



NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE



NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE 1/25 (7 Jan 25)

(The Community Awareness Update provides general information to enable personnel to keep up-to-date with routine crime prevention and security awareness correspondence; it is not provided for mission-related items and does not replace the Emergency Messaging System.)

WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW 'FAMILY' MEMBERS; THE COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH, HOPEFULLY, INFORMATIVE AND USEFUL INFORMATION.

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SCAMS INTO 2025:

Expect even more sophisticated tactics being used by scammers as we move into 2025; five (5) scam trends to look out for:

AI-generated images: With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), some images starting to appear in scams are entirely unreal. Whether it's social media profiles peddling dodgy schemes, product listings on fake websites or scammers lurking on dating apps, fake images created from AI will be more widely used to make scams impersonating people or products harder to spot.

- **Tips to avoid these scams:**

- Look for unnatural details – scan images for small details such as lighting, hair and hands that look strange, and look out for any blurry parts of the image.
- If the image looks too perfect, it might be created by AI.
- Use a reverse image search tool, such as Google or TinEye, to check if the image has been posted anywhere else on the internet. If it hasn't, this could be a sign that it's created using AI, especially if it's of a well-known person. You can reverse image search on Google by selecting the image icon on the right of the search bar.

Voice cloning: This is when scammers use AI tools to clone your voice. They will then use your voice to call people you know impersonating you and asking for money. Fraudsters can get hold of your voice through calls and clips on social media. Ofcom has new rules coming into force on 29 January 2025 prohibiting overseas callers from spoofing UK mobile numbers. This means fraudsters won't be able to change the display number their call is coming from to look like it's coming from a UK number on a mobile phone. This could prompt scammers to hone in on voice cloning to make their scam calls more persuasive, and we've already started to see some instances of it.

- **Tips to avoid these scams:**

- If you receive an unexpected distressed call from a friend or relative that sounds suspicious, verify that it's actually them by contacting them using another trusted contact method.
- Make sure your social media profiles are private as fraudsters can record your voice from your video or audio content.
- Consider setting up a safe phrase with your family or close friends that you can say to verify if you're speaking to them.

Hacking: Hacking is a method for scammers to steal your personal data while spreading their scams further through hacked accounts. Fraudsters set traps to access your email and social media accounts through data breaches, details gleaned from phishing websites or malware downloaded to your devices. In 2025, we predict that personal data will continue to be a big commodity for scammers buying and selling details on the dark web. AI tools appear to be enabling scammers to find new ways of exploiting weaknesses in systems and launching cyberattacks at scale.

- **Tips to avoid your accounts being hacked:**

- Don't use the same password across different accounts, create strong passwords and use a reputable password manager.
- Download antivirus software on your devices.

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- Set up two-factor authentication (2FA) or two-step verification (2SV). This is when you provide a separate form of identification, such as a code being sent via text, when you log into an account.

Well-crafted communications: In 2023, we reported on how the rise of large language models such as ChatGPT were potentially being used by scammers to write phishing messages. The launch of more free tools such as these allows fraudsters to eliminate the classic scam sign of poor spelling and grammar, making dodgy emails, texts and websites much harder to detect.

- **Tips to avoid these scams:**

- Look at the email addresses and phone numbers dodgy messages come from. If you don't recognise them, they could be sent from scammers.
- Be wary of unexpected links in messages.
- Be suspicious of any message or website that asks for your personal or financial information.

Spear-phishing: We also reported on the increase of spear-phishing in 2024, a tactic where scammers create personalised scam messages after gathering enough information on you. Data breaches and information you've published on public social media accounts can provide a goldmine of information for scammers to dig into and build a picture about you. Then, they will send you a message containing your personal data – such as your name, address, date of birth or even where you work – making it seem much more convincing.

- **Tips to avoid these scams:**

- Keep your social media profiles private.
- Don't enter your personal details into websites you don't recognise.
- Check to see if your data has been leaked at haveibeenpwned.com.
- If you're the victim of a scam, call your bank immediately using the number on the back of your bank card and report it to Action Fraud, or call the police on 101 if you're in Scotland.

2025 - CHANGES FOR TRAVEL TO EUROPE AND US NEW DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

EUROPE - EU Entry/Exit System (EES) and European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS):

BLUF. 2025 will, finally, see the implementation of the new EU Entry/Exit System (EES) and European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) - final dates yet to be confirmed; EES will launch before ETIAS.

EU Entry/Exit Scheme (EES):

- The EU Entry/Exit system is a new electronic system that will replace the physical stamping of passports when you go through passport control when arriving in and departing from your destination. It will register all entries and exits to and from the participating European countries, which basically means it will register your movements every time you cross a border in or out of the EU/Schengen area.

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- Once the new system is live, when you go through passport control on your arrival to, and departure from your destination, as well as providing your passport you will also need to have a photo of your face taken, and your fingerprints scanned.

When will it apply?:

- The launch of EES had initially been planned for the end of 2024, however this has been delayed and the EU has yet to confirm the new date.

Who will it apply to?:

- It will apply to those travelling for a short stay, from what the EU call a 'third country', i.e. people who are not an EU citizen or a citizen of the Schengen area. So it will apply to most people travelling from the UK.
- A short stay refers to visits, holidays or business trips that have a duration of up to 90 days and are taken within a 180 day period. The vast majority of travel between the UK and Europe will be classed as a short stay.
- Irish passport holders are exempt from EES. If you are a British passport holder but have EU residency, you are also exempt from EES.
- People of all ages will need to go through the EES checks, however children under 12 will not need to provide fingerprints but they will need to have a facial scan taken.

Which countries will it apply to?

- When EES comes in, these are the countries that will be using it Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland. *(In Cyprus and Ireland, despite being countries of the European Union, passports are still stamped manually.)*

Travelling via the Port of Dover or international train (London St Pancras and Folkestone):

- In most cases, the EES checks will take place in Europe – when you arrive at your destination airport or port, and when you leave at the end of your trip. However, if you are departing via the Port of Dover or via international train from the UK (London St Pancras and Folkestone), then these checks will happen when going through the passport control in the UK, on your departure. This is because there is a dual border – both British and French borders – at these locations. However, you won't need to do these checks again when you arrive on the other side.

Travelling on a cruise:

- If you are travelling on a cruise and stopping at any of the European countries involved in EES, whether you need to go through the EES system will depend on your where your cruise starts and where the itinerary ends. If the cruise departure is from a UK port and returns to a UK port, you will not need to complete the EES registration. Passengers travelling on a cruise will not need to do EES entry or exit checks for EU day trips that are part their itinerary. If you are flying to a European country to pick up a cruise, you will complete the EES process at your arrival airport. If your cruise ends in an EU country, your exit information will be captured at the border check of the country you are flying home from.

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you want to do that, you will need to submit a form to show you give permission. More information will be available here – [Applying on behalf of others - European Union \(europa.eu\)](#)

What information do I need to provide?

- For each application you will need to provide:
 - Personal information including name(s), date and place of birth, sex, nationality, home address, email address and phone number(s);
Parents' first name(s);
 - Passport/travel document details;
 - Level of education and current occupation;
 - Details about your intended travel and stay in any of the countries requiring ETIAS;
 - Details about any past criminal convictions, past travels to war or conflict zones, and whether you have recently been the subject of an extradition.
- You should make sure that the details on your ETIAS match that of your passport, if they don't your ETIAS will not be valid and you will not be able to travel. If you are applying on behalf of someone else, then there may be additional information you need to provide.

Fake websites offering ETIAS:

- There are currently more than 60 unofficial websites offering ETIAS, despite the system not yet being live. Don't use an unofficial website: there's the risk that you will be overcharged, that you won't get an ETIAS and that your personal information could be stolen.
- The official ETIAS website is www.europa.eu/etias

UNITED STATES - NEW DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS COMING IN 2025:

BLUF. Significant changes are coming up in 2025 for those traveling both within the United States and internationally - from domestic flights requiring updated identification to new entry protocols for Europe and the UK, staying informed will be essential to ensure a smooth travel journey.

REAL ID for US Flights: Beginning 7 May 25, US travelers will need a REAL ID-compliant form of identification to board domestic flights or enter certain federal facilities. By enforcing this new requirement, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) aims to enhance security by mandating that all state-issued IDs meet federal standards. To obtain a REAL ID, individuals must visit their state's driver's licensing agency and provide documentation verifying their full legal name, date of birth, social security number, proof of address and lawful status. According to USA Today, REAL IDs are identifiable by a special seal, varying slightly by state, on the upper-right corner of the card. In lieu of a REAL ID, alternative TSA-approved forms of identification—such as passports, trusted traveler program cards (e.g., Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI) or Department of Defense ID - will also be accepted.

ETIAS for Europe Entry. As per above, travelers heading to Europe should also prepare for the launch of the ETIAS. This system will require US passport holders and citizens from visa-exempt countries to obtain travel authorization before visiting any Schengen Area country. The ETIAS authorization will allow for multiple entries for short stays (up to 90 days within a 180-day period) and remain valid for three years or until the traveler's passport expires, whichever comes first. Similar to the UK's ETA, the ETIAS aims to

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bolster security by pre-screening travelers before they arrive. Once the system is up and running, prospective visitors will be able to apply for ETIAS online, but will need to pay a fee of €7 (\$7.21) to do so. Once approved, the travel authorization will be electronically linked to the applicant's passport.

UPDATE ON 'HOLIDAY SEASON' DRINK/DRUG-RELATED DRIVING

- During the festive period, Cambs Police launched a crackdown on drink and drug driving. They made 86 arrests, slightly lower than the 91 recorded during Dec 23, but the yearly figure of drink and drug driving arrests was higher with more than 800 for 2024. Of the 86 arrests made in Cambs, 45 of the individuals involved have been charged and seven of them have been sentenced. Some of the drivers caught last month have lost their licenses after being caught over the limit or failing to provide a breath test. They have appeared in court and have been disqualified from driving for periods of time ranging between one to four years.
- However, it's not a 'seasonal' problem; the legal alcohol limit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for driving is 80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood or 35 micrograms of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath. In Scotland the limit is 50 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood or 22 micrograms of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath. There is no way to know how much you can drink and stay under the limit, since it can depend on your weight, age, metabolism, the amount of food you've eaten and other factors. It's impossible to get alcohol out of your system quickly, it always takes time. A shower, a cup of coffee or other ways of 'sobering up' may make you feel better but won't remove the alcohol from your system. If you've been out drinking, you may still be affected by alcohol the next day and could lose your licence if you drive and are still over the legal limit.
- Alcohol affects everyone differently and any amount can impair your ability to drive. The only safe option is to avoid alcohol completely if you're driving as even 'just one drink' could put you over the limit.
- If you're driving, don't drink any alcohol at all.

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WINTER YET TO ARRIVE 'DOWN SOUTH'...

If we are going to get snow 'down south', probably during Jan and Feb; and frosty morning will continue:

How many times will you see some of the following scenarios:

**Brrrrrrrrrr, it's
cold outside:**



Please take that little bit of extra time and clear your windscreen and side/rear windows before driving off..... but not by leaving your vehicle to warm up unattended whilst you go back into the warmth and finish off you morning cuppa.

How should you drive in snow and ice?

- Clear all snow and ice from the windscreen, windows and roof of the car before setting off.
- Don't use boiling water to de-ice windscreens - hot water can crack the glass, and the water will only freeze again on the screen, or on the ground where you are standing.
- Check your lights are clear of snow and are working.
- If you drive a manual vehicle, use second gear to pull away, lifting the clutch gently to avoid wheel spin. Stay in a higher gear for better control as you pick up speed.
- Many automatic cars have a "snow" or "winter" gearbox mode. Check your handbook for details.
- Maintain the right speed: too fast and you risk losing control, but driving too slowly means you might lose momentum when you need it.
- Brake, steer and accelerate as smoothly as possible, and drive so that you do not rely on your brakes to be able to stop.
- Remember stopping distances are up to 10 times greater in snow and ice.

STAY ALERT, STAY ALIVE:

The Counter Terrorism Policing message remains in that you should trust your instincts and report anything that doesn't feel right when you are out and about in the coming weeks.

Sadly, the threat from terrorism is a real one. Every year across the UK, Counter Terrorism Policing receives over 10,000 reports from the public and a fifth of those provide intelligence which is particularly useful to investigators. Since 2017, CTP, along with partners, have disrupted over 40 terrorist

Policing and security authorities encourage the public to trust their instincts and report anything that doesn't feel right to security or the police.

- You can help by sharing campaign messages for any events you are organising or supporting.

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- You can increase your awareness by taking the free online ACT Awareness e-learning training.

Promoting the awareness and vigilance is also a powerful way of using communications as an extra layer of protective security. By supporting the campaign and using [security-minded communications](#), you could help to deter hostile activity at major events.

We all have a role to play in keeping each other safe.

Wherever you are, whatever the situation....



**If you see something, say something.
Stay Alert, Stay Alive!**

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