

# NSW Beats Working Group 2007

## Terms of Reference

### 1. Background

During the 1990s intensive beats outreach was common practice in HIV/AIDS prevention programs. In recent years the number of these programs has declined due to resource issues and difficulties in quantifying outcomes. However, HIV and STI transmission continue to be an issue for men who have sex with men (MSM) in NSW and health agencies continue to seek ways to engage with this population to reduce transmission and increase awareness.

Sexual activity in public remains illegal in NSW and consequently NSW Police Force are at times involved in law enforcement activity particularly after complaints from general public.

Violence continues to be an issue at some beats and ACON's Anti-Violence Project (AVP) and the police continue to deal with these issues as they arise. In addition they work to reduce violence and the scope for violence at beats through a number of programs.

Many beats are in parks or at beaches and flora and fauna is under constant threat through the destruction of vegetation and habitat and through the problems of pollution caused by discarded condoms etc which are not readily bio-degradable. The National Parks and Wildlife Service and local councils continue to try to manage and protect the environment including areas where beats exist.

The NSW Beats Working Group is a collaboration of agencies directly and indirectly dealing with issues of beats in NSW. The main agencies involved represent health, law enforcement, local government and environment. The working group was formed as a result of an interagency forum held in early 2007 to discuss beat issues at a statewide level and to try and develop a coordinated response.

### 2. Purpose of Working Group

- To improve the health and safety of beat users
- To minimise the impact of beats on the environment
- To retain public amenity for beat users and those who use the space

### 3. Objectives of Working Group

- To provide an opportunity for networking and collaboration between agencies working in the area of beats
- To develop key response guidelines for beats incidents
- To develop a range of beats resources
- To provide training and support for workers in the sector

**4. Meeting Dates and Times**

Initial meeting: 22 August 2007  
Meetings monthly thereafter @ 3.30pm

**5. Meeting Venue**

ACON  
9 Commonwealth Street  
Surry Hills

**6. Membership of the Working Group**

The membership of the working group includes but is not restricted to:

NSW Police Force  
Attorney General's Department  
City of Sydney Council  
ACON Education  
ACON Anti-Violence Project  
ACON Rural  
National Parks and Wildlife Service  
Sydney South West Area Health Service (SSWAHS)  
Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service (NSCCAHS)  
Sydney West Area Health Service (SWAHS)  
South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service (SESIAHS)  
North Coast Area Health Service (NCAHS)  
Hunter New England Health Service (HNEAHS)

**7. Chair and Minute Taking**

The Committee will be co-chaired by Pip Ditzell (City of Sydney) and Douglas Knox (SESIAHS). Minute taking will be shared by the co-chairs.

**8. Terms of Reference**

Terms of Reference to be reviewed annually.