

Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland

Dublin, 29th November 1999

The Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Mr. John O'Donoghue T.D. today launched the www.hotline.ie service on behalf of the Internet Service Provider Association of Ireland.

The www.hotline.ie will provide a central point of contact for members of the public who become aware of any child pornography on the Internet in Ireland. The hotline will accept reports about such material and attempt to identify the source. If the material is hosted in Ireland it will request the relevant ISP to remove it. In some instances, appropriate liaison with the Garda' maybe required. Where the material is not hosted in Ireland, contact will be made with the relevant international hotline.

The www.hotline.ie can be contacted by surfing to www.hotline.ie or sending an email to report@hotline.ie. In addition the hotline will operate a LoCall telephone number on 1890-610710 and faxes can be sent to 1890-520720.

The Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland funds the operating costs of the hotline. A once off contribution from the Irish Government, through the information society fund, has been made for the promotion and launch of the hotline. Additional funding will be sought next year under the EU Internet Action Plan initiatives.

The www.hotline.ie will work closely with, and is a founding member of, the international IN-Hope Association (www.inhope.org) which is a network of eight hotlines in five European countries. The IN-Hope Association will develop procedures and share information on the best practices for the tracing and tracking of illegal child pornography. In addition to the eight member hotlines, there are three associate members from the CyberTipline of the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), REDD BARNA (Save the Children Norway) and the Australian Broadcasting Authority.

The Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 makes it illegal for anyone to knowingly produce, distribute, print, publish, import, export, sell, show or possess any child pornography.

Cormac Callanan, Chairman of the ISPAI, acknowledged that this was an important and significant step towards self-regulation in the Irish Internet industry and paid tribute to the strong support and co-operation the association had received from the major Internet Service Providers in the Irish market.

Speaking at the launch, the Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Mr. John O Donoghue T.D., in his launch speech stated that he was particularly pleased that the Irish service provider industry, in establishing and funding this hotline initiative, had united in this most honourable common endeavour - the protection of children.

Notes: The Internet Service Provider Association of Ireland was founded in 1997 to publicly represent the Irish Internet Service Providers in Ireland. It currently has 6 members comprising of EsatNet, EircomNet, IrelandOnline/Postgem, Indigo, Medianet/ClubInternet and HEAnet. Two additional organisations are in the process of joining:- MCI/Worldcom and Ocean Internet Services.

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