

Top cop's 'shock' at what was discovered on a USB stick, starting one of Australia's largest ever investigations to uncover a depraved child abuse ring: 'Horrendous, unthinkable material'

- Senior officer shared horror after discovering USB with child abuse material
- USB was found during police raid at NSW Central Coast home in February 2020
- Contents helped police uncover child abuse ring and arrest 26 paedophiles

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A senior officer has recalled the horrifying moment they discovered a single USB stick that led police to uncover a global child abuse ring.

Australian Federal Police (AFP) acting sergeant Scott Veltmeyer said he was 'absolutely shocked' by the contents on the device found at a **NSW** Central Coast home in February 2020.

The AFP had received a tipoff from the US National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children before raiding the home of Justin Radford.

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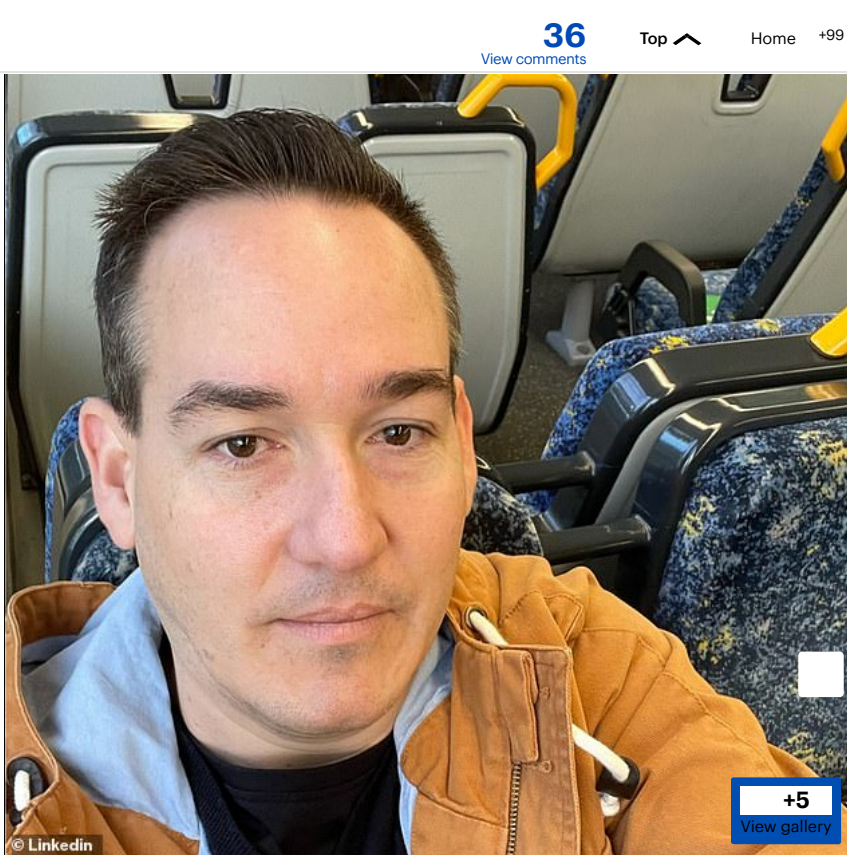


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AFP acting sergeant Scott Veltmeyer (pictured) said he was 'absolutely shocked' by the contents on the device found at a NSW Central Coast home in February 2020



Officers seized a USB stick and handed it to an AFP technician who was able to bypass the security and access the contents

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The discovery eventually led police to arrest 26 paedophiles and rescue 56 children and 11 animals from sexual abuse over the following years.

'It was horrendous, unthinkable material,' acting sergeant Veltmeyer said.

'I could not believe this was happening to children. You would never want anyone to watch those videos.'

AFP Detective Leading Senior Constable Kate Laidler was left mortified saying they could tell by the accents of the children in the videos that they were Australian, news.com.au reported.

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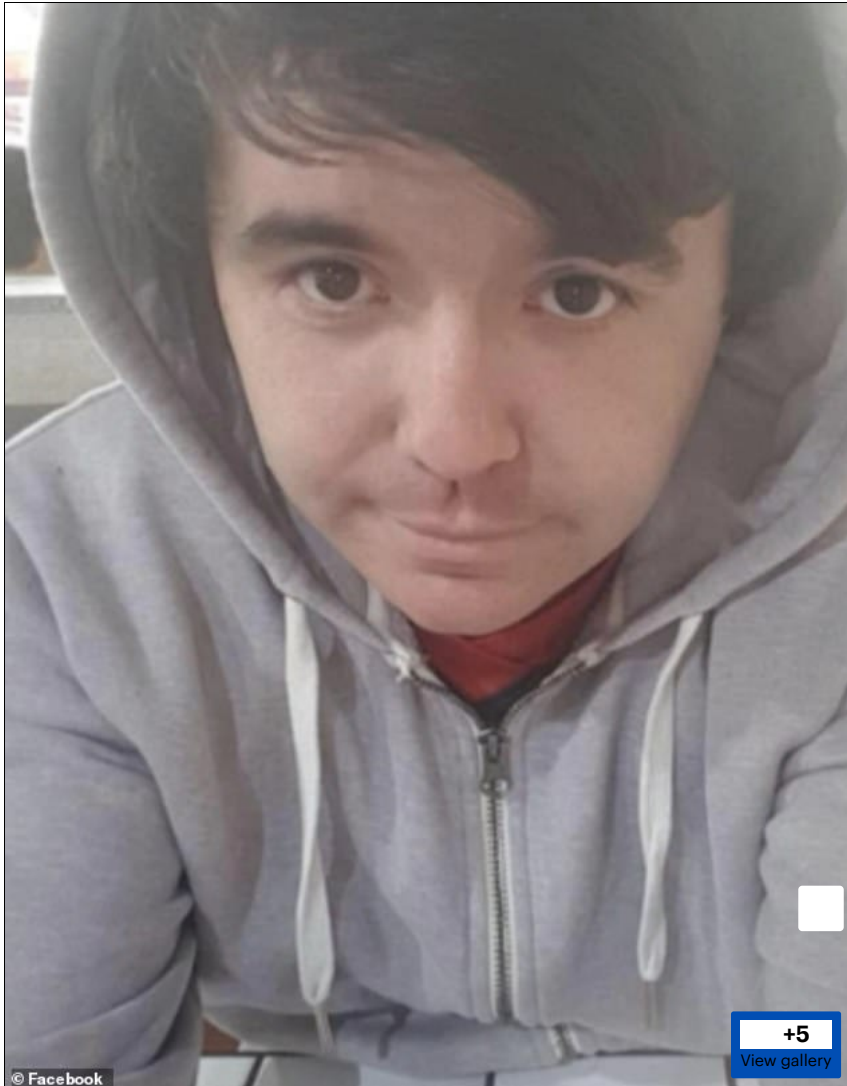
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The USB helped officers to uncover a web of paedophiles who had never met in person but would swap pictures and footage of children being abused online.

Some of the material had been made by the paedophiles.

On top of the 26 arrests in Australia the investigation led to 154 referrals to police agencies across the globe.

The raids and arrests were carried out under Operation Arkstone.



Among the people arrested was 31-year-old western Sydney soccer coach Grant Harden, who was jailed for 30 years on May 13

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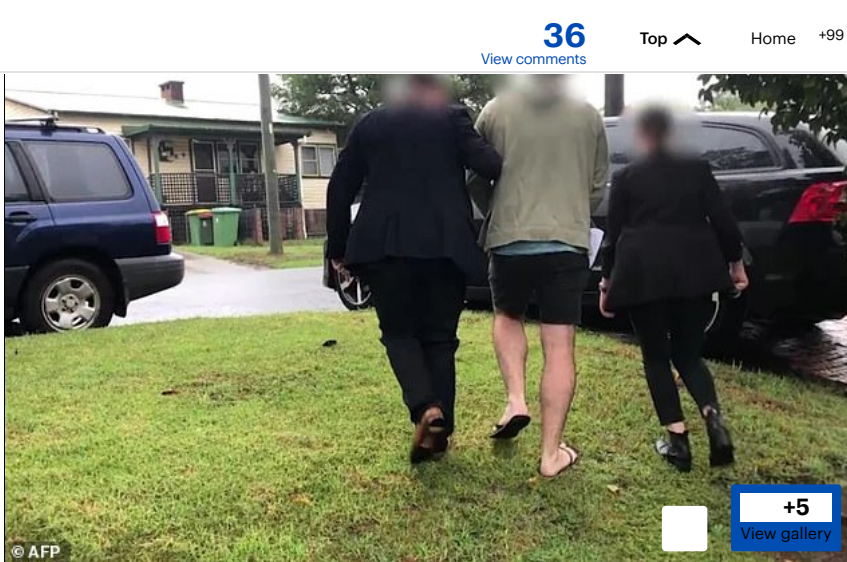


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The discovery of the USB eventually led police to arrest 26 paedophiles and rescue 56 children and 11 animals from sexual abuse over the following years

'It's gut-wrenching stuff, the whole of the material for Operation Arkstone is definitely the worst that I've seen and on the most extreme end.

'It is just the worst of the worst,' acting sergeant Veltmeyer said.

The disturbing content would even be shared over widely used platforms such as Snapchat, Kik and TikTok.

Acting sergeant Veltmeyer said the international ring used group chats where they discussed their crimes and shared sick photos and videos.

'Up to 50 people who were able to discuss horrendous crimes. What they wanted to or had done to children, images of bestiality and self-produced child abuse material,' he said.

Among the people arrested was 31-year-old western Sydney soccer coach Grant Harden, who was jailed for 30 years on May 13.

Harden pleaded guilty to abusing seven different boys with hundreds of videos of his crimes shared with other member of the syndicate.

The court heard he would solicit abuse material online using the moniker Baddad03.

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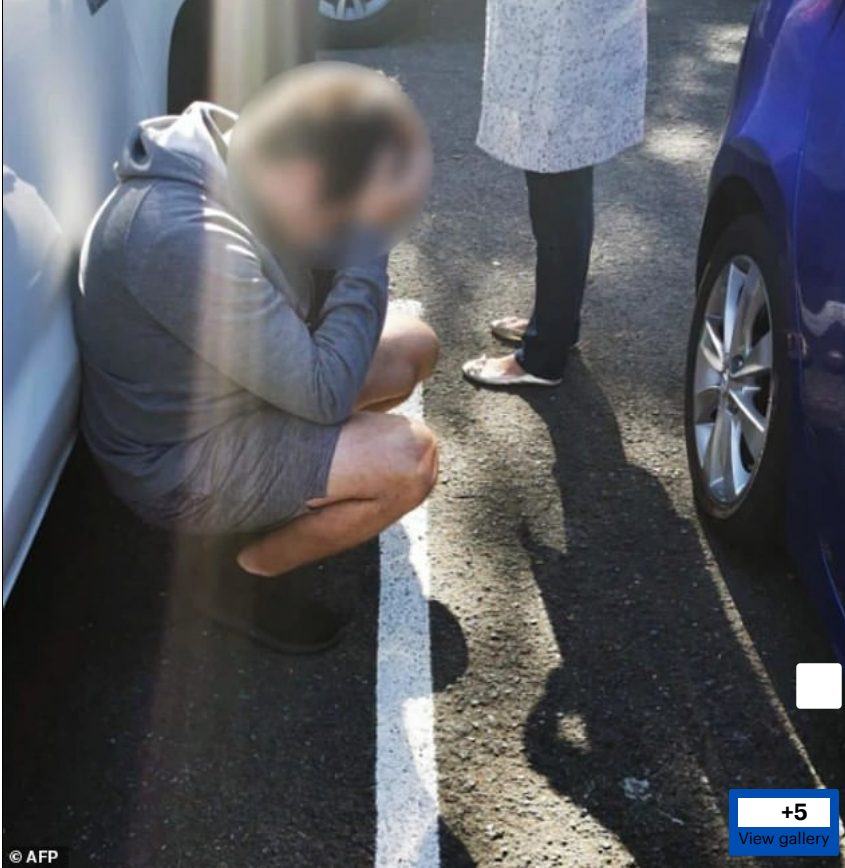
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