

Summary of ‘Giving Victims a Voice’: A joint Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and NSPCC report into allegations of sexual abuse made against Jimmy Savile under Operation Yewtree, published 11th January 2013

Note: This is a 38 page report which contains more detail and commentary than can be included here. Readers interested in the detail of these considerations are encouraged to refer to the original report, of which this is only a brief summary.

Operation Yewtree was launched in response to the broadcast of ITV’s *Exposure* programme on the 4 October 2012. This detailed five women’s accounts of being sexually abused by the late Jimmy Savile at Duncroft School in Staines and in relation to the filming of BBC programmes, all during the 1970s.

The report was designed to provide a detailed analysis of Jimmy Savile’s offending profile, based on the accounts provided. Not all the victims who came forward were interviewed by police. However the patterns and similarities of the offences and behaviours reported gave police and NSPCC staff an informed view that most people provided compelling accounts of what had happened to them.

The terminology adopted in the report is similar to that used about convicted offenders. However, these are allegations and the police state that the information on which they are based has not been corroborated, as corroboration would be considered disproportionate because criminal proceedings cannot now be brought because Savile is dead.

Relevant previous investigations

The States of Jersey Police investigated an allegation of an indecent assault by Savile at the Haut de la Garenne children’s home in the 1970s, but there had been insufficient evidence to proceed.

In 2009, Savile was interviewed under caution by Surrey Police investigating an allegation of indecent assault at Duncroft Approved School for Girls near Staines, Surrey, in the 1970s where he had been a regular visitor. The CPS advised that there was insufficient evidence to take any further action and no charges were brought. (See above summaries of the Operation Ornament and Levitt reports).

In March 2008, Savile started legal proceedings against a newspaper that had linked him in several articles to child abuse at the Jersey children’s home Haut de la Garenne which he denied having visited. He later admitted that he had, following the publication of a photograph showing him at the home surrounded by children.

Operation Yewtree

Operation Yewtree was launched on 5 October 2012 following which approximately 600 people have provided information to the investigative team. The total number of informants reporting on Savile’s activities is estimated to

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be about 450. As a result 214 formal crimes have been recorded in which Savile is a suspect, across 28 force areas. The earliest recorded incident was in 1955 in Manchester. The final recorded offence was in 2009.

The location of reported offending was predominately in Savile's home town, Leeds, and in his main work location, London. 57 allegations relate to hospitals, including hospice premises, 33 to television or radio studios and 14 to schools.

Although 73% of allegations related to victims aged under 18 years old, the total victim age range was between eight and 47 years (at the time of the abuse). Of his victims, 27% were adults. 82% of victims were female with the majority aged between 13 to 16 years.

Victim accounts indicate that offences were normally opportunistic sexual assaults but there are others where an element of grooming appears to have occurred. Within the recorded crimes there are 126 indecent acts and 34 rape / penetration offences. Of the rape / penetration offences 26 victims were female and eight male.

General points on Savile's reported offending

Police believe that Savile used his celebrity status to offend, although he had committed sex crimes before he became famous. The bulk of the reported offending appears aligned to his rising public profile and increased access to children, particularly during a twenty year period, in the 1970s and 1980s, when he was in his forties and fifties. Victims' accounts show that some of the offences took the form of opportunistic touching over or under clothing but many others included coercion, violence and rape.

The report's conclusion

Accounts from victims left police and NSPCC staff to conclude that Savile was one of the UK's most prolific known sexual predators who opportunely abused people. They believe that he manipulated some of those around him to access potential victims and by real or implied threats used his status and position to prevent his activities being made public. They suggest that his actions would today be categorised as 'child sexual exploitation'.

Marcus Erooga
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