

25<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## **Freedom of Information Request – Reference No:20181076**

### **REQUEST**

*I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 200 to request the following information about so-called Paedophile Hunters.*

*This request is for the time period starting from January 2015 up until the most recent date you hold records to.*

*I would like to know the following:*

- 1. How many incidents in relation to the offences listed below were recorded by your force where some or all of the evidence was supplied by so-called Paedophile Hunters?*
- 2. How many of those incidents were subsequently acted on and recorded as a crime and how many resulted in a person being prosecuted.*
- 3. How many of those acted upon led to convictions?*

*Offences in relation to:*

- 18 or over attempt to cause / incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity - no penetration*
- Attempt to cause / incite a boy 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity - offender 18 or over - penetration*
- Attempt to cause / incite a boy aged 13 to 15 to engage in a penetrative sexual activity - offender aged under 18*
- Attempt to cause / incite a boy under 13 to engage in sexual activity - no penetration*
- Attempt to cause / incite a female child aged under 13 to engage in sexual activity - no penetration*
- Attempt to cause / incite a female child under 13 to engage in sexual activity - offender 18 or over - penetration*
- Attempt to cause / incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity - offender 18 or over - penetration*
- Attempt to cause / incite a girl aged 13 to 15 to engage in a penetrative sexual activity - offender aged under 18*
- Offender 18 or over attempt to cause / incite a boy under 13 to engage in sexual activity - no penetration*
- Offender under 18 attempt to cause / incite a girl 13 to 15 to engage in sexual activity - no penetration*
- Cause a child aged 13 to 15 to watch / look at an image of sexual activity - offender 18 or over*
- Offender 18 or over attempt to cause a child aged 13 to 15 to watch / look at an image of sexual activity*
- Offender 18 or over cause a child under 13 to watch / look at an image of sexual activity*
- Adult attempt to meet a boy under 16 years of age following grooming*
- Adult attempt to meet a girl under 16 years of age following grooming*

### **REQUEST update**

*Further to my FOI sent yesterday 13.06.2018 re the above subject.*

*Can I ask that when searching any systems a search all also made for any Paedophile Hunters groups known to your force as searching just the for the term Paedophile Hunter may not bring up any results, as some*

*incidents may have been reported by a group.*

## CLARIFICATION

You may find that research of the Log may be worthwhile prior to submitting future requests as this may well result in the information being available immediately rather than any delay resulting from the process of responding to a request under the Act. In particular, we would draw your attention to the following entries: -

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/find-out/accessing-information/request-information-under-the-freedom-of-information-act/paedophile-hunter-groups-ref-20180075/>

You should also note we are not the holders of Prosecution/Conviction data and the Ministry of Justice should be approached for this element.

## FROM THE REQUESTOR

*Please process my request as is save for removing the part which asks for conviction numbers*

## RESPONSE

I approached our Crime Management Data Returns Administrator for assistance with your request. The CMS system and Connect System is used to record complaints or allegations of those matters, which the Home Office specify should be recorded as 'crimes'.

She conducted a search of the two crime management systems. (CMS - our legacy system which provides data up to 4th December 2017 and our new CONNECT system which records crimes from that date onwards)

You should be aware that disclosure of information on a 'line by line' basis – giving the date, the crime, the location, and the outcome may make it possible to identify individuals from that data, and/or other information in the possession of a data controller. It is not therefore available in this format as it would be exempt from release under Section 40(2) *Personal Information* of the FOI Act.

However, I believe giving the data in a tabled format will mitigate this concern; providing meaningful data whilst upholding the privacy of the victims of crime.

They were able to provide me with data from which the attached spreadsheets have been compiled.

### *CMS data –*

*I have included a count of Sexual Offences recorded on the CMS crime register where 'paedophile hunter' is recorded within the circumstances of offence free text field between 01-Jan-2015 and 04-Dec-2017.*

### *CONNECT data –*

*I have included a count of Sexual Offences recorded on CONNECT for crime where 'paedophile hunter' is recorded within the Initial MO free text field between 05-Dec-2017 and 30-Jun-2018.*

*Again as previously stated, searching for specific words will not identify any spelling mistakes\variations therefore using this method may not reflect what is potentially recorded on our crime management systems.*

*Searching the circumstances of offences free text field within CMS or Initial MO free text field within CONNECT for the word PAEDOPHILE will not find any offences where this word is spelled incorrectly i.e. PEADOPHILE.*

- In addition, the outcomes CHARGED, SUMMONS and CAUTIONS changed in 2017 and we now specifically record for what offence, the offender was charged i.e. CHARGED is now recorded as either CHARGED WITH OFFENCE RECORDED Or CHARGED WITH AN ALTERNATIVE OFFENCE, therefore the outcomes are applicable depending on the year recorded the offence was recorded.*
- We have had to take a slightly different approach to extracting the data from CONNECT as the data is not recorded in the same format as the legacy system CMS. SYP have changed their central crime management system in December 2017. Therefore data from the new system cannot be used as a direct comparison due to the different ways in which crimes are recorded. However, the data has been given to comply with original request and displayed here to show an outline trend.*

Please note that while we are the information holders of outcomes of incidents the Ministry of Justice would be better placed to provide you with any information regarding court case/convictions.