



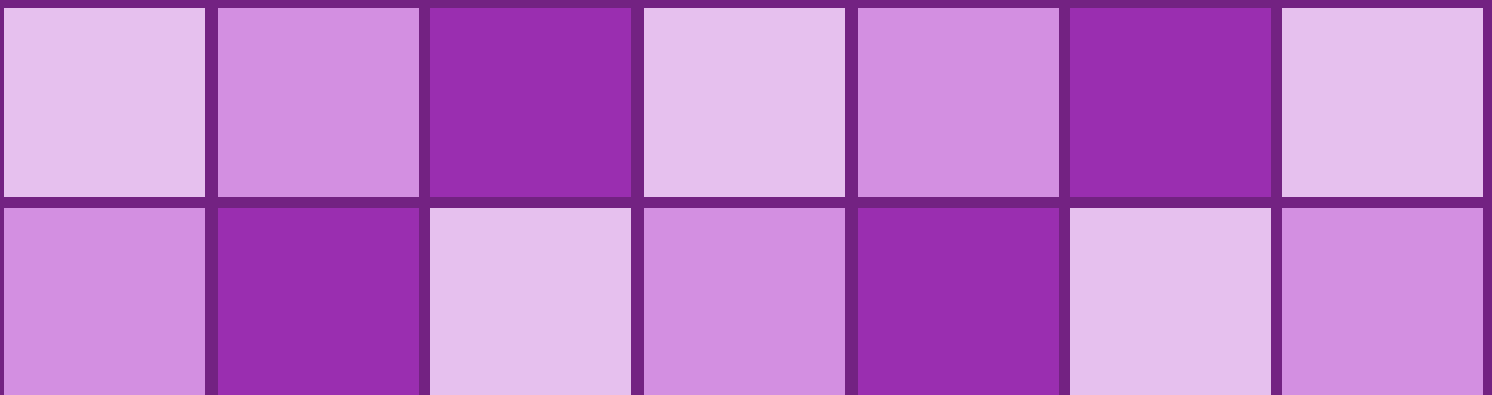
Home Office



Child Abuse Image Database (CAID)

Empowering Law Enforcement through technology to protect children and identify offenders of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

May 2024



What is CAID?

The Child Abuse Image Database (CAID) is a secure national database of images, videos and metadata of illegal Child Sexual Abuse Materials (CSAM) acquired by UK police and the National Crime Agency (NCA), enabling collaboration across UK Law Enforcement.

CAID is a key part of the national IT solution to fight against Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, a priority UK national threat. The Home Office developed CAID in collaboration with the police, industry partners and British & international technology companies. CAID went live in December 2014 and was rolled out across all UK territorial police forces and the National Crime Agency.

CAID provides a suite of tools that increases efficiency and intelligence for investigations, using the latest technology to transform how Child Sexual Abuse Materials are investigated to protect children.

CAID helps identify and safeguard victims, and identify offenders by:

Making investigating Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation cases faster and more effective.

Support international partners to remove indecent images from the internet, identify and safeguard victims and identify offenders around the world.

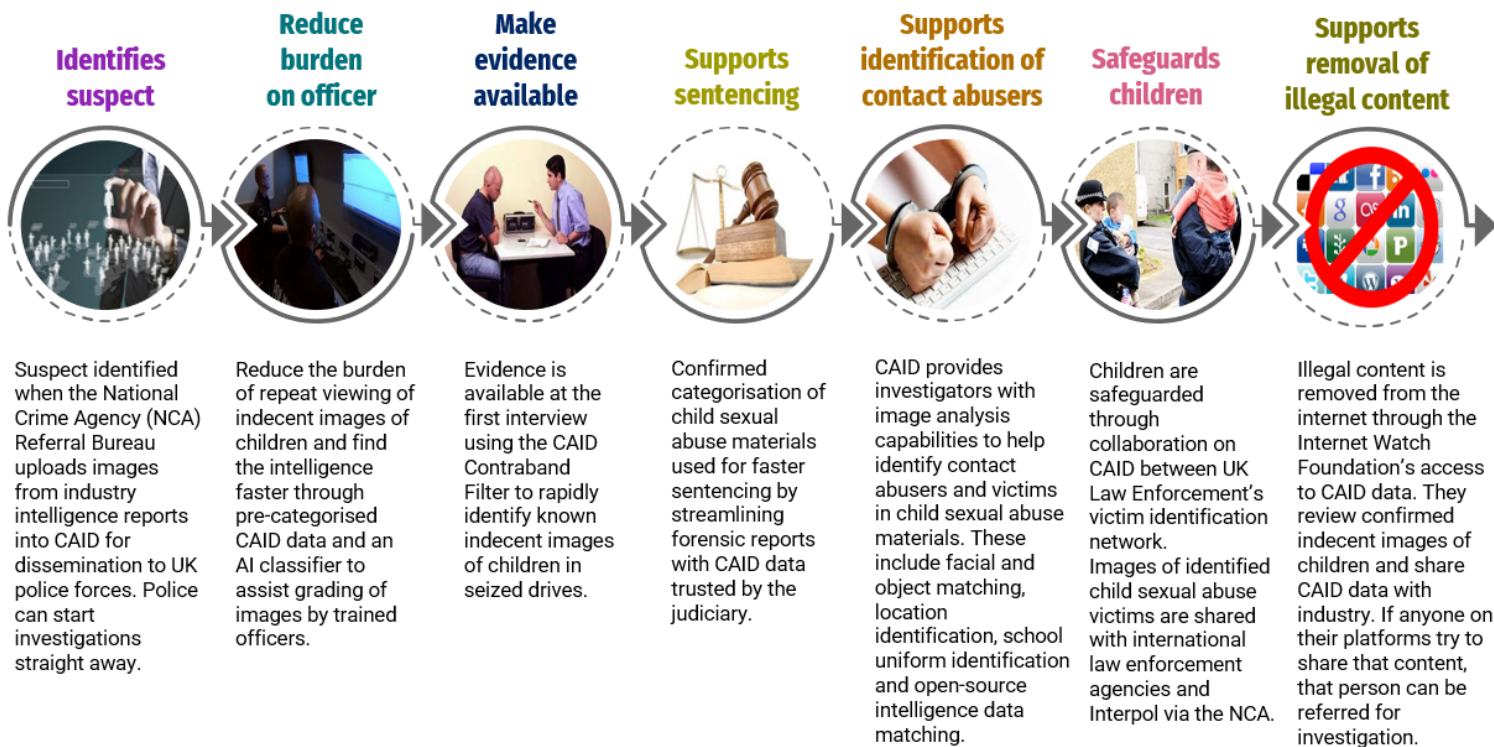
Who works with CAID?

- **UK Police Forces** - all UK police forces have access to CAID to share data and use for investigations. Forces also support the development and testing of CAID tools.
- **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 CSAE.
- **Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)** - is a not-for-profit organisation that works to make the internet a safer place, by identifying & removing global online child sexual abuse imagery.
- **International Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)** – LEAs from around the world, in particular the Five Eyes countries (United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia) work closely to collaborate on developing new tools, share data and knowledge.

The problem

- In 2023, the NCA estimated that there are between 680,000 and 830,000 UK based adult offenders who pose varying degrees of risk to children, equivalent to 1.3% to 1.6% of the UK adult population.
- Huge explosion of child abuse material on the internet - in 2022 the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) received over 32 million reports from the public, containing nearly 88.3 million images and videos.
- The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse estimate about 500,000 children are abused each year in England and Wales.
- Social and economic cost of child sexual abuse in the UK is estimated to be £10.1 billion.
- Advancements in technology and the growth of the internet has played a significant role in changing patterns of abuse by:
 - making it easier for abusers to connect.
 - giving perpetrators a sense of anonymity.
 - making it easier to access and share images of abuse.
 - making sharing illegal images an increasingly international crime.

How are CAID tools used?



Feedback from UK 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.”
- “...helps us get to the images we need to prioritise which is really valuable. It allows officers to make those sort of fast time decisions about safeguarding rather than a couple of days later or weeks later when they have had time to sort through large numbers of images.”

How does CAID help?

CAID can help streamline and increase efficiency of the investigation and prosecution of offenders and protect children in a number of ways:



On-site initial assessment at arrest with CAID data helps the police to quickly identify images of child sexual abuse on suspect's devices. This assists them in prioritising devices for further analysis and enables cases to start with evidence presented sooner.



Provides artificial intelligence to process immense volumes of data and cutting-edge analytical capabilities such as facial/object matching and school uniform identification to gather intelligence.



Helps law enforcement agencies to identify victims faster by enabling them to share images and intelligence more easily in the UK and internationally. This has helped the UK become a leader in the fight against Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation.



CAID data is shared with the Internet Watch Foundation who engage with industry to detect and remove online child sexual abuse materials and prevent it from being spread on the internet.

The road ahead

Policing across the UK are all connected to CAID, however the work doesn't stop here. As technology continues to change, there is a need for continued innovation to keep up with those exploiting this technology to share images of abuse.

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



Home Office



If you would like to find out more information, please contact:

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