



# Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

**Inquiry:** Inquiry into anti-LGBTIQA+ hate crimes in Victoria

**Hearing date:** 24 June 2026

**Question taken on notice**

**Directed to:** Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society

**Received date:** 6 July 2026

## 1. Aiv PUGLIELLI, page 19

### Question Asked:

Are there particular models that exist, perhaps even internationally, that we should be looking to in this sort of rehabilitative, restorative area of justice for people who are victims of these types of incidents?

**Adam BOURNE:** I would have to take on notice whether there was something specific to LGBTIQ hate crimes. I am happy to come back to you on that.

**Response:** To the best of my knowledge, no such model currently exists. However, I understand that the Centre for Innovative Justice at RMIT is currently in the process of developing a restorative justice approach specific to LGBTIQ hate crimes. I do not know when this will be made publicly available.

## 2. Ryan BATCHELOR, page 21

### Question Asked:

Are there any jurisdictions or police forces that you think are doing it (using LGBTIQA+ Liaison Officers) particularly well that we could look to for inspiration on how to improve those issues, particularly community perception of police's willingness to take their issues seriously?

**Adam BOURNE:** I might have to come back to you on that and note that tomorrow I am aware at the hearing there are some colleagues from UNSW who specifically work on issues relating to LGBTIQ policing who might be better equipped to answer that question.

**Response:** Following further research, there are two examples that I would encourage the committee to reflect upon. One from the UK in the form of South Wales Police, and one from the Irish police force - An Garda Síochána.

South Wales Police appears to have taken a relationship-based and scrutiny-oriented approach to improving LGBTQ+ confidence in hate crime reporting. Its public material identifies tackling hate crime and removing barriers to reporting hate crimes and hate incidents as priority areas for LGBTQ+ communities. The force describes this work as involving local policing teams, a cohort of Hate Crime officers, engagement with LGBTQ+ communities, and scrutiny through an Independent Advisory Group. It also explicitly acknowledges historical prejudice and ill-treatment of LGBTQ+ people by South Wales Police, and frames current engagement as part of rebuilding trust and ensuring past failings are not repeated.

In practical terms, South Wales Police appears to provide both direct and supported reporting pathways. Hate crime can be reported online directly to police, while the force also signposts people to third-party or community support, including South Wales Victim Focus, Crimestoppers for anonymous reporting, and Galop for LGBT-specific support. This is important because it recognises that some victims may not feel ready or safe to engage directly with police. The available public evidence, however, is stronger on the existence of these mechanisms than on outcomes: I could not identify a publicly available evaluation showing that South Wales Police's LGBTQ+ work has led to a measured increase in LGBTQ+ hate crime reporting or improved criminal justice outcomes. The most defensible claim is therefore that South Wales Police has put in place visible reporting, engagement and scrutiny mechanisms intended to improve confidence and case handling, rather than that it has conclusively demonstrated increased LGBTQ+ reporting.

An Garda Síochána, Ireland's national police service, provides a stronger example of a systems-level approach. Its model combines online hate crime reporting, a national Garda National Diversity Unit, hundreds of Garda Diversity Officers, formal third-party referral arrangements with civil society organisations, changes to the PULSE recording system (which is their core policing database/records management system), published hate crime data, and mandatory hate crime training. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) notes that Ireland's PULSE system was updated to record non-crime hate incidents using bias motivations, that third-party reporting allows civil society organisations to refer cases directly to the Garda National Diversity Unit, and that Garda hate crime policy and procedures set out how hate crimes and non-crime hate incidents should be identified, recorded, investigated and prosecuted.

The Irish model also provides clearer evidence on how reports are handled. Garda's online reporting system states that all online hate crime reports go

first to the Garda National Diversity Unit, which examines and actions them. Where a report is assessed as hate-related, a PULSE incident is created; hate crimes are forwarded to the relevant local district for investigation, while hate incidents are forwarded for information and appropriate action. Victims are told they will be offered referral to victim support and kept informed during the investigation, and they can request assistance from one of 586 Garda Diversity Officers or from the Garda National Diversity Unit if they do not wish to attend their local station.

There is some evidence that reporting to An Garda Síochána has increased overall. The Garda reported 676 hate crimes and hate-related non-crime incidents in 2024, up from 651 in 2023, with recorded discriminatory motives increasing from 483 in 2021 to 732 in 2024. Garda itself interpreted the 2024 figures as indicating a further increase in people coming forward, while also acknowledging that hate-related crime remains underreported.