

Growth in Sydney assault rates

Despite a growth in anti-gay and lesbian violence, only a small number of hate-motivated attacks on gays and lesbians are being reported, State MP Paul O'Grady has said.

"The landmark Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby (GLRL) Streetwatch Report on violence has shown that very few of the total assaults against lesbians and gay men are being reported."

Mr O'Grady said there had been a growth in the number of reported assaults in inner Sydney, indicating that programs run by gay men and lesbians may be persuading people to report assaults.

According to Bureau of Crime Statistics figures, in 1990, there

were 3,379 assaults reported to police in inner Sydney. In 1991 the number was 3,977 for inner Sydney. In total, there were 17,666 reported assaults in the Sydney area in 1991.

In 1990, there were 256 incidents of sexual assault in inner Sydney reported to authorities, increasing to 357 in 1991. The Sydney total in 1991 was 2,159.

Mr O'Grady said that unfortunately the latest crime figures do not show how many of the assaults are the result of gay hatred.

"It is up to the police to record whether homophobia is a factor in assaults and I will be taking this up again with the Police Minister Ted Pickering."