



## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Advisory Group to the Metropolitan Police

### INFORMATION FOR THE MEDIA

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

##### **1. HISTORY AND FORMATION OF THE GROUP**

###### **What is the LGBT Advisory Group?**

We are a voluntary group of independent lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) advisors working with the Metropolitan Police Service at New Scotland Yard. We advise on and monitor police issues that affect LGBT people who live in, work in, study in or are visiting London.

###### **How did the group come about?**

After the April 1999 Soho bombings (Admiral Duncan) in London, John Grieve, then head of the Racial and Violent Crime Task Force, recognised the need for a lesbian and gay advisory group.

###### **How were members of the group chosen?**

A number of LGBT individuals insisted that such a group should reflect the whole LGBT community and not be selected by the police. An ad hoc group put together a process to recruit a wide range of LGBT people to form an advisory group. The initial group of 25 were selected in January 2000 to form the LGBT Advisory Group (LGBT AG). New members are selected by an independent recruitment panel – the Group does not select its own members.

###### **How is the group funded?**

We have a budget from the Met which covers the expenses of members on Advisory Group business. It also enables our members to attend relevant conferences in the UK and within Europe.

###### **Is the group open to new members?**

There have been several recruitment rounds as people move on from the group, or away from the London area. The average number of members has been around 24. The latest recruitment round was in late 2005.

## **2. THE ROLE AND WORK OF THE GROUP**

### **What does the Advisory Group do?**

Initially we were only invited to advise the Racial and Violent Crime Task Force (CO24), restructured as the Diversity Directorate (DCC4). However as the quality of our advice has been recognised, we are increasingly invited to participate in a wide range of policy and practice work. From a long list of priorities, we have had to become more realistic in only agreeing to do work we have the capacity to do.

### **How does the Group operate?**

We have two Co-Chairs, Bob Hodgson and Rachael Hopkins. The Advisory Group has a number of Sub-Groups to deal with the various aspects of our work. These Sub-Groups meet about every 6 weeks. Each member of the LGBT AG is asked to become a member of no more than 2 of these groups. The current subgroups are:

- Consistency of Service
- Critical Incidents
- Community Representation
- Transgender
- Murder Review

### **How often does the full Group meet?**

Full Conference is the name given to our regular meetings, held every 2 months. All members are asked to attend these meetings. However we may occasionally call an emergency meeting of the full group. We also hold away days for in-depth discussions and strategic planning.

### **Do the police come to your meetings?**

Yes. Our meetings are sometimes attended by senior officers from the Diversity Directorate (DCC4).

### **What other meetings do you have?**

A meeting called Strategy also takes place about every 6 weeks and provides an opportunity for the Sub-Group chairs to report to each other and to coordinate their activities. All members of the Advisory Group are welcome to attend. Strategy also discusses whether a new project group should be set up, though their decision must be ratified by the full Advisory Group.

## OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- making sure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues are always on the agenda of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS);
- proving transparency of the police service by advisors having access to most areas of the MPS;
- providing advice on LGBT-related issues to the MPS 'on demand';
- formulating our own agenda of issues on which to advise the MPS;
- assisting with critical incidents;
- keeping the LGBT community in London informed of police initiatives;
- providing a channel for complaints about poor policing;
- encouraging the community to report homophobic and transphobic incidents to the police or through third parties;
- supporting, informing and facilitating liaison between local LGBT forums;
- creating and sustaining a network of LGBT Liaison Officers throughout the MPS

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