



PURPLE TEARDROP CAMPAIGN

Stop the trafficking ~ Stop the tears

www.purpleteardrop.org.uk

MOBILE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS CAMPAIGN (June – August 2016)

Purpose:

The campaign was planned as an awareness-raiser to highlight to these service providers that their networks are being used by human traffickers as the means of contact for punters to purchase the sexual services of women and girls forced into prostitution. As such, the traffickers are contravening the providers' terms and conditions all of which state that their services must not be used for illegal/criminal activity.

We emphasise that this campaign's intention is to inform providers about this specific issue and to ask them to tell us what investigative measures they have in place to deal with illegal activity in their customer base that contravenes their terms and conditions.

Process:



Sorooptimist
International

So as to start our campaign's dialogue with the providers, in May 2016 Sorooptimists in the UK were invited to participate in the campaign by appropriately amending a given template letter and sending it to their service provider, together with a stamped addressed envelope for their reply. Attached to this letter was a letter regarding supply chains and the legislation in the Modern Slavery Act 2015, provided by Kevin Hyland, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner for the UK. (IASC).

The template letter included three statements to best describe the status of the providers' efforts. The providers were asked to tick the statement that most closely applied to them and to forward the reply to the sender via the sae. There was a deadline by which this needed to be done, and a second deadline by which any responses, including no response, were to be sent or emailed to Purple Teardrop Campaign (PTC) by the original Sorooptimist sender.

To facilitate their understanding, and to aid appropriate action, Sorooptimists involved in the campaign were provided with the CEO name and company address, together with each provider's statement in their Terms & Conditions. All documents can be found on the Purple Teardrop Campaign website <http://www.purpleteardrop.org.uk/2016/05/31/business-chain-awareness-raiser/>

Sorooptimists were advised that the PTC would be collating everyone's feedback and information on best practice in order to inform the mobile phone service providers' CEOs, and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner who suggested we undertake this piece of work. The nature of the collective feedback will then determine the campaign going forward.

Summary of data collected: (see Excel Spreadsheet for more detail of data received):

- 65 template letters were despatched by 19 Sorooptimist Clubs; they were sent from 11 different regions ranging from Devon in the south west to Sheffield in the north, and from Cheshire in the west to Suffolk in the east.
- Of the 65 letters sent out, a standard response was received from both Vodafone (29%) and Telefonica (26%), neither of whom ticked a box from the 3 questions provided. There was no response from EE (20 letters) or 3 Mobile (9 Letters). All 4 providers have posted a detailed statement on their websites regarding supply chains.
- Vodafone and Telefonica only responded to the first few letters received, but their nil responses have been counted as replies, as they stated to us that they would not send out further replies to the standard letters after the first few.

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Interim Conclusions

These represent the views of the PTC volunteers who've worked on the campaign.

It was difficult to reach any firm conclusion from the zero response of EE and 3 Mobile. Whilst we assume these two companies have similar processes and procedures in place, their failure to engage with the campaign is disappointing. Regardless, we will feedback the results of the campaign to all four organisations for transparency and as committed at the outset.

Whilst the number of letters sent out by Soroptimists was moderate, there were sufficient for us to work with.

It is clear that Vodafone and Telefonica are aware of their need to comply with the relevant section of the Modern Slavery Act, and have advised us in positive tones of the well-developed ethical codes of practice which are binding on their employees and suppliers, and that suppliers are audited and assessed routinely to ensure they comply with them. Neither provider indicated that there was any external monitoring of the effectiveness of these procedures, although there may well be.

Our questions were aimed specifically at how they ensure their services are not used for criminal activities (by their customers), in contravention of their terms and conditions, by human traffickers who use their services for the illegal selling of sexual services of women and girls forced into prostitution. Both providers indicate their awareness of possible criminal activity in this area, and Telefonica indicated that they do not, and would not want, to have the right to perform surveillance on their customers to ensure legality or for any other reason, unless legally obliged to do so.

Vodafone indicated that where there is clear evidence of illegality from customers, in breach of their terms and conditions, they have previously acted to stop this, and indicated that if the issue we are presenting was occurring, and they were aware of it, they would take steps to stop that activity if it was being facilitated by their network, provided they were requested through law enforcement channels, to do so – these being either a police force or a court.

Purple Teardrop Campaign

2016