



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Netsafe steps up local fight to tackle child sexual abuse material online

New Zealand online safety organisation Netsafe is voted on to the Board of global INHOPE network, as it ramps up its work to tackle child sexual abuse material online.

Netsafe's Director of Technology and Partnerships, Sean Lyons, has been voted on to the Board of INHOPE, the umbrella organisation uniting a network of 48 hotlines tackling child sexual abuse imagery online and child sexual exploitation around the world.

Lyons says, "Child sexual abuse imagery is a global problem affecting children worldwide and working together is the only way that we can tackle this ever-growing threat. Through the efforts of member hotlines like Netsafe, INHOPE is removing more child sexual abuse imagery from the internet than ever before, stopping the re-victimisation of children who have been horrifically abused and safeguarding children worldwide."

This comes at a time when Netsafe and its New Zealand partners have increased investment in the fight against child sexual abuse imagery online. Netsafe has joined other hotlines around the globe in utilising INHOPE's ICCAM system to report and analyse child sexual abuse material. ICCAM is a secure platform for sharing reports of child sexual abuse material globally, as well as providing information to INTERPOL.

INHOPE hotlines submit reports of child sexual abuse material to the ICCAM system, where the material is analysed and traced. If found to be illegal, the report is then sent to the hotline in the country that the material is hosted where it is then given to the appropriate local law enforcement agency to investigate. In New Zealand, Netsafe works closely with the Department of Internal Affairs to pass on reports of material hosted in New Zealand to be investigated.

Department of Internal Affairs's Principal Advisor, Colm Gannon, says "Child sexual abuse material and the viewing of this material, is not a victimless crime. The images or videos hosted are the records, the evidential records of children being sexual exploited. Netsafe and the Digital Safety Directorate, Internal Affairs, are working together to reduce the demand, remove the websites and actively pursue the rescuing of victims of child sexual abuse."

Mr Lyons is the Director of Technology and Partnerships and joined Netsafe in 2006. Netsafe has been an INHOPE Member Hotline since 2014 and joins the INHOPE board 19 years after it was first established. There are 48 INHOPE Member Hotlines across the globe, spanning all continents.

New Zealanders can report online material that they believe may be illegal directly to the Department of Internal Affairs at www.dia.govt.nz, or to Netsafe at www.netsafe.org.nz/report

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About Netsafe

Netsafe is New Zealand's independent, non-profit online safety organisation. Netsafe provides online safety education, advice and support for people in New Zealand. Taking a technology-positive approach to the opportunities and challenges digital tech presents, Netsafe works to help people in New Zealand make the most of technology by providing practical tools, support and advice for managing online challenges.

Netsafe's helpline is open 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am-5pm weekends and public holidays.

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