



# Ministry of Defence Police

Freedom of Information Manager

Ministry of Defence Police

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Our Ref: eCase: FOI 2022/03138

RFI: 056/22

Date: 5 April 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE: PEDOPHILE HUNTER GROUPS.**

We refer to your email dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to the Ministry of Defence Police which was acknowledged on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

We are treating your email as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).

In your email you requested the following information:

**Breaking the figures into each year for the following years 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011, please answer the below questions. Please also include a keyword search for 'paedophile hunter group' to try and establish how many can be directly attributed to the groups. If such a search is not possible, please advise in the response. (i.e. year 2021- crimes 47, positive outcomes 12, keyword search 14.)**

**How many crimes have been recorded for the following offences and if records allow, how many have led to a positive conclusion such as charge, community resolution or charge? If there has been any change in your crime recording which may impact the figures, please provide details and dates.**

**Arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence contrary to section 14 of the 2003 Act (Grooming).**

**Offence contrary to section 15A of the 2003 Act namely, sexual communication with a child.**

**Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity contrary to sections 8 or 10 of the 2003 Act (or attempting to do so).**

**Indecent images of children (IIOC) offences, possess or distribute.**

**What is your constabularies policy when dealing with potential paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups)? What guidance is provided to attending officers of 'stings'?**

**Has your constabulary conducted any pro-active work with any paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups)? Such as provide training on statements, legal guidelines etc?**

**Have you mapped paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups) in the area you police? Do you know how many there are?**

**Would your force lead be interested in exploring working with paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups) in an effort to manage the risk presented to the target, manage the safeguarding risks resultant from the activities and increase the quality of evidence with an aim to achieving an increase in prosecutions and reducing investigation time?**

A search for information has now been completed by the Ministry of Defence Police and I can confirm that we do hold information in scope of your request.

**Breaking the figures into each year for the following years 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012 and 2011, please answer the below questions. Please also include a keyword search for 'paedophile hunter group' to try and establish how many can be directly attributed to the groups. If such a search is not possible, please advise in the response. (i.e. year 2021- crimes 47, positive outcomes 12, keyword search 14.)**

**How many crimes have been recorded for the following offences and if records allow, how many have led to a positive conclusion such as charge, community resolution or charge? If there has been any change in your crime recording which may impact the figures, please provide details and dates.**

**Arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence contrary to section 14 of the 2003 Act (Grooming).**

No Information held

**Offence contrary to section 15A of the 2003 Act namely, sexual communication with a child.**

No Information held

**Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity contrary to sections 8 or 10 of the 2003 Act (or attempting to do so).**

2011 – 3

2021 – 2

2021 – 1

**Indecent images of children (IIOC) offences, possess or distribute.**

2011 - 5

2012 – 1

2013 – 2

2014 – 0  
2015 - 6  
2016 – 3  
2017 - 2  
2018 - 2  
2019 – 2  
2020 - 4  
2021 – 0

**What is your constabularies policy when dealing with potential paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups)? What guidance is provided to attending officers of 'stings'?**

The MOD Police follow National Policing guidelines, legislation and case law in respect of 'sting' operations.

**Has your constabulary conducted any pro-active work with any paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups)? Such as provide training on statements, legal guidelines etc?**

No information held

**Have you mapped paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups) in the area you police? Do you know how many there are?**

No information held

**Would your force lead be interested in exploring working with paedophile hunter groups (Online Child Abuse Activist Groups) in an effort to manage the risk presented to the target, manage the safeguarding risks resultant from the activities and increase the quality of evidence with an aim to achieving an increase in prosecutions and reducing investigation time?**

No information held

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk).

Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the

Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

**MDP Secretariat and Freedom of Information Office**