



Circular number	<b>39-2005</b>	Date issued	<b>31 August 2004</b>
This circular is	<b>For guidance</b>	No response required	
This circular is	<b>Relevant to the National Framework</b>		
Status	<b>This Circular encourages fire and rescue services to become members of the Diversity Champions programme run by the campaign organisation Stonewall</b>		

# *Stonewall Diversity Champions: joint letter to the Fire and Rescue Service*

Issued by:

**Sharone Collins**  
Fire Legislation, Safety and People Division

Addressed to:

**The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority  
The Chief Executive of the County Council  
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority  
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue  
Authority  
The Commissioner of the London Fire and  
Emergency Planning Authority  
The Chief Fire Officer**

Please forward to:

**Personnel, Equality and Diversity Officers**

Summary

ODPM has issued a joint letter, with CFOA, Stonewall and the Fire Brigades Union, to fire and rescue services encouraging them to join Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme. The letter is attached to this circular.

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Website [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)

- 1.0 Stonewall Diversity Champions: joint letter to the Fire and Rescue Service**
- 1.1** ODPM has endorsed a joint letter (attached to this Circular), with CFOA, Stonewall and the Fire Brigades Union, to fire and rescue services encouraging you to become members of Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme.
- 1.2** The Diversity Champions programme promotes understanding and good practice guidance around issues of sexual orientation in the workplace.
- 1.3** As the letter points out, the new Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations make discrimination in the workplace on grounds of sexual orientation unlawful, presenting challenges for all organisations.
- 1.4** The letter is jointly signed by Stewart Brown, and Executive Council Member of the FBU who was formerly the Secretary of the Union's Gay and Lesbian Committee; Ben Summerskill, the Chief Executive of Stonewall; Tom Carroll, President of CFOA; and Jim Fitzpatrick, Minister for the Fire and Rescue Service and ODPM Equality and Diversity Champion.
- 1.5** Annual membership of the Diversity Champions programme is available to fire and rescue services at a discounted public sector rate of £1,500. Membership provides a seminar programme and other opportunities to network and share good practice and advice and support. It is also a way for organisations, including fire and rescue services, to become known as employers who take diversity seriously.

**SHARONE COLLINS**

**Fire Legislation, Safety and People Division**