ATTN: Newstream Concerning Amber Richards Story

For Immediate Release

14 May, 1996

Terminology Advisory for Print and Television Media

Concerning the Late Amber Richards

Amber Richards, a male-to-female transsexual who lived as a woman for twenty years, recently died in a house fire in Marietta, GA, and will no doubt be a subject of news coverage. We have prepared this advisory so you will know the correct terminology to use to describe her.

First, the correct pronouns to use are the feminine ones **she** and **her**. The use of masculine pronouns is incorrect and offensive, except when used to describe Amber's early life, before she began living as a woman. She should be referred to as **Ms.** Richards or **Miss** Richards, and not as Mr. Richards.

Second, it is incorrect to identify Amber as a man. She lived and died as a woman. It is correct to say that she was born with a male body, and, if you must, that she had not had genital sex reassignment surgery (although we're sure you wouldn't want anyone discussing your genitals on television). It is not correct to say that she "was a man who dressed as a woman," or to describe her as a transvestite or crossdresser. Appropriate descriptive terminology includes the terms, "**male-to-female transsexual**," "**transsexual woman**," or "**pre-operative transsexual**."

Third, the name she used was **Amber Richards**. Whatever name she may have once had, it is not appropriate to use it to refer to her at present. It is appropriate to indicate that her name was once something else, and to give that name.

Amber's death was tragic. She was much loved, and your consideration in the use of appropriate terminology and pronouns will be much appreciated. Thank you.

AEGIS is a national clearinghouse for information about transsexual and transgender issues. If you need statistics or facts about transsexualism, we will be happy to provide them.