



Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

The number of successful prosecutions there has been in Merseyside as a result of intervention from paedophile hunters.

Request

“1. How many successful prosecutions have there been in Merseyside as a result of intervention from paedophile hunters or involving paedophile hunting groups? Please provide results for the last five years.

2. How many prosecutions involving paedophile hunters in Merseyside have failed as a result of the intervention from paedophile hunters? Please provide results for the last five years.”

Response

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) holds prosecution data for child abuse flagged sexual offences in the Merseyside & Cheshire area, broken down by convictions and non-convictions. It should be noted that this data covers all flagged child abuse defendants prosecuted with a principal offence of ‘sexual offences’ and is not specifically confined to exploitation.

In the last five years (2013-14 to 2017-18) there have been 1,655 prosecutions. In order to ascertain whether these prosecutions were successful or unsuccessful as a result of intervention from “paedophile hunters” a manual review of each of these files would be required.

Section 12(1) of the FOI Act means public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. [The appropriate limit for central government it is set at £600.](#) This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days determining whether the department holds the information and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We believe that the cost of manually reviewing 1,655 prosecutions would exceed the appropriate limit. Consequently, we are not obliged to comply with this request.

Under section 16 of the FOI Act there is a duty to provide advice and assistance. If you do wish to be provided with the held prosecution data for child abuse flagged sexual offences in the Merseyside &



Cheshire area then please do inform us of this and we would be happy to take it forward as a new request.

Information Management Unit

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