



Aleph Melbourne

A social and support group for GLBT Jews in Melbourne
(Operating since 1995)

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"The JCCV wants to get a better understanding of Gay Jews' concerns. As John [Searle] has made clear, under his presidency the JCCV has reaffirmed its opposition to vilification and affirmed its wish to as inclusive as possible. However the details of what form this might take have to be worked out; we're still at the information-gathering stage."

Geoffrey Zygier

Executive Director - Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV)

Nov 10 2009

Suggestions for increased GLBT inclusion, acceptance and visibility within the Victorian Jewish community

1. The JCCV has a specific, unambiguous policy addressing the persecution of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Jews in regard to homophobic hate and intolerance, irrespective of whether it originates from outside or inside the Jewish community. These policies must be enforced with the same zero tolerance afforded to antisemitism and Holocaust rhetoric and other hate crimes. This would be enforced using the same or similar mechanisms to which zero tolerance of antisemitism etc is enforced.
2. The JCCV changes its constitution to offer protection for disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised minority groups, in particular GLBT Jews, within the Jewish community.
3. The JCCV develops a policy that requires all member organisations to have policies not to discriminate against any member of their organisation based on sexuality or gender identity and foster a welcome and inclusive environment for GLBT Jews, GLBT Jewish couples and their children.
4. The JCCV works with service organisations within the Jewish community such as those offering assistance for mental health, domestic violence and vilification to offer appropriate assistance to GLBT Jews and make these services known to the entire community by the same communication methods as they do for their other target audiences.
5. The JCCV forms a taskforce that has representatives from each of the Jewish GLBT community groups (eg Aleph Melbourne, Young Aleph, Jewish Lesbian Group of Victoria), the Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council (AGMC Inc) and possibly representatives of the Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby (VGLRL), the Victoria Police Gay & Lesbian Liaison Office and the ALSO Foundation, to discuss issues that arise affecting GLBT Jews and allow open lines of communication between all stakeholders (ie JCCV, Jewish GLBT groups, other relevant GLBT and Jewish community organisations).

6. The JCCV makes membership a viable option for Jewish community groups offering social and support services primarily to GLBT Jews. A significant hurdle to membership of the JCCV is the (discriminatory) constitutional requirement that there be a successful 2/3 majority vote by the JCCV's membership. Whilst the JCCV per se may encourage and support a specific membership application, a large enough bloc of the JCCV member organisations can easily over-rule it. Replacement of this questionable mechanism by an automatic process at the JCCV board level would be a far fairer and more transparent system. Any organisation applying for membership of the JCCV would then only need to satisfy all requirements of membership on an objective basis.
7. The JCCV understands that there is no discrete GLBT Jewish community as such and that GLBT Jews are an integral part of the Jewish community and are to be treated and considered as much a part of the Jewish community as any other Jews.

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