FSCA Press Release 22 July 2026

FSCA issues a warning against the impersonators of Ava Trade

The Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) warns the public to exercise caution when conducting financial services business with individual(s) using the names Ms Praise Van Vuuren (Van Vuuren) and Ms Maryk Calitz (Calitz), purporting to be associated with Ava Markets Capital (Pty) Ltd t/a Ava Trade (Ava Trade) with FSP number 45984.

It has come to the FSCA's attention that individuals identifying themselves as Van Vuuren and Calitz are offering investment opportunities to the public by purporting to be associated with Ava Trade on Facebook. These individuals are reportedly soliciting funds from members of the public for investment purposes. Ava Trade confirmed that it has no association with Van Vuuren and Calitz or the activities conducted on Facebook in its name.

While the FSCA does not comment on the specific business model or services offered by Van Vuuren and Calitz, it is important to note that the individuals behind the Facebook Groups are not authorised under any financial sector law to provide financial services. The individuals behind the scheme failed to respond to FSCA queries.

The public is strongly urged to exercise caution when considering unsolicited investment or trading offers, particularly those communicated through social media. Members of the public are advised to act with care when investing their funds, as many fraudsters operate sophisticated scams, the number of which continues to grow. South Africans lose millions of rands each year to such schemes, which are often disguised as legitimate operations. The public is therefore advised to remain vigilant and to look out for certain tell-tale warning signs when approached with seemingly attractive investment opportunities. These red flags include:

- Unrealistic or exaggerated returns
- Offers made on social media platforms
- Requirements to pay for services upfront
- Requirements to pay more money to have your investments returned
- Requirements to pay for training
- Claims that you must act and pay urgently i.e. creating a sense of urgency
- Vague information about the investment product.

Members of the public may use one of the following methods to confirm whether a service provider or individual is authorised by the FSCA to act as a financial services provider (FSP), including to verify their FSP number. To confirm whether a person or institution is authorised, contact the FSCA on the toll-free number 0800 110 443 or visit https://www.fsca.co.za/Fais/Search_FSP.htm. Suspicious activities can be reported via the Ethics and Fraud Hotline at 0800 313 626, by email at fsca@behonest.co.za , or online at www.behonest.co.za.

ENDS

Enquiries: Financial Sector Conduct Authority
Email address: communications@fsca.co.za
Telephone: 0800 203 722