Over £3 Million of Premium Bonds Prizes Remain Unclaimed from Overseas Customers

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- **Over £3 million of Premium Bonds prizes from overseas customers remain unclaimed.**
- **The largest unclaimed prize is £100,000.**
- **Some overseas customers can avoid unclaimed prizes by registering for NS&I's international payments service (IPS) to have their prizes paid directly into their international bank accounts.**

Over three million pounds of Premium Bonds prizes –including one for £100,000 – remain unclaimed from NS&I customers based overseas.

Premium Bonds are the UK's most popular form of savings provided by National Savings and Investments (NS&I).

NS&I has almost 850,000 customers based overseas with almost £750 million Premium Bonds to their names. Of these, almost 30,000 have been flagged as undeliverable to the address they provided. Currently a total of 63,604 prizes remain unclaimed overseas with the total prize value worth £3,146,625.

In order to prevent this pot growing NS&I would like customers to become more interactive by registering for the online and telephone service and/or receiving their Premium Bonds prizes directly into their current account. At present only 25% of overseas Premium Bonds held have their associated prizes paid directly into their current account

For data protection reasons only countries where there are over 100,000 Premium Bonds customers can be identified to protect the winners' anonymity. NS&I is appealing to Premium Bonds holders world-wide to check their Bonds and come forward to claim these prizes.

The largest unclaimed overseas Premium Bonds prize belongs to a female with a balance of just £6. In February 2007 one of her Bonds with the number 5ET395766 scooped £100,000. To date this prize remains uncollected.

There is no time limit for claiming prizes and each unclaimed prize is held until the rightful winner can be tracked down. The oldest unclaimed prize dates back to August 1960 where a male has a prize to the sum of £25 waiting to be claimed.

Premium Bonds prizes may go unclaimed as a result of NS&I not being informed of changes to a customer's personal circumstances, such as if a customer has moved outside of the UK and not notified NS&I of the change in their address or if Premium Bonds were bought for them as a child and they have subsequently lost track of them. It is important therefore, that customers keep NS&I up to date if anything changes.

Traditionally, prizes have been distributed in the post by warrant. However for customers overseas, the cost of banking the warrant can be quite expensive. But now customers living abroad can reduce the chances of their prizes becoming unclaimed by registering for NS&I's international payments service (IPS) (www.nsandi.com/ips) to have Premium Bond prizes paid directly into their international bank account.

In addition the service allows users to:

- Conveniently withdraw money from selected NS&I accounts (Direct Saver, Direct ISA, Income Bonds (including monthly income) and Premium Bonds including prizes) and send the payment directly to international bank accounts in their name (in selected countries*) without going through multiple financial providers and with a brand they can trust.
- Competitive exchange rates and no fees charged by NS&I.
- Customers can register as many international accounts as they want, provided they are in their name.

Jill Waters, NS&I's Assistant Director, Retail Experience, said: "It is likely that the winner of the £100,000 prize is unaware or she has forgotten that she has Premium Bonds – the lucky winner has just £6 invested. It can be a case of out-of-sight, out-of-mind for customers living abroad so we want to make it

as easy as possible for these customers and indeed those at home to claim their prizes in an easy and secure way.

"By customers using our international payments service they can claim their prize while abroad and have the money paid to their preferred bank accounts without any fees and reducing the risk of any future Premium Bonds wins going unclaimed.

"We often find that prizes become unclaimed as a result of people moving house, or forgetting that Bonds have been bought for them as a child, or executors are unaware the Bonds are held when someone dies."

Ways for customers to check if they have a prize owing to them:

- **Online at nsandi.com**

The Premium Bonds prize checker is on the home page of the NS&I website at nsandi.com – customers simply need to enter their Premium Bonds holder's number into the search facility.

- **In writing to NS&I**

Alternatively people can write to NS&I, quoting their name and address, any former names and addresses, date of birth and, if known, their Premium Bonds holder's number.

Premium Bonds
National Savings and Investments
Glasgow
G58 1SB
UK

Notes to Editors:

Further information about Premium Bonds can be found here. www.nsandi.com/savings-premium-bonds.

1. For data protection reasons the countries identified are where there are over 100,000 Premium Bonds customers, this is to protect the winners' anonymity.
2. For this campaign NS&I has classified unclaimed Premium Bonds prizes as those that have not been claimed for 18 months after the prize draw in which they were won. When reporting total unclaimed assets held by NS&I (including accounts, Certificates, Bonds, unclaimed Premium Bonds prizes and other products), NS&I defines unclaimed holdings as those with no customer contact for a period of 15 years or more.
3. Pictures of ERNIE, Agent Million and buying Premium Bonds online are available in high-resolution jpeg format from the NS&I media team.
4. NS&I has a number of spokespeople available for interviews and our experienced media team is available via our ISDN line: 020 7602 4522.

-ENDS-

Company Contact:

Poppies Fish & Chips

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