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U.K.'s Cyber Center Releases Annual Report on Threats

The United Kingdom's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has published an annual report that reveals that more than a quarter of the cyber threats received by the agency over the past year were COVID-19 related, totaling more than 200 of the 723 handled incidents.

Created in 2016, the NCSC is tasked with protecting the U.K.'s digital lifelines from espionage, fraud, and ransomware attacks, and its annual report described the efforts undertaken by the agency to protect elections, government, critical infrastructure, and businesses.

According to the report, hackers launched phishing campaigns in August, September, and October involving personal protective equipment, test kits, and even vaccines in an attempt to gain sensitive information and distribute malware.

Some of the highlights in the [report](#) include support provided to almost 1,200 victims, over 2.3 million suspicious e-mails that were forwarded to a new suspicious e-mail reporting service, and threat-hunting performed on 1.4 million National Health Service endpoints. In addition, over one million IP addresses were scanned by the agency, and it thwarted over 15,000 COVID-related campaigns and blocked 260 sender IDs for sending malicious SMS messages in addition to taking down over 166,000 phishing URLs. —R. Jason Howard, J.D., robert.howard@wolterskluwer.com

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