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Entertainment Brokers - Book with us

**EO NOTICE** | For our clients, artists, speakers & managers | November 2026 | Ref: EO 2610131

# Too good to be true? How to spot a fake booking before it costs you

*Fake clients, fake agents and fake "management" accounts are a growing headache in our industry – and a little know-how goes a long way.*

At Entertainment Online (EO) we connect corporate event bookers with South Africa's best artists and speakers every week, and nearly all of those enquiries are exactly what they seem. Every now and then, though, someone tries to use the excitement of a big booking to get money or personal information. We recently dealt with one of these attempts ourselves (EO reference **EO 2610131**), so we are sharing what happened, what others in the industry have experienced, and the simple checks that keep everyone safe.

## What happened: our case (EO 2610131)

In October 2026 we received an unsolicited email from **the person using the name Colin Kingsford and the email address ckingsford@abhl.co.za**, asking for a keynote speaker for a very large event with a "government, diplomatic and intergovernmental" audience.

### Why we concluded it was fraud:

- **Unsolicited and unusually large:** a first-time contact asking for a high-profile, high-security event.
- **Rushed acceptance, no payment:** the person accepted terms online very quickly, but no payment ever followed.
- **Pressure for the speaker's ID:** repeated demands for a signed ID copy, said to be needed for "DIRCO" and "SAPS" security clearance.
- **Reluctance to give company details:** a physical address was only provided after repeated requests, and the email domain has no working website.
- **A phone number that does not exist:** our attorneys reported that the number provided does not exist.
- **Refusal to pay:** when payment fell due, the person refused to pay and blamed our verification protocols.

The domain abhl.co.za may belong to, or imitate, a legitimate business; we make no allegation against any real company, and the name "Colin Kingsford" is believed to be false.

**The outcome:** our checks picked up these warning signs, no money changed hands and the booking was never confirmed.

**Reported to SAPS:** EO has proceeded to open a case with the South African Police Service. If you were also contacted by this person and need the case number, email action@entertainment-online.co.za.

## It's not just us

South African artists and their teams have spoken out publicly about similar schemes:

- **Letoya Makhene:** as reported by The South African on 22 September 2022 (citing Sunday World), people posing as organisers of a high-profile birthday party agreed a R30 000 fee and promised payment, then persuaded her team to pay R8 000 to a "travel agency" before becoming unreachable. She opened a fraud case.[1]
- **Nkosazana Daughter:** The South African reported on 29 December 2024 that someone masquerading as her manager and booking agent was sending invoices to promoters after her booking number was hacked; her team urged promoters to pay only into the official company account.[2]
- **Kelvin Momo:** TimesLIVE reported on 28 May 2025 that he warned promoters about people falsely claiming to represent him for bookings, after a scammer accepted a gig on his behalf, and named his official booking agency.[3]
- **Fake conferences:** IT-Online reported on 17 June 2025 that law firm Bowmans warned of fraudulent "professional conference" invitations naming high-profile speakers who confirmed they had not consented to speak; the venue confirmed no such event was scheduled.[4]
- **Naledi Aphiwe:** The South African reported on 20 March 2026 that her official booking number was hacked and an impersonator had misled a promoter into arrangements for an illegitimate booking; she offered a R10 000 reward.[5]

## 🚩 RED FLAGS: pause and check if you notice any of these

- ✗ **Unsolicited and unusually big:** a prestigious, high-budget event from someone you have never dealt with.
- ✗ **Early pressure for IDs or passports,** bank details or signed documents before any deposit is paid.
- ✗ **"Government", "diplomatic" or "security clearance" claims** used to rush you into sharing personal information.
- ✗ **Unverifiable company:** no working website, a free email or lookalike domain, no registration details.
- ✗ **Contact details that don't hold up:** dead numbers, addresses that can't be found, no named finance contact.
- ✗ **Urgency:** a quote "accepted" almost instantly, tight deadlines and pressure – but no actual payment.
- ✗ **Avoids verification:** won't do a video call, pay a deposit or let you speak to anyone else at the company.
- ✗ **Money flowing the wrong way:** you are asked to pay for travel, "admin", commission or a "clearance fee" first.
- ✗ **Payment "proof" instead of payment:** screenshots or PDFs of transfers that never clear.
- ✗ **Changed details:** new banking details or booking numbers sent by email or WhatsApp.

*One flag on its own isn't proof of fraud – but two or three together are a good reason to stop and verify.*

## How EO protects you

Whether you are booking talent or you are the talent, these are the checks we follow:

- **We verify new clients.** Company registration, a working company website and email domain, a physical address and a named contact we can call back on an independently found number.
- **Deposit first, confirmation second.** A booking is only confirmed once the deposit reflects as cleared funds – never on a screenshot or "proof of payment".
- **Artist IDs stay protected.** ID and passport copies are personal information under POPIA. We only share them once a client is verified and there is a genuine, lawful need – and then only the minimum required.
- **Our banking details don't change by message.** If you ever receive "new" EO banking details, confirm with us using the contact details on our website before paying.
- **We record and report.** Suspicious contacts are documented and reported to the right authorities, and we let affected artists know quickly.

## What you can do

**Event bookers:** book through EO's official channels below, confirm our banking details by email or WhatsApp message before paying, and be wary of anyone "from EO" using different contact details.

**Artists, speakers & managers:** don't send ID or passport copies to anyone you can't verify – if a client asks you directly, refer them to us. When you do share a copy, mark it with its purpose and date (e.g. "For EO booking verification only – Nov 2026"). Publish your official booking contacts on your verified social pages.

**If your ID may have been exposed:** apply for free SAFPS Protective Registration (details below). According to SAFPS, it alerts SAFPS members to take extra care when confirming your identity.

**Seen something suspicious?** Let us know – it helps us warn others in the industry.

## Where to get official help

### SAFPS Protective Registration – free

Email **protection@safps.org.za** to apply, or apply online via the SAFPS Protective Registration page. Call 011 867 2234. As stated on the SAFPS website (accessed 13 Nov 2026), SAFPS never charges for its consumer services and does not contact people via WhatsApp.

### Information Regulator (POPIA)

If personal information has been misused or compromised, lodge a complaint via the eServices portal – see the Information Regulator complaints page (enquiries@inforegulator.org.za, 010 023 5200).

### South African Police Service (SAPS)

Report fraud at your nearest police station and get a case number. Cyber fraud and cyber forgery are offences under sections 8 and 9 of the Cybercrimes Act 19 of 2020 (gov.za). To share information anonymously, call SAPS Crime Stop on 08600 10111; in an emergency call 10111.

### Yima and SABRIC

Yima, SAFPS's free scam toolbox, lets you report a scam and scan a website (hotline 083 123 7226). SABRIC lists bank fraud hotlines and scam guidance.

## Not sure about an enquiry? Ask us before you share or pay.

**Website:** entertainment-online.co.za **Email:** action@entertainment-online.co.za
**WhatsApp:** +27 71 484 8382 (WhatsApp messages only)
**SAPS case-number requests (EO 2610131):** action@entertainment-online.co.za

*Jean-Pierre Murray-Kline, Entertainment Online (Pty) Ltd – yours in entertainment.*

## Sources


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2. The South African, "'My bookings have been hacked': Nkosazana Daughter scammed", 29 Dec 2024. https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/celeb-news/local-celebs/nkosazana-daughter-booking-scam/
3. TimesLIVE, "Amapiano star Kelvin Momo warns event promoters about scam", 28 May 2025. https://www.timeslive.co.za/tshisa-live/tshisa-live/2025-05-28-amapiano-star-kelvin-momo-warns-event-promoters-about-scam/
4. IT-Online, "Fraud warning about fake events", 17 Jun 2025. https://it-online.co.za/2025/06/17/fraud-warning-about-fake-events/
5. The South African, "Naledi Aphiwe warns fans after booking number hacked", 20 Mar 2026. https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/celeb-news/local-celebs/naledi-aphiwe-warns-fans-after-booking-number-hacked/

**Official resources:**

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- SAFPS, "Our Services (consumer services – "We will never")", accessed 13 Nov 2026. https://www.safps.org.za/Home/OurServices
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- Yima (SAFPS), "Stop. Think. Don't get scammed!", accessed 13 Nov 2026. https://www.yima.org.za/
- SABRIC, "How to Stay Safe", accessed 13 Nov 2026. https://www.sabric.co.za/how-to-stay-safe/



*The speaker in the EO case is not identified, in line with POPIA. This notice is general information, not legal advice. © Entertainment Online (Pty) Ltd.*

*The author of this document has attempted to ensure that all details and facts are accurate. Should you find any errors, please notify Entertainment-Online.co.za via action@entertainment-online.co.za so that we can update it.*