



# Public Service Announcement

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION



**June 21, 2010**

## **FRAUDULENT TELEPHONE CALLS ALLOWING FRAUDSTERS ACCESS TO CONSUMER FINANCIAL AND BROKERAGE ACCOUNTS**

The FBI Newark Division released a warning to consumers concerning a new scheme using telecommunications denial-of-service (TDoS) attacks.

The FBI determined fraudsters compromised victim accounts and contacted financial institutions to change the victim profile information (i.e. email addresses, telephone numbers and bank account numbers).

The TDoS attacks used automated dialing programs and multiple accounts to overwhelm victims' cell phones and land lines with thousands of calls. When victims answered the calls they heard dead air (nothing on the other end), an innocuous recorded message, advertisement, or a telephone sex menu. Calls were typically short in duration but so numerous that victims changed their phone numbers to terminate the attack.

These TDoS attacks were used as a diversion to prevent financial and brokerage institutions from verifying victim account changes and transactions. Fraudsters were afforded adequate time to transfer funds from victim brokerage and financial online accounts.

Protection from TDoS attacks and other types of fraud requires consumers to be vigilant and proactive. In Newark's Public Service Announcement (PSA), they recommend consumers protect themselves by:

- Implement security measures for all financial accounts by placing fraud alerts with the major credit bureaus if you believe they were targeted by a TDoS attack or other forms of fraud.
- Use strong passwords for all financial accounts and change them regularly.
- Obtain and review your annual credit report for fraudulent activity.

If you were a target of a TDoS attack, immediately contact your financial institutions, notify your telephone provider, and promptly report it to the IC3 website at: [www.IC3.gov](http://www.IC3.gov). The IC3 complaint database links complaints to assist in referrals to the appropriate law enforcement agency for case consideration. The complaint information is also used to identify emerging trends and patterns.

To learn more about the FBI's role in addressing these attacks please refer to the FBI Newark Division, PSA dated May 11, 2010, located at:

<http://newark.fbi.gov/press.htm>.