

Internet Watch Foundation

Suite 7310
First Floor Building 7300
Cambridge Research Park
Waterbeach
Cambridge
CB25 9TN
United Kingdom

E: media@iwf.org.uk
T: +44 (0) 1223 20 30 30
F: +44 (0) 1223 86 12 15

www.iwf.org.uk



Internet Watch Foundation



@IWHotline



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Internet Watch Limited

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Internet Watch Foundation Strategic Plan 2012-2015



The Internet Watch Foundation

Strategic Plan 2012-2015

Introduction

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) is the UK Hotline for the public to report online criminal content. Since its formation in 1996, the IWF has grown to provide an integral resource for the online industry in the UK. Our vision is the elimination of online child sexual abuse content and our successes to date are due to the clarity of our remit, and the support, partnerships and values of the online industry and law enforcement agencies.

The 2011 Annual Report, published in March 2012, demonstrates another successful year for the IWF and our Members. Our effectiveness nationally has created a hostile environment for hosting child sexual abuse content. On the rare occasion this content is hosted in the UK, it is removed typically within 60 minutes, making the UK very successful at removing this content.

Our footprint on the international stage is ever growing. The IWF’s view is commonly sought as an authority to contribute to international debates, policy and guidance. We are speeding up the removal of non-UK hosted child sexual abuse images and videos, wherever they are hosted, due to our unrelenting pursuit of them. In the past these images and videos typically were available for more than one month, but since 2010 we’ve been working with others to speed up their removal. Around 50% of all non-UK hosted child sexual abuse webpages are removed in 10 days. The story is even better for our Members; when this content is hosted by a Member, almost 85% is removed within 10 days and almost all is removed within 13 days. This is due to the services we are able to provide to them.

However, the challenge still remains on a global level and this is no time to be complacent. While we continue to excel at tackling online child sexual abuse content in the UK, the next three years will increasingly focus on sharing our success internationally.

We believe it is not only the right time to meet this challenge, but our duty for our Members, internet users and for child victims of sexual abuse. We will stick steadfastly to our core remit, but will extend our influence globally. There is sound business rationale for this approach. We currently depend on two sources of income - fees from Members and funding from the EU - so by extending our activities and geographic scope, we can diversify our income base and create a sustainable financial future.

Our greatest assets are our 16 years of expertise and our respected track record which are currently underexploited. The challenge is to develop the organisation without detrimentally affecting the quality of service we currently provide to the public and Members. Therefore, in 2012 we will commission a feasibility study into the creation of IWF:international, a discrete project which could provide a range of enhanced and new services for the global market place. This would also see the creation of a central hub which, given the global nature of online child sexual abuse content, will seek to provide a rich source of information, knowledge and resources for those working in this field. To support the development of IWF:international we will create an enhanced communications department whose objective is to raise awareness of the IWF to targeted groups across the world. We will ensure the study and any subsequent pilot projects and business planning activities will not affect the day to day operation of the IWF. Ultimately, IWF:international could become another innovative tool to meet our vision of eliminating online child sexual abuse content.

The IWF is adept at identifying and tackling new trends and we collaborate with other experts in order to access the best technology. Over the next three years we will continue take measures to ensure that we stay ahead of technical developments and continue to adapt our processes. We will engage sectors which are emerging or are new to us. We will concentrate on tackling publicly accessible web-based criminal content, specifically child sexual abuse content.

We will strengthen our collaboration with our UK Safer Internet Centre partners, Childnet International and South West Grid for Learning. We will support wider national initiatives to tackle child sexual abuse online, working with our partner organisations in the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS). We will nurture and further develop our relationship with the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, sharing intelligence, training and best practice.

The IWF is an integral part of the European Union-funded Safer Internet Program. This programme will facilitate new Hotlines joining the 41 INHOPE Hotlines already in existence around the world. We will use our influence and our robust data to assist debates globally about the benefits of Notice and Takedown schemes and blocking access to online content which may be unfamiliar to some administrations.

There will be an inevitable growth in the number of internet-enabled devices across the world, in addition to an expanding volume of webpages. In the UK alone, the number of people regularly online is approaching 40 million and continues to grow. This represents a challenge to ensure internet users know how to report any online exposure to child sexual abuse content. Despite the growth of internet-enabled devices, there are ongoing financial challenges faced by many of our funding companies and we have seen a number of consolidations in the market. Partnership working with the online industry is central to our success, and we recognise that all our funders continue to have financial challenges.

Our vision, mission and six strategic objectives form our three-year rolling plan

Vision – Our aspirations

Our vision is the elimination of child sexual abuse images online.

Mission – Our role

We use our expertise to work with partners to:

- **Disrupt** the availability of child sexual abuse content hosted anywhere in the world;
- **Protect** children who are victims of sexual abuse from repeat victimisation and public identification;
- **Prevent** internet users from accidentally stumbling across child sexual abuse content;
- **Delete** criminally obscene adult, and non-photographic child sexual abuse content hosted in the UK.

Objectives – Our goals

We will achieve our vision by:

Building on our work to make the internet free of child sexual abuse images

We will do this by:

- Providing world renowned and trusted Hotline services
- Ensuring that child sexual abuse content is taken down globally as soon as possible
- Promoting the function and reputation of the IWF
- Developing innovative tactics and services to minimise the global availability of child sexual abuse images and videos
- Supplying partners with an accurate and current URL list to enable blocking of child sexual abuse content
- Researching, analysing and disseminating relevant trends data

Keeping the UK internet free of criminally obscene adult content, and non-photographic child sexual abuse images

We will meet this objective by:

- Providing an excellent and responsive national Hotline reporting service
- Working with partners to ensure criminal content in the UK is taken down

Being the best at what we do internationally

To meet this we will:

- Enhance our worldwide reputation
- Develop our working relationships with existing and developing Hotlines
- Raise awareness of our child sexual abuse URL list abroad
- Influence relevant policy developments
- Develop working relationships with relevant international organisations

Establishing IWF: international

To do this we will:

- Share our expertise with others
- Create a knowledge hub
- Develop a sustainable business model
- Link up with child protection, social and academic institutions

Developing a motivational and dynamic working environment

We will do this by:

- Supporting the welfare of our employees
- Embedding our values in everything we do
- Achieving the Investors in People accreditation
- Actively promoting training and personal development for all staff

Placing our Members at the heart of operations

We will achieve this by:

- Providing a first-class, relevant and responsive service to our Members