

West Hollywood Station

**HATE
CRIMES
PROGRAM**

Although West Hollywood Station patrols one of the Department's smallest areas, it is undoubtedly the most culturally diverse city in the County. Between the 33,000 residents who live here and the millions of visitors who come here each year, virtually every race, creed, nationality, and lifestyle can be found within these congested 1.9 square miles. Unfortunately, not all people can accept individual differences. During 1998, there were ten reported instances of criminal activity directed against persons or institutions based solely upon the victim's race (2), religion (1), or sexual orientation (7). Of these cases, two have been solved, five are still under investigation, and three are unsolved.

The West Hollywood Station C.O.P.S. Team, Special Problems Unit, and Area Beat Teams, in conjunction with City officials, have developed a number of programs to protect residents and visitors from crimes predicated on hate. These include public awareness events such as the annual "March Against Hate," and monthly "Bar Walks," where deputies, City officials



and volunteers parade through the City handing out literature to educate people on how to protect themselves from hate crimes. Additionally, station deputies are also members of the Gay & Lesbian Conference Committee, which seeks ways to ensure active communication between the gay community and the Department. These events clearly demonstrate to the community the serious manner in which the Department views hate crimes.

In 1997, West Hollywood Station organized the "Gay Bar Owners Association" in response to the City's concern about the serial murderer, Andrew Cunanan. The station C.O.P.S. Team gathered a representative

from every gay-oriented club in the City, and briefed them on information, never released to the public, about the status of the Cunanan investigation. Despite the fact that many of the club owners are adversaries in a professional sense, deputies and City officials were able to persuade them to come together on such a serious matter. Since that time, the Association has remained in tact, and is frequently used by the club owners to discuss hate crime problems with the Department.

Despite the City's small size, there are currently more than 20 active Neighborhood Watch Groups who hold monthly meetings in partnership with



*Captain Richard E. Odenthal
West Hollywood Station*



HATE CRIME CASES

1998	10 incidents	7 sexual orientation, 2 race, 1 religion
1997	11 incidents	10 sexual orientation, 1 race
1996	18 incidents	15 sexual orientation, 2 race, 1 ethnicity
1995	22 incidents	16 sexual orientation, 4 race, 1 ethnicity, 1 religion

HIGHLIGHTED FROM FIELD OPERATIONS REGION II

area team deputies. These smaller groups allow deputies to address concerns specific to the group, especially hate crimes. Many residents are recent immigrants from the Soviet Union who become targets of crime due to their unfamiliarity with our laws and customs. The station has recruited two of the Department's three Russian-speaking deputies to communicate with the Russian community.

West Hollywood Station Detective Bureau has sent a number of investigators to specialized training, in order to better understand the motives behind hate crimes. This training inherently improves the quality of their investigations. The detectives then coordinate prosecution with a deputy district attorney specifically assigned to hate crime cases.

These, and other programs, have had a positive effect on hate crimes. The number of reported incidents in West Hollywood has continued to drop in the last four years.

In summary, West Hollywood Station works closely with City officials and local special interest groups in order to deter hate crimes, and to clearly demonstrate solidarity in our resolve to protect every resident and visitor of West Hollywood.

