

PUBLIC NOTICE

ALERT ON RTIA EMAIL PHISHING SCAM

To : All Stakeholders

From : Office of the Acting Registrar

Date : 17 February 2022

The RTIA on 16 February 2022 received numerous complaints from the public and key stakeholders in the AARTO business value chain concerning suspicious emails.

The Agency's ICT unit ran a full scan on its email servers as a matter of urgency on the same day and found that these emails were not sent from the RTIA server environment. Instead, they were sent from external email domains such as Gmail disguised as though they originate from RTIA employees. It has been ascertained that no sensitive information in the RTIA IT environment has been compromised and security has been intensified.

From the diagnostics conducted, it was discovered that this is a typical phishing email scam. Such a scam requires recipients to click on a link or attachment in a fake email which will activate a virus or direct them to a website that will steal their information. Some go to an extent of requesting recipients to provide credit card details, bank accounts or make deposits to certain bank accounts.

Recently, a trend has been noticed in a rise of email phishing scams targeted at government institutions and SOEs. Phishing is undertaken through multiple channels, including email, mobile, social media and phone calls. Most phishing attacks share common characteristics of an urgency to act or an impersonation of an individual or brand. Attacks will often leverage current topics to increase the likelihood of a victim taking the lure.

RTIA stakeholders and the public are advised to take precautions when they receive suspicious emails by not opening such emails and delete them from the system. Alternatively, seek verification of such emails by contacting the Agency and informing their IT departments.

For further information or enquiries regarding suspicious emails purporting to originate from the RTIA, the public and stakeholders can contact Mr Leonard Masango, Head of IT on 083 784 1818 or email leonard.masango@rtia.co.za