

5 Top Tips to help prevent motor insurance fraud

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Ageas, the crew behind you.



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It's a sad fact of life at the moment, motor insurance fraud has become part of our industry. What's worse in some ways, is that too many people believe it's a victimless crime – it's not. It pushes premiums up and affects us all – but it's a circle that you can help us break, simply by being vigilant.

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Motor insurance fraud – what to look out for...

Unfortunately, in our experience, even a metaphorical ‘little old lady’ may be less than forthcoming with the whole truth sometimes. Wilfully not disclosing a motoring conviction is just as fraudulent as making a false claim for a whiplash injury, or operating a ‘crash for cash’ scheme.

However, today, many policies are taken out over the phone or online. And as those transactions are recorded, this makes it easier to check – and double check – any details that do feel ‘not quite right’.

5 , 4, 3, 2, 1...

In at number five – something doesn't 'sound' right...

Is something just ringing an alarm bell? There's a sensible first spot-check you can do, if something simply sounds wrong over the phone. Choose something at random – "Can I just check I've got this right?" – and repeat a personal fact such as the spelling of a name or date of birth, with a deliberate error. An honest person will usually correct the details naturally, whereas a fraudulent person is more likely to confirm you've given the wrong information, correctly.

Reduce risk, to yourselves, and to road users everywhere. If you're 'just not sure...' then we'd much rather you called us, than didn't pass the details on.

At number four – something doesn't 'add up'...

It may be something as simple as the date given for passing a test that can highlight a problem: too recent, too long ago, or perhaps the number of years given for a no claims bonus doesn't match the amount of time a young person has even had the license.

Let us know if the dates aren't right – we'll help you check through the rest of the details too.

Number three – things are going ‘too well’...

Over the phone, does the way this person describes their details give you confidence they’ve been using them for a long time? Can you hear someone passing on details, are they being given too promptly or not shared confidently enough? If an address sounds ‘read out’ or dates sound ‘calculated’ in some way, that may be a clue there’s something wrong.

Tell us – our post sales fraud team will look into things further.

At number two – something doesn't 'look' right...

On an application, does the handwriting change from one field to the next? Does any part of an application look photocopied, unnecessarily? Online, in particular, there may be mismatches in dropdown fields – such as a 'GARDENER' working in a 'BANK'.

Contact us – we can check out user errors and genuine problems.

And our number one tip to help prevent motor insurance...

Give us a call, as soon as you know something's wrong. Every time you contact us, you're helping us either track down a criminal – or reassure your clients. It's win win.

Sometimes fraud isn't easy to spot in advance. We've been contacted by several brokers, who've heard from a genuine client reporting the receipt of documentation they weren't expecting.

Identity fraud – when one person uses someone else's details, or a mixture of several people's details, to buy a policy or make a claim – is a huge problem.



Working together, we'll put the brakes on motor insurance fraud

Thankfully, we do spot many bogus claims before any money is paid out, but that's not much consolation to the innocent policyholders who've been involved. Identity fraud has been going on for years in the finance sector. It's only recently we've started seeing it in the motor insurance market.

Since May 2016, we've seen a steep increase in numbers – in Q3 we recorded 1,839 cases of identity fraud, in Q4 that surged to 2,163 cases – and, here at Ageas, it now represents about 45% of all post-sale application fraud cases.

That said, we've increased our own efforts and we're tackling the problem with determination. In one case, we worked alongside a broker to explore a case of suspected identity fraud, and found the clients' addresses were being used on 21 other policies across a number of our other brokers, too.

And you'll be pleased to know we linked those cases together, and submitted all of the details to the Insurance Fraud Register – reducing the risks for you in the future, as well as for those clients. It's not going to be an easy job and it won't happen overnight, but if we work together, we'll put the brakes on motor insurance fraud...

To speak to our dedicated post sale fraud team, contact us:

Fraud & Risk Quality team

Tel: 02380 313 145

Email: riskquality@ageas.co.uk

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