



SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE

POLICE NEWS RELEASE

MID-YEAR CRIME BRIEF FOR JANUARY TO JUNE 2015

Commercial Crimes Main Cause of Increase in Overall Crime Situation in 1H2015

A total of 16,575 crime cases were recorded in the first six months of 2015. This is an increase of 6.7% (1,044 cases) when compared to the same period last year (15,531 cases). Crime classes of “Violent/Serious Property Crimes”, “Housebreaking and Related Crimes”, “Theft and Related Crimes”, and “Crimes against Persons” all saw a decrease. However, there was a significant increase in the number of “Commercial Crimes” cases.

Breakdown of Statistics by Crime Classes

CRIME CLASSES	Jan-Jun 2014	Jan-Jun 2015	+/-	% change
Violent/Serious Property Crimes	315	175	-140	-44.4
Housebreaking and Related Crimes	180	156	-24	-13.3
Theft and Related Crimes	8,264	7,965	-299	-3.6
Crimes against Persons	2,040	2,032	-8	-0.4
Miscellaneous Crimes	2,226	2,354	128	5.8
Commercial Crimes	2,506	3,893	1,387	55.3
OVERALL CRIME	15,531	16,575	1,044	6.7

Increase in Commercial Crimes a Key Concern

2. Commercial Crimes increased by 1,387 cases in the first six months of 2015 as compared to the same period in 2014. Within this crime class, “Cheating involving E-Commerce” and scams such as “Credit-for-Sex” and “Internet Love” were the main categories which saw a large increase.

Cheating involving E-Commerce

- There was an increase of 402 cases (65.6%), from 613 cases in the first half of 2014, to 1,015 cases in the same period this year.
- Online scams targeting buyers increased by 332 cases (61.9%), from 536 cases in the first half of 2014 to 868 cases in the same period of 2015. The total amount of money that was cheated was approximately \$450,000.
- Online scams targeting sellers also increased by 29 cases (74.4%), from 39 cases in the first half of 2014 to 68 cases in the same period this year. The total amount of money that was cheated was approximately \$44,000.

Credit-for-Sex

- a) This is a new scam that emerged in the second half of 2014. Culprits would use mobile messaging platforms to ask their victims to purchase gift cards or virtual credits in exchange for escort/sexual services.
- b) 627 cases were reported between January and June 2015. The total amount of money that was cheated was approximately \$1.59 million.

Internet Love

- a) There was an increase of 49 cases (53.3%), from 92 cases in the first half of 2014, to 141 cases in the same period this year.
- b) The total amount of money that was cheated was approximately \$3.79 million.

Be Wary of Online Scams

3. The Police urge the public to exercise caution when making purchases online and befriending persons through the Internet. The Police will continue to expand its outreach efforts to the public, particularly the online community, to educate them on how to avoid falling prey to online scammers.

4. The Police, in partnership with the National Crime Prevention Council, have launched a series of anti-scam commercials as part of the nationwide Anti-Scam Public Education Campaign. The campaign seeks to educate the public on how scammers often manipulate victims' emotions, desires and weaknesses to deceive them into parting with their money. Details of the anti-scam public awareness initiatives are at Annex A.

"The growing trend of online crime is a cause for concern. While the Police will do all it can to investigate, deter and disrupt the activities of these criminals, the public has an important role to play. Online transactions may be convenient, but the public should always be alert and exercise due diligence when engaging in online transactions to avoid falling victim to scammers. Some scammers may even be linked to a criminal syndicate operating overseas. It pays to be cautious, especially if a tempting offer sounds too good to be true. The Police will continue with our public education efforts to raise public awareness on the modus operandi of these scammers."

*– Mr David Chew,
Director, Commercial Affairs Department*

Positive Improvements in Other Key Crime Areas in 1H2015

5. Mid-year updates on other key crime areas are as follows:
 - a) The **Unlicensed Moneylending and Harassment** situation continued to improve. The number of cases decreased by 828 cases (-24.7%), from 3,359 cases in the first half of 2014 to 2,531 cases in the same period this year. The number of harassment cases with damage to property also decreased by 464

cases (-32.4%), from 1,434 cases in the first half of 2014 to 970 cases in the same period this year.

- b) **Cyber-Extortion cases** decreased by 133 cases (-72.7%), from 183 cases in the first half of 2014, to 50 cases in the same period this year. The Police urge the public to exercise discretion when chatting with unknown persons online, and to avoid putting themselves in situations where they could be exploited by these persons.
- c) **Outrage of Modesty (OM)** cases decreased by 32 cases (-4.9%), from 657 cases in the first half of 2014 to 625 cases in the same period this year. There were also fewer OM cases on-board trains and in open areas. However, OM cases on public buses increased. Victims are advised to alert the Police at the earliest opportunity possible so that perpetrators can be arrested swiftly and brought to justice.
- d) The **Youth Crime** situation improved with the number of youths arrested decreasing by 280 arrests (-17.1%), from 1,642 arrests in the first half of 2014 to 1,362 arrests in the same period this year. The Police will continue to work closely with our stakeholders, including educational institutions and the social services sector to tackle youth crime.

“The UML and Harassment situation has been improving steadily. Housebreaking and Violent/Serious Property crime cases have also decreased significantly. However, the increase in Commercial Crimes involving E-Commerce transactions and scams is a concern. The Police will step up public education efforts to warn the public against such crimes. Singapore remains a safe place to live and work in. The Police will work hand in hand with the community and key stakeholders to ensure that Singapore continues to be a safe home for everyone.”

– Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police Tan Hung Hooi,
Director, Public Affairs Department (Covering)

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE
24 AUGUST 2015 @ 11.45AM**

INITIATIVES TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF SCAMS

The Police are working closely with the community through the Community Safety and Security Programmes (CSSP) conducted by the Neighbourhood Police Centres to address specific localised crime concerns in neighbourhoods. The Police have also been engaging external stakeholders such as educational institutions and remittance agencies to expand its reach on anti-scam education and awareness.

2. Together with the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), the Police had earlier launched an anti-scam awareness campaign on 28 November 2014. The seven types of scams covered in this campaign were: Cyber Extortion, Online Purchase, Internet Love, Kidnap, Lottery, Impersonation and Money Mule.

3. Digital advertising and conventional advertising mediums such as television, outdoor advertorials at bus-stops, MRT stations and other public spaces helped expand the reach of anti-scam awareness messages. The public can also visit www.scamalert.sg, a webpage dedicated to scams, for more information.

4. As part of the nationwide Anti-Scam Public Education Campaign, the NCPC and the Police also launched the first of three TV commercials on 23 May 2015. The commercials served to remind the public on how scammers often manipulate victims' emotions, desires and weaknesses to make a successful transaction. This commercial featured Cyber Extortion and Lottery scams, which are amongst the top 10 scams in Singapore. On 24 July 2015, the second commercial highlighting Online Purchase scam was launched. The third commercial covering Money Mules will be shown later this year.

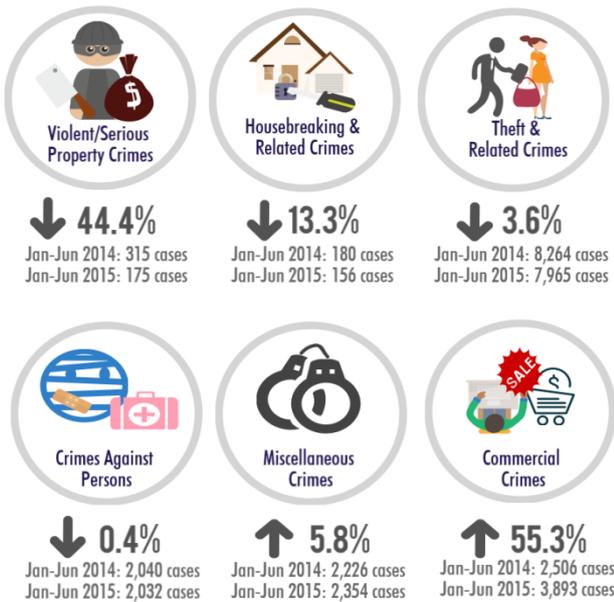
5. Two island-wide Police operations were conducted in 2015 against persons involved in Online Purchase scams. A total of 78 individuals were arrested for suspected money laundering offences as their bank accounts were used as conduits for monies from suspected scams. The Police advise the public against allowing others to use their bank accounts for such activities. Personal bank accounts should only be used for the account owners' personal banking activities. The Police will take action against anyone found to be receiving monies from such illegal activities.

MID-YEAR CRIME SITUATION 2015



- "Commercial Crimes" main cause of increase in overall crime situation
- Decreases in crime classes of "Violent/Serious Property Crimes", "Housebreaking and Related Crimes", "Theft and Related Crimes", and "Crimes against Persons"

BREAKDOWN OF OVERALL CRIME BY CRIME CLASSES



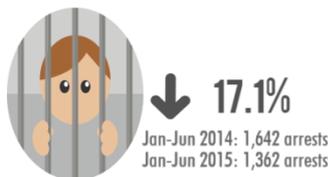
UPDATES ON KEY AREAS OF CONCERN



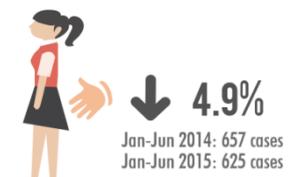
CYBER-EXTORTION



UML & HARASSMENT



YOUTHS ARRESTED

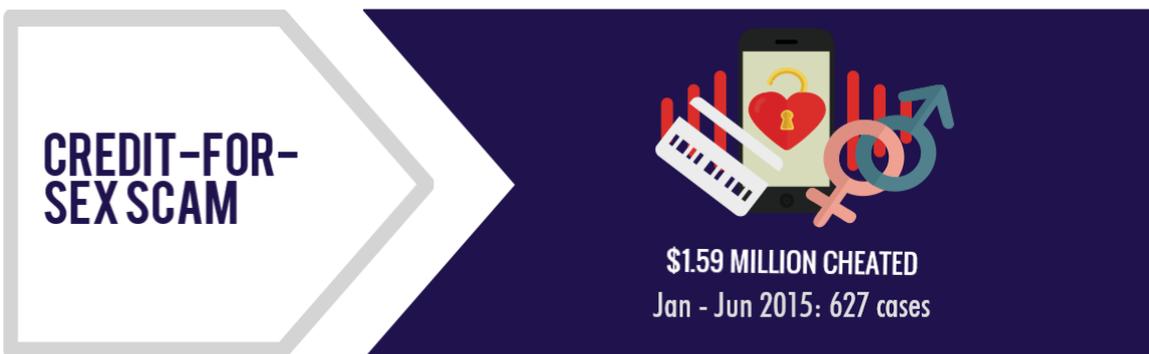
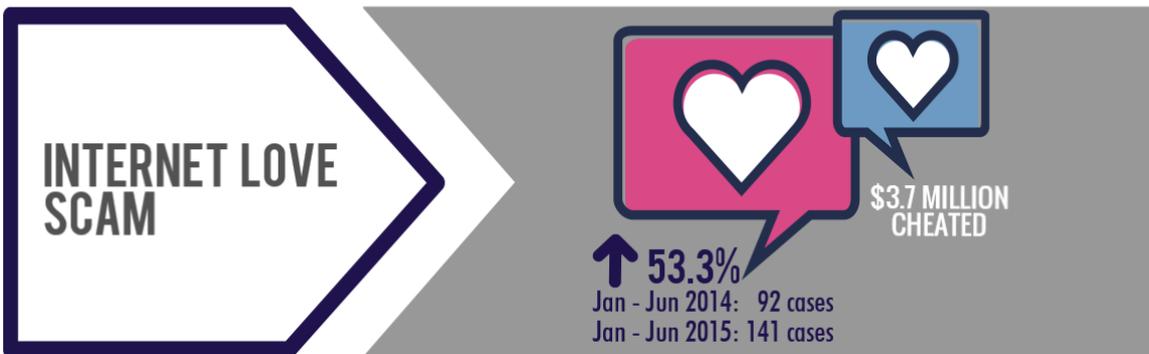
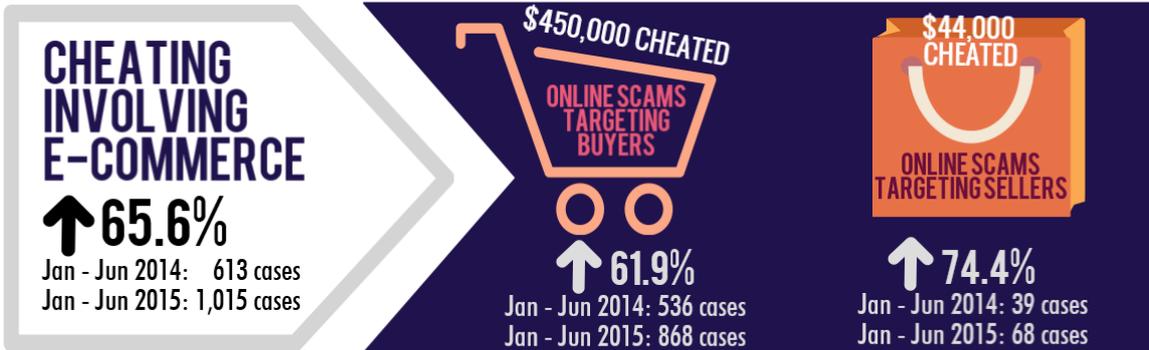


OUTRAGE OF MODESTY



KEY CRIME CONCERNS IN JANUARY – JUNE 2015

Increase in Commercial Crimes largely due to Cheating cases on mobile messaging and online platforms



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