

25. Graph 2 at ANB/1 illustrates the age range of victims from those reports which is predominantly between 11 and 15 years of age. In 84%, the victims were female as illustrated by Chart 2 at ANB/1.
26. Chart 3 at ANB/1 indicates which website or 'App' was used as recorded in those reports with significant percentages shown against Facebook/Messenger, Instagram and Snapchat (23%, 23% and 18% respectively).
27. In addition to identifying females between the ages of 11 and 15 years as target victims, analysis suggests victims are being approached by unknown users when they are using social network websites to communicate with friends in late afternoon to early evening. Children are particularly vulnerable to the exploitation of online predators because they rely heavily on networking websites for social interaction. Predators join group chats to try and befriend a sole victim and develop trust. Initially, the victim will engage in "friendly chat" until the conversation becomes sexual; if photos or videos are shared, the victims will delete all trace of messages. With the growth of the internet, predators have opportunities to entrap new victims potentially of an even younger age, making them more vulnerable to longer periods of grooming. With groups of friends using sites such as YouTube and Musically to share videos, there is also the opportunity for predators to "watch" victims without their knowledge.

6) As regards nature, all relevant matters including:

i) The types of conduct which the force regards as comprising online child sexual abuse

28. Online child sexual abuse investigated by Kent Police includes but is not limited to:
 - Inciting, causing child sexual exploitation / abuse online;
 - Arranging the commission of child sex offence/ grooming online; and
 - Taking, making, possession and distribution of indecent images (regardless of age of the offender and including 'self-generated' indecent images sent to others).

ii) Current, emerging, and future threats in your force area

Current threat

29. The major current threat relates to the demand placed on POLIT arising from the volume of work in terms of referrals and operations.
30. The establishment of POLIT was reviewed in 2016 as part of a major re-organisation of Kent Police. It was recognised that the workload within POLIT was becoming unmanageable and could jeopardise the force's ability to deliver against its overarching strategic ambitions to protect vulnerable child victims and to place victims at the heart of all we do, as contained in the Kent Police Control Strategy and the Mission, Vision, and Values published by the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner, exhibited as ANB/2 and ANB/3 respectively. As detailed under heading 1) above, POLIT has doubled in size but continues to see an upsurge in demand from online child sexual abuse.
31. Referrals and operations for POLIT have increased steadily over the years. Graph 3 at ANB/1 illustrates the increase between 2011 and the current date during which demand has nearly doubled. The number of referrals resulting in an investigation by the Operations team has increased by 172% over the same period.

Future and emerging threats

32. The following are identified as future and emerging threats.
 - i. Proactive investigations into the sharing of indecent images of children ("IIOC")*
33. Proactive investigations are now progressed at a regional level. These have reduced in number due to the increase of NCA-CEOP and other force referrals to Kent Police, the latter increasing from 40% of POLIT's workload to the current 60% within two years.
 - ii. Volume referrals*
34. The NCA-CEOP disseminations have increased significantly over the last two years, as stated above, and have impacted on the ability to target online offenders proactively as a result.

iii. Live streaming of CSE

35. [REDACTED]

iv. Grooming and blackmail/extortion

36. Grooming is currently the fastest growing part of POLIT's work. Frequently blackmail is used, usually to elicit the sending of indecent images; extortion is also emerging, seen in cases of adult males being blackmailed by offenders. The impact on male children is such that some cases have resulted in suicide or attempted suicide.

v. Cloud Storage

37. We are starting to see an increase in the use of Cloud storage by offenders. Cloud [REDACTED]

iii) Any distinguishing characteristics or trends in online child sexual abuse perpetrated by children and young people in your force area

38. We are currently seeing trends in cyber trolling, bullying and harassment concerning adolescent children, e.g. "outing" on social media, predominantly Snapchat. Children report that they have sent indecent images of themselves to peers but the recipient posts the image on 'Snapchat story' for others to see, leading to the victim being bullied and degraded.
39. Another identified trend is groups set up solely with the purpose of naming and shaming children with their image, for others to see, resulting in groups within schools bullying children offline as well as online long after the material has been deleted. Often we are unable to identify who is responsible (again, due to the frequent use of Snapchat).

7) As regards scale, all information and data including all relevant and available statistics or estimates from as far back in time as possible, including:

(i) The number of referrals made to the force by NCA-CEOP

40. Before 2011, NAC-CEOP referrals were not directed exclusively to POLIT, meaning accurate figures before this time are difficult to obtain.
41. Table 1 below shows the number of referrals received by year since 2011 and the number made by NCA-CEOP.

Year	All Referrals	NCA-CEOP Referrals
2011	200	89
2012	315	65
2013	255	50
2014	293	126
2015	303	181
2016	333	150
2017	394	258

Table 1 – Referrals to POLIT

(ii) The number of arrests, charges, and convictions for online child sexual abuse offences

42. It is not possible to provide the total number of charges brought without a detailed examination of every case, however, the number of individuals charged is provided under heading 8) iv) (2) below. The number of arrests and convictions (which for present purposes includes cautions) per year is as follows in Table 2.

Year	Arrests	Convictions
2011	100	77
2012	99	85
2013	98	82
2014	106	82
2015	132	92

Table 2 – Arrests and resulting convictions

43. There were 176 arrests in 2016, 81 of which resulted in a conviction or caution and 36 of which await the outcome of criminal proceedings.
44. There have been 149 arrests in 2017 but it is too early to give an indication of outcome.