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3 October 2008

Bukit Merah East  
Neighbourhood Police Centre  
391 New Bridge Road #03-25  
Police Cantonment Complex Blk A  
Singapore 088762  
1800-236 9999

Dear Sir/Madam,

### CRIME ALERT: NEW VARIATION OF KIDNAP PHONE SCAMS

Over the past few months, there were several reported cases of victims falling prey to a new method employed by fraudsters in the kidnap phone scam. These scams are designed to convince the victims into parting with their money to ensure the safety of their family members.

#### Method of Operation

2. Previously, tricksters would ask the victims to pay the “ransom” via remittance or bank transfer, in order to secure the release of their family members. A recent variation used by fraudsters involves asking the victim to personally handover the “ransom” at a pre-arranged location, usually near an MRT station or park, or wrap the money in plastic bags and leave it at a designated location. Till date, victims have been cheated of cash and valuables totaling \$150,000. The fraudsters would usually use the following content to mislead the victim:

#### Over the Phone

- i. The fraudster would call the victim and claim that his/her loved-one (usually son or daughter) had been kidnapped and demand that a ransom be paid;
- ii. These fake threats would usually be accompanied by sounds of cries for help in the background;
- iii. In some instances, the phone would be passed to a female accomplice who might pose as the kidnap victim, crying for help; and
- iv. The fraudster would then arrange with the victim to handover the ransom at a pre-arranged location, usually near an MRT station before “releasing” the victim’s loved-one.

#### Crime Prevention Measures

3. Members of public are advised to be aware and vigilant of these scams and adopt the following prevention measures:

- i. If you receive such call, do remain calm and contact your loved-one immediately on his/her handphone, at the workplace/school, friends who could be with him/her, etc, to confirm his/her safety. Should repeated attempts at contacting him/her fail, seek assistance from the police immediately;
- ii. Similarly, if you have confirmed that your loved-one is safe, call the police immediately at '999' to report the case.
- iii. Do not reveal your particulars to the caller.

4. More details of such scams can be found in the Singapore Police Force website at [www.spf.gov.sg](http://www.spf.gov.sg) or the Commercial Affairs Department website at [www.cad.gov.sg](http://www.cad.gov.sg).

Yours faithfully,



DSP TAN KIAT HEE  
COMMANDING OFFICER  
BUKIT MERAH EAST NPC  
CENTRAL POLICE DIVISION  
SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE