



ACCOUNT HIJACKING

What is it?

An account hijacker uses another person's bank account.

How it works

A person, often unemployed or a low-income earner, is paid to open a bank account for someone else. The account hijacker is able to move money through the system undetected using someone else's bank account. Identity theft is often a feature of account hijacking.

How to avoid being a victim

- Do not let others use your bank account. Be cautious about giving out your banking details.
- Immediately report a stolen ID to the police.

CASE STUDY: IDENTITY THEFT

After a woman's identity document was stolen, she started receiving letters from her bank and some retail stores showing that she had opened personal accounts. A personal loan of R50 000 was also taken from one of the banks using her name.

The perpetrator had replaced the victim's picture in the ID with one of her own. The loan was never serviced, which is why the victim started receiving letters of demand from the bank.

FIC analysis revealed the home telephone number of the perpetrator. She was reported to be involved in sending suspicious moneygrams to several countries in west Africa and southeast Asia. She was involved in a small export-import business and running a hair salon.

The relevant law enforcement agency is investigating the matter.

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CASE STUDY: ACCOUNT HIJACKING

The FIC received several reports from a bank regarding similar names, destinations and amounts of funds deposited. Large funds, mostly R10 000 at a time, were deposited at ATMs in areas with a high number of immigrants, such as Hillbrow and Yeoville. The money was sent to west African countries. Money was sometimes withdrawn in foreign countries using a secondary card of the account.

These accounts were held by South Africans with the following characteristics:

- All were women.
- They all used addresses from Hillbrow and Yeoville.
- They were between 20 and 30 years old.
- Occupations included students, hairstylists or cashiers.

Upon requesting information from other government departments and institutions, it was revealed that most of these account holders are married to non-South Africans.

A joint operation between the FIC and other agencies revealed that these accounts were opened by South Africans for their non-South African employers or husbands. The accounts were used to conduct cross-border transactions.

The FIC has sent requests to foreign financial intelligence units to get more information on these transactions. The case continues.



Seven held for furniture fraud³

IOL News - Sapa

20 January 2012

Four women and three men have been arrested for using fraudulent documents to buy furniture in several parts of Gauteng, police said on Friday.

They caught one of the men at a house in Soweto on Thursday night, Lt-Col Katlego Mogale said.

“He pointed out the other man who was found at a home in Bramley in the north of Johannesburg,” she said.

“Police confiscated 37 identity documents, 145 bank cards, several pay slips, and sim cards of different networks from the second man’s home.”

The other five people were arrested elsewhere in the province. Mogale said seven cases of fraud had been opened at Brixton, Dobsonville, Kliptown, and Roodepoort police stations in the past few weeks.

Those arrested, aged between 29 and 59, were expected to appear in court soon.

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³ <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/seven-held-for-furniture-fraud-1.1217150>