



**PROJECT:**  
**THE DANGERS**  
**OF USING**  
**DATING APPS**  
**URGENT WARNING**  
**TO THE PUBLIC!**

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*Although dating apps such as Tinder, Badoo, OkCupid, Singles50, Be2 and 60sDating may allow lonely single people to meet new friends and find companionship, they also provide devious criminals with a platform to exploit lonely and vulnerable people.*

*Criminals browse these sites daily in search of new victims. You will be shocked to realise how many ways a person can become a victim on a dating platform.*

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## **THE MOST COMMON DATING APP SCAMS THAT HAVE BEEN REPORTED:**

### **SWEETHEART SCAM:**

- The sweetheart scam mainly targets older victims – usually ladies - in search of companionship.
- The scammer will present himself as a rich and charismatic personality and they usually pose as businessmen that work outside of South Africa.
- The scammers use any means possible to gain the trust of the victim.
- They have mastered the art of playing the 'religion card' to come across as honest and sincere.
- These scammers are willing to work over periods of months and even years to place themselves in a relationship where they can manipulate and exploit the victim.
- They create fake profiles and manipulate the victims to inadvertently share personal information with them.
- They investigate the victim's social accounts and look for weaknesses that they can exploit.
  - For example: If they see that the victim has a soft spot for animals, they will use that to their advantage and present themselves as animal lovers.
  - They even claim to donate large amounts of money to animal shelters.
- Once the victim's trust is secured, they build on the relationship and will eventually ask the victim to assist them with online payments from their bank accounts.
- The victim logs in using the scammer's information and processes payments from the scammer's account.
- In the process, the victim sees the scammer's account balance, which is usually a few million Rands.
- The victim does not know that the entire banking website they had logged into was fake and that the scammer used it to win the victim's trust and show the victim that he has a large amount of money.
- From that point, the scammer will initiate a sequence of events that will eventually end up with him needing money to finish a project, fly somewhere for business or purchase equipment.
- He asks the victim to assist him with funds whilst claiming that his bank account is frozen and that he cannot get the situation fixed until he is able to visit the bank.

- The victim agrees to assist her new companion with funds (keeping in mind that she saw with her own eyes that he has the funds available to repay the loan).
- The loans keep getting more frequent and the amounts keep getting larger until eventually the victim is drained of all her own money.
- Some victims even proceed to sell off their property.
- Millions of rands have been lost to these scams.

## **TRAPPING AND ROBBERY SCAM:**

- These scams are not only a financial risk to victims but also to their physical safety.
- The scammers involved in these scams are not afraid of physical confrontation and dangerous situations.
- The scam runs on the back end of several fake profiles that target both male and female victims.
- At least two or three individuals usually run these scams.
- They pose as charismatic and professional people; they engage in hours of conversation with their potential victims.
- Once a victim's trust is earned, the scammers will look to set up a meeting with the victim.
- The scammers try to prescribe the location of the meeting and they use "the fear of their own safety" as a tool to manipulate the victim and to control the situation.
- The victim shows up to the meeting expecting to meet his/her ideal companion, instead they walk into a trap where two to three individuals overpower the victim, tie them up and rob them of their possessions.
- In several cases, the victims were robbed of their ATM cards and held hostage by one or two criminals while the other one emptied the bank accounts.
- In some cases, the victims were severely beaten and even stabbed.
- In one instance a male victim was told that his children would be harmed if he reported the case to the police.
  - He had a legitimate concern because he shared the most intimate details of his personal life with the person on the other end of the dating app, unaware of the person's devious plans in store for him.

## **"HE CAUGHT US"-EXTORTION SCAM:**

- This scam works similarly to the trapping and robbery scam, except in this scam the criminals target married men that hang around on dating apps to get a bit of extra attention from young, good-looking lady companions.
- This scam is usually operated by at least one male and one female scammer.
- The scammer has several fake profiles, and he monitors the hits on the profiles until he finds one in which he can identify a victim as married or with a reputation that he would pay to protect.
- Once identified, the scammer engages in conversation with the victim and eventually sets up a meeting at a hotel or guest house.
- The victim arrives to meet the person that he has been speaking to for weeks or months.
- Once they are alone in the room and the victim is in a vulnerable position, the scammer's partner will come through the door and play the role of an upset husband or boyfriend.
- Once the parties go their separate ways, the victim starts receiving SMS messages and phone calls from the "upset husband" demanding money for not informing the victim's wife of the ordeal.
- In some cases, the victims go through months of torment and blackmail.
- Some victims have reported paying the scammers as much as R600,000.00 over a period of a few months just to keep their secrets.
- Yet every time a payment is completed, the scammer returns, demanding even more.

## **SEXTORTION SCAM:**

- These scams work in the exact same way as the extortion scams, the only difference is that these scammers can operate alone.
- They do not have to face the victim physically because they often use photos and videos of the victim as blackmail material.
- These photos and videos are sent to the scammer by the victim during intimate conversations often referred to as "Sexting".
- Sextortion scams have been on the rise over the past few years and although the victims are mostly male, there have been reports of female victims too.

- Victims have paid thousands of Rands to scammers to avoid having their private photos and videos posted online or sent to their friends and family.
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## **PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES:**

- Avoid dating apps entirely if you are in a relationship already.
  - Never send compromising photos, videos, or sensitive information to anybody.
  - If you are single and want to try out a dating app, don't put too much personal information on your profile.
  - Keep your profile secure and prevent using profile photos that reveal your location or personal information.
  - If you meet a friend on a dating app and you consider meeting in person, choose a public space, and always ensure that you have a friend with you.
  - If a meeting spot is arranged and the plans are changed at the last minute, don't agree to meet at a different location.
  - Always put safety first and rather postpone the date until both parties can meet at a comfortable and public location.
  - ***PARENTS: BEWARE OF SOCIAL GROOMING, ALWAYS KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE DOING ON THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS.***
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*Specialised Security Services offers device monitoring and device security services that can be put in place to protect your teenagers on social media and other online channels.*

*Contact our dedicated Cybercrime unit for more information.*

**SSS CYBERCRIME UNIT:**  
<https://mikebh.link/CyberTeam>

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**EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUS WARNINGS REGARDING  
RELEVANT PROJECTS:**

- <https://mikebh.link/PotUjh>
  - <https://mikebh.link/I2e76t>
  - <https://mikebh.link/TmENy0>
  - <https://mikebh.link/G2np9b>
  - <https://mikebh.link/yhXMEem>
  - <https://mikebh.link/K6WCAZ>
  - <https://mikebh.link/o2Khb6>
  - <https://mikebh.link/Ka9sQX>
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**CONTACT MR MIKE BOLHUIS FOR ADVICE,  
RECOMMENDATIONS, SECURITY, PROTECTION,  
OR AN INVESTIGATION IF NEEDED.**

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**ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED WITH THE  
UTMOST PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.**

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***You may forward this document and  
share it with as many people as possible.***

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Regards,

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**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT:** All potential clients need to be aware that owing to the nature of our work as specialist investigators there are people who have been caught on the wrong side of the law - who are trying to discredit me - Mike Bolhuis and my organisation Specialised Security Services - to get themselves off the hook.

This retaliation happens on social media and creates doubt about our integrity and ability. Doubt created on social media platforms is both unwarranted and untrue.

We strongly recommend that you make up your minds concerning me and our organisation only after considering all the factual information - to the exclusion of hearsay and assumptions.

Furthermore, you are welcome to address your concerns directly with me should you still be unsatisfied with your conclusions. While the internet provides a lot of valuable information, it is also a platform that distributes a lot of false information. The distribution of false information, fake news, slander and hate speech constitutes a crime that can be prosecuted by law. Your own research discretion and discernment are imperative when choosing what and what not to believe.

**STANDARD RULES APPLY:** Upon appointment, we require a formal mandate with detailed instructions. Please take note that should you not make use of our services - you may not under any circumstance use my name or the name of my organisation as a means to achieve whatever end.

**POPI ACT 4 of 2013 South Africa:** Mike Bolhuis' "Specialised Security Services" falls under Section 6 of the act. Read more here: <https://mikebolhuis.co.za/popi-act-4-of-2013-section-6-mike-bolhuis/>

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**SSS TASK TEAM:**

<https://mikebh.link/Task-Team-2023>

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