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DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS RELEASE

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Enjoy your movie and report hate crime

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) will once again sponsor this year's British Film Institute (BFI) London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, to be held between 17th and 31st March 2010 at the BFI Southbank.

Police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who are also Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Liaison Officers (LO) from the MPS, will be setting up an information stall to speak to as many film-fanatics as possible about the work the Met is doing to improve its service to LGBT people.

Police Constable Andy Pakouta from the MPS Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate, said: "We are delighted to once again be a part of the BFI Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. The festival is a great opportunity for us to meet and speak to people about any issues affecting them as an LGBT person or issues that may be affecting the wider community. It is also an opportunity for the MPS to raise more awareness of the work we are doing to tackle hate crime and encourage more victims to report it to us."

Tackling hate crime - a criminal offence motivated by hatred or prejudice towards a person because of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability remains a top priority for the MPS and there are a number of ways that it can be reported to us.

If you have been a victim, please report these crimes to the police so that we can investigate. There are a number of ways you can report crime to us but in an emergency ALWAYS dial 999. Otherwise you may report crime by:

- Calling: 0300 123 121 - The non-emergency number for the MPS
- Report crime online at www.met.police.uk;
- Attend your local police station; or report via an independent third-party such as www.GALOP.org.uk who will not share your details with the police unless you are happy for them to do so.

Hate crime is investigated by specialist officers working in local Community Safety Units(CSU) who are trained to offer support to victims of hate crime and can provide a service designed to remove barriers that can sometimes make it difficult for victims of hate crime to speak to the police. Your local LGBT liaison officer will also be able to offer you support and advice regarding hate crime.

To find out more about your local CSU or to contact your LGBT liaison officer, please visit: www.met.police.uk/contacts/LGBT.htm.