First Report | **www.hotline.ie** | **November 1999 - June 2001**

Supervising the internet -
WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT CHILD PORNOGRAPHY ON-LINE

www.hotline

EU Safer Internet Action Plan

ispai

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Internet Advisory Board Chairman's Introduction

The work of the www.hotline.ie is crucial to the self-regulation of the Irish Service Provider Industry and I welcome this first report as a clear statement of progress in this direction. This public hotline is part of the ongoing implementation of the Government Review Report on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet, which, I believe, has formed an excellent framework within which to address issues in this hugely complex and challenging area.

The Internet Advisory Board, arising from its mandate to supervise Internet self-regulation in Ireland, has worked closely with the hotline and continues to support and encourage its activities so that its important role in Internet safety can be successfully realised. However, much work still remains to be done on Internet downside issues and I have no doubt that the hotline will face ever greater challenges as we move into the early years of the new millennium and the focus on downside issues moves to include issues other than child pornography.

It is clear that no single party, whether at national or international level, can successfully address the kinds of problem faced by the harmful and illegal use of the Internet. In this regard, the role of the Irish hotline as part of a European network of hotlines is particularly important and I am aware that the Irish hotline has made, and continues to make, a considerable contribution to European developments in this area.

Working together at all levels of private and public sector activity is crucial to success in ensuring that the huge positive potential of the Internet is not overshadowed by its darker side. The hotline of the Irish Internet Service Provider Industry represents the spirit of that cooperative approach.

Eamonn M Barnes
Chairman, Internet Advisory Board

Preface

This is the first report of the www.hotline service describing the operation of the complaints hotline in relation to illegal Child pornography on the Internet for the period 1st December 1999 to 30th June 2001.

The www.hotline provides a central point of contact for members of the public who become aware of any child pornography on the Internet. The hotline accepts reports about such material and attempts to trace and identify the source of the child pornography. If the material is hosted in Ireland it will request the relevant ISP to remove the material and An Garda Síochána to investigate or alternatively if not hosted in Ireland, pass on the report to the appropriate international hotline.

According to the ODTR*, at the end of July 2001, residential Internet penetration in Ireland was estimated at 33% with an active Internet universe of 560,000, of which the largest proportion are under 25. It is also clear that Internet traffic is becoming increasingly important to the telecommunications industry with Internet minutes now accounting for 25% of all local traffic carried on Eircom's network.

I would like to acknowledge the support of the members of the Internet Advisory Board, especially the Deputy Chairman, Mr John Haskins, the members of the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland and the EU Safer Internet Action Plan who provided part funding for the www.hotline.ie activity.

Cormac Callanan
Director

History of the Hotline

In 1997, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform established a working group on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet and this working group produced a report in July 1998. This report is the basis of the self-regulatory approach by the Internet Service Provider industry to illegal use of the Internet. The report also proposed the establishment of the Internet Advisory Board to enable ongoing dialogue between the industry and all major stakeholders.

The Irish Child Trafficking and Pornography Act was enacted in 1998 and makes it illegal for anyone to knowingly produce, distribute, print, publish, import, export, sell, show or possess any child pornography. While there is a wide range of potential dangers on the Internet, child pornography is a particular concern.

The members of the Internet Service Provider industry are directly aware how the Internet has positively transformed everyone's life and how it continues to do so. When used correctly the Internet is a wonderful tool, its benefits are both educational and informative. It is also an efficient and inexpensive means by which to communicate with friends and family worldwide. The Industry is also aware that there can be negative aspects, particularly when it comes to its use by children. Responding to this challenge is a matter for all of us.

There are usually three major concerns expressed in relation to children accessing the Internet. Firstly, the Internet is a medium where people can find illegal or harmful content about children who are victims of paedophiles - such as Child Pornography. Responding to this requires international co-operation to fight criminal activities - and hotlines to receive complaints.

Secondly, the Internet is a communication tool used by paedophiles to get in touch with children. Combating this requires education and awareness programs for children and parents.

Finally, the Internet is a medium which children can accidentally or deliberately discover and be disturbed by harmful material. This requires parental supervision, technical tools and awareness programs.

To address all these dangers properly, a clear framework of co-operation was set up. It clarified the different tasks of the stakeholders involved (e.g., users, child welfare organisations, industry, governments), according to their knowledge, and their legal and technical means.

Following extensive consultations between Government and industry, the Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Mr. John O Donoghue T.D., launched the www.hotline.ie service, established by the Industry in November 1999. The Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (www.ispai.ie) introduced this hotline service to combat illegal child pornography on the Internet. The Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland co-funds the operating costs of the hotline with additional funding from the EU Safer Internet Action Plan (www.saferinternet.org). There was some contribution from the Irish Government, through the Information Technology Fund, for the promotion and launch of the hotline.

Strategic components
The package of strategic measures proposed by the Working Group on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet focused on four main areas:

- the introduction of a system of self-regulation by the Internet Service Provider industry to include common codes of practice (COPs) and common acceptable usage conditions (AUCs)

- the establishment of a complaints hotline to investigate and process complaints about illegal material on the Internet

- the establishment of an Advisory Body on the Internet to co-ordinate measures so as to ensure a safe Internet environment within the self-regulatory framework. See website www.iab.ie.

- the development of awareness programmes for users which will empower them to protect themselves, or others in their care, from the illegal and harmful material on the Internet.

The Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (www.ispai.ie) was established in January 1998 by the Internet Service Providers in the Irish market. The aim of the association is to provide one voice for the Irish Internet Service Provider industry at national, EU and International level. Refer to Appendix 5 for more details. In addition to being the main forum for the Internet Advisory Board to interact with Industry, the association is represented at many government initiatives and provides a public point of contact for the media and is also involved with a wide range of commercial issues. The association is a not-for-profit activity, which is completely funded by the industry on a cost-sharing basis.

The www.hotline.ie is an important and significant step in the self-regulatory approach by the Irish Internet industry. The success of the www.hotline.ie service is as a result of the strong support and co-operation that the hotline has received from the individual Internet Service Providers in the Association, the Internet Advisory Board and the Government.

The www.hotline.ie service was launched in November 1999 and provides a central point of contact for members of the public who become aware of any child pornography on the Internet. The hotline accepts reports about such material and attempts to trace and identify the source of the child pornography. If the material is hosted in Ireland it will request the relevant ISP to remove the material and An Garda Síochána to investigate. Alternatively, the hotline will pass on the report to the appropriate international hotline.

The www.hotline.ie works closely with, and is a founding member of, the international INHOPE Association (www.inhope.org), which is a network of sixteen hotlines in twelve countries as of September 2001. In May 2001, the director of the Irish hotline was elected to the position of President of the INHOPE Association.

Role of the Hotline

The www.hotline.ie service works closely with the Internet Advisory Board, An Garda Síochána and the Internet Service Providers. The functions of the Hotline are those which were agreed by the Committee on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet and are listed in Appendix 1.

The hotline needs advice and assistance from a partnership-driven forum, which monitors and promotes the overall self-regulation framework. The Internet Advisory Board established in March 2001 ably fulfils this role. Members of the Board include Internet Service Providers, An Garda Síochána, Internet users, Government, the Information Society Commission, education and child protection bodies, a legal advisor and the Director of the hotline. Among the many objectives of the Internet Advisory Board is the supervision of the operations of the www.hotline.ie service and the establishment of viable and transparent procedures for processing complaints.

Funding for the www.hotline.ie service is provided by the Internet Service Providers Association in Ireland and part-funding for the www.hotline.ie service was agreed in May 2000 (until April 2002) from the EU Internet Action Plan programme.

The www.hotline.ie service accepts reports:-
- via the secure website (www.hotline.ie)
- via email (report@hotline.ie)
- via low-call phone service (1890 610 710)
- via low-call fax service (1890 520 720)
- via surface mail (26 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4, Ireland)

Reports can be anonymous if desired. All reports are confidential.

When the www.hotline.ie receives a report it follows a procedure which has been agreed with the Internet Advisory Board and with the Internet Service Providers.

The www.hotline.ie has worked closely with the Internet Service Providers, An Garda Síochána and the Data Protection Commissioner to develop a protocol for the controlled exchange of personal data in the course of a criminal investigation.

Reporting Method
(reports made to Hotline for investigation)

Year	Reporting Method	Count
January - June 2001	eMail	43
	Inhope referral	3
	Letter	2
	Telephone	5
	Hotline website	224
	Total	**277**
January - December 2000	eMail	119
	Inhope referral	2
	Letter	18
	Telephone	22
	Hotline Website	217
	Total	**378**
November - December 1999	eMail	6
	Hotline Website	10
	Total	**16**

Reports Received
(by Internet location of material for investigation)

Year	Report About	Count
January - June 2001	eMail	7
	Web	253
	Spam	1
	News	2
	Chat	2
	Other	12
	Total	**277**
January - December 2000	eMail	19
	Web	309
	Spam	1
	News	15
	Chat	4
	Other	30
	Total	**378**
November - December 1999	eMail	2
	Web	12
	Chat	2
	Total	**16**

External Relations

The success of the www.hotline.ie would be very limited if it exclusively focused on operating in the Irish jurisdiction and context.

The Working Group on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet also highlighted the problems of International illegal content in Section 5.5.3 of the July 1998 report.
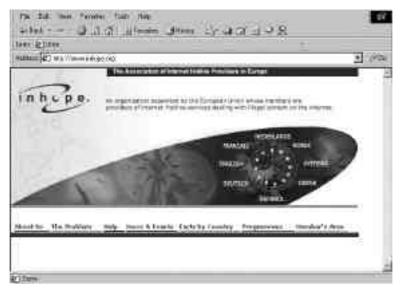
> **"Illegal material stored outside the jurisdiction represents a totally different scenario. The role of the Service Provider is confined to one of providing access. The issue then centres around the ability to "block" access and involves very complex legal and technical considerations already described in the Report. The extent of this problem will diminish as international co-operative measures continue to intensify. International expert opinion suggests that the ability of the service provider to block foreign illegal websites is both limited in its scope and unpredictable in its effectiveness."**

The primary response of the www.hotline.ie to international illegal and harmful content and international issues is through the INHOPE association and through international police organisations such as Interpol and Europol (through An Garda Síochána contacts). The manager of the www.hotline.ie has been an invited participant at the 2000 and 2001 annual High Level experts meeting on Cyber-Crime by Europol. He was also an invited Speaker at the UN Symposium "The Rule of Law in the Global Village" in December in Palermo Italy during the High Level Signing Conference of the UN Convention on Trans-national Organised Crime.

INHOPE
The Internet Hotline Providers in Europe is an organisation established in November 1999 by eight European hotlines and three international hotlines to facilitate international cooperation. The association has since grown to thirteen European hotlines and three international associate hotlines (as of September 2001).

The www.hotline.ie service is a founding member of the INHOPE Association – Internet Hotline Providers in Europe. The INHOPE Association coordinates the activities of the individual hotlines and through regular meetings ensures the extensive sharing of information on the best practices for the operation of an Internet Hotline and tracing of illegal child pornography.

The home page of the Inhope website.

The manager of the www.hotline.ie service was elected as "Executive Member without portfolio" to the INHOPE executive committee from November 1999 until November 2000 and as "Vice-President" from November 2000 to May 2001. The manager of the www.hotline.ie was elected to the role of "INHOPE President" from May 2001. This role has helped understand the broad range of issues which need to be addressed in the operation and daily management of a hotline service.

Since November 1999, the www.hotline.ie manager participated in many INHOPE executive meetings both face-to-face and using teleconference calls with the objective of developing the INHOPE organisation and planning meetings for all members, training courses and web sites.

In addition, the www.hotline.ie manager attended meetings (Dublin, May 2000; Salzburg, September 2000; Paris, November 2000; Stockholm, Febuary 2001 Washington, May 2001) with INHOPE members during this period which discussed many areas of direct relevance to the Irish hotline. These topics included the different operating strategies of hotlines and the range of material which are included in reports and which are investigated.

In addition to the thirteen member hotlines, there are three associate members from the CyberTipline of the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway) and the Australian Broadcasting Authority.

The INHOPE Association exists to facilitate co-operation between European Internet Hotline providers. Its mission is to eliminate child pornography from the Internet and protect young people from harmful and illegal uses of the Internet.

The key functions of the Association are:
- Exchange expertise
- Support new hotlines
- Exchange reports
- Interface with relevant initiatives outside the EU
- Educate and inform policy makers, particularly at the international level

Goals:
- To establish and resource of effective national hotlines.
- To train and support new hotlines
- To foster ongoing Internet safety awareness and education throughout Europe
- The establishment of effective common procedures for receiving and processing reports

Work of the Hotline

Overview of Procedures

This section explains the daily work of the hotline and how reports are processed by the service. Reports are received by email, phone, fax, web or letter.

Once a report is received, it is logged into the www.hotline.ie database system and, if the report is not anonymous, an email receipt is sent to the user who submitted the report. Once the report has been logged the www.hotline.ie attempts to trace the material reported (Trace Attempt). If the material is found then it will be assessed as to whether it is potentially illegal under the Irish Child Pornography and Trafficking Act 1998. If it is potentially illegal under this Act, the location of the material is determined as accurately as possible. (Internet tracing is not always possible under current conditions).

If the reported material is located on an Irish-based server then the manager of that server is identified and the www.hotline.ie issues a notice to An Garda Síochána and to the Internet Service Provider at the same time. The decision to initiate a criminal investigation is a matter for An Garda Síochána. The Internet Service Provider is responsible for the timely removal of the specified potentially illegal content from their servers to ensure that other Internet users cannot access the material. Once this notification is complete, the www.hotline.ie can close the case.

Reports Received (as described by complainant)

Allegation	Reports received January - June 2001	Reports received January - December 2000	Reports received November - December 1999
Child Pornography	251	302	14
Adult Pornography	6	10	2
Racist Material	-	1	-
Illegal Material	4	22	-
Terrorist Related	1	1	-
Financial Scam	-	2	-
Drugs Related	-	1	-
IPR Allegad Violation	-	3	-
Virus Attack	2	-	-
Spam Email	-	4	-
Query	13	26	-
Complaint	-	1	-
Other	-	5	-
	Total: 277	**Total: 378**	**Total: 16**

Total Count June 2001 - 671

The hotline responded to a wide range of queries and issues which arose from the reports received. The table below illustrates the queries which were handled by the hotline.

Responses Processed by Hotline

Area	January - June 2001 Count	January - December 2000 Count	November - December 1999 Count
Adult Pornography	1	-	-
Subscription Only	-	1	-
Not Illegal	-	1	-
Financial Scam	1	1	-
Virus Attack	2	-	-
Spam eMail	-	1	-
Other	23	17	-
Complaint	1	1	-
- Not Found	-	1	1
	Total: 28	**Total: 23**	**Total: 1**

If the material is located on a server in a country that is a member of the INHOPE Organisation, then a report based on the original report will be submitted by the www.hotline.ie to the remote hotline for processing. The case is then closed with the www.hotline.ie service.

Issues Arising

Within the preceding overview of processing reports a number of issues arise which are outlined below. Since the start of the www.hotline.ie service there have been a wide range of issues that arose in receiving and processing reports to the hotline. Many of these issues were resolved with help from other hotline members of INHOPE with more experience.

These issues took significant time to resolve which was beyond that originally planned or anticipated.

• Investigating reports

Reports received by the www.hotline.ie service are often imprecise and point to whole web sites or index/jump sites rather than to specific instances of alleged child pornography. It takes a considerable amount of time to search through a complicated website and traversing complex link structures can be difficult and confusing.

Many sites attempt to restrict access using different methods such as password control, hidden links or even password controlled compressed archive files. In addition, many sites carry advertising banners or console windows which are time consuming to download and can interfere with the safe operation of www.hotline.ie systems. In the case of downloaded files there is the additional risk of virus or more malicious forms of attack.

Investigating the reports received by the www.hotline.ie service has taken significantly more time than was originally anticipated.

• Tracking and Managing reports

The hotline has received a substantial volume of reports from all sources. It has been difficult to manage the reports received from the point of view of tracking and management reporting.

There is no standard software package available for the operation of a hotline service to accept reports from a web site and automatically overlay a management tracking function in a secure, reliable and flexible way. Indeed there is not even a comprehensive requirements definition document available as to the structure and functionality of what such a system would provide.

Several systems were investigated and the system in use by the UK Internet Watch Foundation was extensively reviewed. This system is closest in operation to that required by the www.hotline.ie service. However, this system is designed for a high volume environment where direct web hosting is performed. The www.hotline.ie website is hosted on a secure site provided by an Irish Internet Service Provider. Quotations were solicited and received from the software development organisation used by the IWF but the cost was considered prohibitive.

At a minimum such a system would accept reports from different sources, allow multiple network based access, permit report tracking as part of the investigative system, deliver regular detailed and summary management reports.

It was decided that it would be quicker to develop an in-house Microsoft™ ACCESS database to assist in the process of understanding the requirements. This is currently available in beta version and was back-loaded with the reports received by the hotline since the beginning. However, this process is incomplete and the system will take more time to complete. Some management reports are not yet available although many can now be created regularly. This system is not linked directly to the web site and is separate and independent thereof. This is a major advantage in terms of security.

• Archiving Reports/Material

Inevitably, as the hotline performs an investigation into the reports received, it uncovers material which is deemed to be illegal. Since such material can be easily moved, deleted or updated on a website, it is difficult for the www.hotline.ie service to investigate the website in a non-changing state.

For example, if material on a web site is illegal but outside the jurisdiction of the www.hotline.ie, a report is forwarded to the appropriate international hotline in the target jurisdiction. However, by the time the target hotline investigates the report, the material might have been tampered with and might no longer be illegal. Although this has the clear benefit that the material is no longer available at that location it creates a difficulty in the exchange and subsequent investigation of reports.

Questions arise as to whether the www.hotline.ie service should archive the material on behalf of Law Enforcement or assist in the investigation by other hotlines. Due to the current uncertain regulatory environment, the current decision and considered INHOPE best-practice is that the www.hotline.ies service should NOT archive any material. In most jurisdictions it is illegal for hotlines to store or possess any child pornography.

• Offers of Assistance

From the beginning of its operation, the www.hotline.ie service has received a number of offers of support and direct assistance from members of the public. These people are rightly concerned and offended by the existence of child pornographic material in any form and specifically on the Internet. The www.hotline.ie service is grateful for the level of interest and support it has received.

These offers were evaluated with assistance from the Internet Advisory Board and in consultation with INHOPE best practice recommendations. Arising from the nature of the task and the legal implications involved, it was decided that the work of the hotline should be carried out solely by members of hotline staff.

None of these offers were accepted and the www.hotline.ie service currently operates using its own resources directly.

• Staff Selection and Welfare

The www.hotline.ie service aspires to a high quality service and response time to complaints. The reports received to the www.hotline.ie vary in quantity, quality and complexity making staff planning a difficult activity. It is proposed to have additional staff available to ensure response times remain satisfactory.

However, locating, interviewing and hiring staff for a child pornography hotline service is a difficult process fraught with problems. This is an ongoing subject of discussion with the INHOPE organisation that has been of immediate interest to the www.hotline.ie service. Employees need to be mature, responsible and reliable. Managing this type of material can be difficult and staff welfare is a major concern for a hotline. INHOPE is in the process of developing best practice recommendations in relation to staff welfare.

The www.hotline.ie is evaluating the best approach to this problem and has held discussions with many other hotlines on their experience in this area. A job employee selection process is being drawn up reflecting these international experiences.

• Developing protocol with An Garda Síochána and with Internet Service Providers

Clearly, the www.hotline.ie service has the cooperation of the Internet Service Provider Industry who are uncompromisingly against any illegal activities which avail of internet services. Likewise, the www.hotline.ie service has a close relationship with An Gardaí Síochána.

Under the auspices of the Internet Advisory Board, the www.hotline.ie service has worked closely with An Garda Síochána, the Data Protection Commissioner and the Internet Service Providers to enable the controlled exchange of information required in the process of a Garda Síochána investigation of criminal activity. This protocol involves nominated contacts in each Internet Service Provider and nominated contacts in the An Garda Síochána in conjunction with a standardised request and response form for personal information requests. This form is based on Section 8 of the Data Protection Act 1988.

These contacts enable the www.hotline.ie service to communicate the results of any reports to specific Internet Service Providers enabling the issuing of a "Notice and Take Down" instruction if and

when required. Since the Internet Service Provider industry is in a state of rapid change, this protocol has taken a significant amount of time to develop.

• Rate of Change in Internet Industry

Since the establishment of the www.hotline.ie service, the rate of change and churn in the Internet Industry has been phenomenal. In Ireland alone, we have witnessed a wide a range of mergers and acquisitions, new entrants and new markets in the Internet Industry. The mobile internet access market has strongly established its mark and cable internet services are growing.

All these changes create a very confused environment in the fight against illegal and harmful uses of the Internet. Although the Internet Industry has always been very supportive of the www.hotline.ie service, these significant changes in the market will require the continuing support and commitment from the Internet Service Providers.

Regardless, the www.hotline.ie service continues to work with all these organisations to ensure that it can effectively fulfil its mandate in relation to child pornography on the Internet in Ireland.

• Handling reports for countries where no hotline exists

Many of the reports received by the www.hotline.ie service relate to material in countries/jurisdictions outside the European Union where no known hotline exists. In most of these cases the www.hotline.ie service is powerless to respond and can only forward these reports to An Garda Síochána when appropriate.

The INHOPE association is conscious of this problem and works with many other international organisations to identify suitable contacts in these target countries. This is an ongoing issue that needs constant attention.

• Marketing and Public Relations

The www.hotline.ie service was established to focus on accepting reports from members of the public on illegal child pornography on the Internet. The response to the www.hotline.ie service has been very positive from those reports and responses that have been received.

The www.hotline.ie service does not have a large budget to raise the profile and awareness of the www.hotline.ie and the service it provides. It is important that the www.hotline.ie is widely recognised among Internet users as a place to report illegal child pornography.

The Internet Service Providers have ensured that the www.hotline.ie service is made known on their web sites to their customers and the www.hotline.ie service uses the media contacts to raise the awareness whenever possible.

In addition, the www.hotline.ie service cooperated with the Public Library service in Ireland to ensure posters and leaflets were made available in the public libraries throughout the country where public access to the Internet was provided.

The www.hotline.ie service is now planning to cooperate with Scoilnet and with the Primary and Secondary level school system to raise the awareness of the www.hotline.ie service with pupils, teachers and parents.

Conclusion

In summary, the www.hotline.ie participated in a wide range of activities since the start of operation and gained a wide range of experience in the operation of an Internet hotline service. Many of these activities are ongoing and will continue to produce results over the coming years.

Detecting and confirming the presence of illegal material on the Internet such as child pornography requires a painstaking process of identification, verification and investigation.

The statistical tables illustrate that not all reports originally reported to the hotline turn out to be actionable reports of child pornography. There is no simple one-to-one relationship between the

reports received and the list of reports which were actioned. It will be noted that in most cases, the offending material is, in any event, held outside the jurisdiction.

The hotline is but one of a range of measures used to tackle the problems of child pornography on the Internet. Its ongoing work does represent an important opportunity for the Internet users to respond to the presence of illegal material on the Internet. It clearly demonstrates the commitment of the Internet industry to self-regulation and assists An Garda SÌochána in their role of law enforcement.

Analysis of Reports Received (After hotline investigation and determination)			
Confirmed	**January - June 2001 Count**	**January - December 2000 Count**	**November - December 1999 Count**
Child Pornography	16	23	-
Child Abuse	1	1	-
Child Erotica	18	30	-
Adult Pornography	19	44	6
Extreme Adult	-	1	-
Nudism	1	-	-
Subscription Only	2	1	-
Jump Site	21	34	-
Index Site	5	3	-
Not Illegal	6	10	1
Hacking Site	2	-	-
Pay Site	2	6	-
Racist Material	-	1	-
Terrorist Related	1	2	-
Financial Scam	1	3	-
Drugs Related	-	1	-
IPR Alleged Violation	-	1	-
Virus Attack	3	-	-
Spam eMail	-	4	-
Query	8	18	-
Complaint	1	1	-
Insufficient Detail	6	12	-
Other	6	18	-
- Not Found	158	164	9
Total	**277**	**378**	**16**

Reports Forwarded				
Action Taken	**Target Type**	**January - June 2001 Count**	**January - December 2000 Count**	**November - December 1999 Count**
Forward to US -Cybertipline	Child Pornography	14	18	-
Forward to US -Cybertipline	Child Abuse	1	1	-
Forward to US -Cybertipline	Jump Site	-	1	-
Report to Gardai	Child Pornography	-	2	-
Report to Gardai	Adult Pornography	-	1	-
Report to Hosting Provider	Adult Pornography	-	2	-
Report to ISP	Child Pornography	1	1	-
Report to ISP	Terrorist Related	1	-	-
Report Referral Failure -	Jump site	-	2	-
Report Referral Failure -	Child Pornography	1	3	-
Total		**18**	**31**	**0**

Hotline Report Samples

Sample #1

Report:

The www.hotline.ie received a report from a newspaper reporter indicating that he had seen a website on the internet with an Irish domain name which operated a web-based chat room. In one of the chat activities a young male of 14 stated he was available for sex with any adult males located in Ireland.

Hotline Activity:

The www.hotline.ie firstly confirmed the existence of the website, the chat room and the reported message. It was determined that the website was located in the UK and was registered with the IE Domain Registry. There were no contact details for the website operator.

The public self-written profile of the individual who wrote the chat room message was reviewed and indicated that the individual lived in a Dublin suburb. The UK Internet Watch Foundation was contacted since the website was located in the UK and would therefore be subject to UK law. After consultation with their Law Enforcement contacts it was recommended that An Garda Síochána would best handle the initial investigation.

The report was forwarded to the Garda Síochána. The owner of the website was identified and contacted. He was away on a vacation in the Mediterranean and was unaware of the chat activity until it was brought to his attention. The relevant material was removed from the UK website and the case is still in the hands of An Garda Síochána. The report was closed.

Sample #2

Report:

The www.hotline.ie received a report concerning a range of emails which were being exchange by university students which contained a number of images of popular family cartoon characters participating in family sexual activities. There were animated images of young children having sex with parents and with each other.

Hotline Activity:

The www.hotline.ie catalogued and reviewed the images that were the subject of the report. On consultation of the Irish Child Pornography and Trafficking Act 1998 it was not clear whether the specified material would be considered illegal or would be prosecuted. The www.hotline.ie drew on the expertise of members of the Internet Advisory Board group and their contacts and consulted widely with An Garda Síochána, Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Experts in the UK Internet Watch Foundation hotline and even consulted with the authors of the 1998 Irish Act.

There was a wide range of views but the overall assessment was that the material would unlikely to be strictly illegal under the Act although it was clearly undesirable that such material would exist or would be in circulation. Such material is sometimes used by adults with a sexual interest in children to "groom" the child into believing that sexual activity with adults is acceptable since their favourite cartoon characters are also doing this. On this occasion the report was closed.

Sample #3

Report:

The www.hotline.ie received a report concerning a website which had an Irish language domain name offering products for sale relating to Christmas. The reporter suggested that the website was targeted at Irish children and was concerned that a certain part of the website offered adult sexual toys for sale which was unsuitable for children.

Hotline Activity:

The www.hotline.ie identified the website and verified the existence of the material in question. The website operated under a domain name which was registered in the United States and was hosted by an Irish based web-hosting-provider who was not a member of the ISPAI.

The website had many different areas of activity (over 10) and one of these sections had a contact section for visitors of the website to contact each other. One of the links in this section pointed to a US based website which operated an adult chat service and had links on that page to adult sexual toys. The site reported would therefore be unlikely to have any illegality under Irish law.

The www.hotline.ie was established to deal with illegal child pornography and this report would therefore fall outside the remit of the www.hotline.ie service. However, attempts were made to locate the owner of the website to bring to the owner's attention that the website had received a complaint by the www.hotline.ie service and to explain the nature of the concerns expressed in the complaint. After a period of time, the www.hotline.ie service successfully contacted the owner who had been unaware of the material on the linked website. Steps were taken to remove the offending links as quickly as possible. The report was closed.

Sample #4

Report:

The www.hotline.ie received a report concerning a website which offered a range of compressed, password protected archives which contained large volumes of child pornography. The reporter gave a list of passwords which applied to each file.

Hotline Activity:

The www.hotline.ie accessed the website and downloaded the reported compressed, password-protected archives and accessed the content of the archives using the passwords provided. The material was clearly pre-pubescent children participating in sexual activity with each other and with adults.

The www.hotline.ie traced the possible location of the website which indicated that the website would be located in the United States and forwarded the report to the US Cybetipline service using INHOPE contacts for investigation. The report was closed.

First Report | www.hotline | November 1999 - June 2001

Appendices

Appendix A

Terms of Reference of the www.hotline.ie service
(as agreed by the Committee on the Illegal and Harmful use of the Internet)

- The investigation of complaints from Internet users about illegal material on the Internet.
- The taking of appropriate measures to address identified illegal material hosted, posted or provided within the Irish jurisdiction on the Internet, in collaboration with all the relevant national players, including An Garda Síochána.
- Where illegal material is identified but is outside the jurisdiction, to follow agreed local blocking procedures where feasible, and to liaise with the appropriate national jurisdiction.
- In relation to harmful material on the Internet, to encourage, promote and assist in the development of rating systems for Irish sites in the context of emerging international developments in this area.
- To disseminate information about the hotline service to the Internet user community and to develop user friendly and effective methods for notifying complaints.
- To actively co-operate with similar complaint bodies outside the jurisdiction in the area of exchanging information and experience in all matters relating to its functions.
- To document and implement transparent standards and procedures for its complete range of functions.
- To publicly report on its activities at regular intervals.
- To report to a new Advisory Board on the Internet (see Section 5.4) on all matters which require advice, discussions or decision by the Board, including new Internet developments which the Director feels should be brought to the Board's attention.

Appendix B

Members of the Internet Advisory Board

Interest Represented	Name and Title
Chairman	Eamonn M Barnes
Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform	John Haskins, Chair of Working Group on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet, (Deputy Chairman IAB)
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment	Michael English (Michael Clarke) E Business Unit
An Garda Síochána	Donal Neill, Superintendent Crime Branch
Internet Service Providers Association	Fintan Lawler, General Manager, Eircom Net
Information Society Policy Unit	Michael Moore, Information Society Commission
Data Protection Commission	Ronnie Downes, Assistant Commissioner
Film Censor's Office	Audrey Conlon, Deputy Film Censor
www.hotline.ie	Cormac Callanan, Hotline Director
National Centre for Technology in Education	Jerome Morrissey (John Hurley), Centre Director
Legal	Robert Clark, Professor, Faculty of Law, UCD
Child pornography	Max Taylor, Professor of Applied Psychology, Child Studies Unit, NUI Cork
Children's interest	Marguerite McCormick, Barnardos
Media	David Harvey, Independent Programme Producer, including Crimeline
General Management	Patrick D'Arcy Retired County Manager
Child Psychology	Marie Murray, Clinical Psychologist
Youth support	Terence Kelly, Ográ Chorcaí

Appendix C

Members of the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (Oct 2001)

AOL Europe	www.aol.co.uk	Esat Fusion	www.fusion.ie
Digifone	www.digifone.ie	HEAnet	www.heanet.ie
Eircell e-merge	www.e-merge.ie	UTV Internet	www.utvinternet.ie
Eircom Business	www.eircom.net	Via-net-works	www.via.net-works.ie
Eircom Indigo	www.indigo.ie	Worldcom	www.worldcom.com
Esat Business	www.esatbusiness.ie		

Appendix D

Members of the INHOPE Association (Oct 2001)

Country	Membership Status	Organization Name	Web Address	Membership Date
Australia	Associate	ABA	www.aba.gov.au	1 November 1999
Austria	Full	Stopline	www.stopline.at	1 November 1999
Belgium	Provisional	Child Focus	www.childfocus.be	13 September 2001
Denmark	Provisional	Red Barnet	www.redbarnet.dk	1 March 2001
France	Full	AFA	www.pointdecontact.org	1 November 1999
Germany	Full	Electronic Commerce Forum	www.eco.de	1 November 1999
Germany	Full	FSM	www.fsm.de	1 November 1999
Germany	Full	Jugendschutz	www.jugendschutz.de	1 November 1999
Iceland	Provisional	Barnaheill	www.barnaheill.is	13 September 2001
Ireland	Full	ISPAI	www.hotline.ie	1 November 1999
Netherlands	Full	Meldpunt	www.meldpunt.org	1 November 1999
Norway	Associate	Save the Children	www.reddbarna.no	15 September 2000
Spain	Provisional	ACPI	www.asociacion-acpi.org	1 March 2001
Sweden	Provisional	Rädda Barnen	www.rb.se/hotline	23 November 2000
UK	Full	Internet Watch Foundation	www.iwf.org.uk	1 November 1999
U.S.A	Associate	Cybertipline (NCMEC)	www.ncmec.org	1 November 1999

Appendix E

EU Safer Internet Action Plan – Agreed Objectives of www.hotline.ie Contract

To establish a hotline service in Ireland with extensive collaboration with a European Network of Hotlines. The Hotline will allow Internet Users and Internet Service Providers to report illegal content or use which they become aware of via their use of the Internet. The hotline will initially focus on illegal material involving children/minors and which is explicitly dealt with under the Irish Child Pornography Act 1998.

Tasks

Management

- Oversee the successful establishment of the hotline, and ensure accountability to funders and the public

Operations

- Receive reports of illegal or harmful material on the internet (esp relating to children)
- Track reports
- Investigate reports
- Respond to reports
- Gather statistics to track performance and efficiency and for scientific research
- Liaise with Law enforcement agencies
- Liaise with Law enforcement agencies in relation to reports
- Contribute expertise to government departments, etc in relation to hotline activities
- Attend seminars, conferences to develop industry best practices

Awareness

- Establish web site for hotline and promote this through ISPs and by all other means
- Promote internet safety, where possible in conjunction with others

Contribution to Network

- Sharing information with other hotlines,
- Sharing expertise about responding to illegal content
- Helping with training of new hotlines participating in INHOPE Association meetings and working groups

Expected Results

- Public Internet Hotline to accept reports on illegal child pornography in Ireland will be established
- Volume and results of reports to hotline will be regularly published
- Public awareness will be promoted via seminars and PR process
- 6 month report

Appendix F

Ratified Aims of the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI)

"To promote the interests of Internet Service Providers in Ireland."

Principal Aims

The principal aims of the Association are:

1. To promote accurate and un-biased media coverage of the Internet, Service Providers and Users.
2. To provide a focal point for discussion with political groups and others likely to impact the industry.
3. To establish a Code of Practice for service providers.
4. To establish accepted standards of service and a uniform code of practice acceptable to members.
5. To sponsor research into trends likely to affect Internet Service Providers.
6. To communicate to members, issues and developments relevant to the industry, and to foster communications between members.
7. To foster the industry's image.
8. To encourage an open and competitive environment, and to resist anti-competitive policies and practices.
9. To address any technical issues of specific relevance to the Irish Internet Community.
10. To foster co-operation with related organisations world-wide.

Further information is available on www.ispai.ie.
Further information on the hotline is available on www.hotline.ie

References

First Report of the Working group on the Illegal and Harmful Use of the Internet, July 1998. http://www.justice.ie

Internet Hotlines by Marcel Machill, Alexa Rewer - Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung ISBN 3-89204-555-0

Annual Report of the Internet Watch Foundation, UK http://www.iwf.org.uk

Six Monthly Report on Co-Regulatory Scheme for Internet Content Regulation (July-December 2000) of the Australian Broadcasting Authority http://www.aba.gov.au

Annual Report of the Stopline AT http://www.stopline.at

Advice and Guidance

Here are some guidelines and practises that can be employed in order to increase your families' protection from encountering Child Pornography on the Internet.

Keep it in the open

- Keep your computer in a family room, not in a bedroom, that way you can supervise it's use.

Keep in touch

- Try to interact with your child while they are on the Internet - expressing an interest can be both informative and reassuring.
- Encourage them to show you anything which makes them uncomfortable.

No personal information

- Don't allow your child to give personal information on-line without your permission.
- Examine the privacy policy of a website and those looking for personal information.
- Don't give a child your credit card number - even to make a legitimate purchase.

Chatting can be dangerous

- Strangers on-line are hard to spot. Familiarise yourself with your child's on-line friends.
- Talk to your child about people they contact on-line.
- Never allow your child to have an unsupervised meeting with anyone they meet on-line.

Inform yourself

- Understand the basics of the Internet.
- Ask your ISP about how special software programs can be used to help protect your child.
- Use your children's expertise!

Contact Details
EMail: report@hotline.ie (to make a report)
                    info@hotline.ie   (for General Information)

Telephone: 1890 610 710
Fax: 1890 520 720
www: www.hotline.ie
Postal Address: www.hotline, 26 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4