

THE STREETWATCH REPORT

A Study into Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men



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A Project of the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby Incorporated
Written by Gary Cox

STREETWATCH: A PROJECT OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN RIGHTS LOBBY

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main findings of the *Streetwatch* survey are as follows:

Nature of Incident

- 1.1 73% of survivors sustained physical injury.
- 1.2 Verbal abuse occurred in 48% of incidents.
- 1.3 95% of incidents at "beats" involved physical assault, compared with 80% of the street incidents.

Location and Time

- 1.4 52% of attacks took place in the street.
- 1.5 28% of attacks occurred at "beats".
- 1.6 73% of assaults happened between Thursday and Sunday.
- 1.7 63% of incidents occurred between the hours of 9pm and 3am, more assaults taking place before midnight than after.
- 1.8 Over 10% of all assaults took place between midnight and 3am Sunday morning.
- 1.9 Street incidents mainly occurred between 9pm and 3am.
- 1.10 Incidents at "beats" typically occurred between 3pm and 6pm, and between 9pm and 3am.

Weapons

- 1.11 83% of physical assaults did not involve use of weapons; in those that did, the weapons were usually those conveniently to hand (eg bottles, clubs).

Theft

- 1.12 22% of incidents involved robbery.

Characteristics of Survivors

- 1.13 94% of respondents were male.
- 1.14 91% identified as gay men, 5% as lesbian.
- 1.15 72% of survivors were aged between 25 and 39; the average age was 32.

Characteristics of Assailants

- 1.16 In 94% of incidents, the assailants were all male.
- 1.17 43% of assailants were between 16 and 20 years of age.
- 1.18 40% of assailants were between 21 and 25 years of age.
- 1.19 36% of incidents involved 3 to 5 attackers; the average number was 4 and the maximum was 15.

- 1.20 The larger the number of attackers, the younger they were likely to be. In 82% of incidents involving 6-10 assailants, some of the assailants were aged 16 to 20. In incidents involving 3-5 attackers, the majority involved 21-25 year olds.

Witnesses

- 1.21 52% of survivors were alone when the incident occurred.
- 1.22 55% stated that witnesses were present. In 41% of these cases, the witnesses offered assistance.

Reason for the Assault

- 1.23 79% believed the reason for the assault was that they were gay or lesbian.
- 1.24 In 81% of incidents, the assailants spoke to the survivor. In 74% of these cases, the speech involved anti-gay/lesbian taunts.

Immediate Action Taken

- 1.25 In 39% of incidents, only protective action was possible.
- 1.26 Only 6% of survivors could ignore the assailant(s).

Post-Assault Action

- 1.27 48% of survivors reported the incident to the police.
- 1.28 34% sought medical attention.
- 1.29 36% of survivors took no action.

Reports to the Police

- 1.30 Of persons not reporting the incident, 51% stated low clear-up rates as the reason for not reporting, compared with 17% believing the report would not be taken seriously.
- 1.31 Of those who did report the incident, 19% experienced poor service, whilst 56% experienced helpful or supportive service.

Reports to Health Authorities

- 1.32 83% of respondents who sought medical attention received good service. Only 13% reported receiving poor service.
- 1.33 13% of those who sought medical attention were asked if they were lesbian or gay by the health personnel.

Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit

- 1.34 61% of respondents were aware of the Unit's existence.

Victim Compensation

- 1.35 Only 21% of respondents were aware of the Victim Compensation scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

We recommend that:

- 2.1.1 The Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 be amended to include a new ground of complaint of vilification based on perceived or actual homosexuality and to create a new criminal offence of serious vilification based on perceived or actual homosexuality, on the lines of the 1989 Amendment regarding racial vilification.

2.2 NATIONAL ANTI-GAY/LESBIAN VIOLENCE INQUIRY

We recommend that:

- 2.2.1 The Federal Minister for Justice initiate a nationwide inquiry into the nature, prevalence and root causes of violence against lesbians and gay men. Such inquiry should recommend measures appropriate to eradicate this problem.
- 2.2.2 The Australian Institute of Criminology fully fund research projects into the nature, incidence, causes and remedies of violence against lesbians and gay men.

2.3 POLICE

We recommend that:

- 2.3.1 Gay/Lesbian Liaison Officers, being uniformed members of the N.S.W. Police Force, be nominated for every police station in New South Wales to monitor incidents of violence and to act as contact points for gay men and lesbians otherwise reluctant to report to the police.
- 2.3.2 An innovative outreach education program be established to encourage gay men and lesbians to report incidents of violence to the police. This should be coupled with the programs for organisational and service delivery change in the Police Force outlined in these recommendations.
- 2.3.3 Pilot projects be initiated at Newtown and Surry Hills police stations to establish practices of community policing. This should entail full consultation with the gay and lesbian communities to decide the most appropriate methods to patrol the streets. Programs should be established to improve service, and increase reporting and clear-up rates.
- 2.3.4 Regular evening and night uniformed foot patrols be established on Oxford Street, Darlinghurst and King Street, Newtown. The timing, frequency and efficacy of same should be reviewed by the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Group and the local Community Consultative Committees.
- 2.3.5 A statewide program be initiated by the NSW Police Department to radically improve levels of service to gay and lesbian members of the community. The effectiveness of the program to be monitored by the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Group.
- 2.3.6 A statewide program be initiated by the NSW Police Department to radically improve response times to requests for assistance and clear-up rates for crimes perpetrated against gay and lesbian members of the community. The effectiveness of the program to be monitored by the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Group.

- 2.3.7 In conjunction with the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, the NSW Police Department initiate an in-service education program for constables in awareness of the needs of gay men and lesbians.
- 2.3.8 In conjunction with the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, the NSW Police Department initiate education programs for all new recruits to the Force in awareness of the needs of gay men and lesbians.
- 2.3.9 The NSW Police Department amend their Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Program to include gay men and lesbians. As an essential component of this program, the positive recruitment of gay men and lesbians into the Force should be promoted. A Gay/Lesbian EEO Co-ordinator should be appointed to facilitate this process.
- 2.3.10 The Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit initiate a statewide awareness campaign to inform lesbians and gay men of the Unit's existence, role and function.
- 2.3.11 The Minister for Police and the NSW Commissioner of Police publicly state the total unacceptability of violence against gay men and lesbians. Such announcement should be accompanied by an advertising and media campaign to that effect and the introduction of policies and measures such as recommended in Section 2.3 of this report.

2.4 ATTORNEY GENERAL

We recommend that:

- 2.4.1 The Attorney General ensure sufficient funds and staff are available to the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Group to enable them to effectively monitor the programs for change in the NSW Police Force recommended in this report.
- 2.4.2 The Attorney General initiate a specific statewide promotional campaign aimed at publicising the Victims Compensation Scheme to lesbians and gay men. In conjunction, an awareness program be established to educate Tribunal Members and staff in the particular issues surrounding violence against lesbians and gay men.

2.5 EDUCATION

We recommend that:

- 2.5.1 To affirm positive images of lesbians and gay men and to provide much needed accurate information, personal development courses in schools incorporate positive and relevant information about homosexuality.
- 2.5.2 Teaching staff be provided with in-service training to counteract negative attitudes towards gay men and lesbians, both inside and outside the classroom.
- 2.5.3 Counselling staff be provided with in-service training in order to be able to deal with both the problems faced by young gay men and lesbians at school and also issues surrounding anti-gay/lesbian violence.

- 2.5.4 Resources, library resources and speakers, be made available to aid discussion on homosexuality.
- 2.5.5 Schools address the issues surrounding violence against gay men and lesbians holding special sessions on the subject.
- 2.5.6 The Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 as it relates to homosexuality be amended to include all forms of education, both public and private.

2.6 YOUTH

We recommend that:

- 2.6.1 The peak youth organisations in NSW initiate a program of in-service sessions for youth workers to make them aware of issues relating to violence against gay men and lesbians and the special needs of young gays and lesbians.

2.7 HEALTH

We recommend that:

- 2.7.1 The NSW Health Department fund special programs to teach specific interventions and self-defence techniques to gay men and lesbians.
- 2.7.2 Guidelines for health service deliverers be formulated as to when it is necessary and appropriate to obtain information on the sexuality of an assault survivor and when it is not necessary and should not be obtained. Such guidelines should be approved by the AIDS Council of NSW and be adopted by all health authorities.

2.8 COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

We recommend that:

- 2.8.1 The gay and lesbian communities develop innovative community responses to the issue, along the lines of the Whistle Project in San Francisco.
- 2.8.2 The Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, in conjunction with the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Group, investigate appropriate community policing models.
- 2.8.3 The Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby investigate the efficacy of Police Community Consultative Committees to ascertain their relevance in a community policing model.

2.9 FURTHER RESEARCH

We recommend that:

- 2.9.1 A research program be funded to specifically investigate violence against lesbians in NSW. The program should particularly address the greater invisibility of this group and the lack of previous research.
- 2.9.2 A research program be funded to investigate violence against gay men and lesbians in outer areas of Sydney, in Wollongong and Newcastle, and in country NSW.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

Streetwatch was initiated by the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby in November 1988 in response to the increasing incidence of violence against lesbians and gay men in Sydney.

The purpose of the study was to provide information on the nature of the assaults, the location of same, the survivors, the assailants, and also to identify possible reasons for the apparent increase in the offence. The following report is the result of the Lobby's investigation.

Streetwatch is not the first study of violence and abuse against lesbians and gay men in NSW. The NSW Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB) conducted a "Homosexual Phone-In" in February 1980. This covered amongst other matters the issue of public attitudes to homosexuals. A consistent pattern of abuse, verbal and physical, was unveiled.

The findings of the Board's survey are contained in its seminal report "Discrimination and Homosexuality", 1982. Important features of the ADB survey will be adverted to below. 174 persons responded to the phone-in; nearly 80% were male and over half (55.7%) were below 30 years of age. 42 of these respondents reported being physically assaulted and 64 reported incidents of verbal abuse.

Another source of information has been the ADB-Police "Hotlines". These took place in 1985, 1986, and 1989 in Sydney, and in 1989 in Wollongong. They took the form of 48 or 24 hour phone-in surveys. Members of the gay and lesbian communities were asked to make contact to report incidents of violence or lack of police service.

These other sources of information on violence against lesbians and gay men confirm the pattern revealed by the *Streetwatch* project. The parallels will be referred to in the body of the text.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

Due to the hidden nature of the population to be surveyed (lesbians and gay men who have been verbally or physically assaulted), a phone-in was selected as the most appropriate survey technique. The more usual method of identifying a population and then surveying it was not available.

A phone-in survey was also selected to ensure high quality data. The questionnaire was necessarily in-depth. The technique of a self-administered questionnaire may not have been completed fully. Interviewers could also be monitored to improve the quality of information recorded. In this regard the technique was highly successful.

The other option available to the Lobby was to survey lesbians and gay men through contacting organisations to which they belong or by approaching them in places where they congregate (eg gay bars).

This approach was rejected as being biased and unrepresentative. Many lesbians and gay men

neither belong to groups nor frequent these meeting places. Unfortunately, these constraints resulted in the survey not being fully representative. This was most obvious with regard to lesbian respondents. (See Section 3.4)

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey was administered by a 15 minute structured phone questionnaire. Interviewers were experienced counsellors from the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service and Lesbian Line.

These service organisations were chosen because of the familiarity and trust held in the lesbian and gay communities. This was important since non-reporting of incidents of assault had been identified as a significant issue.

Respondents could call *Streetwatch* during the normal operating hours of the above services: 6pm to 10pm 7 days a week for Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service; 6pm to 10pm Friday for Lesbian Line.

Surveys were only administered on the person the subject of the assault to ensure reliability of data. If a third party contacted *Streetwatch*, they were encouraged to urge the assault survivor to phone personally.

3.3 SAMPLE

Due to the selected methodology, the sample was necessarily self-selected. Advertisements were placed in the gay and lesbian press. Programs on gay and lesbian radio shows promoted the campaign.

Posters and leaflets were left at venues frequented by lesbians and gay men. These not only included bars and coffee shops, but women's health centres, hospitals, and bookshops.

There was also State-wide media coverage on television, radio, and the press. The promotional material urged persons who had been the subject of an attack, an attempted attack, or verbal abuse to contact the *Streetwatch* phone numbers.

The total number of respondents over the 6 month period (November 1988 to April 1989) was 67 (Table 1).

	no.	%
Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service	63	94.0
Lesbian Line	4	6.0
Total	67	100.0

Table 1 Agency conducting the interview

3.4 ERRORS AND BIASES

LACK OF LESBIAN RESPONDENTS

Only 6% (4 cases) of respondents were from lesbians, (Table 2).

	no.	%
Female	4	6.0
Male	63	94.0
Total	67	100.0

Table 2 Sex of Respondent

The most consistent advertising was in the Sydney Star Observer, a gay community fortnightly paper. The Star is primarily read by gay men. 55.2% of respondents had heard about *Streetwatch* through the Star; 65.7% heard about the survey through a gay male paper, (Table 3).

	no.	%
Star Observer	37	55.2
Campaign	3	4.5
VillageVoice	3	4.5
Outrage	1	1.5
Sydney Morning Herald	1	1.5
Papers/magazine unspecified	8	11.9
Poster	2	3.0
Radio	3	4.5
Gay & Lesbian Counselling Service	4	6.0
Counsellor	1	1.5
Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby	1	1.5
AIDS Council of NSW	1	1.5
2010	1	1.5
A friend	4	6.0
Streetwatch launch	1	1.5
Not stated	3	4.5

Table 3 Where respondent heard about Streetwatch

Many cases of violent assault on lesbians take the form of sexual assault by a man. This may not always be interpreted by the survivor as her lesbianism being the cause of the attack, since sexual assault on all women is so prevalent in our society. This fact, added to the different nature of the response of the survivor to sexual assault compared to physical assault, which leaves the survivor more loath to discuss the assault in a survey such as *Streetwatch*, may mean that there was less reporting by lesbians.

Therefore, a clear picture of the nature of the problem amongst lesbians has not been obtained.

It should be noted that the ADB survey also seriously under-represented lesbians. Only 2 (4.5%) of respondents, who reported incidents of physical assault, were women.

GEOGRAPHICAL BIAS

Very few respondents resided outside of the Inner City, Eastern Suburbs, or Inner West, (Table 4).

	no	%
Darlinghurst	11	16.4
Potts Point	3	4.5
Alexandria	1	1.5
Redfern	2	3.0
Paddington	4	6.0
Bondi Junction	2	3.0
Woollahra	1	1.5
Bondi Beach	2	3.0
Edgecliff	1	1.5
Coogee	2	3.0
Glebe	2	3.0
Annandale	1	1.5
Rozelle	1	1.5
Leichhardt	2	3.0
Newtown	11	16.4
Stanmore	4	6.0
Petersham	3	4.5
Neutral Bay	1	1.5
Eastwood	2	3.0
Concord West	2	3.0
Dulwich Hill	1	1.5
Earlwood	1	1.5
Kingsgrove	1	1.5
Riverwood	1	1.5
Katoomba	1	1.5
Overseas	1	1.5
Not stated	3	4.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 4 Home Suburb of Respondent

About 33% of respondents were from the suburbs of Darlinghurst and Newtown. These have identifiable gay and lesbian presences and were consequently the focus of much of the promotional material.

Again, this particular bias emanated from the nature of the campaign and the manner in which it was promoted. It cannot be construed that lesbians or gays living elsewhere in NSW or the outer Sydney suburbs experience no problems with assaults.

In both the 1985 and 1986 ADB-Police Hotlines, incidents of assaults occurred over a wide ranging area of Sydney, covering both northern and southern Sydney suburbs as well as Western Sydney. There were also incidents reported from country areas of NSW. The wider reach of these Hotlines was the result of TV advertising.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INCIDENTS

A number of characteristics of the incidents reported to *Streetwatch* can be obtained from the data. These include the nature of the assault itself, the time and location of the attack, the characteristics of both survivors and assailants.

The following presents a summary of the data in order to present a general picture of the problem. Comparison with other studies of serious assault amongst the general population may be made.

Particular reference will be made to "Police Reports of Serious Assault in NSW", Tom Robb, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, January 1988. The sample sizes for this study were 419 for the 1982 cohort and 436 for the 1986-87 cohort.

4.1 INJURIES SUSTAINED

73% of respondents sustained physical injury (Table 5). Of these, 51% were serious (broken limbs, major wounds) and 49% minor (bruises, cuts) (Table 6). This compares with 64% in the Robb Report (p.7, Table2). It should be noted that the Robb sample comprises only incidents reported to the police, minor injuries are likely to be under-reported.

	no.	%
Physically injured	49	73.1
Not physically injured	18	26.9
Total	67	100.0

Table 5 Was the respondent physically injured?

	no.	%
Minor	25	51.0
Serious	24	49.0
Total	49	100.0

Table 6 Seriousness of injury

The head was injured in over 80% of the physical injuries. This compares with 67% in the Robb Report (p.8, Table 3). The torso was injured in 55% of cases and the limbs in 29% (Table 7) (Overleaf).

	no.	%
Head	40	81.6
Torso	27	55.1
Limbs	14	28.6
Groin	1	2.0
Not stated	1	2.0

Table 7 *Parts of the body injured*

Verbal abuse occurred in 48% of the incidents, (Table 8). This can be a key indicator as to the motivation of the attack, (see Section 4.8 below). Robbery was a component of 22% of incidents (15 cases). Other respondents reported being followed by cars, being spat on, or the subject of abusive phone calls.

	no.	%
Verbal abuse	32	47.8
Physical assault	54	80.6
Robbery	15	22.4
Throwing objects	3	4.5
Abusive phone calls	1	1.5
Followed by car	1	1.5
Spat at	1	1.5
Other	1	1.5

Table 8 *Nature of the attack*

See Section 4.2 below for cross-tabulations of type of abuse by location of incident, (Table 18).

4.2 TIME AND LOCATION OF INCIDENTS

LOCATION

Important insights into the nature of assaults against lesbians and gay men can be obtained from the spatial and temporal location of incidents. Such knowledge can guide policing strategies.

52% of attacks occurred in the street. A further 27% took place in parks. 28% occurred in "beats" - identifiable meeting places for gay men. The rest happened in a variety of venues from railway stations to restaurants. (Table 9 & Figure 1)

	no.	%
The street	35	52.2
Private residence	1	1.5
Bar/club	3	4.5
Beat - Park	16	23.9
Beat - Toilet block	1	1.5
Beat - Pool	2	3.0
Park (not a beat)	2	3.0
Car park	2	3.0
Railway station	1	1.5
Shop/restaurant	2	3.0
Public transport	1	1.5
Sportsfield	1	1.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 9 *Location of the incident*

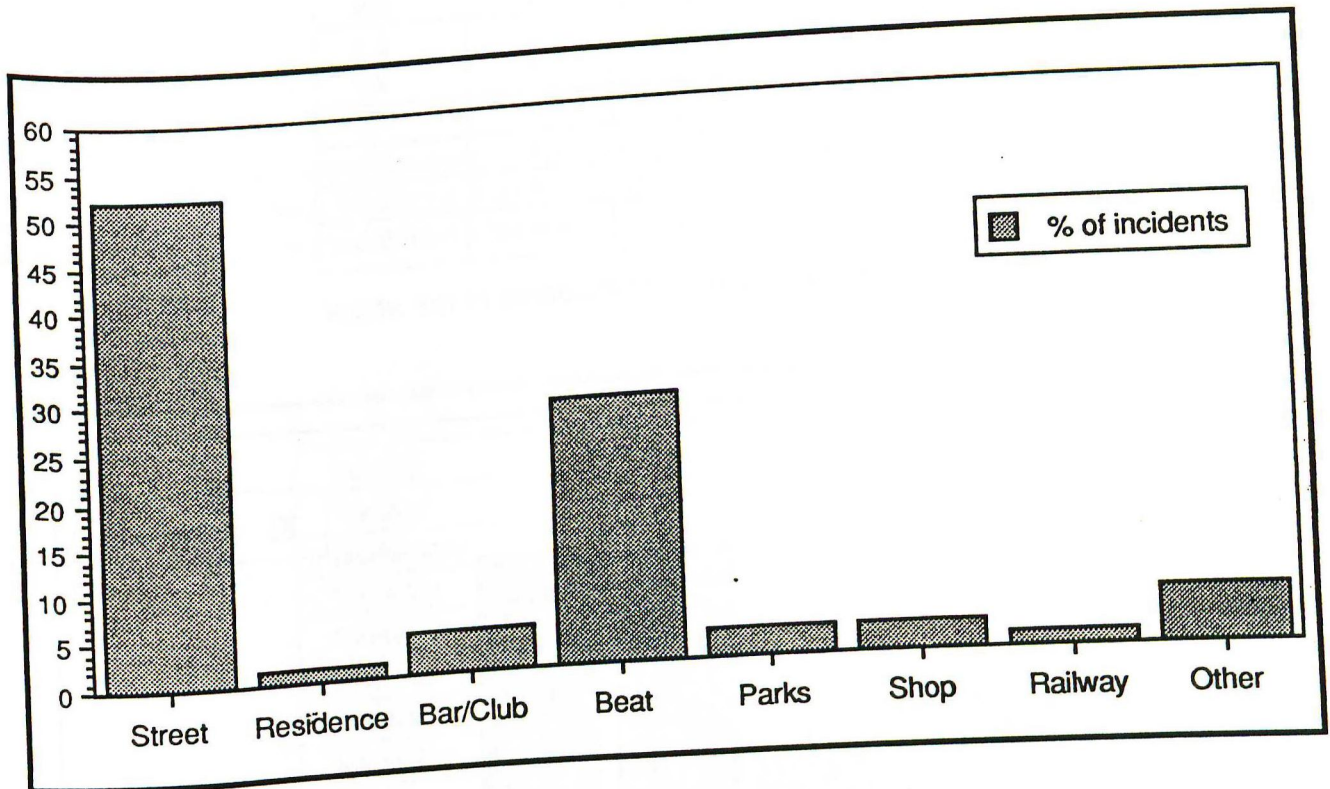


Figure 1 - *Location of the incident*

Of the assaults in the street, the majority of respondents identified the "known" gay and lesbian environs of Oxford Street, Darlinghurst or King Street, Newtown (Table 10 & Figure 2). 53% of reports of attacks at beats were at Moore Park (Table 11).

	no.	%
Oxford St near Exchange Hotel	1	2.9
Oxford/Crown St corner	2	5.7
Oxford St near Albury Hotel	2	5.7
Burton St	1	2.9
Flinders St	2	5.7
Flinders St near Taxi Club	1	2.9
Forbes/Darley St	1	2.9
Liverpool St	1	2.9
Campbell St, Surry Hills	1	2.9
Cleveland St near CJ's Club	1	2.9
King St, Newtown	3	8.6
King St near Newtown Hotel	1	2.9
Off King St	1	2.9
Erskineville Rd near Imperial	1	2.9
Macquarie St	1	2.9
Anzac Pde near KKK Sauna	1	2.9
Outside 3 Weeds Hotel, Rozelle	1	2.9
Norton St, Leichhardt	1	2.9
Redfern	1	2.9
Stanmore	1	2.9
Drummoyne	1	2.9
Katoomba	1	2.9
Not stated	1	2.9
Total	35	100.0

Table 10 Specific location of incidents in the street

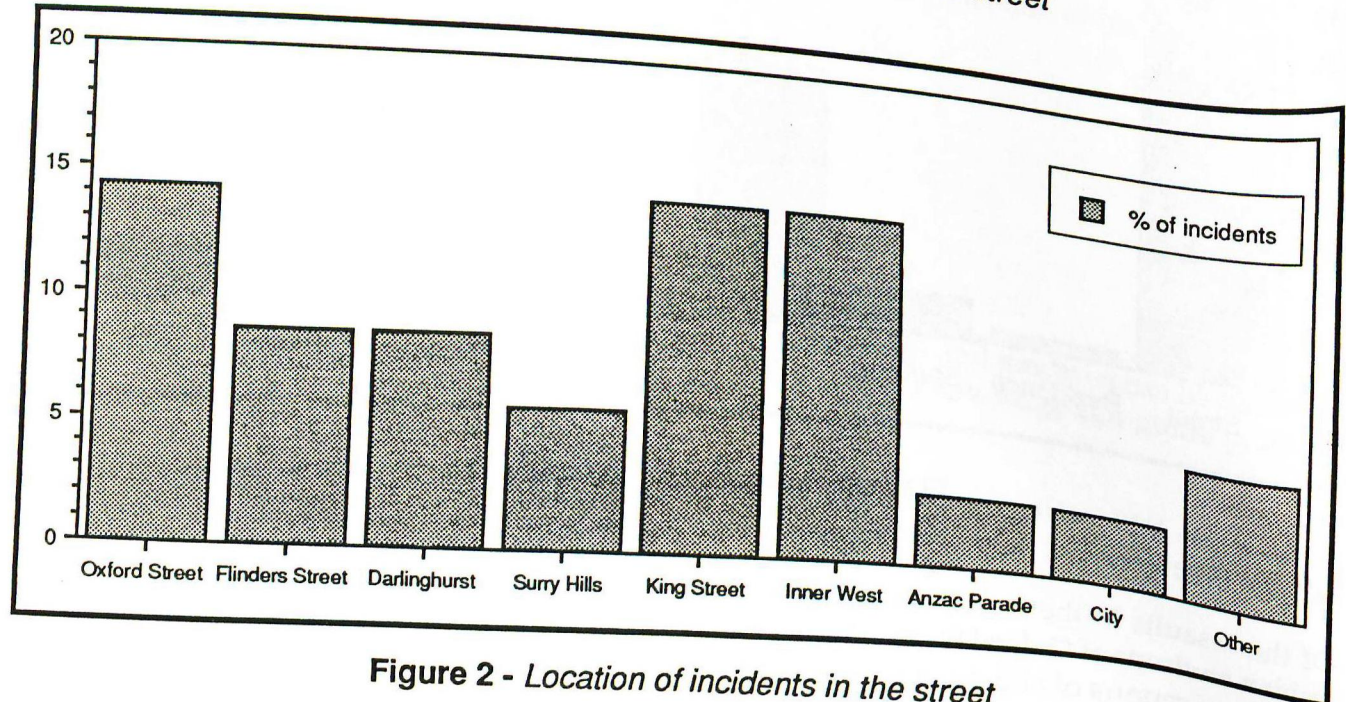


Figure 2 - Location of incidents in the street

	no.	%
Moore Park (not specific)	8	42.1
Moore Park North	1	5.3
Moore Park South	1	5.3
Centennial Park	1	5.3
Green Park	1	5.3
Perry Park, Alexandria	1	5.3
Loftus Oval	1	5.3
Central Station toilets	2	10.5
Coogee Women's Pool	2	10.5
Not stated	19	100.0
Total		

Table 11 Incidents at beats

In the ADB survey, 36% of physical attacks occurred in the street, whilst 25% occurred in parks. Street attacks are clearly a more significant component in the *Streetwatch* data.

DAY OF THE WEEK

73% of assaults occurred between Thursday and Sunday inclusive. Sunday had the highest count, 22%; it should be noted that incidents happening after midnight on Saturday were coded to Sunday. Thursday had a higher proportion than Friday or Saturday with 19%. (Table 12 & Figure 3).

	no.	%
Monday	2	3.0
Tuesday	4	6.0
Wednesday	6	9.0
Thursday	13	19.4
Friday	12	17.9
Saturday	9	13.4
Sunday	15	22.4
Not stated	6	9.0
Total	67	100.0

Table 12 Day of the week when incident took place

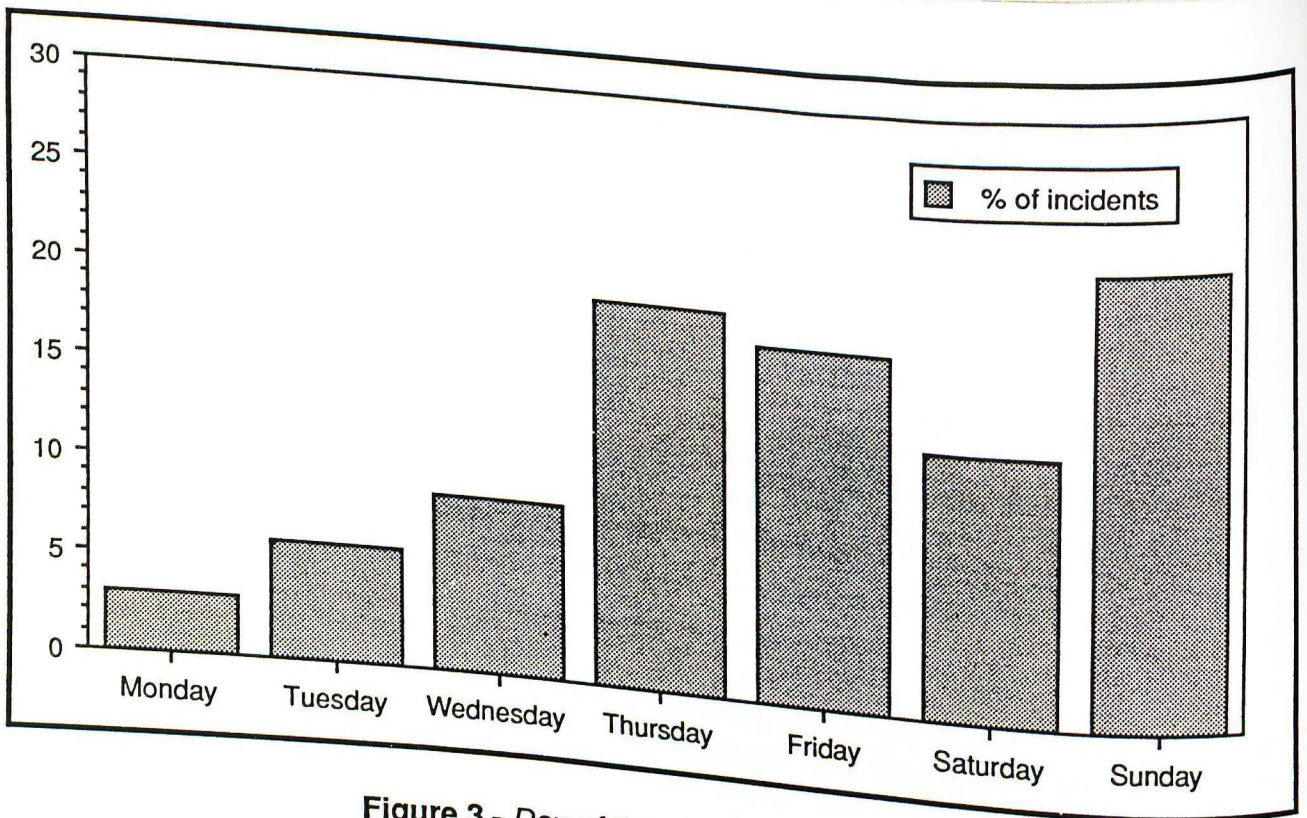


Figure 3 - Day of the week of the incident

The Robb Report revealed a different pattern - a steady proportional increase from 9.8% on Monday to a peak of 20.9% on Saturday. Sunday had 16.0% of incidents. (p.9 Table 4).

TIME OF DAY

63% of incidents occurred between the hours of 9pm and 3am. Slightly more assaults took place before midnight than after. The hours 3am to 6am recorded only 5% of cases; zero occurred between 6am and noon. (Table 13 & Figure 4).

	no.	%
12 midnight - 3am	19	28.4
3am - 6am	3	4.5
6am - 12 noon	0	0.0
12noon - 3pm	5	7.5
3pm - 6pm	7	10.4
6pm - 9pm	10	14.9
9pm - 12 midnight	23	34.3
Total	67	100.0

Table 13 Time of the day when incident took place

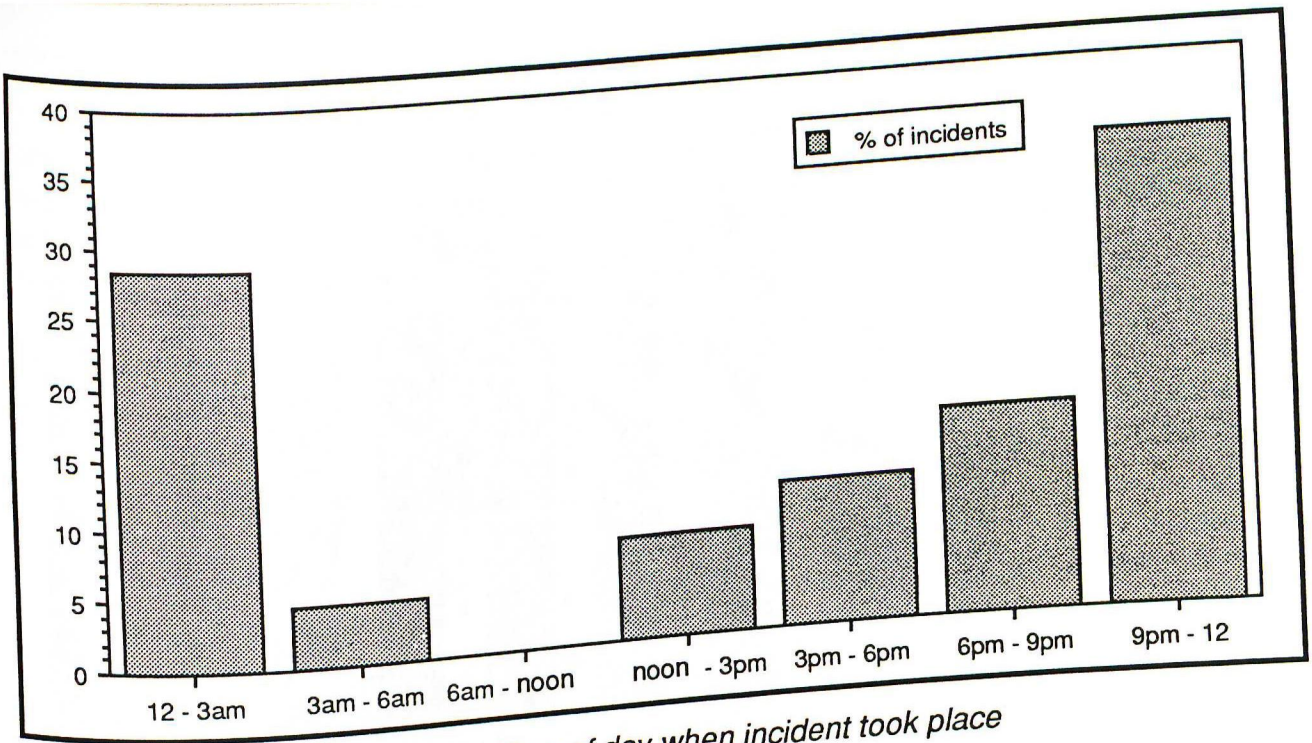


Figure 4 - Time of day when incident took place

The Robb Report findings were similar to *Streetwatch* in this regard. 20.7% of incidents occurred between 10pm and midnight, 18.6% between midnight and 2am, and 13.3% between 8pm and 10pm. (p10 Table 5)

CROSS-TABULATIONS

Tables 14 to 17 cross-tabulate the temporal data. These tables indicate more precisely the temporal and spatial locations of the incidents.

Table 14 shows the percentage of total incidents occurring at the specified days and times. Over 10% of all assaults occurred between the hours of midnight and 3am on Sunday morning. The next peak was between 9pm and midnight on Thursday evening, 7.5%. Early morning and late night Thursday and Friday appeared more of a problem than the same times Wednesday and Saturday.

	MON		TUES		WEDS		THURS		FRI		SAT		SUN		NOT STATED		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
12MIDNIGHT - 3AM	1	1.5	0	0.0	2	3.0	4	6.0	3	4.5	2	3.0	7	10.4	0	0.0	19	28.4
3AM - 6AM	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.5	0	0.0	3	4.5
6AM - 12NOON	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5	1	1.5	0	0.0	5	7.5
12NOON - 3PM	0	0.0	2	3.0	1	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.0	0	0.0	1	1.5	7	10.4
3PM - 6PM	1	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.0	4	6.0	1	1.5	1	1.5	2	3.0	10	14.9
6PM - 9PM	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	7.5	4	6.0	3	4.5	3	4.5	3	4.5	23	34.3
9PM - 12 MIDNIGHT	0	0.0	2	3.0	3	4.5	5	7.5	4	6.0	3	4.5	3	4.5	6	9.0	67	100.0
TOTAL	2	3.0	4	6.0	6	9.0	13	19.4	12	17.9	9	13.4	15	22.4	6	9.0	67	100.0

Table 14 Time of day of the incident by day of the week

Table 15 shows the percentage of incidents per day occurring at specified time periods. Patterns vary considerably from day to day. In general, most days have the majority of their incidents between midnight and 3am and between 9pm and midnight.

	MON		TUES		WEDS		THURS		FRI		SAT		SUN		NOT STATED		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
12MIDNIGHT - 3AM	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	33.3	4	30.8	3	25.0	2	22.2	7	46.7	0	0.0	19	28.4
3AM - 6AM	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	20.0	0	0.0	3	4.5
6AM - 12NOON	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12NOON - 3PM	0	0.0	2	50.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	1	6.7	0	0.0	5	7.5
3PM - 6PM	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	15.4	1	8.3	2	22.2	0	0.0	1	16.7	7	10.4
6PM - 9PM	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	15.4	4	33.3	1	11.1	1	6.7	2	33.3	10	14.9
9PM - 12 MIDNIGHT	0	0.0	2	50.0	3	50.0	5	38.5	4	33.3	3	33.3	3	20.0	3	50.0	23	34.3
TOTAL	2	100.0	4	100.0	6	100.0	13	100.0	12	100.0	9	100.0	15	100.0	6	100.0	67	100.0

Table 15 Time of day of the incident by day of the week

Table 16 shows the time of the assault by the spatial location of the incident. Street incidents were almost evenly distributed between the 9pm to midnight and midnight to 3am categories. Incidents in bars predictably occurred between 6pm and midnight. Assaults at beats were more evenly spread with two peaks between 3pm and 6pm and between 9pm and 3am.

	STREET		RESIDENCE		BAR/CLUB		BEAT		PARKS		RAILWAY		SHOP		OTHER		TOTAL	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
12MIDNIGHT - 3AM	13	37.1	1	100.0	0	0.0	4	21.1	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	28.4
3AM - 6AM	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	3	4.5
6AM - 12NOON	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12NOON - 3PM	2	5.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	1	25.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	7.5
3PM - 6PM	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	26.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	7.5
6PM - 9PM	4	11.4	0	0.0	1	33.3	3	15.8	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	7	10.4
9PM - 12MIDNIGHT	14	40.0	0	0.0	2	66.7	6	31.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	14.9
TOTAL	35	100.0	1	100.0	3	100.0	19	100.0	4	100.0	1	100.0	2	100.0	2	100.0	67	100.0

Table 16 Time of day of the incident by location

Table 17 reveals the day the incident took place by its location. 77% of street assaults took place between Thursday and Sunday inclusive. 29% of these were on Sunday - the early morning attacks. 69% of beat attacks occurred between Thursday and Saturday; the majority, 32%, happened on Thursday.

	STREET		RESIDENCE		BAR/CLUB		BEAT		PARKS		RAILWAY		SHOP		OTHER		TOTAL	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
MONDAY	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.0
TUESDAY	3	8.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	6.0
WEDNESDAY	3	8.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	1	25.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	9.0
THURSDAY	6	17.1	0	0.0	1	33.3	6	31.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	13	19.4
FRIDAY	6	17.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	21.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0	12	17.9
SATURDAY	5	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	15.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	9	13.4
SUNDAY	10	28.6	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	5.3	2	50.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	15	22.4
NOT STATED	1	2.9	0	0.0	2	66.7	2	10.5	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	9.0
TOTAL	35	100.0	1	100.0	3	100.0	19	100.0	4	100.0	1	100.0	2	100.0	2	100.0	67	100.0

Table 17 Day of the incident by location

Table 18 reveals type of abuse by location of incident. 95% of incidents at beats involved physical assault, compared with 80% of street incidents. Robbery was a factor in 37% of beat incidents, compared with 20% of street incidents.

	STREET		RESID.		BAR/CLUB		BEAT		PARKS		RAILWAY		SHOP		OTHER		TOTAL	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
VERBAL ABUSE	19	54.3	1	100.0	0	0.0	4	21.1	3	75.0	1	100.0	2	100.0	2	100.0	32	47.8
PHYSICAL ASSAULT	28	80.0	0	0.0	3	100.0	18	94.7	1	25.0	1	100.0	1	50.0	2	100.0	54	80.6
ROBBERY	7	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	36.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	50.0	15	22.4
THROWING OBJECTS	2	5.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.5
ABUSIVE PH. CALLS	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
FOLLOWED BY CAR	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
SPAT AT	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
OTHER	1	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5

Table 18 Type of Abuse by the Location of the Incident

4.3 USE OF WEAPONS

No weapon was identified in the vast majority (83%) of physical assaults, (Table 19). This is much higher than Robb's proportion of 63% (p.12, Table 7).

	no	%
None - fists, feet etc	45	83.3
Knife	1	1.9
Club - bat, bar etc	6	11.1
Bottle	3	5.6
Stones	1	1.9
Other	1	1.9
Not stated	1	1.9

Table 19 Type of weapon used

Where weapons were used these were usually those of convenience or those near at hand - wooden sticks, iron bars, bottles, stones were used in 19% of assaults and knives in only 2%. Weapons of convenience comprised 83% of weapon assaults. For both types of weapons, the Robb Report proportions were higher, particularly for knife attacks.

4.4 PROPERTY STOLEN

Table 8 (See page 16) indicated that 22% of incidents involved robbery. 36% of respondents reported property stolen or damaged, (Table 20).

	no.	%
Property stolen/damaged	24	35.8
Nothing stolen/damaged	43	64.2
Total	67	100.0

Table 20 Was any property stolen or damaged?

This figure is high compared with the Robb figures (around 2% of cases, p.12). However, Robb's data comprises Police Incident Reports of "aggravated assault"; the charge of "assault and rob" would probably be more common in these cases.

It cannot be unambiguously stated whether robbery was the prime motivation in such assaults, or whether it was an opportunistic element of a basically hate motivated assault.

4.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVIVORS

63 (94%) of the respondents were men and 4 (6%) were women, (Table 2 see page 13). The under-response by women has been commented on in Section 3.4, (above).

4.5% of respondents reported their sexuality as lesbian, 91.0% as gay male, and 4.5% as bisexual, (Table 21).

	no.	%
Lesbian	3	4.5
Gay Man	61	91.0
Bisexual	3	4.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 21 Sexuality of Respondent

Over 80% reported being Caucasian or "Australian" and about 8% as "European" (Table 22). There appears to be no obvious racial motivation in the assaults.

	no.	%
Australian/Caucasian	54	80.6
European	5	7.5
German	1	1.5
Chinese	1	1.5
Sri Lankan	1	1.5
Danish	4	6.0
Not stated	67	100.0
Total		

Table 22 Ethnicity of Respondent

72% of survivors were between the ages of 25 and 39. 25% were aged 25-29 and 46% were aged 30-39. 3% were in their late teens and 3% 50 plus. The average age of respondents was 32; the youngest was 16 and the oldest 57, (Table 23).

	no	%
15 - 19	2	3.0
20 - 24	6	9.0
25 - 29	17	25.4
30 - 39	31	46.3
40 - 49	6	9.0
50 - 59	2	3.0
Not stated	3	4.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 23 Age of Respondent

4.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF ASSAILANTS

SEX

In 94% of incidents the assailants were all males; in 6% of incidents both males and females were among the attackers (Table 24).

	no	%
All males	63	94.0
Both males & females	4	6.0
Total	67	100.0

Table 24 Sex of the assailant(s)

AGE

Respondents were asked the approximate ages of their assailants. In 43% of assaults they were reported as being between 16 and 20 years of age. A similar proportion, 40%, were assessed as between 21 and 25. In 4 cases (6%), assailants aged between 10 and 15 were reported. Multiple responses were permitted for this question. (Table 25).

	no	%
10 - 15		
16 - 20	4	6.0
21 - 25	29	43.3
26 - 30	27	40.3
31 - 40	14	20.9
Over 40	2	3.0
Not stated	1	1.5
	1	1.5

Table 25 Approximate ages of assailants

The age profile in the ABD survey was older than the *Streetwatch* profile. 86% of assailants were under 31 years of age. However, 49% were in the 21 to 30 age group, and 35% in the 16 to 20 category. 2% were under 16. The *Streetwatch* data reveals significantly higher proportions in younger age groups.*

In the 1985 ADB-Police Hotline, 53 incidents of violence were reported; these had occurred over a two year period. Only four of the assaults were committed by persons of adult age, the remainder involved gangs of young persons ranging in age from 12 to 20 years. The 43 reports of assault in the 1986 Hotline were of a more recent nature. Similar to 1985, in all but two cases the assailants were young men.

NUMBER OF ASSAILANTS

In 36% of incidents 3 to 5 attackers were involved. 25% involved 6 to 10 (Table 26). This confirms the view that assaults on lesbians and gay men frequently are by gangs. The maximum number reported was 15 and the average number was 4.

	no	%
1	12	17.9
2	8	11.9
3 - 5	24	35.8
6 - 10	17	25.4
More than 10	4	6.0
Not stated	2	3.0
Total	67	100.0

Table 26 Number of assailants

AGE V. NUMBER

Table 27 confirms the "young gang" pattern. The table cross-tabulates ages of assailants by number of assailants. The larger the size of the gang, the younger the members of the group are likely to be.

* For incidents of public verbal abuse, the ADB phone-in survey shows a broader spread amongst age groups.

	1 assailant		2 assailants		3-5 assailants		6-10 assailants		More than 10 assailants		Not Stated		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Aged 10 - 15	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	3	75.0	0	0.0	4	6.0
Aged 16 - 20	1	8.3	2	25.0	9	37.5	14	82.4	1	25.0	2	100.0	29	43.3
Aged 21 - 25	3	25.0	5	62.5	14	58.3	4	23.5	1	25.0	0	0.0	27	40.3
Aged 26 - 30	7	58.3	2	25.0	4	16.7	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	14	20.9
Aged 31 - 40	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.0
Aged over 40	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
Not stated	1	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
	0	0.0	1	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 27 Number of assailant(s) by their age

In 82% of incidents involving 6-10 assailants, some of the attackers were reported as being between 16 and 20 years old. In incidents involving 3 to 5, the majority of respondents assessed the attackers as between 21 and 25 years. For incidents involving one attacker the assailant was typically older: 58% reported between 26 and 30 years.

ACQUAINTANCE

In the vast majority of cases, assailants were not known to the survivors. However, 4 (6%) respondents stated the attacker was known to them. (Table 28).

	no.	%
Assailant(s) known to respondent	4	6.0
Assailant(s) not known to respondent	62	92.5
Not stated	1	1.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 28 Was assailant(s) known to the respondent?

4.7 WITNESSES

Over half (52%) the respondents were alone when the incidents occurred; 48% were with friends or acquaintances (Table 29). This latter figure indicates that the oft-quoted "safety in numbers" advice is not a guaranteed safeguard against attack. This is obviously the case when confronted by large gangs (See Section 4.6 above).

	no.	%
Alone	35	52.2
With others	32	47.8
Total	67	100.0

Table 29 At the time of the attack was respondent alone or with others?

A slightly higher proportion of respondents (55%) stated there were witnesses present, (Table 30). Where witnesses were present, only 41% offered assistance, (Table 31).

	no.	%
Witness(es)	37	55.2
No witnesses	29	43.3
Not stated	1	1.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 30 Any witnesses to the attack?

	no.	%
Witness helped	15	40.5
Witness didn't help	19	51.4
Not stated	3	8.1
Total	37	100.0

Table 31 Did the witness(es) attempt to help?

There is little comparative data to assess this figure against, though typically witness assistance is proportionately low for all crime. The Robb Report does not cover this issue.

4.8 REASON FOR ASSAULT

One of the major objectives of *Streetwatch* was to ascertain whether anti-gay/lesbian hatred was a prime motive for the attacks.

SUBJECTIVE EVIDENCE

Over 79% (53 cases) of the survivors believed that the reason for the attack was that they were lesbian or gay. Only 6 respondents (9%) stated that their sexuality was not the motive for the assault, (Table 32). Interestingly, 50% of the latter group were attacked at beats, (Table 33).

	no.	%
Attacked because lesbian/gay	53	79.1
Not attacked because lesbian/gay	6	9.0
Not stated	8	11.9
Total	67	100.0

Table 32 Whether respondent thought being lesbian/gay was reason for the attack

	Attack because lesbian/gay		Attack not because lesbian/gay		Not stated		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Street	26	49.1	3	50.0	6	75.0	35	52.2
Residence	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
Bar/Club	2	3.8	0	0.0	1	12.5	3	4.5
Beat	16	30.2	3	50.0	0	0.0	19	28.4
Parks	4	7.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	6.0
Railway	1	1.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5
Shops	2	3.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.0
Other	1	1.9	0	0.0	1	12.5	2	3.0
TOTAL	53	100.0	6	100.0	8	100.0	67	100.0

Table 33 Location of incident by whether respondent thought attack was because s/he was lesbian/gay.

Although the promotional material urged reporting from lesbians and gay men who had simply been attacked - for whatever reason, there may be some under-reporting of incidents where the survivors' sexuality was thought not to be the motivating cause.

In the ADB survey, 55% stated "poofster-bashing/anti-homosexual" as the reason for the attack. 14% identified robbery and 11% did not know the motivation for the attack. The *Streetwatch* data revealed a much higher proportion of perceived anti-gay/lesbian motivation.

OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE

In over 80% of the incidents the assailant spoke to the survivor, (Table 34). In 74% (40) of these cases the assailant's speech involved anti-gay/lesbian taunts, (eg "**** poofster/dyke") (Table 35). This broadly confirms the subjective evidence discussed above.

	no.	%
Spoken to by assailant	54	80.6
Not spoken to by assailant	12	17.9
Not stated	1	1.5
Total	67	100.0

Table 34 Spoken to by assailant(s) before, during or after assault

	no.	%
Poofster/dyke etc. abuse	40	74.1
Demands for money	5	9.3
Asking directions/time	5	9.3
Asking for sex with survivor	1	1.9
Assailant(s) said they were police	2	3.7
Other	3	5.6
Not stated	2	3.7

Table 35 Assailant(s) speech to respondent

From the crosstabulation, (Table 36), it can be seen that 80% of survivors who recognised the attack as anti-gay/lesbian had been taunted in a clear way by the assailant(s). The incidents not defined as anti-gay/lesbian involved demands for money.

	Attack because lesbian/gay		Attack not because lesbian/gay		Not stated		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Poofter/dyke etc. abuse	36	80.0	0	0.0	4	57.1	40	74.1
Demands for money	3	6.7	2	100.0	0	0.0	5	9.3
Asking direction/time	4	8.9	0	0.0	1	14.3	5	9.3
Asking for sex with survivor	1	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.9
Assailant(s) said they were police	1	2.2	0	0.0	1	14.3	2	3.7
Other	1	2.2	0	0.0	2	28.6	3	5.6
Not stated	2	4.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.7

Table 36 What assailant(s) said to respondent by whether survivor thought attack was because s/he was lesbian/gay

Demands for money occurred in 9% of cases, (Table 35, see page 29). Table 8, (See page 16) indicated that 22% of incidents involved robbery. As discussed in Section 4.4 above, it is difficult to deduce whether robbery was a prime motive in these cases or an opportunistic outcome.

It should be emphasised that speech is not essential to ascertain the motivation for an attack. The incident may happen in the environs of a gay bar or at a beat. A reasonable assumption can be made as to motivation, depending on the circumstances of the case.

4.9 IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN BY SURVIVOR

Table 37 relates to action taken by the survivor either during the attack or immediately after. In 39% of incidents the respondent was only able to attempt protective action. In 18 cases (27%), the survivor took the offensive and fought back.

	no.	%
None (protected self)	26	38.8
Ran away	20	29.9
Fought back	18	26.9
Hid	2	3.0
Called for/tried to get help	2	3.0
Ignored assailant(s)	4	6.0
Verbal defence	2	3.0
Other	3	4.5
Not stated	1	1.5

Table 37 Action(s) taken at the time of the assault

Action possible would be dictated by the circumstances of each case - particularly the ratio of number of assailants to number being attacked. Running away was only feasible in 30% of the incidents; only 6% were able to ignore the assailant(s).

5. POST-ASSAULT ACTION

5.1 SUMMARY

The most common action taken by assault survivors was reporting to the police (48%). 34% sought medical attention and 19% contacted friends. However, 36% of respondents reported taking no action, (Table 38). From the analysis presented below, it is apparent that, for this latter group, reporting to police, medical authorities or both could have been warranted in the circumstances.

	no.	%
	24	35.8
None (go home)	23	34.3
Contact doctor/hospital	32	47.8
Contact police	13	19.4
Contact friends	5	7.5
Contact a counsellor	2	3.0
Contact authority responsible for location of attack	4	6.0
Continued evening, e.g. went to a bar	1	1.5
Other	2	3.0
Not stated		

Table 38 Action(s) taken after the assault

5.2 REPORTS TO THE POLICE

BACKGROUND

One of the major reasons behind *Streetwatch* was the apparent contradiction between the lack of reports to the police of violent assaults and the Lobby's impression of a serious and growing problem of street violence against lesbians and gay men.

Streetwatch in its promotional material actively urged the reporting of such incidents to the police. However, the long-standing suspicion of law enforcement officers by lesbians and gay men was cited as the reason for under-reporting. Poor clear-up rates for aggravated assaults may also be a factor discouraging reports to the police.

Chapter 5 of the Anti-Discrimination Board Report (p.359) details the issues surrounding lesbians and gay men and the law, law enforcement agencies, and the courts. 46 of the Board's 174 phone-in respondents gave accounts of their experiences of police harassment.

A major aim of all the ADB-Police Hotlines has been "to encourage members of the gay community to provide information about crimes committed against them" (p.12, Annual

Report of the Police Gay Liaison Group, 1985). The reports of the Hotlines all draw attention to the reluctance of gay men and lesbians to report incidents to the police. Concern was expressed that, in a number of such cases, sufficient evidence existed for an arrest to have been made.

Police attitudes to lesbians and gay men have improved in the last five years. This has been facilitated by the setting up of the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit of the Police Department in 1984 and the convening of metropolitan and regional Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Groups under the auspices of the Anti-Discrimination Board.

Legislative changes also improved the position of lesbians and gay men with respect to the police. In particular the repeal of the Summary Offences Act in 1979, the inclusion in 1983 of "homosexuality" as a ground under the Anti-Discrimination Act, and finally the partial decriminalisation of male homosexual acts by amendment of the Crimes Act in 1984. The latter still prohibits homosexual acts by men 16 to 18 years of age.

STREETWATCH FINDINGS

48% of survivors reported the assault to the police, (Table 38 See page 31).

The *Streetwatch* data suggests that non-reporting was more the result of expectations of low clear-up rates than expectations of anti-gay/lesbian bias. 51% of respondents felt the police "would not be able to do anything" as the reason for them not reporting the crime. Only 6 cases (17%) stated that the report would not be taken seriously. Three cases (9%) viewed the incident as not serious enough to warrant a report. Only one respondent stated embarrassment as a reason, (Table 39).

	no.	%
Felt that the report would not be taken seriously	6	17.1
Too embarrassed about where the assault took place	1	2.9
Felt police would not be able to do anything	18	51.4
Unable to get to the police station	1	2.9
Assault was by a police officer	1	2.9
Assault/harassment not serious enough	3	8.6
Wanted to talk to gay/lesbian organisation first	1	2.9
Drunk/drugged	2	5.7
Felt that police support assailants	1	2.9
Wanted to calm down and get over shock	1	2.9
Not stated	6	17.1

Table 39 Reason for not contacting the police

19% (6 cases) of those who reported to the police received poor service - either aggressive, homophobic, or unhelpful. 56% of respondents judged the service as helpful or supportive, (Table 40).

	no	%
Friendly/helpful/supportive etc	18	56.3
Routine/neutral/indifferent	8	25.0
Aggressive/homophobic/unhelpful etc	6	18.8
Total	32	100.0

Table 40 Service and attention given by the police

8 persons (25% of reporters) identified as gay or lesbian to the police, (Table 41). Only 1 person was asked by the police whether they were gay, (Table 42).

	no	%
Identified as lesbian/gay to police	8	25.0
Did not identify as lesbian/gay to police	23	71.9
Not stated	1	3.1
Total	32	100.0

Table 41 Whether respondent identified as lesbian/gay to police

	no	%
Asked if lesbian/gay by police	1	3.1
Was not asked if lesbian/gay by police	28	87.5
Not stated	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0

Table 42 Whether respondent was asked if lesbian/gay by the police

There appeared to be only a weak correlation between revealing sexual identity to the police and lack of service. 17% of those who did not reveal their sexual identity experienced lack of service as against 25% of those who did, (Table 43).

	Identified as lesbian/gay		Did not identify as lesbian/gay		Not stated		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Friendly/helpful/supportive etc	4	50.0	13	56.5	1	100.0	18	56.3
Routine/neutral/indifferent	2	25.0	6	26.1	0	0.0	8	25.0
Aggressive/homophobic/unhelpful etc	2	25.0	4	17.4	0	0.0	6	18.8
TOTAL	8	100.0	23	100.0	1	100.0	32	100.0

Table 43 Police service by whether respondent identified to police as lesbian/gay

The ADB-Police Hotlines also focused on police service. In the 1986 phone-in, 10 complaints were made of lack of service, as against 6 complimentary statements. The Hotline callers who had not reported incidents to the police invariably stated that they believed they would not receive service because of their homosexuality.

CONCLUSIONS

The data reveals a reasonably good record of police service, though compared with the level of satisfaction from the health services (see Table 45 below), there is clearly room for improvement. In nearly all cases police followed Regulations by not enquiring as to the respondent's sexuality. Importantly, identification as gay or lesbian did not significantly affect police service.

The major area of concern though is non-reporting of offences. Only 3 out of the 35 respondents who did not report the crime to the police stated the reason as the assault not being serious enough. 48% of the sample felt unable to report for reasons other than this, low clear-up rates being the most significant.

5.3 REPORTS TO HEALTH AUTHORITIES

STREETWATCH FINDINGS

34% of respondents contacted a doctor or other medical services after the attack, (Table 38, see page 31). Only 32% of those who did not seek medical assistance cited injuries as not being sufficiently serious as the reason, (Table 44). As with many other areas of service delivery, lesbians and gay men experience discrimination from some medical authorities; this has been further compounded by the AIDS epidemic.

	no.	%
Injuries not sufficiently serious	14	31.8
Too embarrassed by the circumstances of the assault	2	4.5
Too depressed	2	4.5
Drunk/drugged	1	2.3
Not stated	25	56.8

Table 44 Reason for not seeking medical attention

Of those presenting for medical attention, 83% found the service friendly, helpful, or supportive, (Table 45). This compares with 56% for the corresponding question regarding police service. Only 13% (3 cases) experienced poor service.

	no	%
Friendly/helpful/supportive etc	19	82.6
Aggressive/homophobic/unhelpful etc	3	13.0
Not stated	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

Table 45 Service and attention given by the doctor/hospital

30% identified as lesbian or gay to the health personnel, (Table 46). This was a slightly higher proportion than to the police.

	no	%
Identified as lesbian/gay to doctor/hospital	7	30.4
Did not identify as lesbian/gay to doctor/hospital	14	60.9
Not stated	2	8.7
Total	23	100.0

Table 46 *Whether respondent identified as lesbian/gay to the doctor/hospital*

However, 13% were asked by the doctor or hospital whether they were gay or lesbian, (Table 47). This was a much higher proportion than for the police and may indicate assumptions about HIV status on the part of medical authorities.

	no	%
Asked if lesbian/gay by doctor/hospital	3	13.0
Was not asked if lesbian/gay by doctor/hospital	18	78.3
Not stated	2	8.7
Total	23	100.0

Table 47 *Whether respondent was asked if lesbian/gay by doctor/hospital*

CONCLUSIONS

Of concern in the findings is the proportion of survivors (45% or 30 cases) not presenting to medical authorities even though they did not consider their injuries "non-serious". The available data did not uncover any significant reasons for this.

Service delivery was good but the proportion (13%) who were questioned as to whether they were gay or lesbian warrants attention. AIDS assumptions may be a factor here.

6. POLICE GAY/LESBIAN LIAISON UNIT

61% of respondents were aware of the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit and 30% were unaware of its existence, (Table 48). Given the respondents were biased towards inner city gay men, who are supposedly better informed in areas of personal rights, the proportion of those aware of the Unit is low.

	no.	%
Knew of Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit	41	61.2
Did not know of Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit	20	29.9
Not stated	6	9.0
Total	67	100.0

Table 48 *Whether respondent was aware of Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit*

Attention is needed to improve the visibility of the Unit in the gay and lesbian communities. In particular, the role and responsibilities of the Unit and its Co-ordinator require clarification and publicising in the appropriate communities.

7. VICTIMS COMPENSATION

Only 21% of survivors were aware of the Victims Compensation Scheme, (Table 49). Given that 73% of respondents sustained some physical injury, (see Table 5, p. 15), the vast majority of survivors are unable, through lack of knowledge, to exercise their rights to compensation.

	no.	%
Knew of Victims Compensation	14	20.9
Did not know of Victims Compensation	45	67.2
Not stated	8	11.9
Total	67	100.0

Table 49 *Whether survivor was aware of Victims Compensation*

There is clearly a need for the Victims Compensation Scheme to be specifically promoted in the gay and lesbian communities.

8. SUMMARY

The *Streetwatch* project clearly demonstrates the endemic nature of violence against gay men and lesbians in Sydney today. The findings confirm other data sources, such as the 1982 ADB Report survey and the ADB-Police Hotlines.

Given the nature of taunts spoken by assailants, the motivation for most of the attacks is hate against gay men and lesbians. Robbery was not a major feature.

An alarming aspect of the assaults was the size of the gangs of assailants - an average of 4 members, and often many more. The youth of the assailants was a clear finding, confirming results of the previous surveys.

The fact that only 56% were satisfied with the service offered by the police, compared with 83% for the health services, indicates a major area where improvement is necessary. However, the majority of persons not reporting incidents to the police stated poor clear-up rates, rather than anticipated lack of service, as the reason for failing to report.

The low level of reporting to the police, 48%, indicates that despite some substantive changes in police attitudes in recent years, a major section of the population feel unable to avail themselves of their rights to protection and redress under the law. This is another area demanding serious attention.

The survey indicated that the profile of the Police Gay/Lesbian Liaison Unit is in need of lifting. The fact that only 21% of survivors were aware of the Victims Compensation Scheme is serious enough to warrant specific promotional campaigns directed at the gay and lesbian

communities.

The results of the *Streetwatch* survey leave no doubt that a major section of the community, gay men and lesbians, are singled out for abuse and violence in a consistent manner. Furthermore, the police response has been shown to be inadequate in tackling these crimes.

The perception in the community, that homosexuals are in some way inferior to the rest of society, contributes to the belief amongst the perpetrators that gays and lesbians are justifiable targets. The silence on this matter from opinion makers, politicians, the schools, and the police themselves, can only reinforce this view. Hence, to address this particular form of hate-motivated violence both community attitudes to gay men and lesbians and specific policing practices have to be addressed.

9. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

Speech by David Buchanan at the "Stop the Bashings" rally held by the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby Inc. on Saturday 3rd March 1990.

I want to point out two facts. Firstly, in today's Sydney Morning Herald, Kohl protested that a unified Germany is no threat to Jews. "There is no doubt that current laws in West Germany punishing 'crimes of hatred' will apply also in a unified Germany". Secondly, there has been sitting all round Australia for the last two and a half years a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

I point out these facts not to ask why some groups have inquiries into or laws against the phenomenon of violence against members of those groups, but to ask: Why is the phenomenon of street violence against lesbians and gay men not similarly acknowledged, and just as vehemently and automatically deplored? Why is the phenomenon of street violence against lesbians and gay men not too the subject of laws that criminalise hate and that make reparation to the affected community? Why is the phenomenon of street violence against lesbians and gay men not also the subject of the same sort of high level public inquiry - inquiry not just into the events of violence but into its root causes - with sceptical and rigorous analysis of the history of relationships between gays and lesbians and heterosexual people?

Why, when the local Sydney gay community paper carries stories of fresh violence against lesbians and gay men in practically every issue, and when the best study done to date of bashings of gay men and lesbians concludes that some 80% of 67 homosexual people in one inner city in one six month period, were bashed not because of where they were or what they were doing, but because of who they were...

WHY ISN'T SOMETHING BLOODY WELL DONE ABOUT IT?

...You don't need me to tell you why. We already know. It's because it's not so acceptable these days to publicly slag off about women - it's in fact illegal to publicly vilify people because of their racial origin - but it's not only legal, it's positively the Australian way of life to stigmatise lesbians and gay men.

From childhood, we are exposed to a culture which puts sexuality deviants - pooftas and dykes - at the bottom of the pile.

It is playground culture to beat boys up for being sissy and to smear a girl who won't come across as a "fucking dyke".

And for so long as lesbians and gay men are regarded as the one group inferior to any other non-white anglo-saxon male grouping - for so long as lesbians and gay men are to be despised by even those who are themselves stigmatised for their gender or their origins - then a gay man or lesbian's life will be held in the same regard as it is held today - cheap and of no account.

For so long as we have a culture where it's as popular and accepted to roll a poofta as to have a drink in a pub, then the enormity of the violence against us will never truly be acknowledged.

As a result, we have a media that thinks it can sell papers or air time by justifying the airing of views about lesbians and gay men which are often not so much homicidal as genocidal.

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There is no consideration of public responsibility as there would be if the people held up by homophobes like Fred Nile and Derryn Hinch to contempt and ridicule were heterosexual, women, blacks or Jews.

Question: In respect of what other group in society would the "homosexual panic" defence by fag bashers be tolerated? - The insidious but very common defence that the heterosexual slayer was provoked by a sexual advance by the victim?

Once we've recognised that homophobia is not just the condition of a few adolescent male sickos but rather a basic cultural value, the remedy is clear.

Violence against us can be significantly reduced by the band aid measures of better and more responsible policing and by the adoption of self-defence measures.

But there will still be lots and lots of men and boys who want to prove their masculinity by bashing a homosexual.

Our ultimate goal must be to force the authorities to take for us the same measures taken to protect women from the violence of their menfolk and to protect people from racist abuse.

But, in the end, our fight is with the sexism and fear of the sexually different which pervades our society.

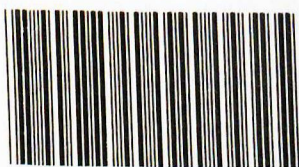
In fighting the Festival of Light, let us not lose sight of the fact that it is not so much their existence which gives inspiration to the bashers and the bigots. It is the platform they are given by a sexist and deeply homophobic culture.

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