assist in this process, the ABA publishes Internet safety information and advice for parents, teachers and children on its Cybersmart Kids web site (http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au), in print-media articles and in brochures. Copies of the brochures are being distributed to all primary and secondary schools in New South Wales, in conjunction with a project to roll-out Internet access to all students.

The ABA released its new Internet safety brochure, *Cybersmart Guide*, which has been endorsed by all Australian law enforcement authorities, in September 2004. The guide provides helpful information for kids to make the most of the Internet safely. Copies of the ABA's Internet safety brochures may be ordered through online@aba.gov.au

Review of the scheme

In its recent review of the Internet content co-regulatory scheme, tabled in Federal Parliament in May 2004, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts found that the majority of submissions expressed clear support for the scheme's continued operation. The report noted that the ABA's operation of the complaints hotline, cooperation with law enforcement agencies and overseas hotlines, and community awareness functions provided especially valuable community safeguards.

Looking to the future, the ABA continues to contribute a range of strategic responses to help make the Internet a safer environment for Australian users, particularly for families with children. Together with the Australian Communications Authority and the Department, the ABA has commissioned advice on technical and commercial aspects of emerging mobile services and applications (such as Internet-enabled mobile telephones). The Department is currently reviewing the regulation of content delivered over mobile communications devices.

Submissions to the review may be viewed at http://www.dcita.gov.au/broad/consultation/a_review_of_the_regulation_of_content_delivered_over_mobile_communications_devices

Liaison with regulatory and other relevant bodies overseas about co-operative arrangements for the regulation of the Internet industry is an ABA function under the Broadcasting Services Act. Andree Wright, the ABA's Director, Industry Performance and Review, attended an INHOPE meeting, following meetings in London with organisations with a particular interest in mobile Internet safety awareness issues. These included ChildNet International, the Children's Charities' Coalition on Internet Safety and Vodafone UK. Here is her report on the meetings.

INHOPE

INHOPE holds members' meetings approximately three times a year. The purpose of the meetings is to review the work of the association and the work of the individual hotlines, to encourage the sharing of knowledge and experience among the hotlines and to provide essential training on key issues facing hotlines and the association by external experts. The meetings are usually hosted by one of the member hotlines and last for three days with a very detailed and complete agenda.

At its third meeting for 2004, INHOPE held a special workshop in Salzburg from 29 September to 1 October. The emphasis was on technical training to facilitate the tracing of child pornography online by hotline investigation staff. Attendees showed particular interest when, on 30 September, the issue by Operation Auxin in Australia of around 400 search warrants into online child sexual abuse matters became international news (for information about this operation go to: http://www.ahtcc.gov.au/MediaReleases/MR30092004OpAuxin.pdf). This operation was the result of extensive intelligence analysis including information from a large investigation in the USA last year. Other INHOPE member countries have either completed or are completing operations that have flowed from the American operation.

INHOPE has five working groups to enable the development, between meetings, of specific key issues facing INHOPE members. Working groups research areas of interest to the broader membership, and provide comprehensive and detailed recommendations for vote by the wider membership. At the September workshop the Personal Mobile Devices Working Group, which deals with mobile Internet, agreed to submit its guide to notification and take down procedures for mobile devices to the next INHOPE meeting for adoption. It is also developing a guide for hotlines for dealing with mobile network operators. Like the Content Working Group, the Personal Mobile Devices Working Group is chaired by Australia.

The London meetings coincided with Vodafone UK's launch of Staying in Touch: A Parent's Guide to Mobile Phones, a booklet developed in conjunction with the National Family and Parenting Institute (see http://www.vodafone.co.uk/cgi-bin/COUK/portal/ep/home.do). Vodafone UK emphasises that, in launching this booklet, it is the first mobile network operator that has tried to help parents understand the complexities of new mobile phones and mobile phone technology. The new services can be great fun for children, particularly as they offer an increased ability to interact with others. Vodafone is also aware that safety issues stem from the fact that phones are more than just talk as they allow users to send and receive messages and pictures, play games, take photos, access the Internet and use chat rooms. The booklet takes this into consideration and includes explanations and guidance about:

- the type of information available on mobile phones
- how to deal with text message bullying
- street theft and how to prevent it
- location-based tracking services
- children and health
- how to manage unwanted 'spam' texts.

This family friendly awareness initiative accompanies Vodafone's 'Content Control', its network filter, which verifies the customer's age before adult services can be viewed, and enables mobile phone users to block these services completely.

These practices are in line with the UK Code of Practice on mobile content and new services which was adopted earlier this year. The self regulatory code includes plans for mobile network operators to develop and provide age verifications systems and to classify adult content.

The Children's Charities Coalition for Internet Safety (CHIS), established in 1999, has been a key advocate for the existence of such a code. And is a respected advocate on children's online safety issues in the United Kingdom. It consists of seven of the UK's largest professional child welfare and child protection organisations including Barnardos, ChildLine, the Children's Society, and the National Children's Board.

CHIS has now launched Child Safety Online: A Digital Manifesto (see www.nch.org.uk/chis) because it wants:

> … all children and young people to be able to share in the huge advantages of the Internet, and therefore strongly supports the government's continuing efforts to encour-

age mass take up. But at the same time CHIS also wants to ensure that such access is as safe as it can be. Almost nothing in life is ever 100 per cent safe, 100 per cent of the time, and the Internet is no exception to that rule. But the Internet can, and should, be a lot safer than it is at present, particularly for children and young people

Because of the ABA's commitment to awareness initiatives that facilitate children's safety on the Internet, whether accessed by computer or mobile phone (see http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au and http://www.aba.gov.au/internet/education/index.htm), there were discussions at the September meeting with ChildNet International on the development of a new NetDetectives module which would focus on the mobile Internet.

The ABA launched Net Detectives in Australia in September 2003, in partnership with ChildNet International (see page 9 for the most recent Net Detectives activity).

Over the past year 21 Australian schools from New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, have played Net Detectives, most recently on 24 November with five South Australian schools online. The event received positive feedback from teachers and children alike:

> This should become a regular event, even a year round exercise… It is such an important message … especially this week with the www.caseydonovan.com.au incident. (teacher, Saint Joseph's Primary School, SA) and

The storyline was great to teach us about how unsafe Internet chat rooms can be if you use them incorrectly … The people in the control room were excellent they didn't give us the answer but they asked questions that made us think and lead us in the right direction. If I had the chance to do it again I definitely would. (11 years old, Saint Joseph's Primary School, SA).

INHOPE

The INHOPE Association exists to facilitate co-operation between Internet hotline providers. Its mission is to eliminate child pornography online and protect young people from harmful and illegal uses of the Internet. Initially created in 1998, INHOPE now comprises 20 hotlines from 18 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, United Kingdom and the United States of America. Other hotlines are in the process of negotiating membership. According to INHOPE's Second Report, issued in April, from March 2003 to February 2004 these hotlines investigated 96,217 online child pornography complaints, more than a third of all reports made to INHOPE members during that period. (Complaints about particular online illegal or offensive material can be made to the ABA using the online complaint form at: http://www.aba.gov.au/internet/complaints.htm or by email to online@aba.gov.au).