A WARNING ABOUT PHISHING EMAIL ATTACKS PURPORTING TO BE FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MUSCAT

WHAT IS PHISHING: Phishing is the fraudulent attempt to obtain sensitive information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details by disguising oneself as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication such as an email or an instant message. Such electronic communication often attempts to lure individuals to enter sensitive information at a fake website which is crafted to match the look and feel of a legitimate site.

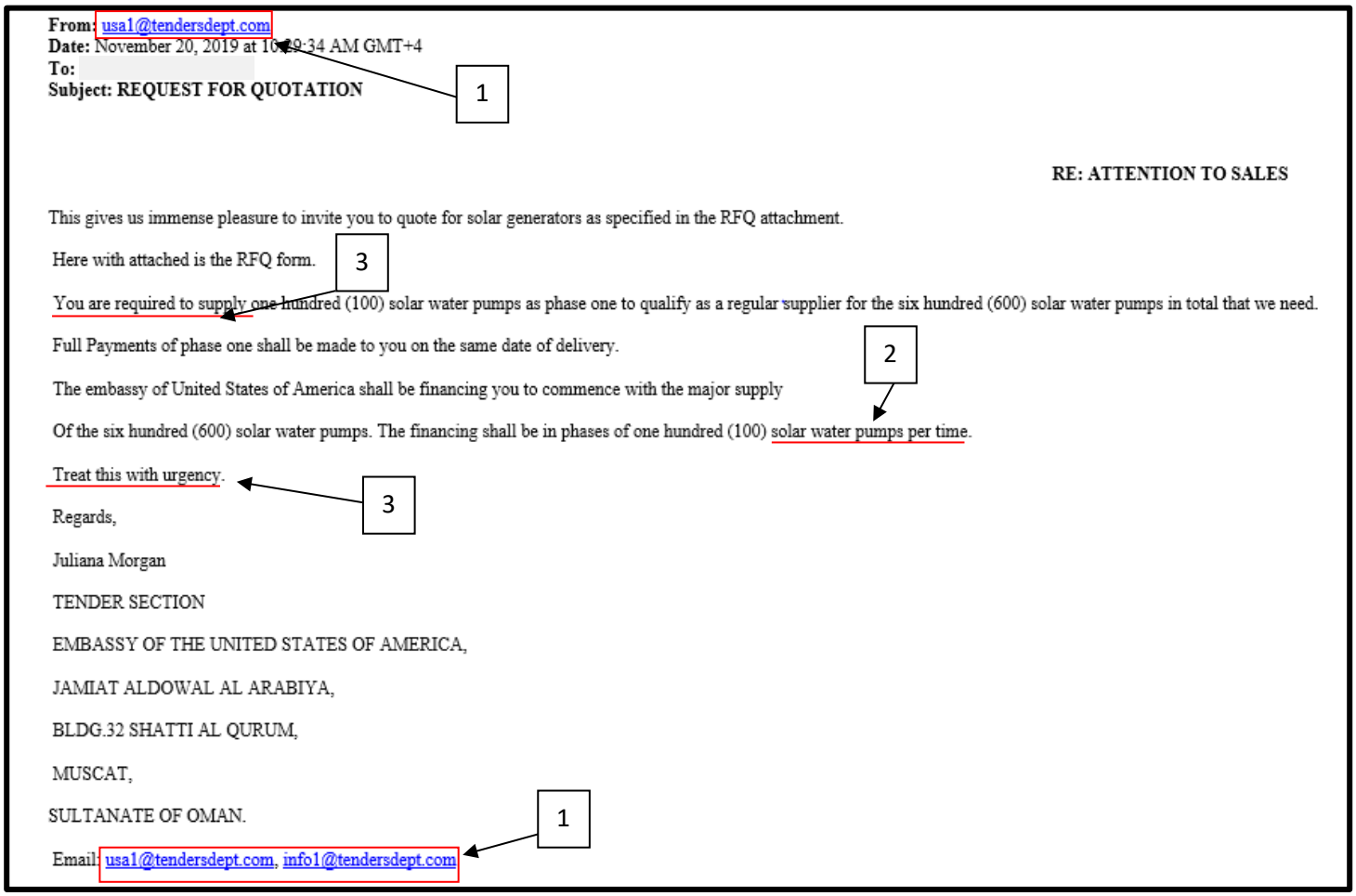
COMMUNICATIONS PURPORTING TO BE FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MUSCAT: As of recent, many people receive communications akin to the email below. These communications purport to originate from the U.S. Embassy in Muscat but in fact constitute an attempt at phishing by unknown parties. The links they contain lead to third-party websites.

WHAT TO DO IF RECEIVING A PHISHING COMMUNICATION: If you receive such a message, we advise you to delete it. Under no circumstances should you click the links in these emails, because doing so may spread malware, and thereby harm your computer or access private information. Clicking the links will also inform the sender that your email account is active, which will make it a target for more spam and phishing attacks. Please do not forward these messages to the Embassy, because we are already aware of this problem and cannot do anything about it.

WARNING SIGNS AND THINGS TO LOOK FOR TO IDENTIFY PHISHING ATTEMPTS

1. **Make sure the email domain is legitimate:** Any correspondence from the U.S. Embassy will be from a properly formatted Department of State email address ending in "@state.gov."
2. **Look for grammar and spelling mistakes:** Phishing scams often contain subtle grammatical and spelling mistakes.
3. **Sense of urgency:** A sense of urgency should create apprehension. Phishing emails will often highlight urgency in their email to pressure the recipient into acting quickly without taking time to consider the legitimacy of the request.

Sample phishing email purporting to be from the U.S. Embassy in Muscat:



From: usa1@tendersdept.com
Date: November 20, 2019 at 10:49:34 AM GMT+4
To:
Subject: REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

1

RE: ATTENTION TO SALES

This gives us immense pleasure to invite you to quote for solar generators as specified in the RFQ attachment.

Here with attached is the RFQ form.

3

You are required to supply one hundred (100) solar water pumps as phase one to qualify as a regular supplier for the six hundred (600) solar water pumps in total that we need.

Full Payments of phase one shall be made to you on the same date of delivery.

2

The embassy of United States of America shall be financing you to commence with the major supply

Of the six hundred (600) solar water pumps. The financing shall be in phases of one hundred (100) solar water pumps per time.

Treat this with urgency.

3

Regards,

Juliana Morgan

TENDER SECTION

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

JAMIAT ALDOWAL AL ARABIYA,

BLDG.32 SHATTI AL QURUM,

MUSCAT,

SULTANATE OF OMAN.

1

Email: usa1@tendersdept.com, info1@tendersdept.com