Home Office

CAID
Child Abuse Image Database
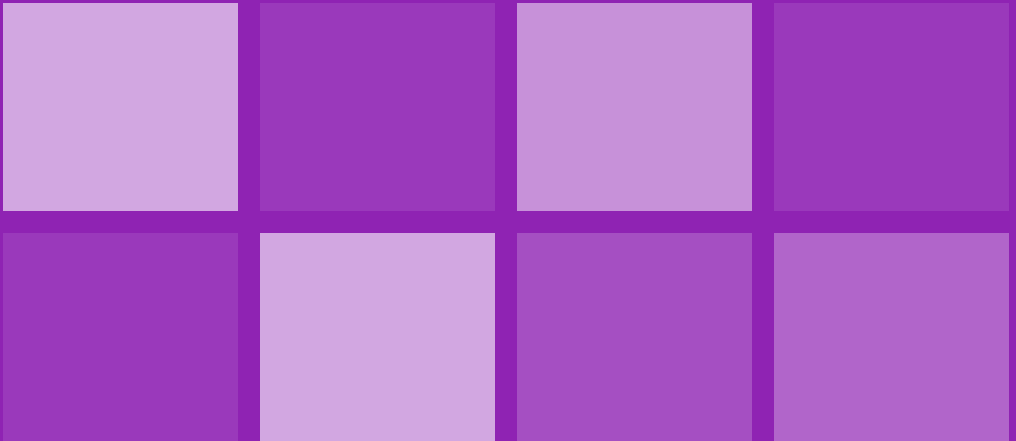
The Child Abuse Image Database (CAID)

May 2018

- Secure Database of Illegal Images and Videos of Children to aid UK Law Enforcement
- Analytical Capability to help Identify Victims and Perpetrators of Online Child Sexual Exploitation
- Facial, Object and Relationship Matching
- Enables Collaborative Working across UK Law Enforcement
- Streamline Forensic Reports

The problem

- Just 25 years ago, there were thousands of indecent images of children in circulation. Today, that number is in the millions.
- The number of recorded child sexual abuse offences has increased rapidly since Operation Yewtree began in October 2012. In the year to June 2017, there were 68,699 child sex offences, up 24% from the previous year.
- Technology has played a significant role in changing patterns of abuse. The Internet:
  - makes it easier for abusers to connect;
  - gives perpetrators a sense of anonymity;
  - makes it easier to access and share images of abuse; and
  - makes sharing images an increasingly international crime.

What is CAID?

The creation of the Child Abuse Image Database (CAID) to contribute to the fight against online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA) was announced at the WePROTECT Summit in 2014.

CAID:

- helps identify and safeguard victims.
- makes investigating Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse faster and more effective.
- supports international efforts to remove images from the Internet

CAID uses the latest technology to transform how we deal with images of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. It brings together all the images that the Police and NCA encounter. Forces then use the images' unique identifiers – called hashes - and metadata to improve how they investigate these crimes and protect children.

The Home Office developed CAID in collaboration with the police, industry partners and British and international Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). CAID went live with seven police forces in December 2014 and was rolled out across UK territorial police forces and the National Crime Agency the following year.

CAID Who's Who

Home Office is the UK Government lead department and provided project management for CAID during development and implementation

West Yorkshire Police hosts CAID and provides day to day support to police forces when they use CAID

National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) is responsible for CAID data alongside Police Scotland and Police Service of Northern Ireland

National Crime Agency (NCA) is the UK agency that leads the fight to cut serious and organised crime, including CSEA

Claritas UK SME which supports CAID users on technical issues

L3 ASA UK company providing support on CAID Software

Hubstream US SME which provides software to manage hashes and uploads to CAID

Griffeye Swedish SME which provides software for image intelligence on CAID

DataLynx UK SME which supported police forces to ensure that they connected to CAID by November 2015.

What does CAID do?

CAID has underpinned work to deliver real improvement

Views from early adopter Police forces

- "It takes less time to review images. Previously, a case with 10,000 images would typically take up to 3 days. Now, after matching images against CAID, a case like this can be reviewed in an hour."
- "CAID has helped shift the balance between reviewing images to identifying victims. The new system is a lot faster and recognises victims quicker."
- "We use the CAID hash set as part of the triage process at the scene to identify devices that contain images of abuse. This process helps reduce how many devices the officer needs to seize – sometimes by more than half"
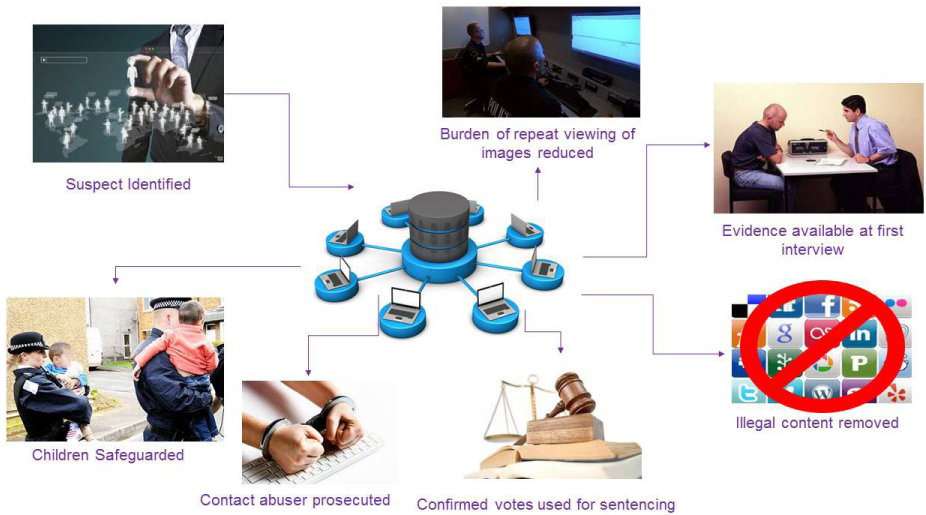
CAID can help streamline the investigation and prosecution of offenders and protect children in a number of ways (see diagram on page 4):

1. On-site triage or initial assessment at arrest with CAID hashes helps the police when they prioritise which of the suspect's devices need further analysis. This eases the burden on digital forensics teams.
2. CAID can help identify images of abuse on devices more quickly so that cases can start and evidence be presented sooner.
3. CAID helps identify victims more quickly by sharing images more easily between agencies and has helped the UK become a world leader, second now only to the US.
4. Hashes of images on CAID can be provided to communication service providers to help them in their efforts to remove these images from the Internet.

Operation Noblebridge, May 2015

West Yorkshire Police used a forensic tool with the CAID hash set to scan a suspect's hard drive. The scan matched 1200 images of abuse on the device against the CAID data within 15 minutes. The suspect was presented with this evidence during their first interview. Previously, this could have taken months to progress the case.

How CAID Works

Suspect Identified

Burden of repeat viewing of images reduced

Evidence available at first interview

Children Safeguarded

Contact abuser prosecuted

Confirmed votes used for sentencing

Illegal content removed

What more do we need to do?

Now that policing across the UK are all connected to CAID, the work doesn't stop. We want to continue to innovate. In fact, we need to as technology continues to change and we need to keep up with those exploiting this technology to share images of abuse.

Victim Identification, March 2015

Procedures to identify victims of child abuse have been developed as a result of the UK Victim Identification Strategy, built around CAID, and West Yorkshire Police have used these in conjunction with NCA to identify first generation images and potential contact offences. In one case, they were able to quickly identify and safeguard an 18 month old child who was a victim of child abuse by a close family member who has been successfully convicted at court.

We also want to work with other government and law enforcement agencies to adopt similar approaches to tackle this abhorrent crime on a truly global scale to help safeguard victims and bring offenders to justice in every part of the world.

Want to know more?

To find out more, contact:

- CAID Business Support Team, West Yorkshire Police: caidbusinesssupport@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk