

To: The Rt Hon. Lord Hanson of Flint
Minister of State, Home Office

XX April 2026

RE: TACKLING ONLINE FRAUD: MAKING DATA ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

Dear Lord Hanson,

The Global Fraud Summit in Vienna last month provided an opportunity to bring together Ministers, senior decision-makers and experts from around the world to improve international cooperation in tackling the growing impact of fraud. As the recognised trade body for the sector, the Online Dating and Discovery Association (ODDA) was delighted to attend the event and participate in the discussions that took place across the two days.

Tackling fraud remains the number one priority for our members who already invest heavily in fraud prevention and detection. Recent figures from City of London Police show that these efforts are beginning to make a real difference with romance fraud now more prevalent on social media apps than it is on a dating or discovery service.

However, to tackle the threat effectively requires a more joined-up approach and greater intervention by Government to enable better international information-sharing and coordination between partners.

The launch of the Government's new Fraud Strategy and the Online Crime Centre mark a significant shift in approach in the fight against fraud. The ODDA and its members warmly welcomed these announcements and are fully committed to supporting the Government in leading the international response to this growing problem.

Yet these efforts risk being undermined by a failure to address a key gap: smaller firms, who are disproportionately affected by fraud, face greater barriers in accessing and sharing information than larger ones. Therefore, ensuring free and fair access to data for businesses of all sizes, not just those with the deepest pockets, needs to be prioritised.

At the heart of this problem is the growth of private sector information sharing initiatives. While they undoubtedly provide a valuable service to their members, the cost of membership is often prohibitively expensive for smaller firms leaving them excluded from accessing an incredibly valuable tool in the fight against fraud.

In our view, access to information about fraud, including device and signal data, should be freely available to everyone with access coordinated through a single national entity.

We call on the Government to bring all existing information sharing initiatives under the umbrella of a single publicly funded organisation to ensure free and fair access to data irrespective of the sector they work in.

We note the successful model in Australia through the National Anti-Scam Centre and believe that the Online Crime Centre could perform a similar role in the UK, providing a truly collaborative approach that benefits everyone.

But successful collaboration can only take place if the barriers to information sharing are removed. While we were pleased to see this point referenced in your speech at the Summit, it is essential that any attempts to address these challenges are done with smaller firms in mind who often have greater difficulty in meeting the stringent requirements placed on them by larger organisations.

Tackling the problem effectively is also about making sure we don't create new opportunities for fraudsters through measures designed to prevent them. For example, following the introduction of new age assurance rules under the Online Safety Act (OSA), several ODDA members reported seeing fake age verification adverts designed to exploit a lack of consumer awareness in the weeks following the new rules coming into effect. We've also seen an increase in attempts at account takeovers as the legislation has forced fraudsters to find other ways in.

To address this, we believe that all Government Departments and Regulators should carry out a Fraud Risk Assessment when considering new legislation, codes of practice or guidance, particularly in relation to additional measures under the OSA. This would help identify any potential unintended consequences and provide sufficient time to 'design out fraud'.

We welcome the Government's thoughts on our proposed actions and look forward to hearing more about next steps following the publication of the Fraud Strategy and the high-level commitments made at the Global Fraud Summit last month.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Newman
Chief Executive Officer