

## Bogus HMRC Phishing Email Scam

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has stated that the letters/emails are headed 'This is not Junk Mail – Please Take Action' and states that the householders address is registered with HMRC as having a 'gambling machine games operator' present at the address. The scammers' then state that owed 'games duty' has not been paid and threatens that enforcement officers could be sent out to the address if there is no response to the letter.

These phishing letters/emails are designed to trick the public into handing over their bank account information and personal details. They can seem genuine, but on closer inspection provide clues to their falsity.

### Top Tips:

- Stay vigilant in the fight against fraudsters and always be wary of unsolicited communication from any source.
- Recognise the signs – genuine organisations, such as banks and HMRC, will never contact you out of the blue to ask for your PIN, password or bank details. You'll never get an email, text message or phone call from HMRC which: tells you about a tax rebate or penalty, or asks for your personal or payment information immediately.
- Stay safe – do not give out private information, reply to text messages, download attachments or click on links in emails you weren't expecting.



### If You Are Affected

If you fall victim to any scam, report to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or <http://www.actionfraud.police.uk>

If you would like support as a result of becoming a victim of any crime, contact [Victim Support](#) on 01926 682 693.

## Apple eaves-dropping bug

A major bug has been discovered in iOS that lets a caller hear and see a person on the other end of a group FaceTime call before the call has been answered. This security issue allows you to take a digital peek into another person's life — completely without their knowledge.

The bug is simple to exploit as you call someone on FaceTime before they answer, swipe up and add yourself to the call. From this, you can hear through the person's phone, all without them answering the call.

The flaw appears to occur when both users are running version 12.1 of Apple's mobile operating system, or newer. The technique involves using the software's group chat function. The eavesdropping ends when the call is cut after too many rings.



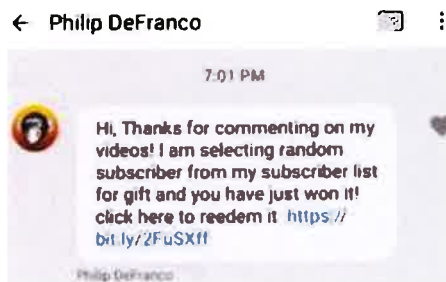
### Top Tips

- If you have iOS 12.1 or newer, ensure you disable FaceTime on all your devices until Apple's software updates have been released.

## YouTube comment scam

The scam messages sent via YouTube's message/comment system asked recipients to click a link to receive a prize.

The names, icons and imagery used by the YouTubers, such as Philip DeFranco, were prominent in the messages to make them look authentic. YouTube said it was looking into ways to spot and stop the impersonation scams. The text in every message is the same, and suggests that a subscriber was picked at random to get a gift.



### Top Tips:

- Avoid clicking on any links in the message that appear to be from the YouTuber. If they do have a giveaway on their video, the information will most likely be found in the description.
- A YouTuber's comment on their own video will always be highlighted and may have a verification tick next to their name if they are a verified creator. Look out for this to make sure the comment is authentic.
- Report the comment by clicking the three dots next to the comment and click 'report spam or abuse'.

### MONTHS TOP TIPS:

- Avoid public Wi-Fi for any shopping, banking or entering of any personal information.
- Do not click on links in emails – go directly to the website the email is claiming to be from to verify any details or claim any offer.
- Look for https and either an unbroken padlock, key or the word Secure within the address bar when entering personal details online.
- Strong and unique passwords are key, try using three random words, mixed with CAPITALS, numb3r5 and punc+ua+!on to make your password more secure.

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## Instagram to implement sensitivity screenings

Instagram will introduce "sensitivity screens" to hide images of self-harm, in an attempt to protect young people who use the site, the app's head, Adam Mosseri, has announced.

The Facebook-owned app already bans posts that promote or encourage suicide or self-harm, Mosseri said, but faces challenges in finding those posts to take them down, as well as ensuring that users can still share imagery related to those topics in ways that allow them to express themselves, but do not amount to incitement.

That includes "sensitivity screens" for images of self-harm, which blur the image behind them until the user explicitly indicates they want to view the graphic content. It also means that company has blocked images of cutting from showing up in search, hashtags or account recommendations. Mosseri says the changes "will make it more difficult for people to see" those images.

Mosseri's promise comes a week after Facebook was issued with an ultimatum by the health secretary Matt Hancock get better at protecting children on Instagram and Facebook's main app, or face the force of the law.



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