

**Draft ACPOS Hate Crime Guidance Manual**  
**Response from the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities**

[Click here](#) to read the draft ACPOS Manual

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Hate Crime Guidance Manual. We welcome the recognition that “*any single hate crime can potentially have multiple victims*” and that “*fear of hate crime escalates dramatically in those who share with an immediate victim, the same group identity that has made a victim a target*”, and therefore are grateful for ACPOS’ commitment to ensure that victims receive an effective and sensitive response from the police. We strongly support the view that working in partnership with communities enhances service delivery, and are therefore gratified by the endorsement of the role of lay advisors, which several of our members perform for various police forces.

### **Underreporting of hate crime**

We welcome the recognition that “*many hate crimes go unreported*”, which accords with our information from Jewish people throughout Scotland. While we recognise the difficulty of quantifying unreported crime, particularly “*low level harassment which ... may be significantly impacting on the victim’s quality of life*”, we urge that research be undertaken as a matter of urgency to explore, so far as possible, the extent of unreported hate crime, and of its effects on the wider community.

### **Recording hate crime**

We are concerned that the recording of hate crime is currently inconsistent even within individual Forces. For example, three of the six antisemitic incidents reported to Central Police Force in the second half of 2009 were recorded under the heading of “race”, and the other three under the heading of “religion”. This hinders Forces from gaining either an accurate snapshot of hate crime in their area or an accurate comparison across time.

However, we are even more concerned by the fact that “*crime recording systems throughout the Scottish Forces differ*”, which makes it impossible to determine the situation Scotland-wide. We find it difficult to accept that it should remain a “*a matter for individual Forces to determine the most effective system of hate incident reporting*”, and urge that Forces collaborate to introduce a single system of both classification and recording to ensure that there is consistency in the way incidents are categorised both locally and Scotland-wide.

Finally, we would point out the difficulty of using the same classifications for victim and perpetrator. Where victims report an incident, they are able to provide full detail of their ethnicity, religion, etc; however, they are unlikely to be able to give more than a generic description of the perpetrator, such as “of middle eastern appearance”, and that may itself be tainted by stereotypical assumptions.

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Note: The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland comprising Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee as well as the more loosely linked groups of the Jewish Network of Argyll and the Highlands, and of students studying in Scottish Universities and Colleges. SCoJeC is Scottish Charity SC029438, and its aims are to advance public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community. It works with others to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality, and represents the Jewish community in Scotland to government and other statutory and official bodies on matters affecting the Jewish community.

In preparing this response we have consulted widely among members of the Scottish Jewish community.  
*Scottish Council of Jewish Communities*  
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