

1 October 2024

FOI Ref 17220

Request - You asked us the following:

- a) The total number of recorded offences of indecent images (still or moving) of children and prohibited images of children for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
- b) The number of recorded offences which related to pseudo images of children.
- c) The total number of recorded offences where an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated child abuse image was detected.
- d) For each offence for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 please break it down by the platform used to commit the offence where known using the following key word search: Snapchat, Facebook/Messenger, Instagram, WhatsApp, X/Twitter, Kik, TikTok, YouTube, Discord, Skype, Facetime, Roblox, Oculus, VR, Metaverse, Only Fans, Signal, iCloud, iMessage, Dropbox, Mega, Patreon, other social media or messaging site, other cloud storage site and online gaming.

We received your request on 03/09/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

Staffordshire Police withholds the following information.

- The total number of recorded offences of indecent images (still or moving) of children and prohibited images of children for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. – **Withheld.**
- The number of recorded offences which related to pseudo images of children. – **Withheld.**
- The total number of recorded offences where an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated child abuse image was detected. – **Withheld.**
- For each offence for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 please break it down by the platform used to commit the offence where known using the following key word search: Snapchat, Facebook/Messenger, Instagram, WhatsApp, X/Twitter, Kik, TikTok, YouTube, Discord, Skype, Facetime, Roblox, Oculus, VR, Metaverse, Only Fans, Signal, iCloud, iMessage, Dropbox, Mega, Patreon, other social media or messaging site, other cloud storage site and online gaming. – **Withheld.**

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our crime/occurrence database to answer this request. For the time period requested there have been upwards of 350 offences recorded as either Take/Make/Distribute, or Possession, of indecent image or pseudo image of a child. However, there is no readily accessible field within this database in which information would be recorded to denote whether any of the images forming part of the offence were pseudo or A.I generated; therefore, in order to determine this, all offence logs would require a manual review.

From dip sampling, it has been established that it would take approximately 5 – 10 minutes per record to determine whether the production method of each image had been recorded, dependent upon the number of images involved within each log. Further research would then be required in order to establish which online platform had been used to perpetrate the offence. Therefore, it can be estimated that it would take between 29 to 58 hours to provide the data requested, this would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold prescribed within the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit.
Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the prescribed limit'.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

In order to assist in refining your request, should you remove the requirement to identify only those offences involving pseudo or A.I generated images and the requirement to identify the online platform used, it would be possible to provide the number of offences recorded as 'Take/ make / distribute indecent photographs or pseudo- photographs of children, or Possession of indecent or pseudo indecent photo of a child.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response.

If you would like us to carry out a review of our response, please let us know within two months of the date of receipt of this email, review requests should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

ST16 9JZ

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit