

Norrie Gets the X passport

For many years Sex And Gender Education (SAGE) Australia and other campaigners have been fighting for the Australian Passport Office to change the passport system to give sex and/or gender diverse groups of people passports that match their identity.

Sex and/or gender diverse (SGD) people are made up from many differing groups including people who are intersex, transexed, transsexual, transgendered, androgynous, without sex and gender identity, cross dressers and people with sex and gender culturally specific differences. They are people who experience variations in physical presentation and social behaviour that is other than stereotypically male or female. Each group may have its own physical, psychological, social, legal and political issues that may not necessarily relate to any of the other groups.

SAGE has campaigned for years for the more general use of X as a neutral sex marker on passports for people are not and do not identify as male or female. Our member Norrie May-Welby gave evidence the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) (previously Human Rights & Equal Opportunities Commission, HREOC) enquiry about need sex neutral documents back in 2008.

This resulted in the concluding paper of the Australian Human Rights Commission's sex and gender diversity project – *Sex Files: the legal recognition of sex in documents and government records, 2009*.

So Norrie on 31st September, 2011, collected their X passport and had a street party with all their neighbours. Australia has occasionally issues these before but under the new system it is as simple as getting letter from the person's GP saying they not identify as male or female and needs a passport marked X for safe travel.

Norrie would like to thank SAGE, AHRC, the Australian Federal Government and all those involved for bringing this into the mainstream.