

Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

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Convener
Public Petitions Committee
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3 July 2013

Dear Convener

The Lord Advocate and Alison Di Rollo, Head of the National Sexual Crimes Unit gave evidence to the Public Petitions Committee on 25 June 2013 in relation to the Committee's inquiry into tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland. Following their evidence, there were two matters arising which require confirmation.

The first related to the number of charges reported to COPFS under the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 in the last 3 financial years where the victim was a child. The number of charges reported is 1610. The Lord Advocate stated in evidence to the Committee that there were 569 charges which were not proceeded with. Of those 569 charges not proceeded with, 321 were as a result of there being insufficient evidence.

Secondly, the Lord Advocate was asked questions about decisions made over the choice of forum for prosecuting cases involving indecent images. The table below contains information on charges prosecuted in the last 3 financial years. Again, only charges which have been fully dealt with and closed on the COPFS database have been included.

Forum of charges reported to COPFS under s52 and s52A of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 with an initial decision to prosecute.¹

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Total	Total as %
Solemn proceedings	286	392	138	816	85%
Reduction to summary ²	39	24	4	67	7%
summary proceedings	41	26	13	80	8%
Total	366	442	155	963	100%

¹ Table includes information on all charges which have been fully dealt with and closed on the COPFS data base (as at 19 June 2013)

² Charges initially marked for solemn proceedings and then reduced to summary following a review of the evidence

I would confirm that of the charges prosecuted in the last 3 financial years, which have been fully dealt with and closed on the COPFS database, 85% proceeded with were proceeded in the solemn courts on Indictment.

I trust this information is helpful to the Committee. If there is anything further I can assist with please let me know.

Yours faithfully

Catherine Dyer
Crown Agent & Chief Executive