

Internet Fraud Complaint Center Referred More Than 48,000 Fraud Complaints to Law Enforcement in 2002

Referrals Triple Since 2001, Fraud Losses Total \$54 Million

RICHMOND, VA - April 9, 2003 - The Internet Fraud Complaint Center (IFCC) released its annual Internet Fraud Report today showing that, on behalf of victims, IFCC referred 48,252 fraud complaints to federal, state and/or local law enforcement authorities last year. This referral rate is triple the number of referrals (16,775) in 2001. The report also states that the total dollar loss from all referred fraud cases was \$54 million, up from \$17 million in 2001.

The 2002 annual report offers a recap of Internet crime hot spots by state, statistical information, and victim demographic data gleaned through complaints IFCC has received and referred through its on-line Web portal located at www.ifccfbi.gov from January 1, 2002 through December 31, 2002. In 2002, complaints filed with IFCC totaled 75,063.

"IFCC helps victims by putting fraud information into the hands of law enforcement and then fosters inter-agency cooperation so these complaints are responded to quickly," said Assistant Director Jana Monroe of the FBI's Cyber Division.

For the third straight year, Internet auction fraud was the most reported offense, comprising 46% of referred complaints. Non-delivery of merchandise and non-payment accounted for 31% of complaints, and credit/debit card fraud made up nearly 12% of complaints. Among victims who reported a dollar loss, the highest median dollar losses were found among Nigerian letter fraud (\$3,864), identity theft (\$2,000), and check fraud (\$1,100) complainants.

California, New York, Florida, Texas, and Illinois were the top five states for victims of Internet crime. In cases where the perpetrator has been identified, nearly four in five were male and over half resided in the states of California, New York, Florida, Texas, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.

IFCC processed an additional 36,920 complaints on computer intrusions, unsolicited e-mail (SPAM), child pornography, and other violations of law. For computer-related filings but which are not considered Internet fraud, IFCC referred these to agencies and organizations that handle those particular complaints.

IFCC has aggressively developed partnerships with agencies to enhance its ability to quickly serve victims of fraud and cyber crime. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the FBI's Innocent Images task force, the National Infrastructure Protection Center, the Federal Trade Commission, and the U.S. Secret Service are regular recipients of IFCC complaint information.

Only one in four complainants contacted a law enforcement agency about their victimization prior to filing a complaint with IFCC.

"As on-line usage continues to climb, consumer education must focus not only on preventive strategies, but also on where an individual can turn for help. IFCC is in a position to handle just such an effort to help victims and assist law enforcement," said Richard L. Johnston, Director of the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C).

Operational since May 2000, IFCC is co-managed by NW3C and the [FBI](#). IFCC is an on-line resource to file Internet fraud complaints that will be referred to law enforcement authorities that have the ability to initiate a case on the consumer's behalf.

To obtain a copy of IFCC's 2002 Internet Fraud Report, visit www.ifccfbi.gov