

Media Factsheet

EMBARGOED TILL MCI COS 2020

MITIGATING SPOOF CALLS

Scam calls are prevalent around the world. More than S\$21million was reported to have been lost to impersonation scams in Singapore last year¹. Malicious actors making scam calls from overseas often mask their country code or impersonate (spooft) local numbers to mislead victims into believing that these calls are from legitimate sources such as government agencies. It can be difficult for individuals to detect if an incoming call uses a spoofed number.

The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) has been working with the Singapore Police Force and telecommunication operators to better protect the public from spoof calls. For instance, telecommunication operators block international calls that spoof numbers such as 999 and 995. This reduces the use of these numbers to scam unsuspecting call recipients. IMDA will require telecommunication operators to introduce a new measure to combat spoof calls by 15 Apr this year. The '+' sign prefix will be displayed on phone screens for all international incoming calls. Domestic calls will not display the '+' sign prefix. This measure will help consumers who are not expecting any overseas calls to be more vigilant and exercise greater care when answering calls showing a '+' prefix. For example:

E.g. 1: +6955 0221 (This is likely to be a spoofed call. For local numbers, there will not be a "+" prefix)

E.g. 2: + 4241 2345 (This is an overseas caller; be vigilant if you are not expecting an overseas call)

IMDA will continue to work with stakeholders to develop longer term measures such as telecommunication network-based solutions to address call spoofing.

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For media clarifications, please contact:

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¹ Source: Singapore Police Force Annual Crime Brief 2019, pg 12