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SWROCU CSEA Problem Profile January 2019

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Not all crimes linked to CSAE fall under sexual offences therefore there were limitations and some offences were not included, these being take or making of indecent images of children (IIOC) or possession of these images, blackmail and obscene publications. This data was not included due to the manual work needed to determine whether they matched the definition of CSA or CSE.

A data request was also sent to partner agencies in the South West in the form of a CSAE related questionnaire.¹ See appendices for full list of partner agencies that contributed towards this report. These partners are based across the region and have involvement either with victims or offenders of CSAE. Partner agencies are likely to hold different information and intelligence to local police forces and tend to focus more on safeguarding and supporting victims. All the agencies that were contacted were asked the following questions:

- *Details of the Organisation and what services are provided to victims and/or perpetrators*
- *How often contact is made with victims and/or perpetrators*
- *Details of any new or established trends identified*
- *Locations of interest*
- *Offender and victim profiles that have been identified*

Executive Summary

As a result of the expanded data collection, the extent of CSAE is higher in the South West region than previously recorded. The data returned from the alternative search parameter was more consistent and quickly identified the under use of the flagging systems in place where relevant. Using this search parameter gives a better overall picture of the scale of CSAE in the South West region.

Following investigation over half (58%) of CSAE crimes did not progress to prosecution due to evidential difficulties, this included either with or without support of the victim.

Victims are most commonly white females between the ages of 13 to 15; this replicates the national picture and continues the regional trend with suspects more commonly being individual white males.

Concerns have been raised by the National Crime Agency (NCA) about the overall exploitation of young people within gangs and groups. There are very few incidents and

intelligence in the South West region to prove or disprove that CSAE is occurring within gang culture.

Nationally, there is an increasing trend in CSAE online and a recent proposal to work with the technology industry by the government has been made to tackle this issue. Due to the lack of use of the online/cyber flag it's been difficult to identify the trend in CSAE online in the South West region.

The development of Online CSAE Activists Groups (OCAGs) formerly known as "paedophile hunters" or "vigilante groups" has been seen since the last regional problem profile in 2016 however the number of incidents involving these groups has decreased over the previous year in comparison to 2017.