



Public Service Announcement

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION



February 13, 2014

CALLBACK SCHEME USED IN INTERNATIONAL REVENUE SHARE FRAUD

Telephone companies in the United States are seeing missed calls used to enable International Revenue Share Fraud (IRSF). Fraudsters are using call generators with automated spoofing capabilities to place calls to a large volume of US cell phone numbers. The calls typically ring once. The number displayed on the recipient's caller ID is a high cost international number, usually located in the Caribbean. The recipient calls the number back and is greeted with a message designed to keep them on the line, such as "Hello, you have reached the operator, please hold." The longer the caller stays on the line, the more revenue fraudsters generate.

Recipients do not realize they are calling an international number and that they will be billed for an international call. Businesses are also victims because recipients often use their work telephone to make the return call.

Telephone companies in the United States are charged when a return call is made because they are required to pay a fee to transfer calls to foreign countries. The payment is then shared with the fraudster who spoofed the calls. This is referred to as IRSF.

Area codes used in the spoofed numbers are from Anguilla, Antigua, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. These countries' numbers are part of the North American Numbering Plan and do not require 011 to be dialed as with other international calls.

Recipients should not answer calls from numbers they do not recognize or initiate a return call. Recipients will not be charged for receiving the calls, however.

Companies that do not conduct business with companies in the above-mentioned countries may want to consider blocking these area codes to avoid this type of charge.

For more information regarding online scams visit our Press Room page for the most current Public Service Announcements.

<https://www.ic3.gov/media/default.aspx>