

OPERATIONAL CIRCULAR

25 MAY 2022



STOLEN VEHICLES RECOVERY SCAM

There is a scam underway where criminals call victims of stolen or hijacked vehicles to embezzle money from them. They normally follow the modus operandi as stipulated below:

The owner of the vehicle will report it as stolen or hijacked to the SAPS.

Sometimes a few hours or even a few days after having reported the matter these scammers will call the complainant in the SAPS case and pretend to be from some police station far from where the vehicle was reported stolen, like for instance Komatipoort SAPS if the vehicle was stolen in Gauteng.

The scammer will advise the complainant that the SAPS has recovered his vehicle and that he/she must pay the SAPS a fee for towing the vehicle back to the complainant. These scammers are professionals and will even have the sound of police radios in the background to make the scam more plausible.

In many cases the client will pay this fee believing that his vehicle is on the way back to him.

Soon after the first payment the scammer will tell the client that the towing vehicle broke down and that he/she must pay a further amount. This will go on for as long as the client is paying the money, meanwhile the vehicle has never been recovered.

If you are contacted by anyone and told that your vehicle is recovered, please ask for the following information:

- The name and number for the person who called?
- To which police station or pound will the vehicle be moved?
- If available ask for the SAP13 number?

Once the client has been advised of the recovery of his/her vehicle, they should contact the assessor appointed on the claim immediately. The assessor will contact the person who's contact number has been provided to verify if this is a legitimate recovery or part of the scam.

Please be advised that the SAPS will never request any payment for the recovery of a stolen vehicle and our clients should be advised to never pay for such service.

Santam is working with the relevant authorities to assist with investigations to apprehend these suspects and end this scam.

Should the client pay any money towards such scam, the loss will unfortunately not be recovered from Santam.