



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Freedom of Information Request Reference No:

I note you seek access to the following information:

1. Under Operation Domain, how many requests has the MPS made to YouTube to remove videos in each of the past five years (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 to date)?
2. Of these, how many were accepted and how many were rejected?

DECISION

I have today decided to disclose the located information to you in full from 2016 as our collaboration with YouTube did not start until this time.

Please find below information pursuant to your request.

Total videos submitted – 139

2016 – 26
2017 – 20
2018 – 81
2019 – 12

Total videos removed – 115
Total videos rejected – 24

2016 – out of the 26 videos - 11 were rejected by google
2017 – out of the 20 videos – 7 were rejected by google
2018 – out of the 81 videos – 3 were rejected by google
2019 – out of the 12 videos – 3 were rejected by google

Since June 2018 there has been an increase in the number videos removed by YouTube which is down to enhanced partnership working, which we seek to replicate with other platforms where content is being seen.

Detective Superintendent Mike West said: "The Met has been monitoring the increase in the number of videos that incite violence since September 2015.

"Gangs try to out rival each other with content - what looks like a music video can actually contain explicit language used by gangs to threaten each other. They can include gestures of violence, with hand signals suggesting they are

firing weapons and graphic descriptions of what they would do to each other.

“The speed at which an online disagreement can escalate into violence, often very serious violence, is staggering. Music role models and social media have a hugely powerful and positive impact, but when used in the wrong way the consequences can quite literally be deadly.

“The Met has got a central database of more than 1,800 indexed videos that we assess and use to gather intelligence. Where we can, we will take action against individuals appearing in them. Ongoing work with the CPS seeks to apply existing law to tackle the encouragement of serious violence within videos.

“An example of this is the use of Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) which are issued at criminal court following a conviction. CBO prohibitions to prevent gang offending include: non-association; exclusion zones; curfews; the wearing of hooded clothing; possession of unregistered mobile phones; and contributions to websites.

“The Met can also apply for a gang injunction at any time when we have intelligence identifying somebody as a member of a gang, and we believe they are at risk of inciting or becoming involved in gang violence. The court can impose various conditions which all, or some may lead to arrest if breached.

“We are not seeking to suppress freedom of expression through any kind of music, and we only ask for videos to be removed from social media which we believe raise the risk of violence.

“We are working very closely with all social media companies to act more quickly to remove the most harmful material. As of 22 February, the Met has submitted 136 requests to YouTube to remove videos, 108 have been removed.

“Close partnership working is a key part of how we address this going forward and we will continue to work with a range of partners to explore how we can tackle the issue.”

Google initiative

On 10 December 2018 YouTube announced a £600,000 grant from to support UK charities dealing with youth violence in the UK. The ideas behind the proposal stemmed from the MPS partnership with Google, and the proposal was then supported by the Mayor’s Office.

The grant will support charities to deliver social media content review training to c500 frontline youth workers in two credible charities - Catch 22 and Redthread. It will also work to support young people to handle online challenges and generate employment opportunities for at risk groups within gang violence.

I would like to thank you for your interest in the MPS.

Information Rights Unit