

Three men sought for impersonating police officers



Police are investigating following a series of incidents where three men have impersonated police officers.

There have been six incidents reported to police, with one occurring on Friday, February 3, another on Saturday, February 11, and an additional four taking place on Monday, February 13.

In all cases they have targeted tourists with a view to extracting money from the victim, with two incidents culminating in the theft of money from visitors.

The first incident happened at around 1.20pm on Friday, February 3, in the Grassmarket. A Chilean man was approached by a man who asked him to take his photograph in King's Stables Road. Both men were then approached by two male suspects claiming to be police officers who demanded to search them.

After this, the two suspects got into a silver or grey Seat hatchback and drove away. The other male who was also searched walked into the Grassmarket and was lost to sight. It was later discovered that a three figure sum of money had been stolen from the Chilean man.

The second incident happened around 5.30pm on Monday, February 13, in Market Street. Two Chinese tourists were approached by two men who showed them a form of ID and stated that they were undercover police officers. They asked to search the tourist and subsequently stole a four figure sum of cash.

There have been several descriptions given to police, however

in all cases they are described as men of Southern European origin who operate in groups of either two or three.

They also deliberately target people who look like foreign national tourists and operate in tourist areas.

The other incidents have occurred in Chambers Street, Castle Street, and in the Calton Hill area.

Police Sergeant Mark Hamilton of West End Police Station said: "These men are purposely targeting tourists who are visiting the City Centre in a bid to steal money from them.

"Impersonating a police officer is not only inappropriate, it is illegal. We would advise that if you are stopped by someone claiming to be a Police Scotland officer, request their collar number and ask to see a warrant card.

"All our officers are happy to provide this information to the public and it should be offered readily.

"I would ask that anyone with information regarding these incidents contact us immediately, and would also urge those visiting the city to be aware of this activity and report any suspicions to police."

Those with information can contact Police Scotland on 101 or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.