



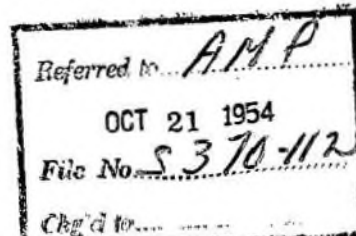
Department of National Defence

Royal Canadian Air Force

St Hubert, Que, 19 Oct 54.

The Chief of the Air Staff,
Air Force Headquarters,
Ottawa, Ont.

Disposal of Airwomen - Abnormal Behavior



1 The experience gained during the past year by this Command Headquarters in implementing the policy direction contained in your letter S370-112 (AMP) dated 26 May 53 with respect to disposal of airwomen having or suspected of having homosexual tendencies has revealed several points which may be useful to other formations faced with this problem.

2 During the early summer of 1953 the behavior of a group of eight girls at [redacted] led to suspicion that they were engaged in homosexual activities. Most of this group were members of the girls' softball team; they cut their hair short, wore masculine clothing when off duty, called each other by masculine nick names such as [redacted], and displayed little interest in male companionship. Two of the girls owned cars and the group would often go out together in these cars.

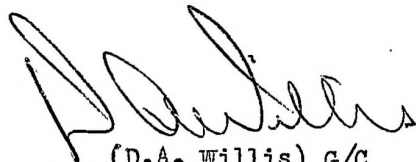
3 During the months of October 53 to January 54, the group was broken up through the marriage of one girl and the transfer of others. One of the latter reported to the woman officer at her new unit in January 1954 and stated that she was a lesbian, was unhappy because of her separation from her friends and desired her release in order to return to Toronto to be near a civilian group and to be near [redacted]. Moreover, she named two of her associates at [redacted].

4 This information was passed discreetly to the Area Social Welfare Officer, TCHQ, who cooperated with the SMO at [redacted] and obtained statements of admission from three of the afflicted. When this situation was drawn to the attention of this CHQ by the CO RCAF Station [redacted], it became apparent that co-ordination was required at and from command level. Although the girls involved were at several stations, they were all referred to the same psychiatrist, [redacted] of Toronto who was asked to give an opinion about this problem in general and to offer suggestions for preventive action and case recognition. The Area Social Welfare Officers of TCHQ and ADC HQ worked conjointly to prepare each individual for referral to [redacted]. Attached is a copy of a letter dated 27 May 54 containing his comments after he had interviewed five of the airwomen.

5 All the girls in point have been released from the Service but only after substantial delay. For example, although the first statement of admission (see para 3) was made on 7 Jan 54, the deviation from normal channels of communication delayed the submission to this CHQ of this girl's release for almost four months. During that period she had been in touch with some of her group and at least part of the initial resistance offered by the other girls during interviews may be attributed to this warning.

6 Therefore, the following points are submitted for consideration:

- (a) When personnel from units other than the unit first discovering substantial evidence are involved or where the danger of adverse publicity arises, there should be immediate and close liaison between the Area Welfare Officer visiting the unit and the Area Welfare Officer at CHQ to enable the latter to advise the AOC and Command Staff Officers concerned; and all pertinent facts should be passed through the normal channels so that the responsible officers at CHQ level can act effectively without delay.
- (b) Whenever possible, female Welfare Officers should interview women personnel and male Welfare Officers should interview male personnel to correlate the supporting evidence and prepare the individual for referral to the psychiatrist.
- (c) When groups of men or women are involved, the services of one psychiatrist only should be used for any single group.


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for Acting AOC ADC

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