



SOUTH WEST ROCU

Regional Organised Crime Unit

We are writing to inform you of an ongoing initiative led by UK police forces to raise awareness of **Courier Fraud**, specifically within the jewellery sector.

Courier Fraud involves criminals impersonating police officers, bank officials, or other trusted figures to deceive victims into believing their bank accounts have been compromised or that they must assist with a police investigation. Victims are then encouraged to withdraw money or purchase high-value items, which they are instructed to hand over to a courier under false assurances of reimbursement.

Our current focus is on increasing awareness among taxi services regarding a concerning trend where criminals manipulate victims into purchasing jewellery, gold bullion, and watches. In 2025, there were 1,891 reports of **Courier Fraud**, with total reported losses amounting to approximately £21 million. The average loss per victim was around £15,050, with the average victim age being 77. **Courier Fraud** involving the handover of jewellery and gold remains a common method for high-value losses, with gold being one of the most requested items, followed by watches.

This awareness campaign aims to equip businesses with the necessary information to identify vulnerable customers and prevent fraudulent activity. Increased vigilance and prompt reporting can significantly disrupt fraud networks, protecting both businesses and customers. Furthermore, early detection and reporting can assist law enforcement in tracking and dismantling criminal operations.

Taxi services are being used to facilitate fraud whether it be to transport the victim to a store or even to collect a package on behalf of someone else and deliver it to the victim's home. Your observation during transportation is vital in identifying a crime in progress and helping prevent it.

We urge you to do the following to help us support the safeguarding of vulnerable people who may be using your service:

- **Stop:** Is the customer's destination a jewellery or high value goods retailer? *Victims targeted may be vulnerable, elderly, confused, upset or on the phone to someone.*
- **Think:** Challenge the customer in a respectful way – highlight your concerns; has a 'trusted agency' (bank, police, HMRC) asked them to make the purchase? Has the customer been asked to lie about why they making an expensive purchase? Does the customer believe they are supporting an official investigation?
- **Fraud:** If the customer answer yes to any of the prompts above, call the police on 999 as there may be a courier fraud might be taking place.

We appreciate your cooperation to maintain high standards of diligence and we urge you to take this opportunity to review your safeguarding policies and share this information with your team. Increased awareness and cooperation with law enforcement are key to reducing the impact of courier fraud.

Thank you for your continued vigilance.



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