

# What action we've taken in April, what we're doing now and what we're doing next

Nuisance calls and messages remain a concern and tackling them is a key action for the ICO. Report your concerns to us at [ico.org.uk/concerns](http://ico.org.uk/concerns).

## What action we've taken



### Five monetary penalties

In April we issued five monetary penalties for making or sending unsolicited marketing calls and messages, amounting to £531,000 in total. The penalties included:

- [Alex Goldthorpe t/a Approved Green Energy Solutions](#) fined £150,000 for making over 300,000 unlawful marketing calls.
- [The Energy Saving Centre Ltd](#) fined £250,000 for making over 34,000 unlawful marketing calls.
- [Royal Mail Group PLC](#) fined £12,000 for sending more than 300,000 nuisance emails.
- [Costelloe and Kelly Ltd](#) fined £19,000 for sending unlawful marketing text messages.
- [IAG Nationwide Ltd](#) fined £100,000 for making over 69,000 unlawful marketing calls.

IAG Nationwide Ltd also received an [Enforcement Notice](#) to compel their future compliance with the law.



### 132 cases are under investigation



### 14 third party information notices issued

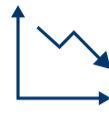
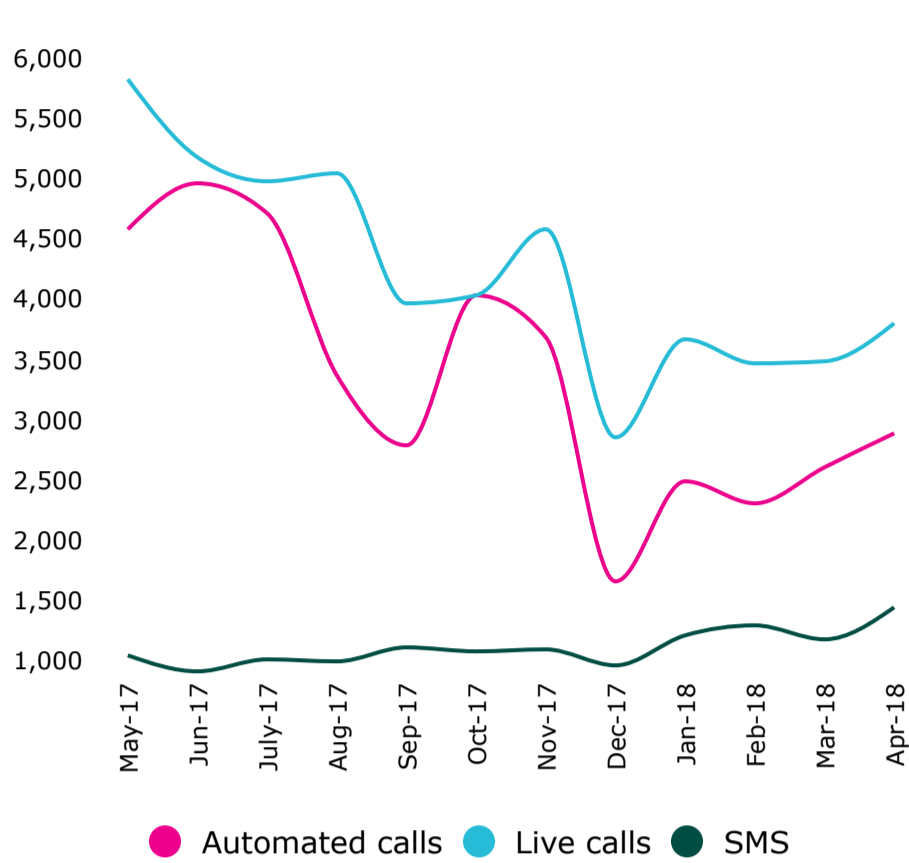
These notices compel communications service providers to give information to the ICO. The evidence we gather helps our investigations.

## 8,454 concerns were reported to the ICO in April 2018

This was an increase of approximately 11% compared with last month.

**Chart 1: Concerns reported by type, May 2017 - April 2018.**  
**Chart 2: Number of overall reported concerns, 2016 v 2017 v 2018.**

Chart 1



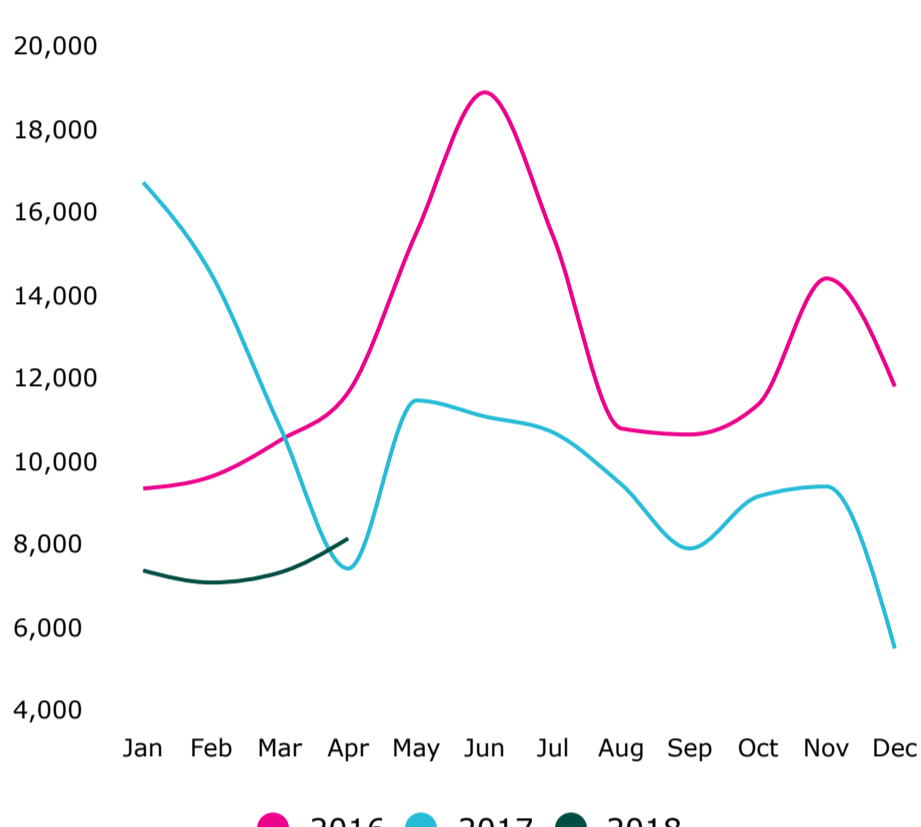
### Why have concerns been falling year-on-year?

Although more concerns were reported to the ICO in April 2018 than April 2017 (an increase of 755 concerns), this is likely the result of a dip in complaint volumes during April 2017 rather than a change in the existing trend. It is likely that the downward trend will resume next month.

There are a number of possible reasons for the overall year-on-year decrease in reported concerns:

- Successful investigations and enforcement action by the ICO may have prevented further breaches.
- Monetary penalties and enforcement action receiving widespread media coverage.
- Call blocking and SMS anti-spam technology are playing a part in reducing the impact of unsolicited marketing. Analysis of our data shows an increase in complaints about calls that have been intercepted by call blockers.
- The Claims Management Regulator and Ofcom have carried out further regulatory action.

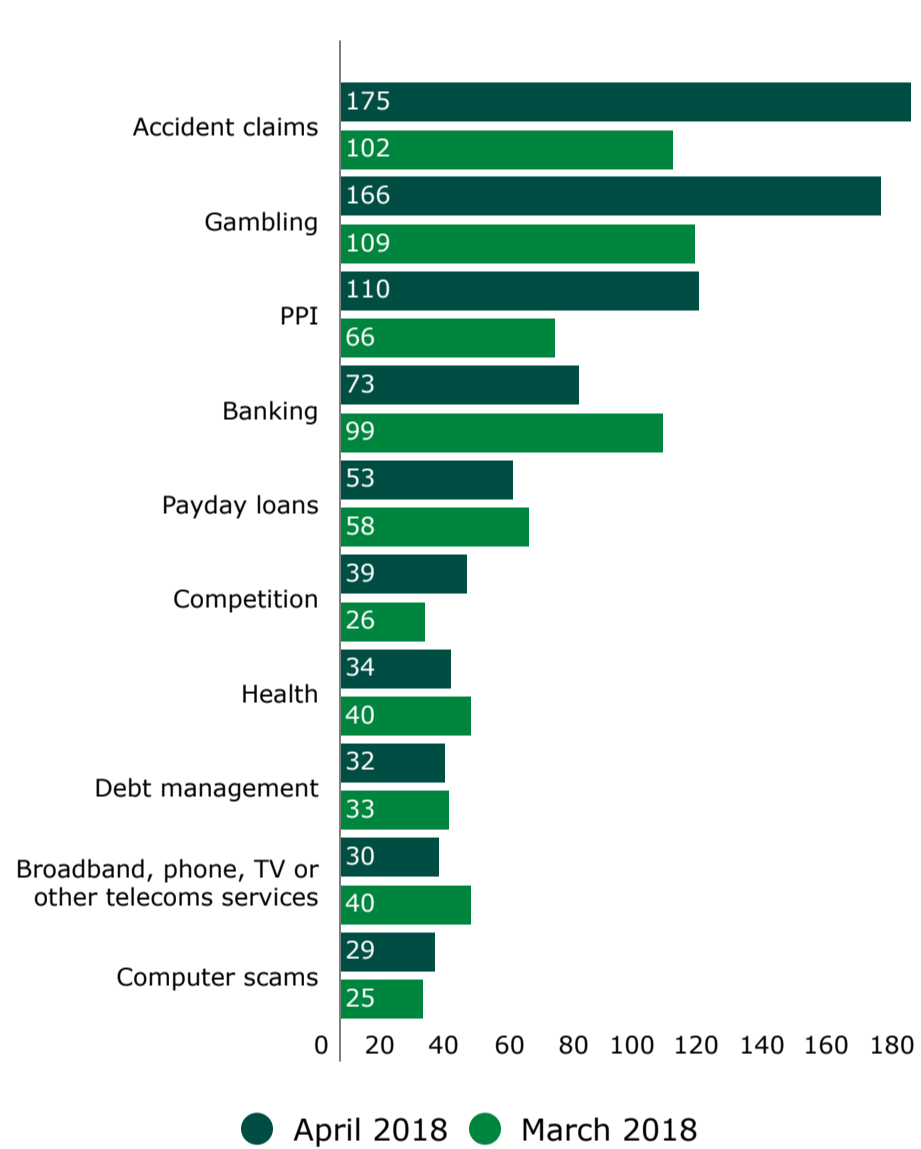
Chart 2



## 1,551 spam text concerns were reported in April 2018

This represented an increase of 261 concerns (20%) compared to March.

**Most common spam text concern types, April 2018 v March 2018.**



### This is the highest number of spam text concerns since November 2016

Though this increase could be caused by an increase in public awareness and media attention surrounding the ICO, the increase in concerns will be monitored closely in the next few months.



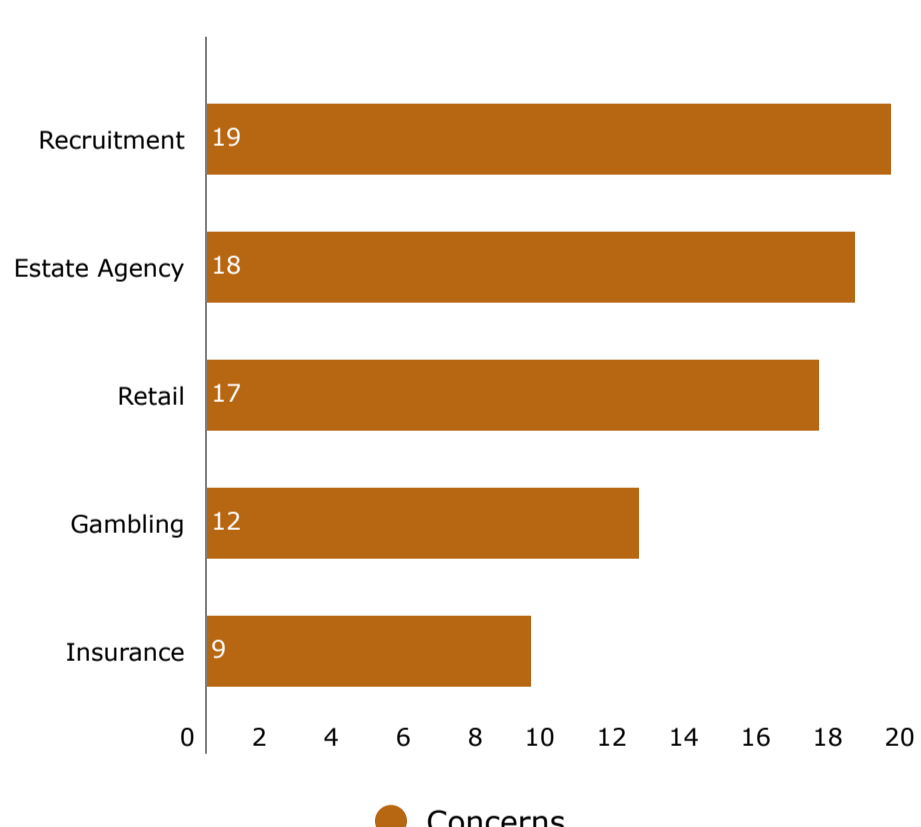
### PPI concerns increased by 44 (67%) from last month

This is likely to be due to the impending FCA deadline. Several messages reported to the ICO include the word 'deadline'.

## Spam email concerns

We also conduct investigations into spam emails reported to the ICO. Complaint volumes are typically much smaller than seen in other contact types.

**Most common spam email concerns, April 2018**



### Increases in recruitment and estate agency concerns

Despite not appearing in last month's top five, both categories feature in the top two this month.



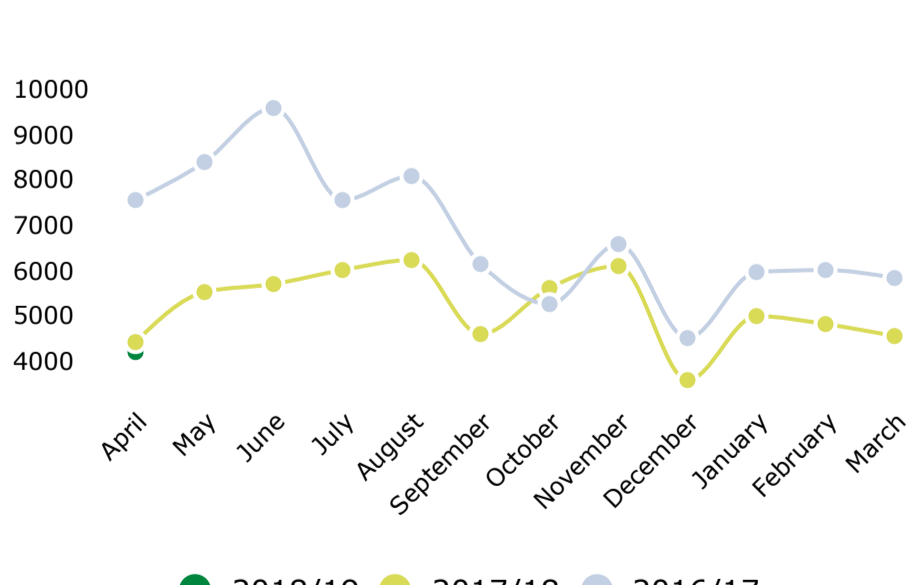
### Retail concerns decreased by 16, from 33 to 17

This follows a month-on-month increase of 9 in March.

## There were 4,489 concerns submitted to the Telephone Preference Service in April

This was a 7% decrease from the figure for March.

**Concerns submitted to the Telephone Preference Service, 2018-19 v 2017-18 v 2016-17.**



As well as a monthly decline in valid TPS complaints, there has also been a year-on-year decrease - down 5% and 220 concerns from April 2017.

## What we're doing now

We are monitoring the following companies:



### We have seen improvements from...

- Mainframe Limited
- Waterloo Limited t/a Uclaim4me
- Guardian Inheritance
- Aditus Audience Acquisition Ltd
- Choice Future Planning Ltd
- CR Smith Ltd
- Coastal Windows & Conservatories



### We have concerns about...

- Solartech North East Ltd
- Horizon Windows
- Uniplus Telecom Ltd
- Goodwin Barrett Ltd
- X Marketing
- Tiger Data Ltd
- Netperform Ltd
- Taylor Edwards Financial Management Ltd

This report was published on 7 June 2018. We aim to update this report every month.