

**Question on Notice
No. 597
Asked on Friday 21 April 2006**

MS BARRY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE) -

QUESTION:

With reference to a disturbing article in the Sunday Mail titled 'Bashed because they are gay' -

Is there any truth to claims there is a gang targeting gay people in Fortitude Valley and what are police doing to ensure community safety?

ANSWER:

Any assault on any member of the community is taken seriously by the Queensland Police Service.

Police in the Brisbane Central District have not been able to identify any gang activity which is focusing on members of the gay community.

Police from Fortitude Valley have been working very closely with gay community groups, a public forum was held on 6 April 2006 to discuss this issue and other matters confronting this sector of the community.

A community initiative which has been strongly supported by Queensland Police Service called 'Walksafe' has been very successful in recent times. This project is designed to promote public safety for gay people in the Fortitude Valley area. The 'Walksafe' web site includes information about the procedures involved in reporting assaults and the subsequent investigative processes. A recent update of the site now allows members of the community to pass information to the police anonymously if they choose.

Police have also introduced an external email address which provides the community with direct access to police officers who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersex (*LGBTI*) Liaison Officers. This initiative is another positive step in strengthening the ties between police and the gay community.

I can assure you that the Queensland Police Service is working hard to ensure the safety of the community not only in the Fortitude Valley but all of Queensland.