

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FPB TAKES A LEADING ROLE IN COMBATTING CHALLENGES OF HARMFUL CONTENT
DISTRIBUTED ON ONLINE PLATFORMS**

22 April 2025, Centurion. The Film and Publication Board (FPB) recently briefed the Parliamentary Select Committee on Economic Development and Trade on the prevalence of harmful and prohibited content accessible on the online platforms. **Harmful content** is described as content that causes emotional, psychological or normal distress to a person, whether it be through any online or offline medium, including through the internet. **Prohibited content** is described as content which amounts to propaganda for war, incitement of imminent violence, advocacy of hatred that is based on an identifiable group characteristics, or is prohibited in section 16 (2), 16 (4) and 18 (3).

With the development and expansion of digital technologies, the crime of online child exploitation and abuse has grown exponentially and has become the most insidious form of global modern and borderless cybercrime. Women have increasingly become victims of these cybercrimes as demonstrated in the FPB's annual trends reports. Similarly there is a visible increase in the peer to peer sharing of non-consensual intimate images (NCSII)..

The FPB indicates that 21 cases of Online Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) were received for expert analysis in the 2024/25 FY,. . 218 582 images/videos were analysed, and 18 945 were confirmed cases and analysis reports generated from the cases analysed. FPB received and investigated 34 public complaints. These complaints included Child Sexual Abuse Material, sextortion (threat of distribution of private sexual videos), online cyberbullying and harassment, impersonation, bestiality and Non Consensual Sharing of Intimate Images (also known as revenge porn).

The organisation collaborates closely with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) leveraging established relationships to support investigations involving suspected CSAM. We have trained Child Protection Officers who analyse potential CSAM to confirm and generate expert analysis reports that serve as evidence in court, they testify in courts to strengthen prosecution. This collaboration reinforces the FPB's commitment to protecting children and ensuring that any harmful content is handled with the highest standards of accountability and legal compliance.

To strengthen our global efforts in combating the creation and distribution of online CSAM, the FPB is a member of the International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE), an international network of **55 hotlines across 51 countries** that collaborate to report such material. This initiative highlights our proactive stance in international CSAM reporting and our commitment to working within a global network to protect children from online exploitation.

We also collaborate with digital platforms owners to swiftly address and remove prohibited content, including CSAM and other harmful materials. Through these partnerships, we issue take down notices to platform owners, mandating the immediate removal of flagged content to prevent further dissemination. This cooperative approach enhances the speed and effectiveness of content removal, with platform owners playing an essential role in upholding regulatory standards and promoting a safer online environment.

The FPB encourages the public to report any harmful and prohibited material through the FPB hotline 0800 148 148 or on our WhatsApp Hotline Channel on 083 428 4767. The public can also access these links on our website at www.fpb.org.za.

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