

Customer Alert – Beware of Bogus SMS Messages and Voice Message Calls

The Bank of East Asia, Limited (“BEA”) would like to remind customers to remain vigilant following reports of bogus voice message (“VM”) calls and bogus SMS messages. Bogus VM calls are purportedly from banks claiming to have discovered irregularities in customers’ bank or credit card accounts. Customers are asked to provide their personal information or to authenticate their accounts during the call. There are also SMS messages purportedly to be sent by a bank, claiming that there are transactions conducted using the customer’s credit card, and request the customer to call a bogus hotline number to check the credit card transaction.

BEA never asks customers to provide sensitive personal information (including login passwords or one-time passwords) by phone or email, and never notifies customers of account irregularities via pre-recorded messages. Customers are strongly urged to protect their personal information at all times. Where customers are suspicious about the identity of the callers, customers should request for the caller’s contact numbers and information and verify with the banks concerned. Customers who have received suspicious SMS messages should also verify the hotline numbers contained in the messages with their banks before calling the numbers, rather than just following the information provided in SMS messages. Customers may find the relevant banks’ hotline numbers at the back of ATM/credit cards or on their respective websites. At the same time, a list of all retail banks’ hotline numbers can be found at the dedicated webpages of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (“HKMA”) and the Hong Kong Association of Banks.

Anyone who has provided personal information in response to such a call or SMS message purportedly from BEA should immediately report the case to the Police for investigation, and contact BEA’s Customer Service Hotline (852) 2211 1333 for assistance. To report / enquire about bogus phone calls and bogus SMS messages (including verification of identity) or to opt-out of direct marketing activities, please also call the above hotline and press “0” after language selection.

Please click [here](#) to read the relevant materials on the HKMA website, and click [here](#) to watch an animated video regarding fraud prevention.