

Australia

Population 27 million · Latest figures: 2025

Australians made 481,523 scam reports in 2025 and reported A\$2.18 billion lost, on the combined count of the National Anti-Scam Centre. The count adds reports to the government's Scamwatch service and the police cybercrime portal ReportCyber, cases logged by banks through the Australian Financial Crimes Exchange (AFCX), cases at the support charity IDCARE and reports to the securities regulator ASIC. Reports were 2.7% fewer than in 2024, but the money rose 7.8%, from A\$2.03 billion. It was the first rise since the peak of A\$3.1 billion in 2022, and the total is still 29.7% below it.



The response is led by the National Anti-Scam Centre, set up on 1 July 2023 inside the competition and consumer regulator, the ACCC. It runs Scamwatch, shares data with more than 40 partners and convenes fusion cells, short taskforces aimed at one type of scam. ASIC supervises banks and has investment scam sites taken down, the communications regulator ACMA polices telephone companies, and the Australian Federal Police lead a joint cybercrime centre.

The main law is the Scams Prevention Framework Act, passed in February 2025. It requires banks, telephone companies and digital platforms to prevent, detect, report, disrupt and respond to scams, backed by civil penalties. Most duties start on 31 March 2027. Since 1 July 2026 the sender names on text messages must be registered, and in June 2026 the Federal Court fined HSBC A\$35 million for failing to protect customers from scams.

PEOPLE SCAMMED

2,784,751

13.1% of adults

In the national survey people aged 45 to 54 were the most likely to have responded to a scam and those aged 15 to 24 the least, men and women were hit at similar rates, and people with a disability almost twice as often as others. Older people lose the most: those aged 65 and over reported A\$88.8 million to Scamwatch in 2025, 26.5% of the losses from 17.2% of the population, with a median loss of A\$716. People aged 35 to 44 filed the most reports with a loss. For those aged 18 to 24 the costliest scams were threats, among them sextortion and callers posing as foreign police who tell migrants and international students they face arrest or deportation. Reporters who speak a language other than English had a median loss of A\$750, against A\$400 overall.

Scammers now mostly reach victims online, through websites, social media and apps: 19,169 Scamwatch reports with a loss and A\$158.5 million in 2025, a third more reports than in 2024. Email is the most reported channel, but only 5% of those reports involve a loss. Phone calls are rarer and dearer, with a median loss of A\$3,800. Reports of scam calls are 73.7% below their 2021 level and reports of scam texts fell from 77,365 to 29,058 in a year.

Many scams are run from abroad. Raids on call centres in Manila and Bangkok found romance and investment scams aimed at Australians, and about 7,000 people were warned afterwards. Fake investment advertisements use AI-made videos of politicians and finance commentators.

PEOPLE WHO LOST
MONEY

1,994,096

72% of victims

Cryptocurrency has overtaken bank transfer as the main way money leaves. Of the losses reported to Scamwatch in 2025, A\$121.3 million (36%) went through cryptocurrency or a digital currency exchange and A\$118.1 million by bank transfer, far ahead of cash, cards and gift cards. Australia has over 2,000 cryptocurrency cash machines, and the financial intelligence agency AUSTRAC estimates that 85% of their heaviest users were scam victims or money mules. It has capped cash deposits at A\$5,000.

The centrepiece of the banks' Scam-Safe Accord is Confirmation of Payee, a A\$100 million system that checks the account name against the account number before a transfer and warns of a mismatch. The accord also brought biometric checks for new online accounts, extra questions and delays on payments to new payees, limits on payments to some cryptocurrency platforms, and membership of the AFCX's Fraud Reporting Exchange, through which banks ask each other to hold and return money. Two major banks let customers lock their own accounts instantly. The major banks stopped about 24% of scam payments in early 2024, up from 13% in 2021-22.

Telephone companies blocked 492.7 million scam calls and 153.5 million scam texts in 2025. Since 1 July 2026 a text carrying a brand name that is not on the ACMA's register is labelled Unverified. The National Anti-Scam Centre had more than 7,500 scam web addresses removed in 2025, and ASIC removed more than 19,400 online scams in the year to June 2026.

MONEY LOST

US\$1.97b

A\$3.05b in a year,
0.11% of GDP

Reported scam losses in Australia peaked in 2022 and have since come down. The National Anti-Scam Centre, which combines reports to Scamwatch, the police, banks and others, counted A\$2.18 billion lost in 2025, up 7.8% on 2024 but 29.7% below the A\$3.1 billion of 2022. Of 481,523 reports, 274,577 involved a loss.

Investment scams are the costliest: A\$837.7 million in 2025, 38% of the total, though down 11.4%. Payment redirection, in which a business or person is tricked into paying a false invoice, took A\$166.8 million, romance scams A\$139.9 million and phishing A\$97.6 million. Losses by phone are larger than most: the median Scamwatch loss on a scam call was A\$3,800, against A\$400 for all Scamwatch reports, down from A\$500.

Older people lose most. People 65 and over had A\$88.8 million of Scamwatch losses, 26.5% of the total, against 17.2% of the population. On Scamwatch reports, cryptocurrency overtook bank transfer as the costliest way to pay in 2025, with A\$121.3 million lost, 36.2% of the total.

MONEY RETURNED

US\$218.5m

11.1% of the money
lost

Refunds depend on whether the victim authorised the payment. Where a card or account is used without authority, the ePayments Code, a voluntary code most banks have signed, sets out who bears the loss, and banks usually pay. A payment the victim was tricked into making falls outside those rules. The regulator ASIC found that customers of the four major banks bore 96% of scam losses in 2021-22, when 31,700 customers lost A\$558 million and the banks paid back about A\$21 million; repayment rose to 7% a year later. At 15 smaller banks in 2022-23 customers also bore 96%: 7% was repaid to victims who complained and 2% to those who did not.

A victim can complain to the bank and then to the free Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA). Under the Scams Prevention Framework a victim will be able to claim damages from a bank, telephone company or platform that broke its duties, and AFCA will hear complaints against all three together, for scams on or after 31 March 2027.

Some money is pulled back: the smaller banks recovered about 20% of the money that reached the receiving bank. The Federal Court's June 2026 penalty against HSBC came with A\$21.5 million in compensation to customers.

REPORTED

71%

of victims reported it

In the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Fraud survey for 2024-25, 71.1% of people who responded to a scam reported the most serious one to an authority or organisation, against 70.8% in 2023-24: 53.8% to a bank, 13.8% to a social media or selling site, 8.5% to the police and 7.9% to a government body.

The National Anti-Scam Centre combines five registers: 481,523 scam reports in 2025 after duplicates, down 2.7% from 494,732, with \$2.18 billion reported lost, up 7.8%. Banks recorded 202,943 cases through the Australian Financial Crimes Exchange, up from 169,184, and Scamwatch took 200,675 reports, down from 249,448. ReportCyber, which passes police reports to state and territory police, took 58,876 scam reports, down from 64,682. IDCARE, the identity and cyber support charity, handled 47,589 scam cases, up from 42,193, and the securities regulator ASIC 1,565, up from 965.

Scamwatch has sent investment scam reports to ASIC automatically since March 2024, referred 8,536 reporters to IDCARE in 2025 and shares data with over 40 partners, including banks, telcos and platforms. Services Australia's helpdesk supported over 9,000 people hit by scams using its name. From 31 March 2027 the Australian Financial Complaints Authority takes scam complaints that a bank, telco or platform has not resolved.

POLICE RECORDS

481,523

cases recorded by the
authorities

The figure shown here is the National Anti-Scam Centre's combined count for 2025: 481,523 scam reports, of which 274,577 involved a loss, and A\$2.18 billion reported lost. The centre, part of the ACCC, adds five registers and removes the duplicates it can find: Scamwatch (200,675 reports, A\$334.8 million), bank cases from the AFCX (202,943, A\$842.3 million), ReportCyber (58,876, A\$774.2 million), IDCARE (47,589, A\$535.8 million) and ASIC (1,565, A\$135.0 million). It includes reports with no loss and from businesses, and amounts are as reported, before any recovery.

ReportCyber is the police channel. Run by the Australian Signals Directorate, it passes reports to state and territory police and received over 84,700 cybercrime reports of all kinds in the year to June 2025, with an average reported cost of A\$33,000 for individuals. Scamwatch alone had 138,392 reports and A\$250 million lost from January to September 2026.

The Australian Federal Police lead the Joint Policing Cybercrime Coordination Centre, whose Operation Firestorm, begun in August 2024, targets offshore scam networks. ASIC charged four people with money laundering over investment scams in 2025 and had 95 companies linked to scams wound up. AUSTRAC made more than 100 referrals to police over cryptocurrency cash machines. The ACMA collected over A\$4 million in penalties from three telephone companies for breaking rules against mobile number fraud, and the Federal Court fined HSBC A\$35 million in June 2026.

Victims who told the police (estimated)



Cases recorded by the authorities



MOST COMMON

1. Card fraud
2. Online shopping
3. Investment

By money, investment scams lead: A\$837.7 million of the A\$2.18 billion reported lost in 2025, or 38%, though 11% less than in 2024. An advertisement, often with a fake endorsement by a politician or finance presenter, leads to a scripted phone call and a fake trading platform that shows invented gains and may pay out small sums to build trust. Payment redirection is second at A\$166.8 million: a scammer breaks into email and changes the bank details on a real invoice, so that the customer pays the wrong account. Romance scams took A\$139.9 million. Contact starts on a dating site and moves to a private messaging app, and requests for money follow.

Phishing, in which messages posing as a bank, toll road or government agency collect passwords and card details, cost A\$97.6 million and is the most reported scam, with 65,361 Scamwatch reports. Remote access scams, where a caller posing as technical support takes control of a device, cost A\$69.9 million, down by a third. These five made up 60% of losses.

By number of victims the picture differs. More people lost money to shopping scams than to any other type on Scamwatch: 12,248 people and A\$10.8 million. Job scams grew fastest: reports doubled and losses reached A\$24.8 million, with students and visa holders among the targets. In the national survey card fraud is far more common than any scam, and buying or selling scams make up half of all scam victims.

Australia has joined up its agencies and passed a strong law, but the duties in that law are not yet in force. The National Anti-Scam Centre pools the reports of five bodies, shares data with more than 40 partners and second staff to the federal police. Banks share cases through their own exchange and have built a shared account name check.

The results are real but uneven. Reported losses are 29.7% below the 2022 peak, and reports of scam calls and texts have fallen by about three quarters. But losses rose 7.8% in 2025, scams begun online grew by a third, and cryptocurrency became the main route for the money. The centre says more work is needed by digital platforms in particular, which follow a voluntary code.

The largest gap is who bears the loss. Customers bore 96% of scam losses at the banks ASIC reviewed, and the ePayments Code is voluntary and covers only payments the customer did not authorise. The Scams Prevention Framework Act of February 2025 sets duties for banks, telephone companies and digital platforms, with penalties of up to 30% of turnover and a right to damages. Firms had to join the complaints scheme by 1 September 2026, but most duties start on 31 March 2027, more follow by the end of 2027, and the codes that define them are still being written. The Act gives no automatic refund: a victim must show that a firm broke its duties. Ten consumer bodies, CHOICE among them, say the proposals as drafted will not deliver fair compensation.

Calculation Methodology & Sources

People scammed

From one survey:

- 13.1%: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Fraud, 2024-25 financial year, Table 1a, Personal fraud, Persons, 2024-25; Table 7a, total persons (12 months to 30 June 2025).
- 13.1% of 21,206,648 adults.

People who lost money

From one survey:

- 71.6%: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Fraud, 2024-25 financial year, Table 6a, Money withdrawn or used; Table 1a (12 months to 30 June 2025).

Money lost

- A\$2.18b was lost in cases recorded by the authorities. Adding the 1,512,573 victims who lost money but are not in those records, at A\$578 each, gives A\$3.05b.
- Price of an unrecorded loss: Read off the line fitted to GDP per person in the countries where this price is measured (Canada, Chile, Mexico, Singapore and United States): US\$372.45 = AUD 578.04.
- US dollars at 0.644330774 per AUD.
- Share of GDP: US\$1.97b against GDP of US\$1.8tn in 2025. World Bank, GDP (current US\$) 2025.

Money returned

- European Banking Authority and European Central Bank, 2025 Report on Payment Fraud, Level average, see note.
- No national figure covers every route, so the average is used for countries where the law makes banks refund unauthorised fraud. Worked out: banks return 16.2% of money lost through banks, the average of France, Chile, Spain, Greece, Brazil, Italy, the Netherlands and Germany; banks returned AUD 310.8m (16.2% of the 63.0% of money lost through banks); AUD 28.3m came back on money lost outside banks (2.5%, measured in the Federal Reserve's household survey for victims who paid only by crypto, cash, gift cards or money transfer firms).
- 11.1% of A\$3.05b lost.

Reported

From one survey:

- 71.1%: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Fraud, 2024-25 financial year, Table 2a, Scams, Most serious scam reported, 2024-25 (12 months to 30 June 2025).

Police records

- 8.5%: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Fraud, 2024-25 financial year, Table 2a, Scams, Police, 2024-25 (12 months to 30 June 2025).
- 481,523: Scam cases recorded by the National Anti-Scam Centre of Australia (combined reports from Scamwatch, ReportCyber, banks, IDCARE and ASIC).

Most common

- Ranked by kinds of personal fraud recorded in the national survey (ABS Personal Fraud 2024-25). 11.3% of answers are methods such as phishing, or other, and are not ranked.

Sources

- Australian Banking Association, Keeping Australia Scam Safe: the Scam-Safe Accord (13 October 2026). Industry source. The banks' commitments and their status. Original <https://www.ausbanking.org.au/scam-safe-accord/>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Fraud, 2024-25 financial year (12 March 2026). Survey. Australia's national survey of card fraud, scams and identity theft in the 12 months before interview. Original <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/personal-fraud/latest-release> ·
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Scams Prevention Framework (13 October 2026). Official source. Regulators, start dates and status of the codes. Original <https://www.accc.gov.au/about-us/scams-prevention-framework> ·
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Continued action critical to combat fraud as annual scam losses exceed \$2 billion (30 March 2026). Official source. Media statement releasing the 2025 report, with the fall since the 2022 peak. Original <https://www.accc.gov.au/media-release/continued-action-critical-to-combat-fraud-as-annual-scam-losses-exceed-2-billion> ·
- Australian Communications and Media Authority, SMS Sender ID Register (13 October 2026). Official source. The register of SMS sender names from 1 July 2026. Original <https://www.acma.gov.au/sms-sender-id-register> ·
- Australian Financial Complaints Authority, Make a complaint (13 October 2026). Official source. How to complain about a bank, with number and hours. Original <https://www.afca.org.au/make-a-complaint> ·
- Australian Financial Complaints Authority, Scams Prevention Framework (13 October 2026). Official source. The Australian Scams Ombudsman and what it can hear from 31 March 2027. Original <https://www.afca.org.au/about-afca/scams-prevention-framework> ·
- Parliament of Australia, Scams Prevention Framework Bill 2025 (20 February 2025). Official source. Passage and assent dates of the bill. Original https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r7275 ·
- Australian Signals Directorate, Annual Cyber Threat Report 2024-2025 (1 October 2025). Official source. ReportCyber cybercrime reports and hotline calls for the year to June 2025. Original <https://www.cyber.gov.au/publication/annual-cyber-threat-report-2024-2025> ·
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission, ePayments Code (13 October 2026). Official source. What the code covers and that it is voluntary. Original <https://www.asic.gov.au/regulatory-resources/financial-services/epayments-code/> ·
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission, \$35 million penalty sought as HSBC admits to scam protection failures, and implements compensation plan (26-126MR) (18 June 2026). Official source. What HSBC admitted and what it has paid. Original <https://www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/news-centre/find-a-media-release/2026-releases/26-126mr-35-million-penalty-sought-as-hsbc-admits-to-scam-protection-failures-and-implements-compensation-plan> ·
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Federal Court orders \$35 million penalty against HSBC for scam protection failures (26-127MR) (18 June 2026). Official source. The court's penalty and findings. Original <https://www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/news-centre/find-a-media-release/2026-releases/26-127mr-federal-court-orders-35-million-penalty-against-hsbc-for-scam-protection-failures> ·
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Report 761: Scam prevention, detection and response by the four major banks (20 April 2023). Official source. Review of the four major banks: who bore scam losses in 2021-22. Original <https://download.asic.gov.au/media/mbhoz0pc/rep761-published-20-april-2023.pdf> ·
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), Report 790: Anti-scam practices of banks outside the four major banks (1 August 2024). Official source. Reimbursement of scam losses by banks outside the four major banks. Original <https://asic.gov.au/regulatory-resources/find-a-document/reports/rep-790-anti-scam-practices-of-banks-outside-the-four-major-banks/> ·
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission, ASIC warns scammers are using AI to spin vast webs of deception (26-195MR) (17 August 2026). Official source. Takedowns in the year to June 2026 and how investment scams are built. Original <https://www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/news-centre/find-a-media-release/2026-releases/26-195mr-asic-warns-scammers-are-using-ai-to-spin-vast-webs-of-deception> ·
- Australian Payments Plus, Confirmation of Payee (13 October 2026). Industry source. How the account name check works. Original <https://www.auspayplus.com.au/solutions/confirmation-of-payee-for-businesses>
- Consumer Action Law Centre, Joint Consumer Submission: Scams Prevention Framework draft law package and position paper (12 January 2026). News report. Ten consumer bodies, CHOICE among them, on compensation under the framework. Original <https://consumeraction.org.au/joint-consumer-submission-scams-prevention-framework-draft-law-package-and-position-paper/>
- Consumer Action Law Centre, Consumer Action calls for strong, world beating Scams Prevention Framework as draft codes land (1 December 2025). News report. Consumer group statement on the delay and on redress. Original <https://consumeraction.org.au/consumer-action-calls-for-strong-world-beating-scams-prevention-framework-as-draft-codes-land/>

- European Banking Authority and European Central Bank, 2025 Report on Payment Fraud (15 December 2025). Official source. Fraudulent payments reported by payment firms; losses that never reach a payment firm are not included. Original <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/intro/publications/pdf/ecb.ebaecb202512.en.pdf> ·
- IDCARE, Contact IDCARE (13 October 2026). Industry source. Numbers and hours of the national identity and cyber support charity. Original <https://www.idcare.org/contact>
- Federal Register of Legislation, Scams Prevention Framework Act 2025 (No. 15, 2025) (20 February 2025). Official source. The Act: principles, penalties and the right to damages. Original <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2025A00015/asmade/text> ·
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, National Anti-Scam Centre, Targeting scams: report of the National Anti-Scam Centre on scams data and activity 2025 (30 March 2026). Official source. Counts only scams reported to Scamwatch, ReportCyber, banks, IDCARE or ASIC; scams that are not reported are not included. Original <https://www.nasc.gov.au/system/files/targeting-scams-report-2025.pdf> ·
- National Anti-Scam Centre, Scamwatch, Report a scam (13 October 2026). Official source. What a Scamwatch report is used for. Original <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam> ·
- National Anti-Scam Centre, Scamwatch, Scam statistics (13 October 2026). Official source. Monthly dashboard of Scamwatch reports; read for January to September 2026. Original <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/research-and-resources/scam-statistics> ·
- National Anti-Scam Centre, Scamwatch, What to do if you've been scammed (13 October 2026). Official source. The government's steps for a scam victim, with helpline numbers. Original <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/stop-check-protect/what-to-do-if-youve-been-scammed> ·
- UN DESA, World Population Prospects 2024 (medium variant) (11 July 2024). Official source. Modelled estimates built from censuses and surveys. Original <https://population.un.org/wpp/> ·
- World Bank, Official exchange rate (local currency units per US\$, period average) 2025 (8 October 2026). Official source. Annual average of official exchange rates reported by national authorities. Original <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/PA.NUS.FCRF> ·
- World Bank, GDP (current US\$) 2025 (8 October 2026). Official source. National accounts estimates that are revised as countries report. Original <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD> ·