

## **ADVP intelligence bulletin – imposters using RtW share codes**

The Association of Document Validation Professionals (ADVP) is a trade body representing many of the providers of electronic identity document validation technology (IDVT) in the UK. Many of the ADVP members support clients with a range of RtW services including digital and non-digital checks. As part of their service, some members will provide advice to their clients regarding use of the Home Office on-line RtW service, often referred to as share code checks.

In recent months members are reporting a significant increase in the number of imposters attempting to use RtW share codes generated by friends/relatives/associates in order to gain employment illegally. In some sectors, the numbers are so prevalent as to suggest that there is a trade in the use of share codes to facilitate illegal working. Such is the concern that some of our members are now advising their clients to request a suitable identity document alongside generating the share code report and others are asking candidates to provide a selfie so that their photo can be checked against the picture in the Home Office RtW report using facial biometrics.

The challenge faced by employers trying to defeat imposters is exacerbated in some cases by share code reports generated by the Home Office not having clear photographs of the applicant. Clients of ADVP members have seen various images where a clear photograph of the applicant should be on the report:

- Image of the biometric page of the applicant's identity document rather than a clear photograph of the applicant
- Image of the biometric page of the applicant's identity document with the photograph being a baby rather than a clear photograph of the applicant
- A photograph with multiple people rather than a clear photograph of the applicant
- An image of the back of a BRP card rather than a clear photograph of the applicant
- A completely black silhouette rather than a clear photograph of the applicant
- A very blurred photograph of the applicant rather than a clear photograph of the applicant
- A share code report with no image or photograph at all

As well as presenting obvious challenges to the employer in verifying the applicant against the share code report, such examples undermine the general confidence in the RtW database given all citizens registered on the database have supposedly been subject to a rigorous onboarding verification process. The examples above clearly demonstrate that could not have been the case.

The evidence regarding the potential scale of this issue is currently mainly anecdotal as providing hard intelligence is difficult for reasons always presented by members – data protection and client reluctance to get involved. However, to give some idea, one member is willing to report that it has helped identify 55 imposters using another person's share code since August.

If this issue is of interest to the Home Office, then the ADVP is certain it can bring members to a meeting to explain first-hand what they are seeing in the market.