



Suppliers & Storage Facilities – Distribution Fraud

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STORAGE FACILITIES – DISTRIBUTION FRAUD

The information contained within this alert is based on the results of research carried out by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). One of the key objectives of sharing fraud data between the NFIB, police forces and the public is to prevent and detect fraud.

ALERT CONTENT

University & Hospital Impersonation Fraud/Short Firm Fraud

The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) has noted a continuing issue regarding Universities and Hospitals being impersonated to enable fraudsters to obtain goods on a credit basis.

Method

A number of wholesale businesses are initially contacted by email by the fraudster purporting to be from a University or Hospital requesting goods in mass quantity. The fraudster will ask for the items to be provided on a 30 day credit basis. If this is approved, the order is made and the items are subsequently delivered to various locations (often nowhere near the institutions impersonated), such as unsuspecting storage facilities, before being moved on. The fraudsters have been known to contact the storage facilities and change the date of the booking on numerous occasions whilst they try and negotiate the delivery date with the suppliers.

It is likely that the storage facilities provider will subsequently fall victim to the short-firm fraud element as the fraudsters do not settle the rental fees.

Things to look out for:

- a. Storage facilities which have been rented out where the client has stated that something is to be delivered, especially where the delivery date keeps changing.
- b. Where the client enquires as to whether the storage facility will re-address and forward the package/s on. Some delivery addresses have stated that they have been provided with courier labels (for companies such as DHL / DLD), and asked to forward the packages overseas to countries such as Dubai, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria.
- c. Any reference to Universities or Hospitals on items being stored or delivered.

PROTECTION / PREVENTION ADVICE

Requested actions for Officer:

- Can officers please visit the storage facilities in their neighbourhoods to inform them of this fraud type, what to look out for, enquire whether they have been victims and encourage them to report, where relevant, to Action Fraud.
- Inform the storage facilities of the following website to check the telephone number given in respect of suspicious storage requests: <http://www.telecom-tariffs.co.uk/codelook.htm>. This website can indicate whether the origin of the telephone call is in the UK or if it could potentially be a virtual number originating from overseas i.e. Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP).
- In your Know Your Customer (KYC) process, consider checking that the phone number and web domain match that of the genuine company.

FEEDBACK

The NFIB needs feedback from our readers to evaluate the quality of our products and to inform our priorities. Please would you complete the following NFIB feedback survey through: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FeedbackSDU>. This should take you no more than 2 minutes to complete. If you have other feedback or additional information that you would prefer to provide by email please send to NFIBfeedback@cityoflondon.pnn.police.uk.

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