



### children's charities' coalition on internet safety

Standard Letter

11<sup>th</sup> April, 2006

Dear Managing Director

#### ***Blocking Access to Known Child Pornography Web Sites***

You will doubtless be aware that it is now nearly two years since BT confirmed they had perfected a method for obstructing access to known child pornography web sites. This system, known as "Cleanfeed", involves marrying together a blocking technology with the database of illegal web sites maintained by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). On signature of a Non-Disclosure Agreement BT are giving away to connectivity providers the technical information which underpins their blocking system. Access to the IWF list, the other necessary ingredient, is provided directly by the IWF and is available to any company that becomes a member.

I am aware of several connectivity providers who have either adopted the "Cleanfeed" approach as it is or have developed their own method of doing the same thing.

You will also be aware that late last year Margaret Moran MP introduced a 10 Minute Rule Bill in the House of Commons which, if it became law, would require all connectivity providers to declare in their Annual Reports and on their Home Pages whether or not they are taking steps to prevent access via their networks to known child pornography web sites. It would not be necessary to declare what the steps were, only that steps are being taken, or not. The Government have expressed their support for the idea that 100% of the UK's connectivity providers should block such access to known child pornography web sites but, so far, they have said they are reluctant to legislate to compel companies to do so. They hope the UK's well-established self-regulatory model will achieve the same result.

As child protection organizations we are agnostic as to the way in which 100% coverage is achieved but that is the end result we very much support.

In that light I am writing to ask you about your company's plans. Do you already take steps to block access to specific, URLs known to contain child pornography e.g. as indicated on the IWF's list? If not, do you intend to do so, and if you do, are you able to say when you expect implementation to be completed?

Yours sincerely,

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