

## **INTERNET TRADERS OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY: PROFILING RESEARCH**

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### **Introduction**

The Censorship Compliance Unit of the Department of Internal Affairs enforces the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993. It has prosecuted and convicted 176 censorship offenders. There are approximately 25 court cases pending. The Unit carries out proactive Internet investigations in newsgroups, chat rooms and Peer 2 Peer applications to detect New Zealanders who are involved in the distribution of child pornography on the Internet.

International cooperation is an important part of the unit's work. The Internet is a global network and investigations, information sharing and communications are required on a global scale.

The profiling research is based on a questionnaire that collects social, demographic and behavioural information about those who have committed offences related to objectionable material on the Internet. In 2004 the Department published a report, written by Angela Carr, that profiled censorship offenders, titled *Internet Traders Of Child Pornography And Other Censorship Offenders In New Zealand*. It analysed data relating to 106 offenders. In the update of October 2004 the profiling research was updated by David Wilson and Carol Andrews and related to a total of 185 offenders. This report updates data involving 202 offenders.

## Research Findings

### DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF OFFENDERS

Two hundred and one of the cases involved male offenders and one involved a female offender.

Seven-tenths (70.81%) of the offenders resided in cities.

**Table 1: Offender Ethnicity**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>No of Offenders</b>	<b>Percentage of Offenders</b>
NZ European	172	84.73%
Other European	9	4.43%
Indian	5	2.46%
Asian	8	3.94%
Other Ethnicity	4	1.97%
Maori	2	0.99%
Unknown Ethnicity	3	1.48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The vast majority of offenders (84.73%) are ‘New Zealand European’ in origin. Of those identified in the category of ‘other European’:

- 3 originated from England
- 3 from South Africa
- 2 from Germany and
- 1 from the United States of America.

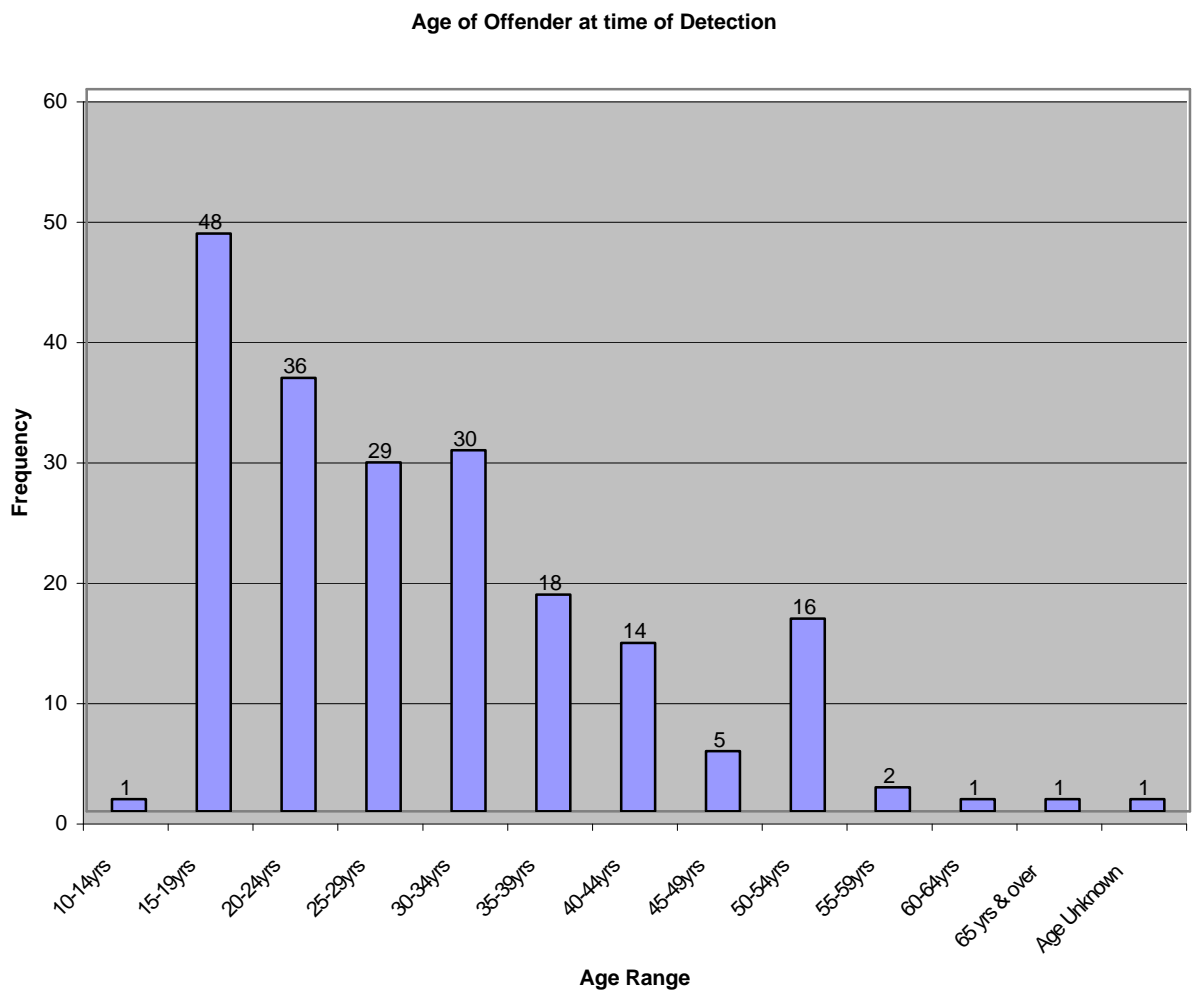
The total in the table exceeds the total number of offenders because one offender identified himself with the different ethnic groups of both his parents.

## AGE OF THE OFFENDER

The largest single age grouping of offenders continues to be between 15 and 19 years. These offenders account for approximately one quarter (24.32%) of all offenders as shown in Figure 1. Over half (57.30%) of all offenders were under the age of 30 at the time of investigation. The age of the offender at the time of detection ranged from 14 years to 67 years.

The most significant change between the original research findings and the last update is an increase of 1.38% for the age range between 35-54 years. The age ranges of 15-34 yrs are still the most common range seen by inspectors.

**Figure 1: Age of the Offender**



## OCCUPATION

Students are still the largest occupational group amongst offenders, making up 28.8 per cent of the total. Two thirds were studying at tertiary level. Of the 40 students studying at tertiary level, 15 (37.5%) were studying a field related to information technology.

With the second most commonly identified profession still being those involved working in the field of information technology (16.67%). Students and information technology workers have greater access to computers than average and could be expected to have more advanced computer skills. Other occupations identified included:

- radio announcer
- soldier
- ice-cream van driver
- naval rating officer
- holiday camp labourer.

The occupational data is in excess of 202 because some offenders were identified in more than one category.

**Table 2: Offender Occupation**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No of Offenders</b>	<b>% of Offenders</b>
Student	64	28.83
Information Technology Profession	37	16.67
Professional	15	6.76
Trade	9	4.05
Unemployment Beneficiary	17	7.66
Retail	9	4.05
Sickness Beneficiary	16	7.21
Labour	6	2.70
Educational Profession	11	4.95
Transport	5	2.25
Food/hospitality worker	5	2.25
Caregiver	2	0.90
Farm/agricultural worker	5	2.25
Medical Profession	2	0.90
Trades person	1	0.45
Retired/superannuitant	1	0.45
Security	1	0.45
Other	16	7.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100.00</b>

## **CRIMINAL HISTORY**

**Table 3: Criminal Histories of Offenders**

<b>Criminal History</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Criminal History	152	74.51%
Censorship Conviction	5	2.45%
Conviction for a non-violent, non-sexual crime	12	5.88%
Minor offence of a sexual nature	3	1.47%
Sexual offence against a female aged under 16years	9	4.41%
Sexual offence with a male aged under 16years	5	2.45%
Sexual offence against an adult	1	0.49%
Drug Related Offence	3	1.47%
Other criminal offence	4	1.96%
Criminal history unknown	10	4.90%

The trend in criminal history has remained a constant with the majority of offenders (74.51%) found to have no criminal history.

Of the additional 17 offenders whose details were added to this update 4 had a criminal history. 3 had committed non-violent crimes such as fraud. The other offender had committed an assault and a sexual offence against a female under the age of 16.

The number of offenders who have committed sexual offences is of particular concern. While the majority of offenders have not been convicted of a sexual offence, the numbers who have been is greater than in the general population. While it is not possible, based on this study, to draw a causal link between viewing child pornography and offending against children, an association between the two offences is suggested by the findings. The relationship between viewing objectionable material and committing physical offences requires further research before the nature of the association can be understood.

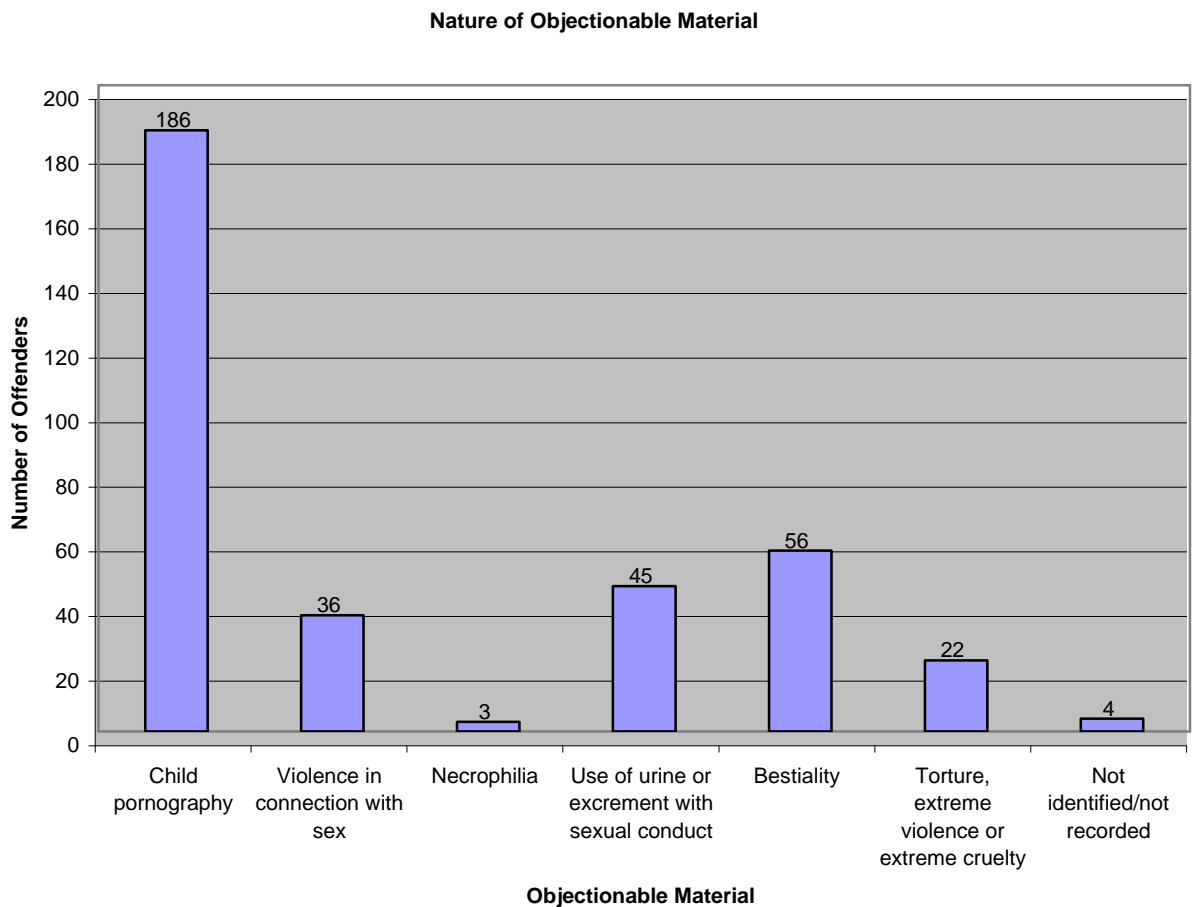
## **NATURE OF OBJECTIONABLE MATERIAL**

The majority of offenders were found in possession of child pornography. Only 16 out of 202 offenders did not possess child pornography. This is partly due to the investigation of child pornography being the main focus of the Department. Images of bestiality and material containing the use of urine or excrement were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> most commonly found sorts of objectionable images. Text files describing explicit sex acts on children and non-objectionable images of partially clothed children were also found in the possession of many offenders.

Offenders were found to favour three distinct types of objectionable material:

- violent images of all manner of subjects
- degrading and dehumanising images of all manner of subjects or
- solely paedophilic images.

**Figure 2: Nature of Objectionable Material**



## ACCESS TO SUBJECTS OF OBJECTIONABLE MATERIAL

**Table 4: Access to Subjects**

<b>Offenders access to children, animals and other subjects</b>	<b>Number of Offenders</b>
Works or has frequent contact with the general public	50
Works or has frequent contact with children	42
Other access to children or animals	17
Works primarily with computers	30
Is mobile in job (job involves frequent travel of any type)	13
Frequently sole caregiver of children/dependants	19
Access to other subjects	5
Works or has frequent contact with animals	3
not specified	39

Given the subject matter of much of the objectionable material involved in the offences investigated by the investigators (i.e. child pornography), the degree to which offender occupation or lifestyle facilitated access to children and young people was considered particularly important. 81 (40%) offenders have been identified as having some form of regular physical contact with children and/or young people.

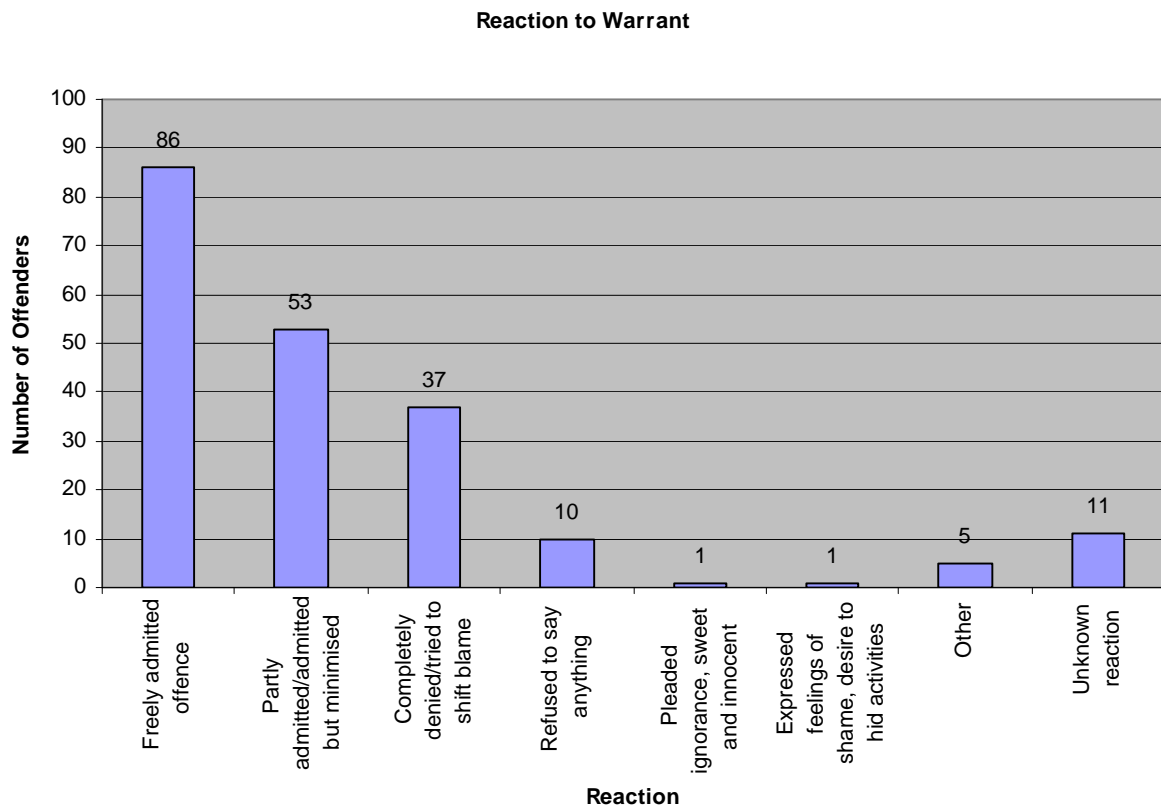
The research examined the extent to which offenders had access to the subjects of the objectionable material that they collected (such as children or animals). Examples of individuals who had frequent contact with children included:

- Soccer Coach (2 offenders)
- One offender who lived across the road from a private girls school and whose wife worked in a childcare centre.
- Headmaster of a local primary school
- Driver (taxi, metro bus, and intermediate school bus)
- Teacher's aide who was also involved in the Boy Scouts and taught martial arts to young people.
- Babysitter
- Caregiver

## **REACTION TO WARRANT**

As indicated in Figure 3, when initially confronted by Department’s investigators, 86 of the offenders profiled freely admitted their involvement with the distribution and/or possession of objectionable material. However, a quarter of offenders tried to minimise or downplay the nature of their offending and a fifth completely denied the offence and/or tried to shift blame for the offence to another party.

**Figure 3: Offender Reaction to Warrant**



Offenders who tried to minimise the nature of their offending commonly did so by under-estimating the number of objectionable images in their possession and/or extent of their involvement in the trade of objectionable images, over-estimating the ages of the children and young people portrayed in or by attempting to justify the offending by challenging the concept of “objectionable”.

## **OBSERVATION**

Since last reporting there has been a distinct movement of New Zealand offenders away from Internet Relay Chat to Peer to Peer applications Twenty-two of the last 37 convictions have been for offending on Peer to Peer applications.

## **CONCLUSION**

The profiling of offenders continues to uncover a great deal of information about offenders and their offending habits. It has raised particular concerns about the age of some offenders, the relationship between viewing child pornography and sexual offending and the number of offenders who have access to the subjects of their collections of objectionable material. This research is ongoing and constantly being updated. This can only act to increase our knowledge and understanding of these types of offenders and the associated behaviour.