



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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17 November 2005

GUY100763.E

Guyana: Anti-stalking legislation and its effectiveness (2000 - 2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Information updating GUY35239.E of 27 September 2000 was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

A government publication from November 2000 indicated that "[t]here is no legislation dealing comprehensively with sexual harassment and stalking" in Guyana (Guyana Nov. 2000).

While not specifically mentioning stalking, *Country Reports 2004* stated that the Domestic Violence Act of Guyana contains mechanisms for women to seek protection from abuse and mentioned that an application can be filed by the victim, a social worker or a police officer for a protection order against an abuser (28 Feb. 2005, sec. 5). Once an interim protection order is issued, a judge evaluates whether it should be made permanent (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sec. 5).

The Guyana Human Rights Association has stated that there is widespread denial about the extent of violence that women face in Guyana (*Stabroek News* 24 May 2005). According to the association, although allegations of widespread stalking, murders and violence against women and girls cause "outrage and indignation" among Guyana's population, "[these acts] continue to occur at the same rate" (ibid.).

A survey administered to the public during March and April of 2005 by the non-governmental organization (NGO) Help and Shelter indicated that a majority of respondents felt that "verbal abuse and stalking should not be punishable by law" (Help and Shelter June 2005, 1, 6).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004. 28 February

2005. "Guyana." United States Department of State.
<<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41763.htm>> [Accessed 15 Nov. 2005]

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Help and Shelter. June 2005. "Rapid Assessment - Awareness and Attitudes to Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Guyana." Community/Police Outreach of the Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative Funded Through the UNIFEM Trust Fund for Violence Against Women.
<http://www.sdn.org.gy/hands/2005_survey_report.pdf> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2005]

Stabroek News [Georgetown]. 24 May 2005. "Brochure Pushes 18 as Age of Consent." <<http://www.stabroeknews.com/index.pl/article?id=20252511>> [Accessed 15 Nov. 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), the NGO Help and Shelter, and the National Development Strategy Secretariat of Guyana did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Attempts to reach the Red Thread Women's Development Collective were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (Cladem), Factiva, *The Guyana Chronicle*, National Development Strategy Secretariat of Guyana, Website of the United Nations Development Programme for Barbados and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, Women Watch.

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