

## Mobile Network Scams Data 2023

Authors: National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB)

Document Owner: Director, NFIB

Date:

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### Introduction

An FOI request was received by the NFIB regarding scam reports where mobile phone operators are pursuing victims for debts in 2023. The below results provide the following data:

- The volume of crime reports relating to the below specified mobile phone operators reported to Action Fraud between 1st January and 31st December 2023 broken down by month.
- The volume of crime reports that were then disseminated to law enforcement agencies between 1st January and 14th August 2023.

### Methodology

Statistics were derived from analysis of Action Fraud crime reports and all classified Home Office Crime Codes. An explanation of each Home Office Crime Code can be found online.<sup>1</sup>

A series of keywords were then searched against the reports to identify instances where 'mobile' and 'phone' had been referred to. This data set was further filtered to identify instances where 'O2', 'EE', and 'Vodafone' has been referred to.

<sup>1</sup> [Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime](#)

## Results

### Reporting Volume

The below table provides the volume of crime reports relating to the specified mobile network operators reported to Action Fraud between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 broken down by month.

Month	Reporting Volume
Jan	486
Feb	448
Mar	559
Apr	466
May	526
Jun	570
Jul	566
Aug	706
Sep	646
Oct	736
Nov	650
Dec	540
Total	6,899

Of the above cases, 260 cases were disseminated to law enforcement agencies between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

## **Caveats**

- Action Fraud is a self-reporting tool; information provided within Action Fraud reports may not have been verified by law enforcement or interrogated for authenticity or accuracy and may be subject to discrepancies.
- There is no formal agreement with Scotland to report to Action Fraud and Action Fraud data is not a full representation of the level of fraud in Scotland. Police Scotland remain responsible for the gathering and enforcement of fraudulent activity affecting Scottish victims.
- Underreporting to Action Fraud may affect the extent and loss, as it may not be a true value of the fraud that is occurring nationally. Action Fraud is based on victim reporting and reports have not been verified.
- The Action Fraud reporting system is a live reporting system. Reports can be updated by the reporting person or other administrators as necessary; loss amounts, details and fraud classifications can change on occasion throughout the life of a report. For consistency, and to enable an accurate temporal dataset for reporting volumes, the original version of a report has been extracted from the system for use in this dataset. This dataset is accurate as of the time it was extracted.
- The inclusion of the relevant reports is reliant on the information provided in the 'Additional Information' section of the report provided by the reporting person. Only those containing the specific search terms identified above within the body of the report are included; any reports that contain misspellings or differing formats of the defined keywords will not have been captured.
- Whilst defined keywords have been used to identify reports relating to mobile phone operators, it is possible that the resulting data set from this methodology may include some reports that do not relate directly to this. If fraud reports have been recorded using other terminology or spelling than the defined search terms used, then it is possible that some reports relating to this fraud may not have been captured.
- Reports have been captured by date of initial reporting to Action Fraud. This date is consistently used across NFIB data analysis, as it is a consistently populated data field, and is automatically generated by the system. Any other date fields are liable to inaccurate data entry, or of not being populated at all by the reporting person.