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Registered Charity: 0677732-09



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Mr. R. R. Fowler, Deputy Minister
Department of National Defence
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K2

January 28, 1993

Dear Mr. Fowler:

As the President of Pink Triangle Services (PTS), a gay and lesbian social service agency, I congratulate you on your long-awaited decision to end the discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the Canadian Forces. We are, however, concerned that the implementation of this policy may cause difficulties, and we would like to offer the services of our organisation to assist in this process.

As has been experienced with the integration of females and other minorities into various armed forces, there is the possibility, indeed likelihood, of harassment of members of a new minority. Also, unresolved internal stress in the organisation may jeopardise its operational effectiveness. Every effort must therefore be made to ensure that the incompatibility predicted by the Department of National Defence as an argument against the inclusion of gays and lesbians does become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Sensitivity and awareness training of all ranks of the CF can ensure the smooth integration of this new aspect of diversity.

Over the past six years, we have provided training programs to such government agencies as the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service, the Department of National Health and Welfare, and the City of Ottawa; as well as to social service agencies such as the Elizabeth Fry Society, the Lowertown Resource Center, the Montreal YWCA, the Youth Service Bureau of Ottawa, and the Ontario Association of Professional Social Workers; and to the Carleton University School of Social Work, the Pembroke General Hospital, and the Ottawa Police Service.

Our training programs generally run for at least one half day, for a fee of \$ [redacted] and focus on three areas: personal homophobia, supporting gay/lesbian colleagues, and working with gay and lesbian clients. It has been our experience that unless there is some exploration of personal attitudes at the beginning of the training session, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to then effectively discuss the issues of working with lesbian and gay clients and colleagues.

REGISTRATION

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The focus of the training workshops is to look specifically at how workers can respond in an informed, positive manner to their gay and lesbian clients and colleagues.

We generally work with groups of about 20 - 25 people, with four facilitators. Each agenda is specifically tailored to the work of the agency where the training is occurring. Following introductions and a description of PTS, and the gay and lesbian community in Ottawa, we then set the tone for the workshop. In doing this, we try to encourage that there be an open and comfortable atmosphere where the participants feel free to ask questions, and to say what is on their minds. This is very important as we feel that it is the face-to-face personal interaction that makes the difference. We move into personal experiences and then break into small groups to explore personal homophobia via a questionnaire. Following this discussion, we come back to look at practical suggestions for building trust, and for providing gay positive services.

We believe that these workshops could help your Department ensure the success of the implementation of this new policy. I would ask to discuss our program with you or your representatives. Please call me at my work number 995-9404 or leave a message on the Pink Triangle Services answering machine at 563-4818.

Sincerely yours,



Jamie Robertson
President

✓ cc. D. E. Munro
Director General Personnel Policy
Department of National Defence