

**Sexual Profiling and Abuse of Gay Men  
by San Francisco Police Department's  
Narcotics Division**

presentation to the San Francisco Mayor's Citywide Task Force on Crystal Meth

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I have recently had contact with more than twelve San Francisco gay men who shared strikingly similar stories: all of the men were arrested in recent months and charged with methamphetamine-related offenses including possession and possession with intent to sell. All of the men were active members of internet web sites used by gay men to find and meet sex partners. Most of them are HIV-positive or have AIDS and are disabled, and all of them experienced at least one of the following:

- homophobic epithets from arresting officers
- unnecessary and extreme use of physical force
- Each of the arrested men was pressured and harassed to give names of multiple drug dealers even if they were not dealers themselves and did not know more than one dealer. This information was commonly solicited by overt and embellished threats of long-term prison sentences and promises of exchange for lighter sentencing.
- Search warrants were obtained on the basis of observations of legal behavior that may seem unusual to heterosexual people but fall within the realm of gay cultural norms in San Francisco (i.e., observation of a handful of men coming and going from a residence in a single evening). In a number of ways, gay men's sexual activity is being inaccurately equated not only with drug use but drug trafficking.
- Men reported searches without warrants, consent or probable cause.
- All of the men were nonviolent offenders, most without any prior criminal record.
- Arresting officers made deliberate attempts to shame, humiliate and stigmatize the men in the presence of neighbors and bystanders.
- Many of the men believe their arrest resulted from indicating they use drugs while looking for sexual partners on the internet. Undercover officers seem to be increasingly targeting web sites where local gay men hook up for sex.
- Each of the men claimed to know several others who had endured the same experiences.
- Few of the men are willing to give me permission to share their names as sources. They were unwilling to make formal complaints for fear of police retaliation and the firm belief that doing so would dramatically worsen the outcome of pending criminal charges.

Several cases stand out as especially disturbing:

A 75 year old gay man with AIDS reported that San Francisco police recently searched his home without a warrant and without his consent. He sustained permanent injuries by the physical abuse of Narcotics Division officers. He has since filed a report with the Office of Citizen Complaints.

Late last year, a team of police officers entered the apartment of a gay male couple living at 19th and Castro Street, held them at gunpoint, and searched their home on the basis of a false and unsubstantiated allegation they were operating a meth lab in their residence. The bogus report was made by the couple's landlord and conspiring neighbor in an attempt to have them evicted from their rent-controlled apartment. Police were able to obtain a search warrant simply on the basis of observing a handful of men coming and going from the couple's residence in the course of a single evening.

After their arrest, the prosecutor for the San Francisco District Attorney attempted to bolster the charges against them by discrediting their character with allegations of sexual immorality, which included a neighbor's report that "shirtless men" would sometimes sit outside on the steps leading to the men's front door.

The attorney also disclosed the couple had hosted sex parties in the privacy of their home as evidence of their criminal deviance, even though no complaints for noise or other neighborhood disturbances had ever been made. This became the basis for an additional charge of operating an establishment where methamphetamine is used. Furthermore, the couple's HIV positive serostatus was introduced in testimony, implying the men represented a threat to community public health, noting the relationship between methamphetamine use and HIV transmission.

The men are permanently disabled and rely upon social security for income. They were subsequently evicted from their rent-controlled apartment on the basis of the police report resulting from the search warrant, and face the prospect of losing support and benefits as the result of a drug-related offense.

In another case, a local gay men made a police report that his password for accessing a cruising web site had been changed by a casual acquaintance, and his account was being used without his consent by the acquaintance. The acquaintance continued using the victim's photos, constituting a form of identity theft.

SFPD officers informed the victim there was a special unit to assist gay men who had been victims of internet-related crime, despite having made public statements that they do not track or in any official capacity address internet-related crimes against gay men. Police agreed to pursue the matter in exchange for an unusual request. Upon regaining possession of the victim's account password, they would then use the account for undercover investigations of other web site members for a period of at least sixty days. Feeling forced to choose between a criminal's use of his likeness online and cooperation with police investigators, the victim cooperated with police. The victim described the officers with whom he met as male, "surprisingly young," and possessing little or no knowledge of gay culture and internet sex.

Officers used the man's account for two months on [www.men4now.com](http://www.men4now.com), conducting drug-related surveillance of other members who indicated they 'party and play' in their profile. Police used the victim's existing screen name, description, and photos to gain trust in interacting and gathering information from

other web site members who were already familiar with the victim's profile, had previously met the victim in person, had formed established relationships with the victim, and with whom the victim shared mutual friends and acquaintances. Police subsequently communicated their activity to the victim and then returned control of the account to him when they had exhausted their use of it.

In other cases, men consistently reported unnecessary use of physical force by Narcotics Division officers as well as the use of homophobic language such as "faggots," "fudge-packers," and "butt buddies." Arrestees consistently named two officers as being the most problematic: Sergeant David Martinovich and Investigator Bill Braconi. None of the men I interviewed could be described as mid- or high-level dealers of meth, nor suppliers of meth to other dealers. Several of the men were only recreational or occasional users of meth, and in no way trafficking in narcotics.

Community United Against Violence, San Francisco's LGBT Anti-Violence organization, has also received reports of police violence against gay men during meth-related investigations. An audio podcast interview of the experiences of three gay men mentioned in this document can be found at: <http://www.dotmen.net/pods.html>

### **The Crystal Meth Task Force's Need for Greater Community Involvement**

The Mayor's Task Force on Crystal Meth was founded in April of 2005 and heralded as the first of its kind in the nation, both progressive and innovative in its approach to the problem of meth among local gay men. Rather than simply condemn and punish, they set out on a mission of compassion, understanding, prevention and treatment through close community partnerships with community entities. The task force's membership was comprised primarily of HIV prevention and other public health officials, substance abuse experts and local law enforcement.

At the time it was formed, the Task Force intended to create a mechanism for ongoing, open communication about its efforts with the larger community for continued dialogue and feedback in addition to public notification of its findings and activities. That mechanism was a package of web-based software called StakeWare, by means of which community stakeholders could have easy access to information regarding the Task Force. This element of the Task Force's operation was so central that it was specifically highlighted in the Mayor's brief press release announcing the Task Force's creation:

"Mayor Newsom and Supervisor Bevan Dufty indicated that the process of coming up with a comprehensive plan to address the issue will be as open to the public as possible, using a stakeholder management technology known as StakeWare. StakeWare will assist in increasing the public's access to the work of the task force, and enable various agencies around the City to provide input and expertise going forward. Natan Zaidenweber,

CEO of StakeWare, will attend the first meeting to present a prototype of the system and to gather input from the group on other functionalities they'd like to see.”

San Francisco Mayor's Office of Communications. “Mayor Newsom And Supervisor Dufty Announce Formation Of Citywide Crystal Methamphetamine Task Force.” Press release, April 26, 2005.

In a later article published in the *San Francisco Bay Times*, Supervisor Dufty elaborated on the centrality of the software for purposes of community involvement.

“Dufty made it clear that Task Force meetings are to be open to the public. To maximize feedback from the public, the City plans to utilize computer software Stake Ware. The online approach will allow the Task Force greater access to the community—and the community access to the Task Force. Through the software, the public can contact the Task Force, view its meeting agendas, progress and status reports. Most importantly, community members wishing to share their experiences and stories about crystal meth on an anonymous basis can do so using the system.”

Pratt, Paul. “City Forms Meth Task Force.” *San Francisco Bay Times* April 28, 2005.

The software was never implemented, however, and no public notice was given as to the reasoning behind its abandonment. Additionally, no comparable process was ever created or organized to take its place. In its absence, local law enforcement have been free to operate without substantive oversight, observation or guidance from the Task Force, while at the same time being further emboldened because the gay community themselves 'asked for it.'

## **SEXUAL PROFILING**

Evidence of a problematic relationship between police and gay meth users pre-dates the Task Force, however. On April 28, 2005, the *San Francisco Bay Times* newspaper published comments by Captain Timothy Hettrich, head of the SFPD's Narcotics Division:

"At the beginning of the year, before being approached by the Mayor to join the new Task Force, Hettrich began his own attack on the City's crystal meth usage. At his direction, a four-person crystal meth sub-unit was formed in SFPD's narcotics division to focus, in particular, on the gay community.

Actions by the narcotics division to catch drug dealers include

efforts ranging from informants and undercover agents to combing online postings, such as those found on Craigslist, which mention drug-related terminology.

'Thirty years ago, this would have been called homophobic [placing emphasis on the gay community] on the part of the police department, focusing on men in these locations,' Hettrich stated. 'Now I think it's called concern, concern for the City, and responsibility on my part.'

In November of 2005, an article published in the *San Francisco Chronicle* claimed that meth use among San Francisco gay men was on the decline. In the article,, Hettrich again stated that four officers of the Narcotics Division are devoted to targeting gay men:

"Capt. Tim Hettrich of the San Francisco police narcotics unit said more crystal meth is sold in the city every year. But the fact that four officers focus on crystal meth sales in the gay community could explain some of the decrease, he said."

Buchanan, Wyatt. "Interviews indicate drop in meth use by gay men." *San Francisco Chronicle* November 4, 2005 p. B-5

In addition to supervising these four officers, Hettrich himself spends time every day investigating gay men's online personal ads:

"Capt. Tim Hettrich, the chief of vice and narcotics for the San Francisco police department, said he checks Craigslist every day as part of his job; this month his department arrested two men on felony drug charges after the police responded to an ad offering methamphetamines."

Werde, Bill. "A Web Site as 18-Ring Circus of Supply and Demand." *The New York Times* January 23, 2003

Combined with recent reports by gay men of police mistreatment and abuse, this constitutes nothing short of sexual profiling. As defined by the San Francisco Police Department's own General Order 5.17, "...biased policing is the use, to any extent or degree of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, **sexual orientation**, or gender identity in determining whether to initiate any law enforcement action in the absence of specific suspect description." The policy also states that officers shall not consider sexual orientation "... in deciding to initiate even those consensual encounters that do not amount to legal detentions or to request consent to search."

The purpose of this "Policy Prohibiting Biased Policing" is to prevent police from considering, among other factors, sexual orientation "in establishing either reasonable suspicion or probable cause." Furthermore, "All officers are

responsible for knowing and complying with this policy. Supervisors shall ensure that all personnel in their command know the content of this policy and operate in compliance with it."

Among the special investigative units of the San Francisco Police Department, the Narcotics Division arguably possesses the greatest potential for biased policing, as the formulation of investigative pursuits is determined by a handful of officers who operate outside the scope of public scrutiny due to undercover activity. This was noted in a 1998 audit of the Police Department, which states,

"Unlike the General Investigations and Juvenile Divisions, the cases in the Narcotics/Vice Crimes Division are often self-generated. Investigators are expected to take a proactive role in identifying and tracking down potential suspects through the extensive use of informants."

San Francisco Board of Supervisors Office of the Budget Analyst.

*Management Audit of the San Francisco Police Department, Phase II*

An example of the way in which law enforcement's equation of gay = meth includes an episode in which a gay man had returned home to find his domestic partner unconscious after an allergic reaction to prescription medication. His partner had fallen through a glass table top and was bleeding heavily. After paramedics took the injured man to the emergency room, his distraught partner was unable to join him due to being detained by police for over an hour. They questioned him and even his neighbors about suspected drug use, particularly crystal meth, even though there was no evidence illegal drugs were in any way involved, nor was the detained partner under the influence of any substance. Police were upfront and clear that their meth-related suspicions were formulated solely by the men's sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation is not only used as reasonable suspicion and probable cause for local investigations, searches and warrants, but as evidence in aggressive sentencing for meth possession. Prosecutors for the San Francisco District Attorney have used such arguments as "Your honor, there were male guests loitering outside the residence with their shirts off." and "Your honor, these men were hosting sex parties in their home." with exasperation as supporting evidence in aggressive prosecution of gay men arrested for possession of meth. The HIV status of gay male arrestees, obtained from their internet personal ads, has reportedly been introduced in some cases as further supporting evidence, justifying extreme methods of search and seizure as a matter of public health intervention on behalf of the greater good. This comes at a time when the San Francisco Department of Public Health has waged a major campaign encouraging gay men to disclose their HIV status to sex partners as an effective HIV prevention strategy.

Rewards for high arrest rates can be numerous for San Francisco police: officers' performance is evaluated, in part, by the number of arrests they make,

even if those arrests never lead to criminal charges or are later dismissed in court. High numbers of drug-related arrests also help demonstrate a need for increased state and federal funding earmarked for the national "War On Drugs." This creates a dynamic in which methamphetamine-related arrests are vigorously pursued with the motivation of generating statistical data to support substantial grant awards.

The Sentencing Project is an organization that brings national attention to disturbing trends and inequities in the criminal justice system by the publication of groundbreaking research, aggressive media campaigns and strategic advocacy for policy reform. They provide a critical examination of this potential for abuse in the allocation of resources for addressing meth, noting,

"The federal grant system creates an incentive for law enforcement agencies to increase their efforts targeting methamphetamine, which manufactures the artifice of a problem. The increased arrests or seizures, the result of aggressive enforcement rather than substantiated use patterns, reinforce the perception of widespread methamphetamine use. Meanwhile, personnel and fiduciary resources are diverted from other substance abuse concerns that may pose far greater harms in that locality. Focusing too narrowly on one element obscures more imminent problems and results in policy that is not properly calibrated to address the greatest needs of a particular locality. " - page 15

King, Ryan S. *The Next Big Thing? Methamphetamine in the United States* The Sentencing Project, June 2006.

In April of 2006, the SFPD's Narcotics Division was allocated more than \$249,710 worth of electronic surveillance equipment from the Office of National Drug Control Policy's Counterdrug Technology Assessment Center via their 'Technology Transfer Program' (Board of Supervisors Resolution 103-07). The equipment includes a telephone conversation intercept system named 'VoiceBox' enabling police investigators to easily monitor any telecommunication, including mobile phone conversations and computer use, of suspects in drug-related investigations. An additional \$60,000 was received for software to be used with the system (Board of Supervisors Resolution 103-06). The SFPD also received a grant earlier this year in the amount of \$330,000 from the governor's Office of Emergency Services for a project entitled, "California Multi-Jurisdictional Methamphetamine Enforcement Team (CAL-MMET) Program" (Board of Supervisors Resolution 185-07).

The Board of Supervisors' official resolutions for accepting these funding sources has been Bevan Dufty, the openly gay supervisor who was the driving force behind creation of the Meth Task Force. Interestingly, Dufty also introduced a resolution condemning the Patriot Act, and specifically its ability to expand government surveillance of civilian telecommunications. This is ironic given that the Patriot Act includes dedication of substantial funding to combat



methamphetamine using unprecedented surveillance technologies which he seems to have welcomed into our community through other resolutions.

Most recently, on September 14th, 2007, the San Francisco Police Department was awarded a Methamphetamine Initiative Grant of \$235,252 from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). According to COPS,

"These innovative community policing grants encourage recipients to develop partnerships with such entities as community leaders, local fire departments, drug courts, prosecutors, child protective services, treatment providers, and other law enforcement agencies to create a coordinated response to methamphetamine proliferation. COPS grants have funded equipment, training, and personnel to improve intelligence-gathering capabilities, enforcement efforts, lab clean-up, training related to drug endangered children, and the prosecution of those who engage in methamphetamine-related crimes." –COPS *Methamphetamine Initiative Fact Sheet* 2006.

It remains to be seen exactly how this money will be spent, especially in regards to developing partnerships with community leaders and treatment providers.

If skeptics question the motivation of biased policing conducted by the Narcotics Division, at least one answer is clear: nearly a million dollars of state and federal funding in less than eighteen months, supported and justified by inflated arrest statistics generated from the violation of a vulnerable community's human and civil rights.

### **HIV-Positive Gay Men's Vulnerability to Both Crystal Meth and Police Mistreatment**

Formation of the San Francisco Mayor's Task Force on Crystal Meth was motivated in part by the belief that gay men's meth use plays a substantial role in new HIV infections in San Francisco. The Task Force's work has focused primarily on targeting HIV negative men in an effort to prevent them from becoming addicted to meth or encouraging them to seek treatment for their meth use. This tunnel vision focus on HIV-negative men is predictable given the ultimate goal of preventing their infection with HIV. Public health interventions and community outreach efforts in recent years have taken a broader approach, however, motivated by the understanding that the health and wellness of HIV-positive men can have a significant impact on HIV transmission rates and new infections. This is commonly referred to as 'Prevention With Positives,' and is based on evidence that demonstrates the physical health of HIV-positive men can directly influence the biological potential for viral infection of their HIV-negative peers, and are less likely to engage in risk behaviors that facilitate HIV transmission, in addition to enjoying an overall greater quality and length of life.

The fact that HIV-positive men are being targeted without significant access to adequate resources for treatment and recovery, coupled with an understanding of the impact these arrests can have on the lives and behaviors of these men, creates the possibility that law enforcement efforts could in fact be contributing to new HIV infections rather than helping deter them.

Amidst continued cuts in HIV-related public assistance, gay men living with AIDS in San Francisco are trapped in economic hardship and poverty at rates dramatically higher than their HIV-negative and heterosexual counterparts. They are less likely to have adequate health care coverage or financial resources to pay for inpatient and longer-term drug treatment programs that can be crucial to sustained recovery from crystal meth addiction.

The harsh economic realities of San Francisco create pressures for some gay men to use meth not only for escape and enjoyment, but to help them work longer hours or multiple jobs simply to survive. In some cases, these financial hardships lead not only to drug use but drug dealing as a means of supplementing income while facing a lack of affordable housing, ongoing reduction in social programs providing crucial services, and problematic health conditions that can prevent securing and maintaining a stable job.

Gay men living with AIDS commonly suffer from physical fatigue, a sense of hopelessness, a lack of self-confidence, and absence of motivation to attempt overcoming what are often viewed as insurmountable life obstacles. Crystal methamphetamine alleviates these conditions, albeit temporarily, providing short-term relief to suffering and despair despite contributing to more severe and long-term consequences. In short, gay men with AIDS often use crystal meth simply to "get through the day."

Research clearly shows that drug use is frequently triggered in HIV-positive gay men because of the homophobia, harassment, violence, isolation and depression they have endured and continue to experience. If the goal of the Citywide Task Force on Crystal Meth is to reduce the conditions contributing to substance abuse, the following scenario should be considered:

- unexpected intrusion into one's home
- the trauma of being held at gunpoint
- having personal belongings ransacked and damaged
- public humiliation of arrest orchestrated to be witnessed by neighbors
- lengthy detention before release that can result in lack of medications, sleep, and dietary needs of immunocompromised individuals
- physical assault and threats of assault
- powerlessness at the mercy of police who openly communicate their homophobia and disdain of gay men
- a financial inability to post bail or afford adequate legal representation
- the prospect of jail time and/or imprisonment while combating a life-threatening illness
- being intimidated, threatened, and harassed to expose and endanger members of your community to a legal system that can be not only biased,

- prejudicial, and unjust, but physically violent
- being forced to work and serve as an informant for the police for weeks or months. This involves immersing oneself in social and physical environments that normalize, encourage, and trigger further substance use, in the hope that doing so will alleviate punishment for that same activity. This inevitably results in simultaneously continuing to use meth without any required treatment or support offered by law enforcement. Meanwhile, police continue to benefit from informants' addictions during the course of their investigations, which can extend indefinitely.

The experiences outlined above inflict trauma on an already vulnerable population that often suffers from poverty, clinical depression, anxiety, social isolation, physical violence, and a sense of despair. Infliction of such abuse on these men who also have substance abuse problems further exacerbates the conditions known to trigger the urge to use drugs, and represent many of the most common co-factors of unprotected sex resulting in HIV transmission.

These men are also less likely to have the physical and emotional energy necessary to advocate for themselves in seeking fairness and justice throughout an often lengthy and laborious series of legal hearings, meetings, attempts to communicate with unresponsive public defenders, and multiple court appearances that can drag on for months or even years. The associated severity of psychological stress has obvious implications for the maintenance of a healthy immune system.

In combination with public health messages that demonize meth users, these arrests also have the potential to simultaneously render gay men more likely to conceal their drug use. This can also discourage or prevent them from seeking advocacy and support from existing community resources due to public disapproval such as accusations that they are responsible for fueling the spread of HIV. On a national level, the current stigmatization and popular alarm of the infectious gay male 'meth menace' has surpassed a basic level of community education and is beginning to approach levels similar to the 'crack baby' hysteria seen more than twenty years ago. HIV-positive meth users are frequently blamed for everything from viral super-infection to reductions in federal AIDS funding by unsympathetic legislators. Unfortunately this has the potential to undo the work of many community-based harm reduction programs that remain grounded in factual information, compassionate understanding, and the engaged involvement of both active and former meth users in devising solutions to their own problems.

Drug-related convictions can have particularly devastating consequences for gay men living with AIDS who risk losing their benefits and sole source of income if their drug use becomes known, including possible eviction and homelessness. These ramifications extend well beyond the immediacy of their arrest, however, including an impact on the increasing number of HIV positive gay men attempting to return to the work force after living on social security and other disability income. The employment implications for job seekers with a

history of being charged or convicted of a drug-related offense can be a deciding factor in one's decision to seek vocational rehabilitation and attempt re-entry to the work force even after successful treatment for substance abuse and stabilization of health.

It should be noted that the mere presence of drugs in some of these men's homes does not necessarily constitute their involvement or participation in illegal behavior. The housing crisis of San Francisco people living with AIDS sometimes results in undesirable living conditions, including being forced to choose between homelessness and living in a residence used by others for drug-related activities.

Moreover, what limited information these men may have about a drug operation might implicate their partner, roommate, or a community member who is their caregiver or otherwise necessary to their long term health and survival, rendering them understandably reluctant or fearful of providing information.

## **CONCLUSION**

The intent of this document is not to defend meth use, condone drug trafficking, or minimize the devastating impact of meth in our communities. Nor is it an attempt to vilify San Francisco Police, who have made great strides in recent years by building strong and collaborative relationships with a range of LGBT communities throughout San Francisco. Unfortunately, the work of a few officers operating within a single unit has the potential to counteract years of work to establish a tenuous degree of mutual trust.

Actions of the San Francisco Police's Narcotics Division are not altogether unlike the mentality shared by criminals who come to the Castro to prey on gay men: both opportunistically target gay men (and specifically in this case, HIV-positive gay men), because they perceive us as easy targets who are weak and unable to fight back. Both expect to reap rewards, both financial and otherwise, with very little effort. Both rely upon men's shame and social isolation to prevent detection of a coordinated pattern of systematic abuse of power

Recent actions by law enforcement have been unwittingly emboldened by a mayoral task force whose inception was born from a legitimate concern for gay men's health. When challenged on the severity of their actions against gay men, law enforcement can confidently claim, "They asked for it." These unintended consequences run the following risks:

- damaging rather than promoting the health and well-being of gay men
- perpetuating rather than deterring conditions that facilitate HIV transmission
- driving the problem of meth abuse further underground, beyond the reach of public health
- discouraging gay men from seeking treatment and support
- fostering a relationship of fear and distrust of local law enforcement at a time when recent crimes against gay men, especially in the Castro

- neighborhood, demand a closer partnership than ever
- furthering gay men's alienation from each other and the San Francisco gay community at large
- the erosion of civil liberties and the violation of basic human rights

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A re-evaluation of the Citywide Task Force on Crystal Meth is needed with an emphasis on greater community representation, stakeholder participation, a structured process to solicit input and feedback, and public communication regarding its findings and activities.
- In-depth sensitivity training should be mandated for all SFPD Narcotics officers with respect to sexuality, gay culture, and HIV infection.
- A full investigation of the ethics and legality of the Narcotics Division's operations and arrests targeting gay men in the past three years.
- An audit of the Narcotics Division's past and continued efforts to receive funding and financial assistance based on statistics generated from biased, prejudicial and unfounded arrests.
- External evaluation and monitoring of the Narcotics Division's focus on the gay community is needed. Particular scrutiny should be made to the discrepancy between the Police Department's stated emphasis on arrests of mid- to high-level dealers and suppliers as compared to actual arrest rates of low-level dealers and non-trafficking users.
- The development of clear guidelines by the District Attorney's Office for the handling and prosecution of meth-related offenses, including the acceptability and relevance of evidence related to sexual orientation and HIV serostatus.
- San Francisco public health organizations should begin to address the lack of funding and coordination for crystal meth prevention and treatment tailored to the specific needs of HIV-positive men.
- Supplemental social marketing efforts are needed. Local crystal meth-related awareness campaigns have been heavily framed within a context of preventing new HIV infections without substantively addressing the effects of meth on those already infected. Education related to the consequences of meth use should be expanded beyond HIV. Additionally, campaigns must begin to address the other 'benefits' experienced from meth use other than heightened sexual arousal, including anti-depression, alleviation of fatigue, an instant social network of nonjudgmental peers, and more.
- An ongoing, critical review of the research methodology and statistical analysis of data gathered from local gay men is needed. For example, can we really stake the claim that meth use is declining if the bulk of our data comes from public venues not frequented by meth users?
- Community education regarding an individual's rights and responsibilities

with respect to illegal drug use, investigation, arrest and prosecution. For example, one can be arrested for simply visiting a residence that is under investigation as a location for drug sales, even without buying, selling, using, or having knowledge of the drug activity there. Allowing a visitor to use meth in your home, even if it is never stored, bought or sold there, is also a crime and can be grounds for arrest.

- Further cooperation, communication, and bridging of the arbitrary division between mental health services and substance abuse treatment in San Francisco.
- The Task Force needs a formal system by which stigmatized community members can anonymously communicate their needs and concerns.
- The Task Force must recruit active and former meth users, preferably without any organizational affiliation, to serve among its membership.

Although authored by a third party based on research interviews, this document compels an awareness of recent reports and allegations of abuse, harassment, mistreatment, and violations of the human and civil rights of men who are gay and HIV-positive in San Francisco. These acts warrant some degree of inquiry and action by the Citywide Task Force in addition to the Human Rights Commission, Office of Citizen Complaints, San Francisco District Attorney, the Police Commission, the Chief of San Francisco Police, and others who have the political power and institutional authority to investigate, regulate or otherwise influence the operations of the San Francisco Police Department's Narcotics Division.