



NEWS RELEASE

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Who's that calling?

Jersey's telecom regulator is taking action to deal with the increasing number of phone scams by fraudsters using bogus phone numbers.

The Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority (the Authority) plans to review the local provision of Calling Line Identity (CLI) facilities. The move responds to a growing potential for fraudsters to trick victims into handing over personal information using advanced telecoms technology.

CLI facilities allow someone receiving a call to see the number of a person or organisation calling them. They can then decide whether to answer the call or not, or to only answer calls from recognised numbers.

Recent developments in telecoms technology make it easier for fraudsters to swap the telephone number associated with a call for one recognised by the receiving person. They may make it appear the call is coming from your bank, for example, or a government department, and to persuade you to provide personal information, such as account or payment details.

Following a lead by UK regulator Ofcom, the Authority intends making it more difficult for this number swapping or 'spoofing' to take place.

Tim Ringsdore, JCRA CEO says, "One key goal of the Authority is safeguarding consumers – this project firmly aligns with that. Our published prioritisation principles also consider the direct effect of an initiative on consumer or citizen welfare.

"While this review won't eliminate telephone-based fraud, it's an important step towards building in some of the regulatory protections needed to limit the impact on vulnerable islanders."

The planned CLI review begins in August 2021 with a 'Call for Information', through which the Authority sets out its intentions and invites comments from interested parties and the wider public. Taking responses received into account, the project may lead to changes to local telecoms licences and the publication of operator guidelines.

The public consultations will include reaching out to local telephone operators and consumer protection organisations such as the Jersey Fraud Prevention Forum.

"We welcome plans for a local CLI review," commented Anne King, Operations Director at the Jersey Office of the Information Commissioner and Fraud Prevention Forum member. "Telephone-based fraud is one of the scams used to gain access to the personal information of islanders and can be an unsettling and upsetting experience to anyone receiving the calls.

"While recognising it's very difficult to stop these calls altogether, the Fraud Prevention Forum supports any steps that can be taken to limit this malicious activity."

Anyone interested in finding out more about the planned CLI review or commenting through its 'Call for Information' can visit the Authority's website at <https://www.jcra.je>

Ends

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About The Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority:

The JCRA was established under the Competition Regulatory Authority (Jersey) Law, 2001. It is responsible for administering and enforcing the Competition (Jersey) Law 2005 and also regulates the telecoms and postal sectors and the Ports of Jersey.

The JCRA strives to ensure that the markets work well for the benefit of all stakeholders, including Government, business, citizens and consumers facilitating best value, choice and access to high quality services. For more information visit www.jcra.je

About the Jersey Fraud Prevention Forum

The Jersey Fraud Prevention Forum brings together a number of local agencies who seek to protect the Island's public from investment frauds and scams.

The aim is to promote and raise awareness about the growing number of scammers targeting Jersey, in particular among the elderly and vulnerable in the community.

For more information visit www.fraudprevention.je