

## Man arrested in Nigeria over attempted real estate fraud in Western Australia

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[Photo: Ntuen Promise Ekenmini has been arrested in Nigeria for attempted fraud. \(WA Police\)](#)

[Map: Perth 6000](#)

A man has been arrested in Nigeria over the attempted fraudulent sale of a home in Western Australia, in what is believed to be the first arrest of its kind by Australian authorities.

WA Police worked with Consumer Protection and a real estate agent over eight months to intercept the sale of the house in Falcon, south of Perth.

The owners of the home are based in South Africa.

Ntuen Promise Ekenmini, 27, was apprehended by Nigerian authorities yesterday when he went to collect documents using a fake drivers licence in the name of the real home owner.

Police allege the attempted fraud began when a man contacted the property manager of a Mandurah real estate agency on 17 December, 2012, pretending to be the owner of a home being managed by the agency and requesting documents relating to the rented property.

He allegedly used an email address in the name of one of the real owners, who is a resident of Johannesburg, and requested all future correspondence be forwarded to it.

On 18 January, 2013 the agency received a request to sell the property and a sales agreement with false signatures was returned to the agent, together with copies of fake passports of the two owners, a husband and wife, as well as a forged document purporting to be from the Australian High Commission in Pretoria confirming their identity.



## AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION

292 Orkut Street, Arcadia, Pretoria, South Africa.

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31st January, 2013.

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

On behalf of Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and His wife Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
South Africa, The Australian High Commission in  
South Africa writes to certify that the person whose name, photograph and signature  
appears on the attached passport are true copies.

[Photo: The fake Australian High Commission document used by Ekenmini. \(WA Police\)](#)

The agent became suspicious and reported the attempted fraud to authorities.

In conjunction with the police, the agency engaged with the alleged offender - at one stage instructions were given to deposit \$AU785,000 into a bank account in South East Asia.

Detective Senior Sergeant Dom Blackshaw says police are investigating whether the crime is linked to previous cases of real estate fraud in the state.

He says six of the seven cases involved owners who live in South Africa, have investment properties in Perth which are rented, and have had their identities stolen.

"There's every chance that these people are the same offenders; however, we are working with the police in Nigeria to identify whether that is the case," he said.

"The offenders are very tenacious; they haven't given up. This has been eight months that they've been contacting the agent.

"They've been changing email addresses, telephone numbers, even to the point they've been threatening the agent when things have been delayed."

"We need to be constantly vigilant. We can't afford to rest now and think 'ok we've caught someone, that's the end of it'. There will be further attacks from further offenders in those countries and we need to be very mindful of that."

Mr Ekenmini is expected to be charged with fraud and theft.

*Submitted by Roger Buhlert – Cardinia Shire Council*