

## **OPERATION HYDRANT – FOOTBALL ABUSE STATISTICS UP TO AND INCLUDING 28<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

Following widespread national publicity regarding allegations of non-recent child sexual abuse in football in November 2016, many police forces across the country received an increased number of calls from victims and from people offering information.

This information was forwarded by forces to Operation Hydrant, along with referrals from the NSPCC helpline, as part of the process of operational coordination across the police service.

Operation Hydrant collates this information, cross references it to avoid duplication of investigation, and ensures information and intelligence is shared across forces. The process of operational coordination is complex and detailed, and remains ongoing, meaning that figures provided may fluctuate.

Statistics released today by Operation Hydrant provide an indicative\* national figure, up to and including the 28 September, in relation to allegations of non-recent child sexual abuse within football. The figures are accurate at the time of publication, but may change as forces progress local investigations and as the information offered is further analysed.

### **2028 referrals have been received by Operation Hydrant from the NSPCC helpline and directly from police forces.**

- This figure does not equate to the number of victims.
- 688 referrals came from the NSPCC, and 1340 from Police Forces.

### **The indicative number of victims now stands at 784**

- This is an indicative figure based on the information available at the time of publication, and may fluctuate.

### **285 suspects have been identified.**

### **331 football clubs have been impacted.**

- This does not equate to 331 football clubs under investigation, but instead refers to the number of clubs referenced when information is submitted.
- The figure spans all tiers of football, from premier clubs through to amateur.

### **96% of those identified as victims are male.**

### **The age range for victims at the time of the abuse spans 4 years through to 20 years.**

### **The vast majority of referrals relate to football. However, a number of other sports have also been the subject of a referral.**

- 27 referrals relate to sports outside football.
- These referrals include basketball, rugby, gymnastics, martial arts, tennis, wrestling, golf, sailing, athletics, cricket, and swimming.
- No further breakdown of the categories within sports will be provided at this stage to avoid prejudice to any live ongoing investigations.

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Note: Quarterly statistics comparison.

The figures relating to sport in the quarterly published statistics now include most of the data relating to allegations in football that were in the process of being audited and inputted at the time of the last quarterly publication in July 2017.

National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Child Protection, Chief Constable Simon Bailey said: "Allegations of non-recent child sexual abuse are complex, and often require specialist skills and knowledge, and can take time to progress. However, all allegations and information received by police forces across the country are being acted upon.

"We continue to urge anyone who may have been a victim of child sexual abuse to report it, if they are ready to do so, by dialling 101, or contacting the dedicated NSPCC helpline, regardless of how long ago the abuse may have taken place. We will listen and treat all reports sensitively and seriously. Anyone with any information regarding child sexual abuse is also urged to come forward.

"When allegations are reported it enables police to assess whether there are current safeguarding risks and ensure that appropriate action is being taken to prevent children being abused today."

### **Background info:**

Investigations have been launched by forces local to the area where allegations relate, and these are being progressed in a prioritised manner based on assessment of risk and harm.

Where allegations against a suspect span a number of forces, a lead force will be identified to progress the investigation, while maintaining liaison with other forces holding relevant information.

Due to the high number of calls received across the service, it may take longer than normal for an officer from a local force to make contact to follow up from the initial call. Please be assured that the information provided will be taken seriously and acted upon.