

## **One page summary - public hearings in phase two of the Internet investigation**

This investigation will explore the response of the internet industry and the government to online child sexual abuse.

This includes various types of abuse, such as downloading or possessing indecent images of children, grooming a child through sexual communication and the live streaming of sexual abuse.

The two week public hearing forms the second phase of the Inquiry's investigation into the Internet and Child Sexual Abuse. The first phase was held in January 2018 and considered the response of law enforcement.

Ofcom figures show that 99 percent of 12-15-year-olds go online for more than 20 hours per week, while 83 percent of 12-15-year-olds have their own smartphone. These statistics highlight just how easily accessible children are to those intent on causing them harm.

The Inquiry will investigate what is being done to keep children safe by internet service providers, software companies, social media platforms, search engines and messaging services.

Representatives of Google, BT, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft are among those due to give evidence. Some of the issues that will be addressed include:

- Who has access to services (which includes age limits and parental controls)?
- The prevention and detection of child sexual abuse material
- How service providers engage with law enforcement

The hearing will also consider the government's response to child sexual abuse facilitated by the internet, including the new Digital Economy Act which is due to come into force in July.

The government's 'Online Harms White Paper', published in April this year, will be considered as well. The White Paper proposed the establishment of a new regulatory framework for online safety, underpinned by a statutory duty of care to make companies take more responsibility for the safety of their users.

**Useful definitions:** **IIOC** - Indecent images of children. **CSAM** - Child sexual abuse material. **CEOP** - The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command, part of the **NCA** - National Crime Agency. **CSEA** - Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. **NCMEC** - National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. **CAID** - Child Abuse Image Database.