

**The Internet Service Providers' Association of Ireland  
Announces the publication of the  
"Second Report Of The www.hotline.ie Service"  
For the two-year period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2003**

**Tuesday 4th May 2004**

Today, the ISPAI published the 2nd report of www.hotline.ie, the service that processes complaints from the public about illegal material, particularly child pornography, encountered when using the Internet. www.hotline.ie has been operating since November 1999.

Launched by Brian Lenihan T.D., Minister of State with responsibility for Children at the Departments of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; Health and Children; and Education and Science, the report covers the two-year period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2003.

Over that time the Hotline received 1792 reports of material which members of the public suspected to be illegal.

This is a 123% increase on the number of reports received in the preceding two-year period.

Approx. 70% of these reports cited suspected child pornography. (Roughly 9% complained about adult pornography, another 9% were non-specific in their allegation and the rest referred to financial scams, virus attacks, hacking, etc.)

Hotline investigation of the reported material and discovery of sites linked from these, resulted in 357 cases of probably illegal material.

After removal of duplicates, reports from different sources referring to the same material, 213 unique reports of probably illegal material remained.

**None of the 213 reports, determined by the Hotline as probably illegal, referred to material either hosted or distributed from the Republic of Ireland. All were traced to locations outside of the jurisdiction.**

Of these, approx. 50% was apparently located in a country where an INHOPE member hotline exists. Tracing details were forwarded to the member hotline for action as required by law within those jurisdictions.

5% were traced to countries where no INHOPE hotline exists and so were forwarded to the Gardai to channel to the appropriate authorities through Interpol. Around 40% could not be positively traced or referred onwards.

Over the 2 years, techniques to avoid detection have become more commonly used by those distributing illegal material on the Internet. This is particularly the case of paedophile rings. Through the coordination of INHOPE, hotlines are sharing new techniques with each other and law enforcement to meet this challenge. International co-operation is increasing with new countries joining the 17 now in INHOPE.

Reports of unsolicited commercial e-mail ("spam"), advertising what was suspected to be child pornography and other illegal items, increased from 2 in the previous reporting period to 864 this period. Many of these are defamatory attacks on innocent websites or e-mail accounts that are provided as the contact within the spam.

The statistics in the report show that self-regulation of the Internet industry in Ireland is successful. Ireland's ISPAI members are among the leaders in the world in the acceptable usage standards applied to the Internet services offered.

The success over the reporting period, in preventing such material being hosted in Ireland, must not allow complacency to set in. The ISPAI will continue to play its part in the International effort to combat illegal use of the Internet and is determined to deal swiftly with any misuse of the Internet facilities provided by its members in this country.