



# FORUM NEWS

## MARCH 2023

**Newsletter for the San Francisco Police Department, Chief's LGBTQ+ Community Advisory Forum in San Francisco, California, USA.**

**FOUNDED IN 2010**  
[LGBTQ.forum@sfgov.org](mailto:LGBTQ.forum@sfgov.org)

**SFPD CO-CHAIR**



**Captain Christopher Del Gandio**

**COMMUNITY CO-CHAIR**



**Greg Carey**  
 (Castro Community On Patrol)

**COMMUNITY CO-CHAIR**



**Ken Craig**  
 (Community Patrol Service)

### Forum Reborn During "Meet & Greet" Event



The Chief's LGBTQ+ Forum was officially reborn during a "Meet & Greet" event on Wednesday February 8, 2023 held at the offices of San Francisco Safety Awareness For Everyone.

The Forum was in continuous operation from its initial inception in 2010 under then Chief George Gascon but lapsed into dormancy during the height of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Chief Scott assigned Captain Del Gandio to chair and re-launching the forum and he reached out to former forum members Greg Carey and Ken Craig in early January of 2023.

Outreach communications and invitations were extended to over thirty individuals and organizations within the broadest LGBTQ+ diversity known to the current Co-Chairs, with eight attending the "Meet & Greet" and agreeing to become our

first new permanent members.

These are:

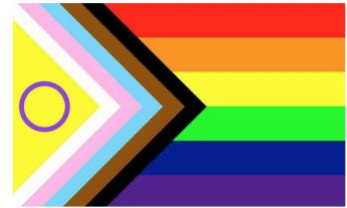
- **Andrea Aiello**, Castro CBD
- **Paul Allen**, Corbett Heights Neighborhood Association
- **Cal Callahan**, SF Leather Cultural District
- **Robert Mansfield**, UCSF
- **Jen Reck**, Castro LGBTQ Cultural District
- **Omar Rincon**, District Liaison for Senator Scott Wiener
- **Stephen Torres**, San Francisco Entertainment Commission
- **Gary Pegueros**, South Beach Rincon Mission Bay Neighborhood Association

Our continuing goal is to reach out to LGBTQ+ individuals, groups, and communities throughout San Francisco who are not currently represented amongst our permanent membership.

If you know of any individuals or groups who may be interested in becoming a permanent member, please have them contact us at:

[LGBTQ.Forum@sfgov.org](mailto:LGBTQ.Forum@sfgov.org)

### Forum Name Update To Include Q+



In line with our goal to invite and encourage the broadest diversity of LGBTQ+ individuals and groups to join and participate fully in the forum, Captain Del Gandio approved an update to the forum name from simply LGBT to LGBTQ+.

This "small" change in acronym terms is much more significant in real terms. Designed to clearly reflect our desire to include as many diverse individuals and groups as possible, this change also brings us up to date with the standard acronym usage by peer LGBTQ+ organizations and non-profits.

In order to be as effective, impactful, and valuable as possible, to the LGBTQ+ community and to the SFPD, it is vital that the forum has this varied and broad reaching representation.

[LGBTQ.Forum@sfgov.org](mailto:LGBTQ.Forum@sfgov.org)

**"Working together to create a safer and stronger community for all"**

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LGBTQ+ FORUM



*Chief George Gascon*  
2009-2011



*Chief Greg Suhr*  
2011-2016



*Chief William (Bill) Scott*  
2016-present

The Forum was first created under then Chief George Gascon in 2010, and functions as a liaison and conduit for communication, support, and exchange of ideas, and raising concerns directly with the command staff and the Chief of the Department.

The Forum is comprised of members of the LGBTQ+ community, drawn from the broadest possible demographic to ensure all voices are heard. Forum permanent members are unpaid volunteers who dedicate their time and energy through regular meetings, special events, and outreach efforts. The Forum is also comprised of SFPD Officers who offer their insights, guidance, and knowledge to benefit the permanent community members.

All Chiefs of the SFPD have supported the Forum since it was first formed in 2010, and the Forum has successfully implemented several initiatives with the full support of the Chief's and their Command Staff personnel.

The Forum hosted a "Hate Crimes Symposium" in 2012 including panelists from the FBI, US Attorney's Office, SF District Attorney's Office, and of course the SFPD. This symposium was very well attended by members of the LGBTQ+ community who learned of the specific legal requirements to establish a "hate crime" enhancement and of the collaboration and cooperation between local, State, and Federal law enforcement in determining which jurisdiction best served the case.

The Forum supported cold-case investigations into prior LGBTQ+ murders throughout the city, republishing details and seeking new witnesses and information.

The Forum created the initial LGBT SAFE ZONE program to ensure members of the LGBTQ+ community that police stations were truly places of sanctuary when they are being harassed, assaulted, or need to report a crime to police.

With our new permanent forum members, we will continue this ground-breaking and impactful work into the future, living up to our motto "Working together to create a safety and stronger community for all."

***"Working together to create a safer and stronger community for all"***

## A Message From Captain Del Gandio



Captain Christopher Del Gandio

The LGBTQ+ Chief's Advisory Forum is an essential part of connecting the police department to our community. I am happy to serve as its executive sponsor. As an out gay man in law enforcement for over 20 years, I can say that I have seen the progress that can be made when the community works together with the police department. Bringing in new perspectives and allowing the police gain insight into the communities we serve, is essential for modern day policing. The forum is one of the ways we do that. It allows me, the executive sponsor, to bring suggestions, grievances, and concerns directly to the Chief of Police in order to help address the issues raised and improve our department. It also allows me to share with the community what the police department is doing to build trust and foster a better relationship with the LGBTQ+ community.

I am committed to do the hard work to bridge the gaps between our community and the police department. And I appreciate everyone who comes to the table to express their views and perspectives. The dialogue allows us to hear each other and make progress towards our goal, which is a safer place for our community and for the City and County of San Francisco as a whole. I'd like to thank my co-chairs and all the forum members who are coming to the table for their commitment. Together we can move towards a brighter future.

## Taking Our Meetings “On The Road”



Tenderloin Museum

While we have set a date of APRIL 26, 2023 at 7 PM for our next Forum meeting, Captain Del Gandio has agreed in principle with a suggestion offered by permanent forum member, Robert Mansfield to consider hosting some forum meetings at suitable venues in the community.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the forum met monthly at one of the ten district police stations around San Francisco, skipping December and January as most members were just too busy during those months. While this ensured we met in each of the SFPD districts throughout the year, we also recognize that not everyone within the community may feel comfortable in meeting within any police station community room.

Robert's great idea is to reach out to willing spaces around the city that would offer a less formal and less intimidating meeting space for us, and one which may encourage members of the public to attend. We think this is a winner and hope to be able to make this happen for at least some of our future meetings.

The Tenderloin Museum was Robert's suggestion as it is spacious, has some wonderful historical exhibits which would be of interest, and Robert has “connections” to hopefully make this happen 😊

If you know of similar locations, and especially if you already have connections with those locations, please let us know. We can always use the space generously provided by SF SAFE, and district police stations are always available to us, but we think that using other spaces around San Francisco is a good way to hopefully reach more people with the LGBTQ+ community.

***“Working together to create a safer and stronger community for all”***

# Making Friends Around The World

By Community Co-Chair Ken Craig



Assistant Commissioner  
Robert Blackwood



Tasmania Police  
Challenge Coin



Tasmania Police Shoulder Flash

One of the most rewarding benefits of participation in the LGBTQ+ forum in my personal view, is the ability to reach out to LGBTQ+ law enforcement organizations and personnel in cities throughout the USA, and in countries around the world. By reaching out and connecting, we are able to share information, exchange ideas, offer support, glean initiatives and concepts that can be deployed in San Francisco, and we build a network of friendships when we visit their cities and countries as well as extending friendship when they visit our own San Francisco.

I started this “International Liaisons” project soon after the Forum was first formed, using my own connections to the United Kingdom as a born and bred Scotsman to connect with the [Scottish LGBTI Police Association](#) and then the [National LGBT+ Police Network](#) which covers England and Wales. On a trip back to Scotland in 2014 I met with Scottish Police Officers and presented them with SFPD shoulder patches, ball caps, and Pride Alliance t-shirts. We had an opportunity to chat about our Forum and how Police Scotland operates in the LGBTQ+ areas, and I was even asked to write a few articles about San Francisco and the LGBTQ+ community experience here for their newsletter.

Through these connections we were contacted by the [Netherlands Police Pink in Blue LGBTI](#) network and exchanged some information and ideas by email. This connection was also useful when the Mayor of the City of Amsterdam and a number of politicians and Officers visited San Francisco to find out about our LGBTQ+ community and policies. Forum Community Co-Chair Greg Carey and I met with a few of the Officers and representatives at Harvey’s in the Castro to chat and exchange ideas.

More recently I was fortunate enough to travel to Australia for World Pride and their annual Pride celebration known as Mardi Gras. I had visited Sydney eight years before and connected with then Senior Constable Dave Turner of the [New South Wales Police Force GLLO / LGBTI Q+ Liaison Advocates](#). When I reached out to meet him again on this trip, he was delighted to hear from me, and we attempted to coordinate a meeting, but the Pride events meant he was just too busy for a meeting, but I was very happy to hear he has been promoted to Commander now. Despite not being able to meet in person, I did leave a regular and Pride SFPD Shoulder patch and a set of SFPD lapel pins for Dave.

From Sydney I traveled to New Zealand and connected by email with Sergeant Seven Wyatt of the [New Zealand Police Diversity Liaison Office](#). Again, due to my schedule we were not able to meet in person, but we shared some ideas and thoughts, and Steven provided some background information on how their DLO program works.

My last stop on this very fun vacation was in Tasmania, Australia where I was fortunate enough to meet in person with recently promoted Assistant Commissioner Robert Blackwood (pictured above.) We had a great chat about the many similarities between the Tasmania and San Francisco Police and LGBTQ+ communities and I left him with the SFPD patches and pins while he very generously gifted me with a Tasmania Police challenge coin and shoulder flash.

As a permanent Forum member, we do encourage you to reach out to local law enforcement LGBTQ+ organizations and officers when you travel, around the State, around the Country, or around the world. While we don’t have a formal budget right now, we will do our best to provide SFPD shoulder patches, or challenge coins, or lapel pins if you are traveling and connecting with other groups or individuals. Just let us know well in advance of your travel. 😊

*“Working together to create a safer and stronger community for all”*

**SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

# **Chief's LGBTQ+ Community Advisory Forum**



The LGBTQ+ Forum is comprised of a broad diversity of LGBTQ+ members from around the city who meet regularly to discuss community needs and concerns, and to help influence SFPD procedure and policy.

Participation in the Forum is open to anyone within the LGBTQ+ community who lives, works, or attends school in San Francisco.

**CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION**

[LGBTQ.Forum@sfgov.org](mailto:LGBTQ.Forum@sfgov.org)

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