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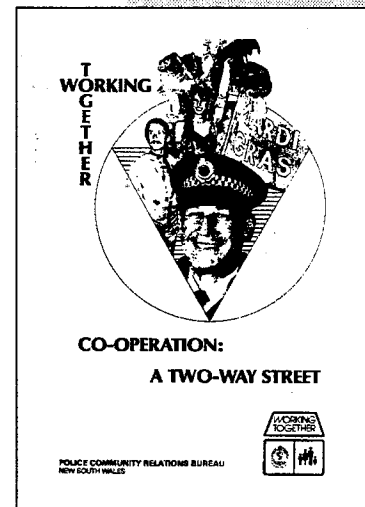
## IMPROVING POLICE GAY/LESBIAN RELATIONS AND TARGETING HATE CRIMES AGAINST LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

The NSW Police Service formalised its commitment to improving Police gay/lesbian relations and to acknowledging violence against gays and lesbians in 1985, when it established the first full-time civilian Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officer in Police Headquarters and the first Police/Anti-Discrimination Board/Gay Counselling Service Phone-In Violence Survey on Gay Violence. The Minister for Police had given his written support for this liaison in 1984 and the NSW Premier had announced soon after that the Police Service would establish a Gay Liaison Unit within the newly created Police Community Relations Bureau. A year later the first Gay Community Relations Coordinator was appointed and a new era in police gay/lesbian relations commenced in NSW.

The clear shift in public policy at that time was brought about because of a range of influences, including :- the renaming of the then NSW Police Force into the Police Service and its reorientation towards service delivery and improved community relations or what is now called community-based policing; pressure from what was becoming a well-organised gay and lesbian community willing to articulate its needs and to identify discrimination and violence; a shift in government policy under a Labour Government including an acknowledgment of the special needs of different community groups; a legislative base for protecting those needs via the Anti-Discrimination Act including its 1982 amendment to cover homosexuality; the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1984 and the establishment of the Anti-Discrimination Board Gay Consultation in late 1983 which was to become a voice for change in police gay relations.

In the preceding 200 years police gay/lesbian relations in NSW were far from cooperative and harmonious. Male homosexual activity was a criminal offence, punished by the death penalty until 1839 and then by other criminal sanctions. During this era police arrested men who engaged in homosexual behaviour and laid charges which often resulted in lengthy imprisonment and a range of devastating consequences including loss of employment and reputation and rejection by family and friends. The gay historian, French, 1995, details stories from this era of police gay/lesbian relations which clarify the level of mistrust and hostility.

Another important influence on this era was the fact that homosexuality was officially viewed as a psychiatric disorder and as an illness or sickness, with many gay men and lesbians being incarcerated in psychiatric institutions and administered severe treatments such as electric shock therapy and aversion therapy. While homosexuality was removed from the list of psychiatric disorders in 1975 and decriminalised in NSW as recently as 1984, the effects of this history are still felt today in terms of widespread prejudice, discrimination, violence and harassment against gay men and lesbians. Prior to 1984 it could be said that at best police were complacent about violence against gays and lesbians and at worst may have participated in incidents of violence and harassment themselves. Newspaper articles from the early 80s contain documentation of allegations of Police assaults on gay men.



With community relations and community-based policing identified as key organisational issues in the NSW Police Service from 1984, full-time positions were established in the then Police Headquarters Community Relations Branch targeting groups in need of improved police community relations. Full-time liaison officers were appointed for Aboriginal, Ethnic and Youth Liaison, and in 1985 for Gay Community Relations as it was then called. This change in public policy in NSW and the allocation of police resources created an environment in which the Police Service could recognise and respond to hate crimes against gays and lesbians and the systemic targeting of the gay and lesbian communities. The types of incidents which may be termed hate-crimes against gays and lesbians include verbal abuse and harassment, gay bashing, lesbian bashing, neighbourhood violence/threats/harassment, gay hate-related murders, demanding money with menaces at public toilets, blackmail, robbery, drugging, domestic violence (involving previous heterosexual partners or family reprisals upon discovering a family member's homosexuality) and sexual assault.



Hate violence against gay men and lesbians is not confined to NSW or to inner city locations. While it may be more concentrated and visible in the inner city it is a city, suburban and rural problem. Of the 32 gay-hate related killings in NSW since 1990, eleven men have been killed in Sydney city, fourteen in suburban Sydney and seven in non-metropolitan or rural locations. This violence and harassment affects the individuals it is perpetrated upon, their families and friends, the gay and lesbian communities who experience the trauma of being a targeted and victimised group in society and the wider community which becomes further diseased

by the perpetration of any violence.

Out of the Blue, A Police Survey of Violence and Harassment Against Gay Men and Lesbians was launched at NSW Parliament House in February, 1995, and is the first Australian study to examine the level of victimisation of lesbians and gay men and its affect on their lives. This independently administered population survey confirmed what the NSW Police Service had been acknowledging since 1990, that gays and lesbians appear to experience significantly disproportionate levels of violence and harassment with many being targeted in hate-crime attacks. Lesbians in the sample group were at least 6 times more likely than other Sydney women to experience a physical assault in a 12 month period. Gay men in the sample group were at least four times more likely than other Sydney men to experience a physical assault in a 12 month period. The great majority of these incidents were hate-related and a very small percent involved robbery. Half of those surveyed experienced verbal abuse or harassment in the last 12 months and a third had experienced multiple victimisation with three or more incidents occurring in that time.

The Survey contains other key findings for informing public policy such as the equal level of victimisation of lesbians and gay men, the extremely high level of fear of violence amongst gays and lesbians as compared to the general community and the high level of behaviour modification in an attempt to avoid violence and harassment.

The NSW Police Service response to this hate crime is based on a recognition of the need to overcome the previous police complacency towards this violence and the historical legacy arising out of 200 years of legislative and psychiatric characterisation of homosexuality as a crime and a psychiatric illness. The Police Service itself having intervened in the private lives of gay men and lesbians for over 200 years, recognises that it must now foster and promote a partnership of cooperation and understanding with the gay and lesbian communities. It is formally committed to the continuous improvement of police gay/lesbian relations and to the provision of customer service to gay men and lesbians which is appropriate and responsive to their needs, based on professionalism, cooperation and understanding and which reduces violence, crime and fear in the gay and lesbian communities.

Since 1990 the NSW Police Service has demonstrated an extensive change in its willingness to respond seriously to the victimisation of lesbians and gay men. It has implemented a strategic response to anti-gay/lesbian violence and harassment and improving Police gay/lesbian relations. This response has a dual focus and relies on both a corporate/strategic approach and a local/operational response. The work of the NSW Police Service in responding to this violence was recognised in February, 1995 when the Australian Heads of Government selected the Police Service as winner of the 1994 Australian Violence Prevention Award for its program 'Reducing violence, crime and fear in the gay and lesbian communities.'

## **PHASE 1 - 1990-1992**

Phase I of the program commenced in January 1990 with the mission to mobilise the Police Service, the gay & lesbian communities and the wider community to awareness, understanding, commitment and action on homophobic violence.

The objectives of this Phase were to increase awareness and understanding of homophobic violence at key levels of Police, Community and Government; to reduce violence and harassment against gays and lesbians by encouraging a joint community and police problem-solving approach at a local and corporate level; to increase the gay, lesbian and heterosexual communities' intolerance of anti-gay/lesbian violence and harassment; to increase the access of gays and lesbians to sensitive and professional policing services responsive to gay/lesbian hate violence; to increase Police accountability at Senior and Operational levels for preventing, reducing and responding to anti-gay/lesbian violence.

In Phase I the strategies included:

### **Police Gay/Lesbian Client Group Consultant**

This full-time civilian position was established in January 1990 following the initial Police Gay Liaison Officer position established in 1985. Both of these positions have been endorsed by Police Ministers who have recognised them as an important government initiative. The Client Group Consultant role is to initiate, develop, implement and monitor police programs, policies, procedures and operations towards improved police gay/lesbian relations, customer service and safety and feelings of safety for gay men and lesbians. The occupant of this position is a public servant based in Police Headquarters with experience in policy, law reform, mediation, strategic change processes and program management. A continuing close relationship between Police Ministers and gay and lesbian lobby groups has led to the gay and lesbian community having a representative on the Interview Panel which selected both appointees to these positions. This has been an important demonstration of good will by Governments and by the Police Service and has ensured a close level of cooperation with the occupant of the position and confidence in that person's commitment and integrity.

### **Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers (PGLLOs)**

These nominated police officers at Police Stations are central to the Police Service local response to anti gay/lesbian violence. They may be general duties police, beat police, police intelligence officers or others who take on the PGLLO role as one of their duties. They are available as contact officers for local gay/lesbian members of the community, are responsible for proactive consultation with local gays and lesbians and for assisting in the development of police patrol initiatives which reduce, prevent and respond to anti-gay/lesbian violence. The experience of the NSW Police Service has been that without these officers working proactively in the gay and lesbian communities and being promoted as skilled and committed individuals who can be asked for by name at a Patrol - that the violence, harassment and other hate crimes against gays and lesbians would remain largely invisible and not brought to Police attention. This is a customer service and personal safety initiative designed to give lesbians and gay men equal access to policing services, to improve the level of satisfaction with police customer service and to maintain an effective local police response to hate crimes against lesbians and gay men.

From the initial four PGLLOs in inner city locations in 1990, to nineteen in 1992, 48 in 1993, 100 in 1995 and 164 in 1997 there is now a state-wide coverage in more than half of the State's police stations.

The expansion of the PGLLOs has not been as a result of any senior direction but because of either the initiative of the local Police Commander, a significant or visible gay and lesbian population in the area, ongoing problems of violence or harassment, the local community requesting that an officer be nominated to the position, or by the initiative of an officer with a commitment to improved police service to this section of the community.

The successes of the PGLLOs are numerous and varied including:-

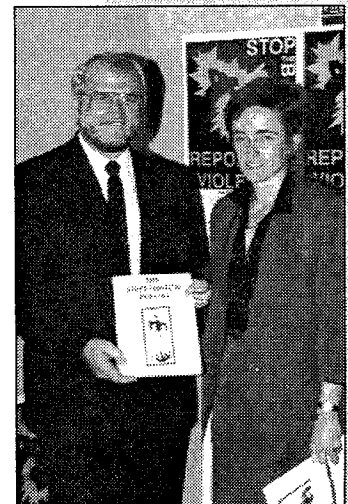
- a PGLLO Referral Manual to assist police in referring gays and lesbians to organisations and groups sensitive to their needs;
- police safety patrols of gay/lesbian dance parties in country locations after hostile media attention or negative community attitudes;
- attending crime victims' homes and providing care and support to reduce trauma;
- intervening in neighbour harassment/threats to halt their escalation;
- addressing local schools on homophobia and anti-gay/lesbian violence;
- targeting police operations to apprehend particular offenders;
- liaising with the Volunteer Gay/Lesbian Street Patrol Group to ensure immediate police backup when violence is witnessed on the streets;
- conducting effective investigations into violent crimes against lesbians and gay men;
- attending key gay/lesbian community events and promoting the role of PGLLOs around NSW.

### **Police Gay/Lesbian Anti Violence Consultative Groups**

Since 1985 these groups have been set up in critical locations after ongoing reports of violence/harassment were received by the Community Relations Advisor or Client Consultant. These currently operate in Newtown, Newcastle, Lismore and Surry Hills. Informal consultation takes place in a wide range of other patrols and is designed to respond to the needs of the local community. These specialist consultative committees are a crucial way of fostering a close, cooperative and proactive relationship between police and gays and lesbians in local areas. The assumption that gays and lesbians would be represented on general community consultative committees has been shown to result in gay and lesbian issues remaining invisible at a local level. These committees have now created an avenue where gays and lesbians feel comfortable raising their specific issues and concerns.

### **The Police Minister**

In April 1990 the Police Minister gave credibility to anti gay/lesbian violence and harassment as a serious issue when he agreed to a request by the Police Service to launch a community-prepared survey on violence against gay men and lesbians. This Survey Report, the Streetwatch Report, was prepared by the Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby. The media launch by a Liberal Government Police Minister, fascinated the media, focused their attention on homophobic violence, gave it credibility as a serious issue and created a phase of intense media interest and coverage in NSW, Australia and overseas. Prior to this the media had often not dealt with hate crimes against gays and lesbians with any seriousness, concern or professionalism and seemed to prefer to ignore the violence, sensationalise it or blame its victims.



## Media rapport to encourage community education

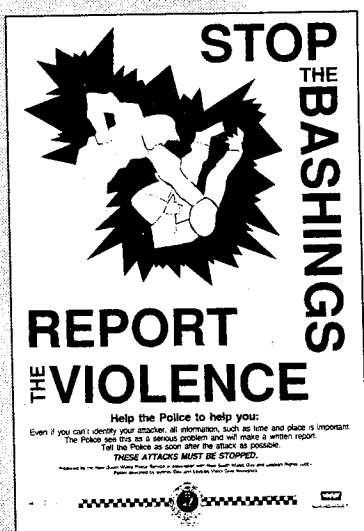
Close rapport was developed with the media during 1990-92 in an attempt to change their often blatant homophobia and blaming of gay & lesbian crime victims. An extensive amount of assistance was provided to facilitate sympathetic coverage of issues by TV current affairs programs, radio, newspaper, popular magazines (such as Penthouse, Rolling Stone, HQ) and TV serial programs such as GP and Country Practice. Since 1990 over 170 interviews have been conducted with the mainstream press by the Client Group Consultant. Regular articles also appear in the gay and lesbian media. The Police Service has recognised the importance of the media in educating the public about the criminal victimisation of gays and lesbians and has used the media as a central strategy in the fight against hate crimes.

## Streetwatch Committee

The Police Service initiated the focusing of Government attention on homophobic violence by requesting the Police Minister to form a Government and Community Committee to look at anti-gay/lesbian violence. This Committee, known as the Streetwatch Implementation Advisory Committee, met from 1990 to 1994 and presented the Police Minister with its first report in 1992 and its final report in 1994 which was launched at NSW Parliament House. The work of this Committee, under the auspices of the Police Minister and chaired by the Anti-Discrimination Board, has ensured a wider government response to homophobic violence with initiatives being developed by the Department of Health, Department of School Education and Department of Housing.

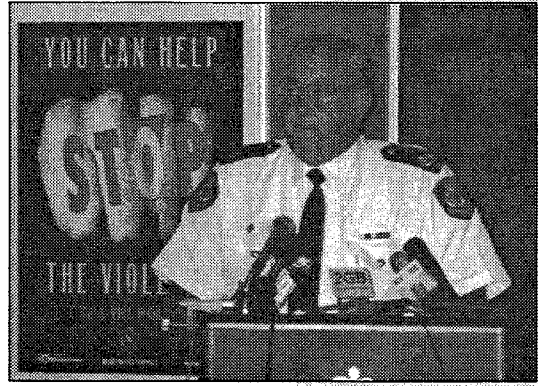
## Annual Marketing and Communication Campaign

A marketing and education campaign about violence and harassment against lesbians and gay men was implemented in 1990 and is reviewed annually. It targets both the gay/lesbian and wider communities and aims to educate the community by using the Police Service as a role model speaking out against hate crimes. It also encourages the reporting of all violence/harassment against gays and lesbians. This campaign was launched by the Police Minister in April 1990 when he launched the Streetwatch Report. The focus of this education campaign within the gay/lesbian communities was to encourage use of police services. This message was conveyed in 1990-92 by the "Stop the Bashings Report the Violence" Campaign which used startling orange and black posters portraying an assault. The campaign poster was commissioned by the Police Service and designed by a gay artist from the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Association. Another poster entitled "Threats and Violence, Don't Put Up With It," designed by a lesbian artist from Mardi Gras, was highly coloured and showed interlocking male and interlocking female symbols. A State wide mail out campaign of these posters reached gay and lesbian community groups, government agencies, neighbourhood centres and included a letter from the then Police Commissioner which identified anti-gay/lesbian violence as a community priority.





The campaign was redesigned and refocused in February 1995 and was launched at Parliament House by the Police Minister as the "You Can Help Stop The Violence" Campaign with posters, brochures and fridge magnets. This campaign is a joint strategy of the Police Service, Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project and Health Department and has revamped the earlier broad-based education campaign. These new pink and black posters featuring a fist with a bold "STOP" across the knuckles have been seen in banks, shops, pubs, doctors surgeries, hospitals, police stations, schools, McDonalds and many other locations.



An ongoing advertising campaign in key gay/lesbian publications encourages reporting to Police and identifies the Police Gay/Lesbian Client Group Consultant and the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers. These advertisements have appeared in gay newspapers, gay & lesbian magazines, the Mardi Gras Guide, Gay & Lesbian Travel Guides and Gay & Lesbian Business Directories. This is a crucial strategy in building cooperation between police and the gay and lesbian communities and in giving gays and lesbians access to police who are trained to understand their issues. It has been one of the most effective and visible reminders of the commitment of the Police Service to work with gays and lesbians. These advertisements have received attention from the gay and lesbian media and lobby groups across the world.

### **Working with Schools**

Great emphasis was placed on working with the Department of School Education during these years because of the involvement of numerous school age boys in the murders of gay men. Following two murders connected to the one school in 1990, a school program was immediately initiated by the Police Gay & Lesbian Client Group Consultant with support from the Police District Commander of the local area. The program content was developed by the Client Group Consultant, two Police Youth Officers, two local Youth Workers, the School Counsellor and the Family Planning Association.



The intervention was run under the auspices of Police Crime Prevention Workshops and utilised ten Police and six Youth Workers in a three day intensive program which addressed homophobia and violence against lesbians and gay men as the sole issue. The program was coordinated by the Police Service with a high level of support from the School Principal. Police & Youth Workers jointly facilitated small group work with students and assistance was provided by a panel of 15 gay men and lesbians who attended question and answer sessions. The attendance of a diverse range of gays and lesbians was crucial to the effectiveness of the program and

according to the School Principal, teachers and students the program was a startling success with a lasting impact on the school.

Work was also undertaken with the Catholic Education Office in 1992 which led to the inclusion of a segment on homophobia and violence in the AIDS package under the topic "Rights & Feelings of Others". This work has been ongoing and the Client Group Consultant is now working with a Catholic dioceses on a pilot program addressing homophobia, AIDS and hate violence in Western Sydney Catholic Schools.

### **Promoting National and International Awareness of Anti-Gay/Lesbian Violence**

The Police Service has assisted in putting the issue of homophobic violence and the need for Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison on the agenda both nationally and internationally.

In 1991 the then Police Commissioner presented a paper on "Prejudice, A Barrier to Professionalism" to the Conference of Australasian and South Pacific Police Commissioners.

Ongoing assistance has been provided to Police, Community Groups, Human Rights Commissions and Members of Parliament in Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, ACT, New Scotland Yard, New Zealand, Philippines and Japan regarding establishing formal Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison in those locations. Until 1997 NSW was the only Australian Police Service to have a full time position dedicated to this liaison work. In 1997, Western Australia appointed a full-time police officer to a similar position. All other States and Territories except for the Northern Territory have a nominated senior police officer who is available to be contacted on gay and lesbian issues. Community groups in several States have argued that this arrangement has not encouraged or facilitated dialogue between police and the gay/lesbian communities and has not led to a change in the level of cooperation or to an increase of confidence in the willingness of police to do anything proactive to target hate crimes against lesbians and gay men. International media stories of NSW Police strategies on targeting hate violence against lesbians and gay men have featured in the London Times, NZ Herald, The Swedish Times, French TV, Japanese TV, Italian and Irish newspapers amongst others.

The Client Group Consultant has also run workshops at Australian Institute of Criminology National Crime Conferences which have assisted other Australian Police Forces and service providers in realising the importance of addressing the serious social problem of these hate-crimes.

### **1990-1992 were the years of visible symbols of Police Commitment**

A Mobile Police Van was placed at Taylor Square, Oxford Street, Darlinghurst in late 1990, every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night and continued until 1994 when local consultation led to its removal so that increased police foot patrols could be instigated. This location was chosen as Oxford Street is Australia's most well-known gay and lesbian streetscape with pubs, clubs, restaurants, clothes shops and other businesses which are gay/lesbian owned or market to the gay and lesbian communities.

A high level of hate crimes against both gay men and lesbians have occurred in this area.

Police presented the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Association with an award for crowd control and safety in 1991. The Police Officer presenting it received 5 minutes applause and in return received an award for the Surry Hills Police Station for its outstanding cooperation with the gay and lesbian communities.

Police contributed \$5,000 to the "Truth or Dare" Video developed by inner-city young and youth workers people in 1991 to stop the homophobia and violence of their peers.

Police ran and continue to run a stall dealing with anti-gay/lesbian violence at World AIDS Day and at the Mardi Gras Fair Day where attendance has risen from 20,000 in the early 1990s to approximately 60,000 today. The Mardi Gras Fair Day Stall is the most important Police Service public display of its improved relations with the gay and lesbian communities.

The annual display includes information on the latest hate crimes and successful solving of these crimes, police initiatives in the continuous improvement of police gay/lesbian relations, a police motorbike with the sign "Your photo on a police bike \$3.00" with proceeds to an AIDS Charity or to the Lesbian and Gay Anti Violence Project. This bike is a feel-good display of a changed era in police gay/lesbian relations in NSW and has attracted politicians, public figures, children, gay and lesbian couples, drag queens and a range of people who love the opportunity to laugh along with the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers. This stall is the light side of police planning for the annual Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras. The actual parade planning is a seven month process now including personnel from Mardi Gras, Fire Brigade, Ambulance, Rail, Bus, Ferry, Councils, etc.

Police formally objected to the development application of an Amusement Parlour on Oxford Street which they believed would increase homophobic violence. They spent half a day being cross-examined in the Land and Environment Court on homophobic violence.

### **Extensive community consultation**

Liaison and consultation was, and continues to be the essential strategy in building cooperation and trust and a joint approach to reducing anti-gay/lesbian violence. This consultation encompasses gay and lesbian community leaders, community groups and the many individuals who require assistance in coming forward to report crimes. It also involves the Police Service enlisting the support of other government, local government and non-government agencies in working to reduce this serious social problem of hate violence and harassment.



The Police Service has welcomed the ongoing assistance of the Anti-Discrimination Board in holding formal Gay & Lesbian Quarterly Consultations which always include a segment where issues of concern regarding police can be raised and where current information on police initiatives can be conveyed. Another important aspect of this consultation in NSW has been the ongoing close cooperation with the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project which is a community based organisation funded by the Health Department. Having other salaried full-time personnel working to reduce and target hate crimes at a community level has provided the NSW Police Service with an excellent opportunity for joint problem solving in the context of community based policing.

## **PHASE II - 1992-1994**

Phase II of the program commenced in 1992, its mission "Police working with the gay and lesbian communities to reduce violence, crime and fear through formalised organisational change".

This phase has involved both structural reforms and widespread local community and police solutions to reduce and prevent hate violence and harassment against gay men and lesbians. While focused in 1992-94 this Phase continues on an ongoing basis.

The objectives of this Phase were to improve the Police Service response to anti-gay/lesbian violence through comprehensive training for Service personnel on appropriate strategies for reducing this violence and responding to the needs of the client group; to improve the Police Service response to anti-gay/lesbian violence through identifying and implementing organisational reforms relevant to improved customer service; and identifying and lessening organisational practices detrimental to improving Police Gay/Lesbian relations; to improve the whole community response to reducing homophobic violence through working with government and non-government organisations.

Phase II has included the following strategies:

### **Training and Education**

A coordinated training strategy is being implemented which will provide heightened awareness of homophobia, homophobic violence and increased sensitivity to the needs of gay and lesbian members of the community.

This strategy has had six strands:

- A Patrol Commanders' Workshop was held in December 1992 for Commanders in areas where there was homophobic violence or a need for improved customer service. 38 Patrols were identified through monitoring of community feedback over a three year period.
- An in-depth On The Job Police Training Package was completed in February 1993 on "Police Relations With the Homosexual Community". It is available for use in Patrols and is the first such Police package in

Australia. 50 Patrol Training Officers have been trained in the use of the package at a local patrol level.

- An article was written for the Policing Issues and Practice Journal, titled "Dealing With Difference" which addressed homophobic violence and the needs of gay men and lesbians. Each of the State's 13,000 Police received a copy of this Journal.
- Since 1992, all Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers have attended a 5 day training course at the Goulburn Academy which is co-facilitated by the Client Consultant and an Academy Lecturer. This is the first formal Police Academy course to address gay/lesbian issues in Australia and is evaluated by attending police as a highly successful training course and some have named it the best in-service course that they have completed in their career.



PGLLOs receive ongoing training in current crimes affecting gays and lesbians and on effective local strategies through three monthly meetings with the Client Group Consultant. These meetings only assisted metropolitan PGLLOs. As a result, in 1995, an annual seminar program was initiated for all PGLLOs.

### **Senior Level Working Party on Improving Police Gay/Lesbian Relations**

The Police Service established a Senior Working Party in 1992 to oversee Police initiatives seeking to increase the safety of gays and lesbians feelings of safety, and satisfaction with policing services. This Working Party is the first of its kind in Australia and was chaired by an Assistant Commissioner on behalf of the State Commander. It included relevant Assistant Commissioners (Professional Responsibility, Education and Training), Regional Commanders, PGLLOs, the Client Group Consultant and had regular input from key gay and lesbian organisations as issues arise which affect their organisations.

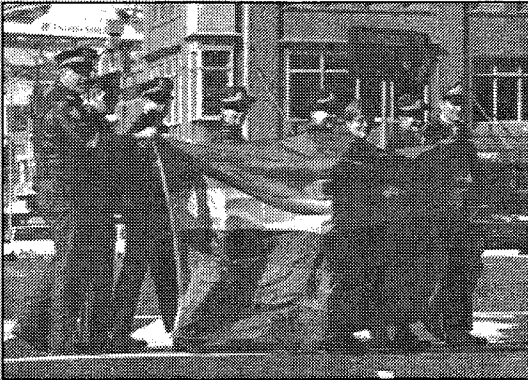
From 1992 to 1995, this Working Party has identified 30 issues for consideration by the Police Service and developed formal organisation positions on a wide range of strategies to reduce anti-gay/lesbian violence, improve service delivery and Police gay/lesbian relations. Some of its successes include a formal Statement of Duties and Mission Statement for PGLLOs; a Commissioners' Notice on Police Operations Targeting Offensive Behaviour in 'Beats' (eg. Public Toilets, Parks and like places etc); a brochure on Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison. This committee will be re-established in 1998.

### **Senior Sponsor on Gay/Lesbian Issues**

From 1993 to 1997, a high profile Assistant Commissioner of Police, Assistant Commissioner Alf Peate (pictured on page 7) played a significant role in advancing police gay/lesbian relations within the Police Service.

This highly respected officer worked closely with the Police Gay/Lesbian Client Consultant and championed an innumerable list of police reforms with his colleagues until his retirement in 1997.

### **Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers**



The number of Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers was dramatically expanded to 95 officers at 79 Patrols during this Phase to ensure local attention to hate crimes and improved police gay/lesbian relations across the state.

### **Schools Homophobia Package**

The Department of School Education in response to interest in the 1990 Police Crime Prevention (Homophobia) Workshop set up a working group of their training personnel, a teacher and the Police Gay/Lesbian Client Group Consultant to turn the school homophobia project into a comprehensive training package available for school use as a six hour module. That package has been used in several schools across the State.

### **Survey of Violence Against Lesbians**

A Survey of violence against lesbians was conducted by the Police Service in 1992 via a UNSW Social Work student on placement. 300 women were surveyed at a National Lesbian Conference at the University of Technology and a draft report has been compiled which shows some disturbing and interesting findings. This is the first such survey of its size on anti-lesbian violence and assists police, community and government in understanding and responding to these crimes. This Survey was the first indicator to the Police Service that there appeared to be a significantly disproportionate level of physical violence against lesbians and a level very similar to that experienced by gay men. Further, it showed that most incidents were hate-related and involved anti-lesbian abuse.

### **Anti Gay/Lesbian Violence Forum**

A Forum was organised by the Police Service in April 1993 to provide wider access to the successes of the Streetwatch Committee. It was attended by several senior and operational police, relevant government departments, local government and Parliamentary representatives and gay and lesbian community organisations. The Forum's aim was to bring all stakeholders up to date on the range of community and government strategies now targeting homophobic violence and to plan future directions together.

Improvements to the Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS) Refinements to the COPS System were examined by the Police Service to ensure more accurate collection of Hate Crimes data and to assist police patrols in their response to anti-gay/lesbian violence and harassment. The changes were finally approved in 1997 and will also enable access to non-identifying data collected by community organisations such as the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project. Ongoing consultation with the gay and

lesbian communities, Anti-Discrimination Board, Privacy Committee, PGLLOs and senior police is taking place on this issue.

### **External Assistance on Homophobia**

Assistance is provided by the Client Group Consultant or PGLLOs to the many organisations who are attempting to respond to homophobic violence and the needs of gays and lesbians, for example Alternative Dispute Resolution Association, Relationships Australia, Church Groups, Universities and Schools.

## **PHASE III - 1995-1997**

The mission of Phase III is "the publishing of a formal Police policy and strategic plan to reduce violence, crime and fear in the gay and lesbian communities and to improve Police customer service and Police gay/lesbian relations".

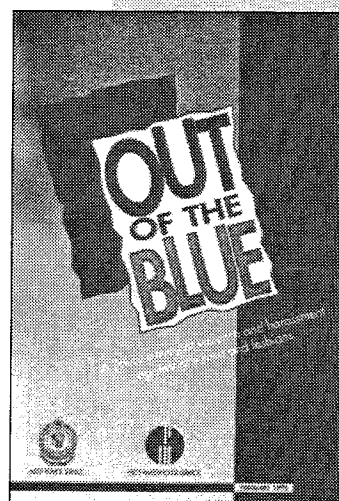
This phase commenced with Police research of the level of victimisation of gays and lesbians and of their fear levels, and will then move into a widespread community consultation process which will take place with the gay and lesbian communities via focus groups in city and suburban locations and consultation in key rural centres. This will enable assessment of satisfaction with police services and community suggestions to further impact on hate violence.

The objectives of this Phase are to more accurately understand the victimisation and levels of fear of gays and lesbians through appropriate research; to more accurately assess the needs of gay men and lesbians in relation to homophobic violence and police customer service through widespread community consultation; to formalise the Police Service commitment to anti-gay/lesbian violence, improved police gay/lesbian relations and customer service through publishing a comprehensive Gay/Lesbian Policy and Strategic Plan.

Phase III includes the following strategies:

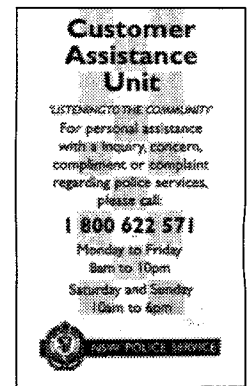
### **Out of the Blue, A Survey of Violence and Harassment Against Gay Men and Lesbians**

The NSW Police Service funded an independently administered gay and lesbian population survey at the Mardi Gras Fair Day in February 1994 to ascertain levels of fear, victimisation and satisfaction with police customer service. The survey report, 'Out of the Blue,' was launched in February 1995 at Parliament House by the Police Minister and is the first Australian survey to effectively examine the level of victimisation of gay men and lesbians. The fact that this is the first published Police Survey of these hate crimes is a clear demonstration of the Police Service commitment to a deeper understanding and more effective response to these targeted crimes of violence and harassment. This Survey has given credibility to the claims of gay and lesbian groups regarding the high level of violence targeting this section of the community. It can be read on the PGLLO web site at <http://www.eagles.com.au/~gllos>.



## **Customer Assistance Unit**

The Police Customer Assistance Unit was established in 1994 and after a period of community education, gays and lesbians are now utilising this Unit for inquiries or conciliation about police customer service issues. The Unit is open to receive calls seven days a week and for 10-14 hours per day providing an invaluable and accessible service to the community at large and also to gays and lesbians. More serious complaints about police conduct and service are referred to the Internal Affairs Branch and the Ombudsman's Office.



## **State-wide Community Consultation**

Widespread gay and lesbian community consultation via focus groups was conducted in 1995 to provide for community input into the Police Gay/Lesbian Policy and Statement. The personal safety of gays and lesbians was a major focus of this consultation process which targeted urban and rural locations.

## **Gay & Lesbian Police Employees Network (GALPEN)**

The State Commander's Working Party on Improving Police Gay/Lesbian Relations focused on developing and reviewing organisational strategies to reduce violence, crime and fear in the gay/lesbian communities during 1995. Another key initiative of the Working Party in 1995 was the establishment of a formal Gay and Lesbian Police Employees Network (GALPEN) set up along similar lines to The Koori Network and Spokeswomen's Network to create a formal support structure for gay and lesbian police and administrative officers. The Police Service's demonstration of support for its own gay and lesbian personnel is an important indicator to the gay/lesbian community that its commitment to tackling hate crimes is genuine and congruent with its own respect for its employees. GALPEN was officially launched by the Police Minister at the First National Conference on Violence Against Gay Men and Lesbians at Sydney University in October 1995.

## **Commissioner's Notice on Police Operations at Beats**

In response to allegations of unprofessional Police conduct in targeting men who have sex with men in public toilets, etc. the Police Commissioner has issued a notice to all officers regarding appropriate operational practices. This notice encourages the use of uniformed Police Patrols as the preferred method of operation in all but a few circumstances. In the past many victims of violence in these locations have been too wary of Police to report these crimes and in some areas, hate violence has escalated into gay-hate murder. The increased confidence in professional Police Services as a result of this Notice should lead to increased reporting to Police and appropriate Police intervention in violence trouble spots.



### **Formal Police Gay/Lesbian Policy Statement**

The Police Gay/Lesbian Policy Statement will be published in 1997. It will formalise and describe the ongoing Police commitment to reducing violence, crime and fear in the gay/lesbian communities, improving Police gay/lesbian relations and Police customer service.

### **Continuing Steps to Place Hate Violence on the Wider Government and Community Agenda - Australian Violence Prevention Award**

In February 1995, the Police Service was announced joint-winner of the Australian Violence Prevention Award in conjunction with the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project. This Award was established in 1991 by the Heads of Government of Australia in response to the Strathfield shooting massacre in Sydney, NSW. In jointly winning this prestigious award for 'Reducing, Violence, Crime and Fear in the Gay and Lesbian Communities,' the Police Service and the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project, through their cooperation and good working relationship have taken another step forward in placing this issue on the community and government agenda.



As a way of recognising the work of the award winners and of the importance of responding to this hate violence, the Federal Government announced at the Award Ceremony the holding of the First National Conference on Violence Against Gay Men and Lesbians. This Conference, was held under the auspices of the Australian Institute of Criminology in October 1995 and focused further national attention on these hate crimes. It attracted speakers, panellists and participants from around Australia.

At this conference the NSW Police Minister committed to raising violence against gays and lesbians at the Annual Australian Police Ministers Council (APMC). As a result of this the APMC resolved to ask their jurisdictions to consider the NSW Police suggestion of a national approach to Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison and Hate Crimes Data Collection.

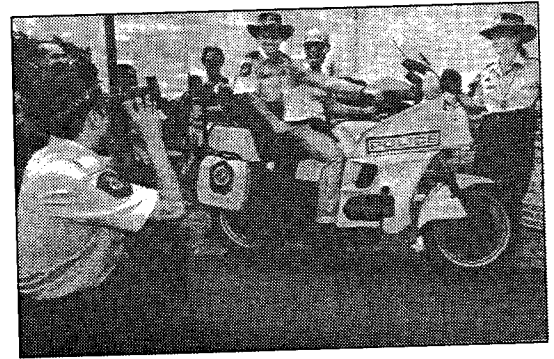
### **First National Police Seminar on Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison**

As part of the above National Conference the NSW Police Service hosted a 1 day seminar for interstate Police Service personnel involved in Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison. Eleven police from other States and Territories visited NSW Police Headquarters to participate in an information exchange day on police gay/lesbian liaison and police strategies to reduce hate crimes against gays and lesbians.



## Police Recruitment Strategies

In 1994-95 the Police Service made contact with key Police Forces in the U.S.A. and England and examined their recruitment strategies targeting gays and lesbians. As a result of this research the Police Service has a recruitment display at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day which is incorporated into the annual police stall at this key community event.



## Targeted Recruitment Advertisements

In June 1997 the Police Service took the next step by placing targeted recruitment advertisements in the gay and lesbian press. These full page advertisements used humour which would be appreciated by lesbians and gay men.

### A CAREER OPPORTUNITY FOR GAY MEN THAT DOESN'T PUT YOU IN A STRAIGHT JACKET.

While there have always been gay police officers, it is only recently that the NSW Police Service has actively begun seeking gay recruits. Times have changed and the NSW Police Service wants to reflect that change. To that end we are doing some pretty radical things ourselves. Indeed, that's another reason why we want to attract you to the Police Service, to help change it".

No matter what a recruit's background, they must all have integrity, determination, self confidence, good communication skills, flexibility and intelligence. The starting salary for a probationary constable is \$31,000, well above the average graduate's starting salary. Basic training takes about 18 months, and you will graduate with a Certificate of Policing from Charles Sturt University as a fully trained police officer. Trained to maintain safety, peace and good order, respond to emergencies, investigate crime, prevent crime, and solve a wide variety of community problems. Please call. Because a more diverse police service is not only more humane but, we believe, more humane. For further details about career opportunities with NSW Police Service, call us on (02) 9539 5350 or visit us at <http://www.police.nsw.gov.au>.

The advertisement which appeared in the monthly Lesbians On The Loose, depicts a pair of women's shoes with the caption 'JOIN THE NSW POLICE SERVICE, WE GUARANTEE YOU'LL GET SENSIBLE SHOES'. The other advertisement which appeared in the gay weekly newspapers depicts a police leather jacket with the caption 'A CAREER OPPORTUNITY FOR GAY MEN THAT DOESN'T PUT YOU IN A STRAIGHT JACKET'.

The idea of the campaigns was to send a message without being too serious, to attract people with integrity, compassion, determination, self confidence,

good communication skills, flexibility and intelligence.

While both advertisements state "Times have changed and the NSW Police Service wants to reflect that change" they also acknowledge the need for honesty "entrenched attitudes take time to change. Indeed that's another reason why we want to attract you to the Police Service, to help change it".

### JOIN THE NSW POLICE. WE GUARANTEE YOU'LL GET SENSIBLE SHOES.

While there have always been women police officers, it is only recently that the NSW Police Service has actively begun seeking lesbian recruits. Times have changed and the NSW Police Service wants to reflect that change. To that end we are doing some pretty radical things ourselves. Indeed, that's another reason why we want to attract you to the Police Service, to help change it. We are also actively recruiting more women, more Asians, more people from all kinds of ethnic backgrounds, more Aboriginal people, and more graduates of any profession.

No matter what a recruit's background, however, they must all have integrity, compassion, determination, self confidence, good communication skills, flexibility and intelligence. The starting salary for a probationary constable is \$31,000, well above the average graduate's starting wage. Basic training takes about 18 months, and you will graduate with a Certificate of Policing from Charles Sturt University as a fully trained police officer. Trained to maintain safety, peace and good order, respond to emergencies, investigate crime, prevent crime, and solve a wide variety of community problems. Please call. Because a more diverse police service is not only more humane but, we believe, more humane. For further details about career opportunities with NSW Police Service call us on (02) 9539 5350 or visit us at <http://www.police.nsw.gov.au>.

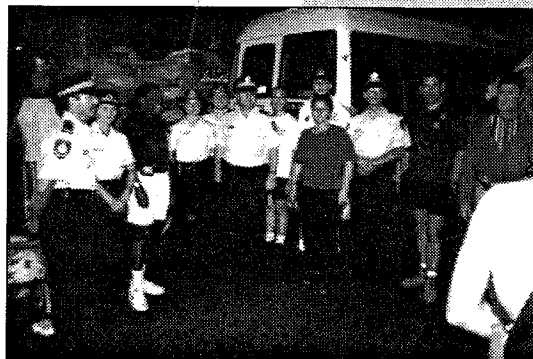
NSW POLICE SERVICE

## Police Join Annual Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade

From 1996 an official police bus was entered into the annual Mardi Gras Parade. This bus carried the neon rainbow banner "STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST GAYS & LESBIANS, TELL THE POLICE. Police and the Community Working Together Towards a Safer Community".

The police presence attracted cheers of support & encouragement from the huge Mardi Gras crowds estimated at 600,00.

In 1997 the Police Commissioner attended the Mardi Gras Viewing Room as an official VIP guest. In the past, senior police had created much good will with similar gestures but the presence of the Commissioner received much media attention.



### **Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison on the World Wide Web**

In 1996, one of the PGLLOs established a computer web site on Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison. This was undertaken as part of his Academy Training Course and resulted in him being awarded a Commissioner's Commendation. In the first two years of its operation, it has received over 18,000 site visitors and has been inspirational for lesbians and gay men around the world.

The web site address is: <http://www.eagles.com.au/~gllos>.

### **CONCLUSION**

No other State or Territory Police Service in Australia has dedicated the same level of resources to targeting violence and harassment against gay men and lesbians as the NSW Police Service. This booklet summarises the comprehensive program targeting these hate crimes and shows that the NSW Police Service has put itself forward as an advocate for change in the community. The response of other States and Territories has been very different. Unit 1997 all States, except the Northern Territory had a nominated senior police officer as a contact on gay/lesbian community issues. These officers generally carry a range of portfolios, like community relations, child abuse or are in fact a senior operational police officer in charge of a police area. In most cases the role of this officer is to respond to problems with police customer service and to provide a mechanism for improving police accountability. Proactive policing strategies have not tended to be addressed in this structure.

As mentioned earlier, many gay/lesbian community leaders in Australia have expressed concerns that their issues will remain invisible and unreported until Police Services extend the hand of cooperation in a visible proactive way which encourages gays and lesbians to access policing services. Several Australian States are now responding to these community requests.

In mid 1997 the other States began to give more attention to the issue of Gay/Lesbian Liaison. Western Australia created a full-time Liaison Officer position filled by a serving police officer. The Federal Police ran a pilot Liaison scheme and are now looking at setting up liaison officers as contacts in each of their Canberra police stations.

The Queensland Police are also examining a pilot scheme in their State. Each of these police forces have sent police to the NSW Police Academy for training on gay and lesbian issues.

In Victoria, police and gay/lesbian community groups meet regularly in a centralised committee context, while in Queensland there are meetings in several regional areas. In Tasmania and South Australia meetings between police and community representatives would be convened on a needs basis if a particular problem arose. It appears that most of the formal committees focus on concerns/complaints regarding police customer service and develop avenues for gays and lesbians to input into police recruiting and training days. Police Services in SA and QLD can refer lesbians and gay men to other police operational initiatives such as Victim Support Officers, Regional/Divisional Crime Coordinators or Regional/Divisional Community Based Policing Units.

Gay and lesbian community groups in many States and Territories have sought to replicate the NSW model for proactively targeting hate crimes against gay men and lesbians. In so doing many have lobbied their Police Services for a full-time gay and lesbian liaison/policy/community relations position and their Governments for a funded gay/lesbian community-based Anti-Violence Project. NSW has been fortunate in terms of the ten years of commitment of respective Government and Police Service administrations and through its program to reduce anti-gay/lesbian violence, has purposefully taken the lead in creating a momentum for social change on homophobic violence and harassment in Australia and internationally. The NSW Police Commissioner, Tony Lauer, summarised this type of organisational change at the 1993 National Conference on 'Keeping the Peace - Police Accountability and Oversight.'

*'To many in the community we are moving from being a traditional repressor of freedom and public expression to a champion of the downtrodden, a representative of the maligned and underprivileged in society - an advocate for the community.'*

[Hotel Nikko, 20 May, 1993, A R Lauer, NSW Commissioner of Police]

These words are an echo of the words of the Minister for Police in 1985 when referring to the need to end 'racial indiscretions' or 'overt antagonism to gays and lesbians.'

*'Every serving member of the Force must face up to the fact that whether they like it or not our diverse community is made up of many minority groups, all of whom deserve and have the right to expect, equality from those appointed to police it.'*

*'Those who choose not to face up to that fact, or who having faced up to it, cannot accept it, should leave the Force now rather than damage the fabric from which the institution has been cut.'*

[Senior Officer's Strategic Planning Seminar, 16 February, 1985,  
The Hon Peter Anderson MP, Minister for Police]

The momentum for social change, pushed along by the NSW Police Service and gay and lesbian community groups, has made hate crimes against gays and lesbians an increasingly important social issue since 1985. The NSW Police Service is committed to lead the way in its program to reduce anti-gay/lesbian violence and to creating a safer community for lesbians and gay men.

## GRAPHICS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

1. 'Police Gay Liaison,' first Community Relations Branch leaflet, 1985.
2. Collage of newspaper headlines, 1990-1995
3. The Hon Ted Pickering, Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Sue Thompson at the launch of the Streetwatch Report and the 'Stop the Bashings, Report the Violence' Campaign. Pride Centre, Flinders Street, April, 1990.
4. 'Stop the Bashings, Report the Violence' Poster. Designed by Riffin Drill, Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Association, 1990.
5. Assistant Commissioner Alf Peate, Commander, South Region at the launch of the 'Out of the Blue Report and the 'You Can Help Stop The Violence' Campaign. Parliament House, February, 1995.
6. Addressing Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men in Catholic Schools. Sue Thompson, June 1995.
7. Senior Constables Kerry King and Brad Scanlan were a highlight at the Dot and Fanny Show. Photo reprinted courtesy of Mazz Images.
8. Police Gay Lesbian Liaison Officer Academy Training Course. Goulburn Police Academy, July, 1994
9. Police Gay Lesbian Liaison Officers and Sue Thompson carrying Rainbow Banner. Taylor Square, Darlinghurst, June, 1994.
10. 'Out of the Blue, A Police Survey of Violence Against Gay Men and Lesbians,' February, 1995.
11. Customer Assistance Unit Commitment to Service Card.
12. The Hon Duncan Kerr, Federal Minister for Justice with Award Winners of the Australian Violence Prevention Award, Hotel Nikko, Darling Harbour, February, 1995.
13. National Police Exchange on Gay/Lesbian Liaison, NSW Police Headquarters, October 1995.
14. 'Gay Cops,' article in Sydney Morning Herald. 11 April, 1995, Photo by Robert Pearce reprinted courtesy of Sydney Morning Herald.
15. Police Gay/Lesbian Recruitment Advertisements.
16. Police Bus in 1996 Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade.

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