



Organised Crime Newsletter

13

29th April 2022

ATM (Automated Teller Machine) Thefts

The purpose of this months newsletter is to raise awareness of the various types of crimes involving ATMs or Cash Machines.

ATM Distraction

The criminals who commit this type of crime are hunters and go looking for targets to prey upon. The typical offence involves elderly victims or those with disabilities, although any age could fall foul of this crime. The victim is approached by the criminals, whilst the victim is using the ATM. The offenders observe the victims putting in their PIN number before distracting the victim and then use sleight of hand to steal the card, making the victim believe it has been retained by the machine. The cards are then used at other ATMs nearby and also to make contactless payments for goods.

In order to reduce your chances of being a victim of this type of offence, we would suggest the following:

- Always be aware of who is around you when using an ATM to withdraw cash
- Where possible make use of the cash machine within the bank
- Try to go in pairs when using an ATM, that way one can keep watch whilst the other withdraws their money. The offenders tend to prey upon lone victims as it is easier to distract just one person.

If you believe you are being watched or notice any other suspicious behaviour, then report it to bank staff.

ATM Skimmers

When using an ATM, you insert your bank card into the card reader slot and then input your PIN number. The more technically minded criminals can create a dummy card reader, which mimics exactly



If you have any information about possible organised crime, victims of such crime or vulnerable people subject of exploitation, please inform your local Police or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555111

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101

IN AN EMERGENCY
ALWAYS CALL 999

and fits over the ATM's actual card reader. Every time the ATM is then subsequently used, the skimmer will record all of the bank card details from every transaction. The criminals will then use those bank card details for their own purposes.

As the skimmer is designed to fit over the top of the real card reader and needs to be removed easily by the criminal, the skimmers tend to be lightly glued in place. In order to check if an ATM's card reader is genuine, look for signs of glue around the outside and give it a gentle pull. If the card reader is loose or does not feel 100% secure, it may be a skimming device. We would advise that you do not use that ATM and report your suspicions to bank staff who will investigate and report to police if required.

This is a YouTube address to a video where a card skimmer is discovered— [Finding an ATM Skimmer in Vienna - YouTube](#)

Theft of or from ATM cash machines.

Since January 2022, there have been 37 reported ATM thefts nationally. There are two distinct methods used by the criminals. The first involves attaching strong cables or ropes to the doors of the ATM and then attaching the other end of the cable/rope to a high powered car or van, which is used to force open the cash door. The thieves then steal the cash contained within the ATM. The second method involves stolen plant machinery, like diggers, which are used to smash the ATM out of its housing and then steal the entire ATM.

The Kent & Essex Serious Crime Directorate previously dealt with such a gang of organised criminals who targeted ATMs and in October 2019, the 8 members of that gang were sentenced to a total of 55 years imprisonment at Chelmsford Crown Court.

How to report possible offences, concerns or to give information?

If you are a victim of, or have any information about any of the above offences, please report this via one of the below methods.

Police via 999 for offences being committed at that time or via 101 or online at www.essex.police.uk or www.kent.police.uk

CrimeStoppers in order to give information anonymously — 0800 555 111



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