



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Industrial Relations**

Tuesday November 24, 2009

ATTORNEY GENERAL WARNS OF HOAX INHERITANCE EMAIL

NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos today issued a warning about a hoax email that encourages people to find out whether they are entitled to a share of a non-existent estate.

“This email claims to have come from myself, the Attorney General, but I can assure anyone who receives it, that it is a scam,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

The hoax email uses part of a legitimate media release issued by the Attorney General earlier this year about money distributed to beneficiaries of deceased estates by the NSW Trustee & Guardian.

Written in Dutch, the email claims a man named Heiman de Waal died without making a will and encourages people to call a telephone number to find out whether they are owed money from his estate.

“If you receive this email you should delete it immediately and do not attempt to make contact with the scammer or provide them with any personal information, such as bank account details,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

The scammer purports to be from the Australian Association of Genealogists and Records Agents, however the Association has confirmed it has no knowledge of the author of the email.

“I am gravely concerned that an unscrupulous individual would manipulate a legitimate media release to take advantage of vulnerable members of the community,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“I have asked that further investigations are conducted to track down the author of the scam.”

Mr Hatzistergos said all claims made on estates of people who die without a will are closely scrutinised, and payments are only made to those with proof of their entitlements.

“I can assure the community the NSW Trustee & Guardian conducts exhaustive research to ensure that deceased estates go to rightful heirs and next of kin,” he said.