

News Release

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NASD Alert Warns of Investment Scams Using Fake Regulator Web Sites

Washington, DC — NASD issued an Investor Alert today warning investors to be wary of a new type of stock scam that references phony government regulator Web sites. These unsolicited investment pitches are often ploys to get investors to send money in advance of any service rendered and are mainly targeting non-U.S. investors through e-mail and facsimile.

NASD's Investor Alert, "*Dash*" [Gov Sites Part of Ploy to Dash Off With Your Money](#), highlights particular investment pitches referencing "official" Web sites that are, in fact, phony. The latest twist involves sites using "-gov.us" in the Web address to resemble the ".gov.xx" designation that official government Web sites outside the U.S. typically use, where "xx" is a 2-letter country code. For example, the Australian Securities & Investments Commission's Web site is [www.asic.gov.au](#). In the U.S., the Web sites of federal agencies all end with ".gov" not "-gov" or "-gov.us." The *Alert* also explains these fake sites may use "cookies" to track visitors and gather personal information.

"What we are seeing is a new trick to lend legitimacy to money-making 'advance fee' schemes by fraudsters in the international arena," said NASD Senior Executive Vice President Elisse Walter. "It is important that investors—both in the U.S. and abroad—be wary of these investments scams and if they suspect they are being targeted call or e-mail their regulator."

NASD is aware of at least three sites using the -gov.us trick and provides screen captures of each in the Alert:

- [Central Registry Regulators](#), which claims the organization "administers and enforces the federal securities laws in order to protect investors and to maintain fair, honest, and efficient markets."
- [National Mergers and Acquisitions Board](#), which claims "to oversee, administer and enforce the federal securities laws relating to corporate Mergers and Acquisitions (M & A)."
- [Board of Commissioners of Mergers & Acquisitions](#), which also claims, in exactly the same language as the site above, "to oversee, administer and enforce the federal securities laws relating to corporate Mergers and Acquisitions (M & A)."

Additional information on international financial scams is available in a previous NASD Investor Alert, [Well-Traveled Fraud-Advance-Fee Scams Target Non-U.S. Investors](#). To receive NASD's latest Investor Alerts and other important investor information via email, sign up for NASD's [Investor News](#).

NASD is the leading private-sector provider of financial regulatory services, dedicated to bringing integrity to the markets and confidence to investors through effective and efficient regulation and complementary compliance and technology-based services. NASD offers a broad range of tools and programs to help people better understand investing and know how to protect themselves along the way - including developing and publishing Investor Alerts, brochures and online resource guides on such critical topics as mutual fund class shares and 401(k) and college savings plans. NASD has distributed this information through its Web site, printed materials and Investor Forums.

NASD touches virtually every aspect of the securities business — from registering and educating all industry participants, to examining securities firms, enforcing both NASD rules and the federal securities laws, and administering the largest dispute resolution forum for investors and registered firms. For more information, please visit our Web site at [www.nasd.com](#).

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