ICRC data breach – FAQs

NSL Operator Key Actions:

* Advise any callers who are concerned about their data they can contact [dataprotection@redcross.org.uk](mailto:dataprotection@redcross.org.uk)
* Alternatively you can **log any requests for further action using the following MS Forms** link: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ujzc_l7KiEOoN7Rcfw1xt7yuyhmlkD5KgRjogZMHQhJUQzZFTkVNQ05MQUsxMVVFVDRISkUzVUxSUC4u>
* Any safeguarding concerns should be raised in the usual way, and referenced in the MS Forms link above.

**BRC messaging**

**Statement**

“A sophisticated cyber security attack against computer servers hosting information held by the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** was detected this week. **The** **British Red Cross international family tracing service** has been impacted by this breach. We are investigating how this affects **our service**, which helps to reunite families torn apart by armed conflict, disaster, migration and other situations requiring a humanitarian response. Unfortunately, the breach means we've had to temporarily suspend our international family tracing operations.

“We are appalled and extremely concerned that this sensitive humanitarian data would be targeted and compromised in this way. An attack on the data of people who are missing makes the anguish and suffering of their families even more difficult to endure.

“We can assure you that British Red Cross and the ICRC are taking this breach extremely seriously. We are working closely with our humanitarian partners worldwide to understand the scope of the attack and take the appropriate measures to safeguard our data now and in the future.”

For anyone who is concerned about their data, please contact [dataprotection@redcross.org.uk](mailto:dataprotection@redcross.org.uk)

For anyone who is concerned please contact the British Red Cross Support Line, open 10am – 6pm daily on 0808 196 3651.

**Q&A**

**Q. Has BRC been affected by this data breach? Are you one of the 50-60 national societies mentioned by the ICRC? How else have your operations been affected?**

A. We are in close contact with our ICRC colleagues, who are analysing the extent of the breach. British Red Cross is one of the national societies affected and we are working urgently to understand the implications for us. We have temporarily suspended our International Family Tracing operations while we examine the potential impact of the cyberattack.

ICRC have suspended all access to the compromised systems to mitigate the immediate impact of this attack, and are now in the process of identifying short-term solutions to enable Red Cross and Red Crescent teams worldwide to continue providing humanitarian services for the people impacted by this breach.

**Q. Is BRC data stored on the breached server?**

Use answer above until we have more detail to share.

**Q. Is other BRC data potentially compromised? What is the extent of this and does it affect other BRC service user data?**

A. The breach does not affect British Red Cross data or services beyond our International Family Tracing operation. We can assure you we are closely monitoring the security of our systems to ensure all data is held safely.

**Q. I would like to exercise my right to be forgotten, and for you to get rid of any data you have connected to me from any previous interactions I have had with BRC. How can I make this happen?**

A . Thank you for getting in touch. Please contact [dataprotection@redcross.org.uk](mailto:dataprotection@redcross.org.uk) if you have any concerns about your data and we can help you with next steps.

**Q. Have you warned people who may be potentially impacted? How many people could be impacted?**

A. We are investigating any potential impact of the cyberattack on people we are working with. If we identify a data breach or potential data breach affecting people we are helping, we will notify those people as soon as possible.

**Q. Are people still able to use your International Family Tracing service?**

A. We have suspended the service temporarily as a precaution, but we are looking at ways we can continue our vital work to reunite families torn apart by war, natural disaster and migration.

**Q. I am a current user of your International Family Tracing service. Is my data safe? I’m very worried for my family. Will you still be able to progress my case?**

A. Due to a cyberattack, we have paused our International Family Tracing service for now as a precaution. We are looking into ways we can continue this vital work and will update as soon as we can. When we have more information we will share on our website.

British Red Cross, and ICRC, are working to find out more about what has happened and what the implications may be. We will let you know more as soon as possible.

**Q. I have an urgent issue with my current family tracing case**

1. As above. Currently we are not able to give you an update about your case as we are not able to access the database due to the Cyberattack. However, I can take your details and put you on a list for one of our International Family Tracing caseworkers to call you back when it is possible. But, this may take some time. In the meantime please continue to look for any updates on our [webpage.](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.redcross.org.uk%2Ftrace&data=04%7C01%7CPSims%40redcross.org.uk%7C679b34dede9b4b980b1c08d9df428d28%7Cfedc3cbaca5e4388a837b45c7f0d71b7%7C0%7C0%7C637786299201877677%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=qOWavwCSpwoPKhqamPzWh03yqK%2BR7wyC2msDUUjW3JQ%3D&reserved=0).

NOTE to call handler – if you assess that there may be a safeguarding concern, or the caller is extremely anxious or distressed please note any important information on the MS form and tell the caller that you will contact the International Family Tracing caseworker team who will contact the caller as a priority (Monday to Friday). Please flag on the MS form that this person needs to be contacted as priority.

If the caller continues to ask lots of questions and you suspect they may be a journalist, please be mindful not to stray from this script, as your answers may be being recorded. If someone calls the support line and says they are a journalist, please take their name, number and the publication they work for, and refer them to the British Red Cross out of hours media line, which is 07710 391703. Thank you.

3. Reactive Q&A

***ON THE ATTACK***

**Who is behind the hack?**

We don’t know and cannot speculate on this.

**How long has the breach been happening?**

The international committee of the Red Cross learned of the breach on 18th January and have people working around the clock ever since to understand the extent of the breach.

**Was ransomware involved in this incident.** No, it was not.

**What steps are we taking to identify whose data is affected?** The ICRC’s technical evaluation of the data is ongoing. They are going through each application in the server to determine what has been compromised.

**Was the data of people encrypted or plain text?** The data was encrypted.