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Mobile minus: Sales boss reveals security problem

Anybody can hear private messages

A CWMBRAN sales manager says he has discovered a major security problem with one of the country's largest mobile phone networks.

Horrified Vodafone subscriber Steve Nott, 32, found that ANYONE can access his answer phone service and listen to his private messages ... helped by the giant network's own operators.

He explained: "Some time ago, the Vodafone network went down because of a technical fault. I had some important messages coming in, so I rang Vodafone to access them.

"I was asked by an operator if I had programmed a PIN number into my answer service. When I said I hadn't, I was told it didn't matter, that all I had to do was key in the default number.

"I followed the instructions and was able to hear my messages. It was easy and had taken just seconds."

Mr Nott added: "Afterwards I thought that anyone with my phone number could get into my messages just as easily as I had."

Mr Nott, whose marketing work in London is so sensitive that he doesn't want his full Cwmbran

EXCLUSIVE

By Rob Skellon

address to be published, complained to Vodafone bosses.

The angry marketing man even contacted the British intelligence service MI5.

He said: "Vodafone has millions of users, and many of them will be MPs and high-ranking government officials, people with highly sensitive information at their fingertips.

"I thought it important that the intelligence service should know about this. Unauthorised accessing of someone's message service is on a par with tampering with their mail."

The Argus put Mr Nott's claims to the test and by following his instructions we were able to access a Vodafone user's personal message service.

In this case, it was with the subscriber's permission. But it proved the point. Anyone can do it.

A Vodafone spokesman also conceded it was possible.

But he added: "Subscribers have the facility to change the default number and set up their own PIN number.

"If they don't, I suppose they are risking the security of their message service."



PHONE WORRY: Steve Nott, who claims that anyone can access anyone else's Vodafone messages

Picture: PENDRE SIMS