

Delivered

For

You

In 2013/14

Our performance report

Foreword

This year has been one of change and development for the Civil Service Rainbow Alliance (CSRA). The early part of the year saw a number of our team resign. For some this was caused by facility time cuts. For others it was because they had left the Civil Service altogether through voluntary early redundancy deals. This left us with a core of four, down from a team from ten.

It is within this context, that we are very proud of what we have been able to achieve. In the first half of the 2013/14 financial year, we still managed to deliver a lot including:

- organising a civil service conference about sexual orientation equality
- co-ordinating civil service wide participation in London Pride under the CSRA banner
- providing advice on sexual orientation equality to departmental LGB or LGB AND T networks, individual civil service, or those working in areas such as equality and human resources
- creating a new newsletter for our members that has grown and developed over time

We acknowledge that we have not fully met our objectives for the year. Our objective to provide systematic support for staff in the regions or devolved administrations has been one area where we have suffered from an acute lack of capacity.

However, we have already taken steps to address this capacity constraint. We have undertaken a successful recruitment campaign that has increased our team from four to nearly thirty. We have consulted on what you want us to do and we will bring forward a new programme of activity for the year ahead very shortly.

Overall CSRA is moving into the 2014/15 financial year in a stronger position. This means that we will be able to do more with you and for you. We look forward to making the most of this opportunity.



Oliver Entwistle
CSRA Chair



Kate Scott-Hughes
CSRA Vice-Chair

Objective 1: Organise and deliver a conference

Overall assessment

Met

What did we do?

This year saw the return of the CSRA conference, after a couple of years absence due to funding constraints. Held at the Ministry of Defence on 23rd October 2013, the conference was attended by around 120 civil servants from a broad range of Government departments and their arm's length bodies.



The theme for the day was 'Pride not Prejudice' and we heard from an illustrious collection of speakers about how their organisation, or their personal work, had focussed on supporting LGB equality and tackling prejudice wherever they encountered it. Our keynote speakers were: Simon Cholerton, Liz Bingham, Sir Bob Kerslake, Norman Lamb MP, Edward Lord OBE, Keir Starmer QC and Peter Tatchell.

We also had workshops on a wide range of topics including: the changing face of sexual orientation; intra-community prejudice; role models; hate crime; and how to progress LGB equality in your Department. The slides from these sessions are available on [our website](#).

Perhaps the highlight of the day was a panel discussion on mental health within the LGB and T communities, with representatives from Government, the Civil Service, LGB stakeholders and mental health charities. In this session we explored the state of mental health within the LGB and T communities and what we could each do to end the stigma around mental health.



Feedback from attendees about the conference was overwhelmingly positive and we have been able to use the conference to raise the profile of our work. It was also the springboard for many more volunteers coming forward to help deliver CSRA's work.

Objective 2: Conduct a survey of departmental LGB/LGB AND T networks and use this to improve engagement with networks

Overall assessment

Met

What did we do?

CSRA launched a survey of departmental networks in May 2013 that ran until June 2013.

The aims of the survey were:

- to gather basic information about networks such as membership size or how a network is structured
- to develop an evidence base on the amount of facility time and funding available to networks, and, how this has changed over time
- to understand the level of senior level of support for networks from senior management
- to understand how networks engage with other organisations such as Stonewall, CSRA and a:gender.

31 responses were received with all the major Government Departments replying.

The responses provided very useful evidence for CSRA and we would like to thank all those who took the time to complete the survey.

The full results are available on [our website](#).

Since conducting the survey, we have used the results to:

- refine our plans for the remainder of the 2013/14 financial year, including a greater focus on sharing best practice at our conference
- launch a significant recruitment campaign so that we have the capacity to meet the growing demands for CSRA to do more
- establish a new account manager system so that each departmental LGB/LGBT network has a dedicated person in the CSRA that they can speak to about issues they may be facing
- included regular features in our newsletters written by departmental LGB/LGBT networks. This provides a forum for networks to celebrate their successes and share their examples of best practice

Objective 3: Share best practice, including from the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index

Overall assessment	Partly Met
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CSRA has made some good progress against this objective but we have not been able to do as much as we would have liked to due to resourcing constraints. For example, we did not produce a best practice guide as we had planned. As a result, we have assessed our performance against this objective as Partly Met.

What did we do?

Over the course of the year, we have:

- promoted an event about LGB role models in the legal departments in the Civil Service. This event also saw the launch of a new role models guide that featured two members of the CSRA team
- promoted a Stonewall event for Civil Service networks to learn the key messages from the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index
- started to use the new account manager system to bring departments together so that they can share examples of best practice
- provided advice to individual networks about the development of their network based on the examples of best practice we have picked up when we meet network leads
- included regular features in our newsletters written by departmental LGB or LGB AND T networks that shared examples of best practice

What do we still need to do?

Unfortunately, we were not able to provide a best practice guide before the end of the current financial year. We will therefore carry this objective forward into 2014/15.

We are also keen to share best practice more systematically by developing an “extranet” on our website (www.csra-uk.com) where visitors can access case studies from departmental LGB/LGBT networks.

Objective 4: Provide tailored support for women & bisexual staff

Overall assessment

Partly met

During the year, we have made some progress against this objective but have assessed this as partly met as we feel that CSRA does not yet provide consistent and regular support for women and bisexual staff.

What did we do?

Focussing firstly on providing support for women we have:

- discussed the issues facing gay or bisexual women in workshops at our conference;
- provided material for an International Women's Day event held at the Ministry of Defence
- featured articles in our newsletter that were particularly aimed at women
- started to build connections between lesbian or bisexual women within the Civil Service through events and bespoke communications
- recruited a dedicated Women's officer

Turning to the support provided for bisexual staff we have:

- led sessions at our conference on intra-community prejudice that included exploring the challenges facing bisexual men and women
- promoted BiCon and Bisexuality Awareness Day to our members
- raised the profile of bisexual issues through our newsletter
- a dedicated bisexuality officer in place but would ideally like one more

What do we still need to do?

The challenge for the year ahead will be to build on this progress by both having a continuous programme of events and providing practical support to gay women and bisexual men and women in the Civil Service. We also, for the first time will do the same for gay Men and other minority sexual orientations.

Objective 5: Provide support to staff in the regions, including through the re-introduction of the CSRA Regional Road Show.

Overall assessment

Not met

We have assessed this as being not met. The reason for this is although there are pockets of progress being made, such as a nascent regional network in the North-West, we have not provided the level of support to staff in the regions or devolved administrations we had envisaged and we have not been able to reintroduce the CSRA regional road show (or a suitable alternative). This lack of progress has been down to an acute lack of capacity in the regional and devolved administration team up until Christmas.

What did we do?

- we have organised occasional events, or facilitated the organisation of events, in different regions or devolved administrations of the UK
- we have included articles in our newsletter targeted at raising awareness of events taking place in different regions or devolved administrations of the UK
- we have taken steps to significantly strengthen the regional and devolved administrations team so that we now have representatives for most parts of the UK

What do we still need to do?

- we still need to develop a systematic approach to supporting civil service working in the regions or devolved administrations of the UK
- we still need to recruit volunteers for regional representatives for the following regions of devolved administrations of the UK:
 - East of England
 - Northern Ireland
 - Yorkshire and the Humber

More widely, we are also looking to recruit a new co-ordinator for the regional and devolved administrations team. If you are interested in any of the roles listed here, please [contact us](#).

Objective 6: Ensure Civil Service representation at Pride events

Overall assessment

Met

What we did?



This year saw the first truly Civil Service wide participation, under one banner, at London Pride. We brought together civil servants from a broad range of departments and their arm's length bodies.

We also produced banners for the parade that included the logos of each of the departments or arm's length body that participated.

Outside of London, we provided advice to networks that were participating in their local Pride events. We also provided the CSRA banners for other Pride events wherever the participants wanted to walk under one umbrella civil service banner.

The challenge for next year will be to use our new network of regional representatives to improve the geographic spread of Civil Service representation at Pride events.

Objective 7: Organise events for members, including a joint event with Radius

Overall assessment

Met

What did we do?

During the course of the year we have organised a range of events for our members. This has included:

- organising a history month event with the [Opening Doors project](#) focussing on the experience of LGB and Transgender people in post-war Britain. We have also promoted many events organised by other Government Departments or relevant organisations such as Stonewall. The presentations from this event are available on [our website](#)
- organising a panel discussion event on 'big decisions in the economy' featuring Sir Nicholas Macpherson, KCB and [insert name]. We organised this event with our private sector colleagues [Radius](#)
- participation in London Pride as a walking group and supporting the participation of civil service in other Pride events
- organising a civil service wide conference in the autumn
- holding regular meetings for LGB civil service to discuss civil service equality, departmental LGB or LGB AND T network activity, and our organisation's work

Alongside this we have promoted a wide variety of events organised by departmental LGB/LGBT networks, or, by relevant external organisations.

Objective 8: Improve our communication methods

Overall assessment

Met

What did we do?

CSRA has made considerable progress against this objective, in particular in the second half of the financial year by:

- substantially redeveloped our website to increase its functionality and relevance
- establishing a Facebook group, which will shortly become a Facebook page
- setting up a Twitter account which has quickly grown to over 200 followers
- creating a new newsletter for our members that has produced ten newsletters since the late autumn. This newsletter has been refined over time and we will be making further improvements in May 2014
- setting up a dedicated communications team, who are developing plans to improve CSRA's communication methods to make us more relevant to our members and more visible within the Civil Service

Objective 9: Perform effectively as an organisation, including organising and delivery CSRA plenary meetings and increasing our capacity.

Overall assessment	Met
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What did we do?

As we head into 2014/15, CSRA as an organisation is in a much healthier position. We have gone from a team of a few, very stretched, people to a broad team of just under 30 with a good mixture of skills and experience. This increased capacity has, for the first time, enabled us to set up teams with clear remits for:

- communications
- events and membership
- networks and policy
- engagement with staff in the regions and devolved administrations

We also have dedicated officers to support gay women, gay men, and bisexual staff. This increased capacity has already helped us to deliver more and we will shortly be publishing our plans for 2014/15 to build on this.

Alongside this, we have also been working to make our meetings more interesting and relevant to you by:

- rebranding the meetings as “*CSRA members meetings*” so that we can extend an open invite to anyone who identifies as being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or any other sexual orientation minority. We also continue to welcome our colleagues from a:gender who represent transgender staff
- inviting one departmental LGB/LGBT network per meeting to do a presentation on their work and share with you some of their best practice LGB equality examples
- hosting the meetings in two locations and providing a telephone conference so that as many people as possible can join in with the meeting even if they can't get to the main meeting location