

AMERICAN PROPERTY PURCHASER SCAMMED ONLINE



When buying property in New York, an American citizen was duped into paying a portion of his purchase amount into a fraudulent account.

The fraudulent account holder intercepted e-mails between the property purchaser and his estate agent. Posing as the estate agent over e-mail, the subject convinced the purchaser to pay cash for the property into the fraudulent account. The funds were then immediately transferred to three different accounts held in South Africa.

After gathering information from its American counterparts, the FIC immediately authorised intervention directives to freeze the funds in the three accounts and tracked funds to six other accounts. The FIC gathered enough intelligence to issue an additional four intervention directives and identified three vehicles bought with some of the crime's proceeds.

The National Prosecuting Authority and the Asset Forfeiture Unit obtained preservation orders against nine accounts and three motor vehicles. The co-operation between all stakeholders involved resulted in the recovery of 93 percent of the stolen funds.