

The Central Bank of The Bahamas

PUBLIC NOTICE

Identity Theft Scam: Fraudulent use of IRS Name and Likeness

It has come to the attention of the Central Bank that persons unknown are falsely representing themselves to the Bahamian public as officials of the Internal Revenue Services (IRS), United States Department of the Treasury seeking to obtain personal information. The scheme targets non-resident aliens who may or may not derive income from a United States source using fictitious IRS correspondence and an altered IRS form, such as Form W-8BEN, in an attempt to trick foreign persons into disclosing their personal financial data. Information gathered is then used to steal the taxpayer's identity and financial assets. Note that genuine W-8BEN Forms are sent to recipients by their financial institution, not by the IRS; the real W-8BEN Form may be viewed at the IRS website.

The IRS has in the past issued several Consumer Warnings on identity theft schemes. A description of the scheme currently surfacing in The Bahamas may be viewed at the link below:

IRS Reissues Consumer Warning on Identity Theft Scheme:
Scheme Now Targeting Caribbean
IR-2004-104, August 3, 2004

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=127914,00.html>

A further renewal alert has been posted by the IRS which gives additional details about such schemes and how persons may protect themselves from falling victim to them.

IRS Renews E-Mail Alert Following New Scams
IR-2006-104, July 7, 2006

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=159925,00.html>

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