to urge the public not to send any money or give out any personal information such as name, date of birth, social security numbers and bank account information.

Any personal information requested, which may seem harmless to provide, opens the door to identity theft that could involve criminal and financial crimes. Consumers who are contacted by any of the aforementioned agencies or any suspicious callers are asked to report any calls or emails to Bernie Alvarez, Consumer Advocate for the OAG at 475-3324 ext. 3340 or to email the information to: balvarez@guamag.org

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