

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Authority 2008 - 2009

Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties from **1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009**. This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of Section 49A of the DDO from the **1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009**. Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is submitted electronically (by completing this template) and in hardcopy, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive to the Commission by **31 August 2009**.

In completing this template it is essential to focus on the application of Section 75 and Section 49. This involves progressing the commitments in your equality scheme or disability action plan which should lead to outcomes and impacts in terms of measurable improvement for individuals from the equality categories. Such outcomes and impacts may include changes in public policy, in service provision and/or in any of the areas within your functional remit.

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

Department for Regional Development

Equality Officer (Enter name and contact details below)

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DDO (if different from above):

S75 Executive Summary

- **What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations and what outcomes were achieved?**

(Enter text below)

- During 2008/09 the Department through quarterly progress reports kept the Departmental Board, the Minister and the Regional Development Committee fully briefed on progress.
- The Department hosted its biannual Equality Forum in May and December 2008 with representatives from Section 75 groups. This consultative Forum provided a useful opportunity to engage with policy makers, discuss the major policy issues and EQIAs/ Screening Exercises planned by the Department. This network was also used by the Department to consult on its draft three year Disability Action Plan. The Forum contributed significantly to the

development of the draft Action Plan which was submitted to the Equality Commission on 29 June 2007.

- A review was carried out on the Guide to Making Information Accessible, and a revised Guide was issued to staff in September 2008.
- A multi-lingual section of the DRD Internet site was developed and launched on 29 September 2008. The new section provides a range of information about the Department in eleven different languages: Irish; Ulster Scots; two variants of Chinese; Czech; Latvian; Lithuanian; Polish; Portuguese; Russian and Slovak. The Department is continuing to develop this site in line with customer feedback. It has received approximately 1200 hits per month since the launch. Following a meeting with POBAL in December 2008, improvements were made to the Irish section of the site.
- The DRD Disability Action Plan (DAP) was revised, updated and circulated to staff, the Regional Development Committee and Section 75 groups in February 2009. The revised DAP, which was signed by both the Minister and Permanent Secretary, was forwarded to the Equality Commission on 6 February 2009.
- Between April and June 2008 the Department ran an EQIA Consultation on the extension of the Concessionary Fares Scheme, to provide free fares on public transport for people aged 60-64. A final EQIA was issued end of June 2008. The Scheme came into

operation in October 2008, and helps promote equality of opportunity to people aged 60 and over by assisting them to take part in public life.

- Door-to-Door Transport Service was extended from 27 to 29 urban areas.
- As part of the rural Transport Scheme, a pilot cross-border rural transport pilot began in counties Fermanagh and Donegal in December 2008. The pilot will run for one year and will help to determine the need for cross border travel at local community level.
- During 2008/09 the Department assisted in implementing the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) wide Diversity Awareness Training commitment by putting a further 1545 staff through the training during the year. This fulfilled the training programme target for 2008/09 for 1500 staff to receive this training package before the end of March 2009.
- Representatives from the Department were appointed to various groups as follows:
 - A Children's Champion was appointed April 2008.
 - Sign Language Partnership Group (interdepartmental body) – Access to Services Strand – representative appointed April 2008.
 - NI Vision Implementation Group part of RNIB - representative appointed February 2009.

- Work was taken forward to embed the Guidance on Integrating Equality of Opportunity and Sustainable Development into Procurement, issued jointly by the Equality Commission and the Department for Finance and Personnel, across the Department and its associated bodies.
- Roads Service produced a Sustainable Procurement Action Plan in March 2009.
- In the delivery of this Action Plan, Roads Service included revised social, economic and environmental requirements in major works contracts, integrating equality and sustainability considerations in the prequalification and tender stages. This ensures that clients and supply chains are focused upon better design, use of the CEEQUAL process, low waste, higher recycled content, respect for biodiversity, and inclusion of the unemployed and apprentices within the project.
- A 'Roads to Sustainability' Website is planned, to assist in promoting awareness of the Sustainable Procurement objectives.
- **What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?**

(Enter text below)

- The Department will continue to invite members of the Voluntary and Community Sector to its biannual Section 75 Consultative Forum. These meetings will include presentations on key policies.
- The Department plans to review and update the Disability Action Plan by March 2010
- During 2009/10 the Department will continue to sponsor Imtac, whose main function is to advise Government on matters relating to people with disabilities and transport. This is a committee made up of disabled people and older people as well as key transport professionals.
- In March 2009 the Department launched the draft Action Plan for the Accessible Transport Strategy for the period 2009-2012. The draft action plan builds on the progress that has been made since the launch of the Accessible Transport Strategy in 2005. The Plan presents new actions to further improve transport services in those areas where barriers continue to prevent older people and people with disabilities from making full use of the services available. Implementation of the Action Plan will proceed in 2009/10
- The Travel Safe Guide to Promote Independent Travel for People with Learning Disabilities will be revised, by July 2010.
- A new Disability Awareness Training Programme has been developed for line managers and staff who want to learn more

about how to manage disability within the work place. This will be delivered to staff from September 2009.

- Work will commence to evaluate the Cross Border Rural Transport pilot which will run from December 2008 until December 2009.
- **Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3:**
 - Most amendments to policies or practices were made as a result of policy development rather than at the EQIA or screening stage. Significant changes to policies are set out below.
 - The Concessionary Fares Scheme was extended to people aged 60 to 64. A full EQIA was carried out on the policy.
 - New arrangements have been put in place for shared walking and cycle routes. Roads Service staff will now consult with Imtac before beginning work, in an effort to ensure that the needs of all are considered when developing shared facilities.
 - Informal arrangements have been introduced whereby disabled persons badges issued by EU member states are recognized in the UK. Subordinate legislation is to be introduced in the north of Ireland which will formally recognize badges issued in the south of Ireland.

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Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties

- **Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2008-09**

(Enter text below)

- Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties were built into the Department's Corporate Plan and the Business Plan 2008/09. Quarterly progress reports on PSA targets, including equality targets, were submitted to the Minister. Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties were also included in Agency Corporate and Business Plans and Divisional and Branch Business objectives. Targets were monitored and all targets and objectives were met.
- Under the NICS Performance Management Framework equality objectives and associated performance indicators were built into the personal performance agreements of relevant staff and reviewed throughout the year, in conjunction with personal development plans.
- The Departmental Board received quarterly monitoring reports on the Department's progress on fulfilling its Section 75 duties and other issues handled by the Equality Unit. These were approved for onward submission to the Minister and to the Regional Development

Committee (RDC). The RDC sought follow-up information on a number of occasions.

- The Department met biannually with the Equality Forum in May and December 2008. This consultative Forum provided a useful opportunity for Section 75 groups and policy makers to discuss the major policy issues and EQIAs/ Screening Exercises planned by the Department.

Section 2: Screening

- Please provide an update of new/proposed/revised policies screened during the year.

Title of policy subject to screening	Was the <u>F</u> ull Screening Report or the <u>R</u> esult of initial screening issued for consultation? <i>Please enter <u>F</u> or <u>R</u></i>	Was initial screening decision changed following consultation? <u>Y</u> es/ <u>N</u> o	Is policy being subject to EQIA? <u>Y</u> es/ <u>N</u> o? If yes indicate year for assessment.
The Road Traffic (Traffic Wardens) (Revocation) Order NI 2008	F	No	No
Roads Service Policy & Procedure Guide - SO10 - The Road Traffic (NI) Order 1995	F	No	No
Roads Service Policy & Procedure Guide - SO18 - Legislation – General	F	No	No
Roads Service Policy & Procedure Guide SO14 - The Road Traffic Regulation (NI) Order 1997	F	No	No
Road Service Policy and Procedure Guide – Disposal of Surplus Land	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Parkgate Rd, Antrim	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Bush Rd, Antrim	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Steeple Rd, Antrim	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Stiles Way, Antrim	F	No	No

Speed Limit – Ardglass Road, Downpatrick	F	No	No
Speed Limit – A2 Garron Rd, Waterfoot	F	No	No
Loading Bays – Union St. Cookstown	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Ballagh Rd, Lisnaskea	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Killyclogher, Omagh	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Ardboe, Co.Tyrone	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Clady, Strabane	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Sligo Road, Belcoo	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Derrychara, Enniskillen	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Ederney, Co.Fermanagh	F	No	No
Parking Restrictions – Belfast	F	No	No
Extension of Bus Lanes, Antrim Rd, Belfast	F	No	No
Parking & Waiting Order – Paget Lane, Enniskillen	F	No	No
Restriction of Waiting Order – Cemetery Rd, Cookstown	F	No	No
Provision of Parking Bays – Dobbin Street, Armagh	F	No	No

RSPPG – Signing of Approved Walking Routes	F	No	No
Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 - 5 Year Review	F	No	No
Speed Limit Order, Eglisish Dungannon	F	No	No
Extinguishment of Right to use Vehicles on Roads (Belfast) Order NI 2007	F	No	No
Loading Bays and Parking Places on Roads Order (NI) 2008	F	No	No
Parking Places on Roads (Fivemiletown) Order 2008	F	No	No
Abandonment Order, Silverwood Rd, Lurgan	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Old Junction Road, Kilskeery	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Six Road Ends, Conlig	F	No	No
Parking & Waiting Restrictions/ Loading Bays, Ballymena	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Canal Quay, Newry	F	No	No
The Cycle Routes Order (NI) 2008	F	No	No
Weight Restrictions – Curran Road, Magherafelt	F	No	No

Cycle Tracks – Grosvenor Road, Belfast	F	No	No
Loading Bays – Chichester St. Belfast	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Church Square, Rathfriland	F	No	No
Parking Places on Roads – Dungannon	F	No	No
Penalty Charges (Additional Contraventions) Regulations NI 2008	F	No	No
The Parking Places on Roads Order, Newtownstewart	F	No	No
Speed Limit Order – Benvardin Rd, Ballymoney	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Templewell, Templepatrick	F	No	No
Introduction of One Way Traffic Scheme, Eglinton Lane, Portrush	F	No	No
Shared Footway and Cycleway – Frosses Road, Ballymoney	F	No	No
Speed Limit – Mussenden Rd & Ballywoolen Rd, Articlave	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Moneyglass Village	F	No	No
Road Speed Limit Order – Bready Road, Strabane	F	No	No

Road Speed Limit Order – Granville, Co.Tyrone	F	No	No
Road Speed Limit Order – Carrickmore, Co.Tyrone	F	No	No
Weight Restrictions – Printshop Road, Crumlin	F	No	No
Road Traffic & Vehicles – The Roads (Speed Limit) 2008	F	No	No
No Right Turn – Old Warrenpoint/ Warrenpoint Road, Newry	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Brook St, Coleraine	F	No	No
One Way Traffic (Ballymena) Order (NI) 2008	F	No	No
Road Speed Limit Order – Hollywood Road & Parkway, Belfast	F	No	No
Road Speed Limit Order – Cabragh, Dungannon	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Runkerry Road, Bushmills	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Pool Lane, Newry	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Woodhill Newry	F	No	No
Shared Footway/ Cycleway - Newry Rd, Armagh	F	No	No

Shared Footway/ Cycleway – Moy Rd/ Drumcairn Rd, Armagh	F	No	No
Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits) (Amendment) Regulations 2008	F	No	No
Road Speed Limit Order – Creagh, Toomebridge	F	No	No
Parking Places on Roads Order – Main Street, Castledearg	F	No	No
Two Way Traffic – Norglen Parade, Belfast	F	No	No
Bus Lane – Lisburn Road, Belfast	F	No	No
Parking Places Order – Wellington Place, Enniskillen	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Anne Street, Enniskillen	F	No	No
Shared Footway/Cycle Tracks- Westlink, Belfast	F	No	No
Bus Turning Circle – Shore Road, Newtownabbey.	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Main St, Portglenone	F	No	No
Cycle Paths – Crevenagh Rd/ Irishtown Rd, Omagh	F	No	No
Traffic Management Scheme – Loop Road, Limavady	F	No	No
Road Speed Limit Order – Hawthorne Hill, Newry	F	No	No

Waiting Restrictions – Mullaghboy Crescent, Magherafelt	F	No	No
No Waiting Restriction – Newal Road, Ballymoney	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Kevlin Road, Omagh	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Cooneen Rd, Fivemiletown	F	No	No
Waiting Restrictions – Main Street, Fintona	F	No	No
Parking Places on Roads Order – Main Street, Lisnaskea	F	No	No
Parking Places Order – Bank Brae, Lisnaskea	F	No	No
Improvements to the A5 & A8 Transport Corridors	F	No	No
Control of Traffic Antrim Order 2008	F	No	No
Parking Places on Roads Order – Canal Street, Strabane	F	No	No
Roads Miscellaneous Provisions Bill – Roadworks Permit Scheme (Amendment of 1993 Order)	F	No	No
Roads Miscellaneous Provisions Bill (Road Closure)	F	No	No
Roads Miscellaneous Provisions Bill (Holding an Enquiry)	F	No	No

Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

- Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2008/09, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2009/10

EQIA Timetable – April 2008 - March 2009

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 09 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme: Free fares for persons aged 60-64 inclusive.	<u>Stage 6</u>	Minimum age reduced from 65 to 60 therefore benefitting those in the 60 – 64 age bracket.
Mid-Term review of the Regional Transportation Strategy	<u>Stage 2</u>	Purpose of the plan is to develop an integrated transport system which meets economic and social needs. This should benefit all users who fall within the section 75 categories.
Major 10 Year Review of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS)	<u>Stage 1</u>	The revised RDS will positively impact on all Section 75 categories.
Restricted Zone Access Permits	<u>Stage 2</u>	Better management of pedestrianised zones to ensure safe environment for all users including those who are disabled, have dependants and are elderly.
Government proposals on Public Transport Reform	<u>Stage 1</u>	<p>Purpose of reform is to improve transport services for the benefit of all customers and the environment. Focus of EQIA is on the impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ of service delivery on customers and ▪ on staff as a result of proposed changes. <p>With regard to services, there will be a positive impact on all users within the section 75 categories. It is not anticipated there will be an adverse impact on staff.</p>

- Where the EQIA timetable for 2008/09 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.

(Enter text below)

- The EQIA on Water and Sewerage Services Strand 2 Report is dependent on Executive decisions on the funding of Water and Sewerage services.

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2008- March 2009

Title of EQIA subject to Stage 7 monitoring	Indicate if differential impacts previously identified have reduced or increased	Indicate if adverse impacts previously identified have reduced or increased
Proposed Discontinuance of Service on Antrim/Knockmore Railway Line	No	Monitoring of this policy has been discontinued.
Review of Blue Badge Scheme	Yes – proportion of Blue badge holders aged 65 or older has increased from 58% in 2003/04 to 64% in 2007/08.	N/A
Review of Concessionary Fares	No	N/A
Provision of Pedestrian Facilities	No	No adverse impacts. One complaint was received regarding the location of a pedestrian crossing but this was resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

Operation and Management of Off-Street Car Parks	No	No
Transport Programme for People with Disabilities	The application form for the Door-to-Door Transport scheme currently asks people to provide information on their equality characteristics. A bigger proportion of applicants in 2008/09 were willing to provide their equality characteristics than in earlier years. Some further validation is required before the data are ready for analysis. The Department is also looking to gather information on usage to identify areas where uptake is lower, so that these areas (potentially disadvantaged areas) can be targeted.	N/A
Rural Transport Fund	The application forms for the Rural Transport Fund already ask for information on a number of the equality categories. As a result of the data gap analysis, the Department has amended the application forms to include questions on marital status and race. Some further validation of the data currently held by the Department is required before the data can be analysed.	N/A
Regional Transportation Strategy	It was previously indicated that as the RTS was being delivered through transport	N/A

	plans it was reasonable to monitor any impacts through those plans.	
Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan	No reduction or increase observed.	No reduction or increase observed.
Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan	No	No
Accessible Transport Strategy	Original EQIA concluded impacts positive on all groups.	N/A
Water Reform	N/A	N/A. Awaiting decision by Executive.
Water Service Transformation Programme	A programme of action to monitor impacts of transformation programme on staff has been agreed with NIW and will be reflected in next year's report.	N/A
Regional Development Strategy Housing Indicators	The independent panel which conducted a Public Examination into the housing growth indicators recommended that it was inappropriate for an EQIA to be carried out by DRD. This should be done by Planning Service at the Development Plan stage. This recommendation was accepted by the Department.	DRD is not responsible for monitoring this policy.
All Ireland Travel Scheme	No	N/A
Sub-Regional Transport Plan	No	No

2009-10 EQIA Time-table

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2009 – March 2010	Existing or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
Policy on Access to Restricted (Pedestrianised) Zones	Existing	October 2010
Mid-Term review of the Regional Transportation Strategy	Existing	February 2010
Major 10 Year Review of the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland	Existing	March 2010
Public Transport Reform	New	March 2010

Section 4: Training

- **Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.**
 - In 2008/09 1545 Staff attended Equality and Diversity training aimed at raising awareness and understanding of equality issues. This is a mandatory course and all staff who had not attended previously were invited to attend. This training included the relevant employment legislation, the Disability Discrimination Act, Discrimination, Dignity at Work, Harassment and Bullying and how to deal with such issues in the workplace. The course also covers the Department's Disability Action Plan. The aim is to promote positive attitudes towards diversity within and outside the workplace.
 - Staff from Roads Service and Regional Planning & Transportation attended a two-day training seminar on consulting with Children and Young People organized by the Participation Network.
 - Staff attended training on S75 Screening of Policies, EQIAs and Human Rights.

Section 5: Communication

- **Please outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the Section 75 Duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.**

(Enter text below)

- The Department's Section 75 Forum meets biannually. Meetings in May and December 2008 provided policy makers and Section 75 representatives with an opportunity to discuss policy issues and areas of ongoing concern. In particular the December 2008 meeting focused on the Department's review of the Regional Development Strategy. Forum members were advised of dates of up and coming consultations.
- The Department's Roads Service provides regular representation at disabled interest committees/groups such as Disability Action's Regional Access Committee and Imtac's Personal Mobility Working Group.
- All consultation documents issued in 2008/09 included a note of the Department's obligations under Section 75.
- The Department also made full use of the departmental briefing mechanism and regularly provided staff with information on Equality issues. In the year 2008/09 this included information on:
 - Information on how to access a New Guide on Consulting with Children and Young People

- Launch of Multi-lingual section of the DRD internet website;
 - Revision to DRD Guide to Making Information Accessible
 - Anti-racism in the Workplace and details of Anti-racism week.
 - Rural Transport Fund winner of Best Local Authority/ Passenger Transport Executive from the Community Transport Association;
 - Start of cross border rural transport pilot in counties Fermanagh and Donegal;
 - Revision of DRD Disability Action Plan;
 - To remind staff of the importance of using accessible venues and to advise how to access relevant guidance.
- Through quarterly Equality Scheme progress reports the Minister, Departmental Board and the Regional Development Committee were apprised of the fulfillment of objectives contained within the Department's Scheme.
 - The Department's Equality objectives and associated performance indicators are built into the personal performance agreements of relevant staff.

- Section 75 representatives were notified in April and October 2008 of all policies screened out and forthcoming consultations. They were given the opportunity to indicate the policies in which they had a particular interest. This helped pre-consultation and draft EQIA consultation.

- Roads Service in-house magazine 'Roundabout' is used to highlight the Agency's commitment to Section 75 issues and to update staff on all equality related issues. Staff are also made aware of equality issues in the staff brief which is issued monthly.

- The Equality Times, an in-house magazine used to promote equality of opportunity in DRD, DOE and DCAL, is published biannually. In 2008/09, Race was a recurring theme in both editions with features on the work of NICEM and articles looking at the Islamic Community and the Jewish Community living in Northern Ireland. Disability was also featured with an article on DRD's Disability Action Plan, focusing on how the Department is committed to continuously improve the services it provides to both staff and the public, and an article on Disability Etiquette.

- The Equality Unit continued to maintain and update the Equality section on the Department's Internet site. Information provided covers screening exercises, consultations and EQIAs, the Disability Action Plan and Annual Progress Reports.

- The Department's Mobility and Inclusion Unit continued to act as an observer at Imtac meetings and working groups

- During the development of the Accessible Transport Strategy draft Action Plan for 2009-2012, the Department also worked closely with Imtac. This included meeting to discuss new actions to be undertaken as part of the draft action plan and within their work programme. The draft revised Action Plan was provided in a number of accessible formats including Braille, audio, Daisy, Large Print and easy-read. The ATS team was commended by members of the Equality Forum on the Easy Read version of the draft strategy produced.

- The Department's Ports and Public Transport Division provided regular representation at various disability meetings including Disability Action's Regional Access Committee, Imtac's Personal Mobility Working Group, RNIB NI's Vision Implementation Group and Age Sector Platform meetings.

Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis

- **Please outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research or any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75.**

(Enter text below)

- Work by Statistics Branch in DRD to assess the quality of and any “gaps” in equality data held across the Department continued. This analysis highlighted some policies where further equality data could be gathered to aid the monitoring process. As a result, the Department has committed to conducting two surveys, by postal questionnaire. These will be sent to a sample of Blue Badge holders, and a sample of Concessionary Fares SmartPass holders. The surveys will be anonymous – the results will not be able to be linked back to respondents’ application information. These surveys will collect usage information, as well as extending the range of equality information available. The Concessionary Fares survey is already underway and the Blue Badge one will start in the autumn.
- A series of meetings was also held with business areas to agree a framework for the annual review of data. The meetings also decided which policies no longer required monitoring or merited only brief annual review.

- The Department's Principal Statistician is a member of the Equality and Social Needs Research and Information Group (ENSRIG), which includes as members officials from Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office, along with representatives of the Equality Commission and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. The cross-departmental Information & Research Needs Strategy, sponsored by ENSRIG, sets the direction in assessing and filling gaps on information relating to Section 75 groups. OFMDFM has published two research papers which were funded by the Equality and Social Need Steering Group. These were 'Differences in mortality rates in NI in 2002-2005 – a section 75 and social disadvantage perspective' (published October 2008) and 'Personal problem debt in Northern Ireland: a qualitative study' (published June 2008).
- Work commenced in Summer 2008 on updating the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005. A DRD statistician and a DRD equality officer are involved in this project. Most of the work will fall into the 2009/10 year.
- The Department contributed regularly to the NICS policy bulletin, which gives information about new policy, relevant conferences/seminars, other events, publications, planned policy reviews, research, reports and statistical publications etc.

- **Please outline any use of the Commission’s Section 75 Monitoring Guide.**

(Enter text below)

- Following the issue of the Commission’s Monitoring Guide in 2007 the Department carried out an assessment of the type and methods of data collection used. A gap analysis was conducted with business areas to consider how best to fill the gaps. New procedures will be fully in place for next year.
- The Department also reviewed the arrangements for reporting on the monitoring of completed Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that they remain meaningful.
- A formal monitoring report is provided at Annex A and includes information on the Regional Transport Strategy, the Accessible Transport Strategy, the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan and the Sub Regional Transport Plan. Other than the change to the age profile of Blue Badge holders, there have been no significant changes to the differential impacts of any policies.

Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services

- **Please provide details of any initiatives/steps taken during the year, including take up, to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.**

(Enter text below)

- During 2008/2009 the Department reviewed its internal guidance on making information accessible. This guidance, which was developed in conjunction with the Section 75 Equality Forum, included specific arrangements to monitor access to information provided by the Department and review implementation of the guidance. The Equality Unit used the Section 75 Forum to ask members for their opinions on the guidance and any recommendations for improvement. Consultation also took place with members of the internal Equality Working Group. A revised guide issued in September 2008 and was published on the Department's website.
- The Department holds biannual meetings between policy makers and representatives of Section 75 groups. These meetings provide an opportunity for policymakers to update on policy progress and issues of concern. The Forum has also been used by both policymakers and Section 75 representatives to facilitate presentations on policies and key issues. Section 75 representatives are given the opportunity to comment on reported progress and highlight their own areas of concern. The Forum has reviewed accessibility of information and provided feedback on difficulties and problems. The lessons learned and good practice is

then promulgated across the Department through the Equality Working Group.

- The Department participates in the Promoting Social Inclusion Disability Working Group Forum and related sub group on Housing, Transport, Information and Access.
- Information on Section 75 including draft and Final EQIAs is published on the Departmental Internet site.
- During 2008/2009 the Department continued to sponsor Imtac, whose main function is to advise government on matters relating to people with disabilities and transport. The Committee seeks to help achieve the development of an inclusive and integrated transport system in the North accessible to everyone. The Committee aims to ensure that people with disabilities in the North have the same opportunities as everyone else to travel when and where they want.
- During 2008/2009 the Department developed a multilingual section on its website, providing core information and contact details for the Department's main functions. This information was provided in Irish, Ulster-Scots, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Latvian, Lithuanian, Czech and two forms of Chinese. Content was developed after consultation with representatives of language bodies and ethnic minority groups to ensure relevance. Links to the page for each language were placed prominently on the homepage, and the section was launched in September 2008 by the Minister, at

and event attended by Departmental officials and local dignitaries, as well as members of language bodies and ethnic and minority language groups. Monitoring has shown that the multilingual pages are well used, with an average of around 1200 hits per month.

- During 2008/2009, the Department spent £6,075 on translations and the provision of information in alternative formats.
- The ATS Draft Action Plan, launched in March 2009, was also produced in a number of alternative formats including Braille, Large Print, Audio, Daisy and easy-read versions. The Equality Forum members commended the ATS team on the publication of an easy-read version of the Draft Action Plan.
- As part of the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities, the Department continued the roll-out of the Door-to-Door Transport service from 27 to 29 urban areas in Northern Ireland. These services are aimed at older people or people who through disability find it difficult to use mainstream public transport, in order to improve access to services and public life. The Scheme also operates an accessible application and booking system. The cost of providing this scheme in 2008/2009 was £2.4 million.
- The Department continued to support and fund the 'Buddy Scheme' during 2008/2009, developed in partnership with the VSB. This is designed to assist disabled people and older people to engage with public and community transport and increase their

confidence in independent travel. It has expanded from the previous pilot scheme in Dunmurry and Lisburn to operate in Dungannon and Strabane, in conjunction with the Door-To-Door scheme. Funding for 2008/2009 amounted to around £34,000.

- During 2008/2009 the Department completed two major marketing campaigns to promote the introduction of concessionary fares for people aged 60 and the introduction of Door-to-Door Transport in Belfast and Londonderry. Both these campaigns involved the production of marketing materials, literature, web sites and application forms that were all produced in line with the Department's accessible information standards.

- The Department also supports the Northern Ireland Mobility Centre which helps promote the independence of people with disabilities by offering advice and assessment on all aspects of personal mobility. This includes offering driving lessons, providing information on specialist equipment that may be required, including local adaptation specialists, and on road assessments of driving ability. In 2008/2009, financial support for the service amounted to around £70,000.

Section 8: Complaints

- **Please identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:**
 - **received and resolved by the authority (including how this was achieved);**
 - **which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;**
 - **which were referred to the Equality Commission.**

(Enter text below)

- The Department has a formal complaints procedure. Complaints received are monitored regularly.
- During 2008/2009 the Department received no new complaints.
- The Equality Commission concluded an investigation into a complaint received in 2007. The final report, issued in September 2008, held that the Department was not in breach of its Equality Scheme. However, the Equality Commission recommended that the policy for Restricted Zone Access Permits be subject to an EQIA. This is currently underway.

Section 9: Consultation and Engagement

- **Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.**

(Enter text below)

- The Department is committed to carrying out consultations in accordance with the Equality Commission's guidelines. The main methods used are face-to-face meetings, conferences, advisory groups, focus groups, key stakeholder groups, issue of full and summary consultation documents to appropriate consultees, and advertisement of all consultations on the internet.
- The bi-annual meetings of the Department's Section 75 Forum, made up of Section 75 representatives and departmental policymakers, have proved to be a useful method for consulting on general Section 75 issues.
- The October 2008 Forum meeting contributed significantly to the review of the Department's draft three-year Disability Action Plan which was submitted to the Equality Commission on 6 February 2009.
- The Department undertook pre consultation on the ATS Action Plan through discussions with a number of older people and disabled people.

- The Department also undertook pre-consultation on the review of the Regional Transportation Strategy through the Integrated Transport Stakeholder Group (ITSG). The ITSG membership includes representatives of Imtac and the Community Transport Association.
- Equally the development of a Rathlin Island policy included extensive discussion with the islanders' representatives.
- In reviewing the Regional Development Strategy the Department held 11 pre-consultation workshops in each of the 11 new administrative areas proposed under the Review of Public Administration. The purpose of the workshops was to share with stakeholders the work that had been done to date in reviewing the Strategy and to listen to views and ideas about specific areas. An External Working Group was also formed to ensure that the work was carried out in a robust and open manner. The group represented business, trade unions, local government, etc including a member of the Department's Equality Forum.
- The Department attended a seminar organized by the Participation Network on 25 June 2008 to discuss how to involve children and young people in the policy-making process. This was aimed at senior management.
- The Department attended the seminar arranged by the Equality Commission on 13 February 2009 to discuss the next steps

following the Consultation on the draft Guide to the Section 75 Duties.

Section 10: The Good Relations Duty

- **Please provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.**

(Enter text below)

- All EQIAs and Section 75 Screening carried out during 2008/2009 considered the implications of proposals for Good Relations.
- The Department launched a charity race and fun run, 'Between the Bridges' which took place on the recently completed Westlink in March 2009. This was implemented to help foster good relations with and between the surrounding communities, and was supported by the Community Relations Council.
- As part of the Rural Transport Fund a pilot Cross Border Rural Transport Scheme began in December 2008 with colleagues from the South. The pilot will run for one year. A steering group has been established and their responsibilities will include production of a report, on completion of the project, to:
 - determine the level of need;
 - identify the advantages; and
 - examine the need for further development.

- **Please outline any use of the Commission’s Good Relations Guide.**

(Enter text below)

- The Department has reviewed the issues involved in the Commission’s Good Relations Guide at its quarterly Equality Working Group meetings.

Section 11: Additional Comments

- **Please provide any additional information/comments**

(Enter text below)

- The Department formally participated in the consultation on the draft Guide to the Section 75 Statutory Duties produced by the Equality Commission. The response of 5 November 2008 raised a number of concerns about the proposals.

Annual Report 1 April 2008 / 31 March 2009
'Disability Duties' Questions

1. How many action measures for this reporting period have been?

9

Fully
Achieved

2

Partially
Achieved

0

Not
Achieved

2. Please outline the following detail on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ¹	Outcomes / Impact ²
National ³	Review Department's public appointment procedures to identify ways of facilitating applications from people with disabilities.	<p>A review and update on the implementation of the recommendations in the short-term working group report on Diversity in Public Appointments was sent to Central Appointments Unit on 13 May 2008.</p> <p>Fliers issued to additional groups in order to attract more diversity in the applications.</p>	<p>Monitoring indicated an increase in diversity in applications.</p> <p>Section 75 groups more aware of public appointment opportunities.</p>

¹ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

² **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

³ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

		<p>Fliers issued to Central Appointment Unit distribution lists which include all S75 groups.</p> <p>Annual review of public appointment procedures carried out in Oct 2008, worked with CAU to help develop questionnaire on disability for Board members.</p>	
Regional ⁴			
Local ⁵			

⁴ **Regional:** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

⁵ **Local :** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Deliver awareness programme on diversity in the workplace to staff from April 2008 – March 2009.	Train 1500 staff by March 2009. Articles in Equality Times in April and November 2008.	Achieved. 1545 staff trained and evaluation confirms that awareness of disability and diversity issues have increased. 85% of attendees felt that their knowledge had increased.
2			
3			
4			

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	During 2008/2009 raise awareness of disability duties through internal and external mechanisms such as Departmental Brief; Equality Working	Article published in the February 2009 Departmental Brief to advise staff that the DAP had been updated and how to access it.	Staff aware of DAP. Policy members and stakeholders regularly consider disability issues.

	Group and Section 75 Forum meetings.	DAP on agenda of all Equality Working Group and Forum meetings.	
2			
3			
4			

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	The Department will continue to support Imtac as a source of independent advice on the transport needs of disabled people.	Agree a work programme annually with Imtac.	Achieved June 2008. Work programme ensures that Imtac’s work is prioritized in line with Departmental objectives.
2	Sponsor Bodies asked to arrange training in disability awareness for all those holding public appointments.	All members of public bodies trained.	Request made to Sponsor Bodies.

3			
4			

2 (e) Please outline any additional action measures that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	The Department will compile a new Accessible Transport Strategy Action Plan for the period 2009 – 2012.	Draft action plan published for consultation in March 2009.	Ensure transport programmes are as accessible as possible.
2	Review ways of making information on services more accessible.	Update and reissue of Departmental Guide to Making Information Accessible.	Guide issued September 2008. Staff made aware of good practice.
3	The Department will continue to support accessible transport solutions for people with disabilities. This will include	June 2008 the Door-to-Door service was extended from 27 to 29 urban areas. Expenditure £2.4m in 2008/09.	Achieved. Improved access to services for people with disabilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extending Door-to-Door Transport services; and • continued investment in new accessible vehicles for 'Translink and the Rural Community Transport Partnerships. 	October 2008 - 30 new fully accessible minibuses at a cost of £1.3 million were provided to Rural Community Transport Partnership.	
4	Review existing and future action measures at the Departments Equality Working Group (EWG) and Equality Forum meetings and reflect in amended Action Plan.	Revised Disability Action Plan to be issued.	Completed and signed off by DRD Minister and Chief Executive and copy sent to the Equality Commission on 6 February 2009.

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones ⁶ / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	The Accessible Transport subgroup of the British Irish Council have agreed to look at a number of areas across eight administrations to consider what a disabled person requires to travel from one administration to another.	Consideration of a common web page and mutual recognition of concessionary fares.	Facilitate independent travel from one administration to another by people with disabilities.	This work is continuing.
2	In association with Partners, implement measures in the Accessible Transportation Strategy Action Plan 2007 – 2009.	Published in July 2008. Regular monitoring reports prepared.	Improved access to transport services.	Action Plan detailed – most actions achieved. Outstanding issues picked up in new 2009 – 2012 Action Plan.
3				
4				

⁶ **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

4. Please outline what **action measures have not been achieved** and the reasons why?

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1		
2		
3		

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

The disability action plan is monitored on a quarterly basis as part of the Department's Equality Progress report to the Minister / Departmental Board. All the Equality and Diversity training programmes are evaluated, improvements can be made to the programme based on the evaluation feedback received. This ensures that information is relevant to the target audience.

A "gap" analysis has been carried out to assess quality of information being monitored. Work is presently ongoing to address any "gaps" identified. This will help to improve monitoring of transport programmes relevant to people with disabilities.

The Disability Action Plan was revised in association with stakeholders in 2008/09, and circulated to stakeholders in February 2009.

(b) Quantitative

Individual programmes such as the Accessible Transport Strategy and transport programme for people with disabilities have their own monitoring tools and arrangements.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions, has your organisation either:
- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
 - taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes.

Please delete: Yes / No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	Accessible Transport Strategy Action Plan 2007-2009	Disability awareness and diversity training will be provided for all staff involved in the design or delivery of transport service or facilities for older people with disabilities. Examine and scope the potential advantages and problems associated with the creation of a central body to co-ordinate booking of transport services for older people and people with disabilities.	March 2009 November 2009
2	Accessible Transport Solutions	Implement Demand Responsive	Evaluate pilot by

		projects in rural areas throughout Northern Ireland.	September 2009
3			
4			
5			

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes.

No, a review of the Plan was carried out in February 2009.

Annex A

6th ANNUAL EQIA MONITORING REPORT

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY, INCLUDING THE ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT STRATEGY, BELFAST METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PLAN, REGIONAL STRATEGIC TRANSPORT NETWORK TRANSPORT PLAN, AND SUB REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Department published the EQIA relating to the Regional Transportation Strategy in July 2002.

1.2 The purpose of the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) is to support the Regional Development Strategy in achieving its longer term vision for transportation i.e:

‘to have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone’s quality of life’

The RTS is being delivered through three transport plans; the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP), Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and the Sub Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) and the Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS).

1.3 Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) the Department is required to monitor the impacts identified in the EQIA to ensure that all objectives are being achieved. It was previously indicated that as the RTS was being delivered through transport plans it was reasonable to monitor any impacts through those plans and analyse the results to determine whether or not the impacts on any of the Section 75 groups had changed significantly.

1.4 The BMTP is the transport plan for the Belfast Metropolitan area to 2015 and was subject to a full EQIA. The EQIA concluded that the implementation of the proposals contained within the Plan would provide benefits across all equality groups identified under Section 75 with no negative impacts.

1.5 The RSTNTP is the transport plan for the skeletal framework of the regional connecting all the main centres of economic and social activity and the major hubs to 2015 and was subject to a full EQIA. The EQIA concluded that the implementation of the proposals contained within the Plan would provide benefits across all equality groups.

1.6 The SRTP is the transport plan for the whole of the North to 2015, with the exception of the Belfast Metropolitan area and the rail and trunk road networks which are covered within the other two plans, and was subject to a full EQIA. The EQIA concluded that the implementation of the proposals would provide benefits across all of the equality categories and would have no detrimental impacts on any one group.

1.7 The ATS was published in April 2005 and sought to explain how the Department intended to address a significant range of barriers that impede

use of the transport system by older people and people with disabilities. The ATS was subject to a full EQIA and concluded that the implementation of the strategic objectives through the stated policies and actions would provide benefits across all equality groups with no negative impacts on any group.

2.0 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Delivery of the RTS is continuing and work is progressing to implement the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan, the Sub Regional Transport Plan and the Accessible Transport Strategy.
- 2.2 The proposals in each of the Transport Plans are being implemented on a measure by measure basis and are subject to detailed economic appraisal, the completion of statutory processes involving e.g. environmental assessment, planning and land acquisition and a public inquiry into land use and the availability of funding through the normal budgetary processes.
- 2.3 The ATS established a Mobility Inclusion Unit to oversee the implementation of the associated action plan. The Mobility Inclusion Unit has reviewed the ATS Action Plan and critically examined the success or otherwise of the associated actions by establishing the extent that they had been completed and consulted with the relevant stakeholders on the impact of the ATS to date.

2.4 In the period of the 2007-2009 Action Plan some of the notable achievements included:

- the introduction of 60+ Smartpass scheme;
- the expansion of Door to Door transport services to urban areas with a population of 10,000 and over, including Belfast and Derry;
- the introduction of Disability Discrimination (Taxis) (Carrying of Guide Dogs etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 by the Department of the Environment;
- the distribution of 3,000 copies of 'Travel Safe – A Guide to Community Safety for People with Learning Disabilities' ;
- the introduction of 395 accessible buses to the Translink fleet including the introduction of new rural accessible buses;
- the installation of audio & visual announcement system on all new Translink trains and ongoing development to extend this to bus services;
- start of a consultation process to introduce legislation to extend part III of the DDA to Transport services in Northern Ireland;
- the decriminalisation of parking enforcement and improved access to parking for disabled people;
- the establishment of the Inclusive Mobility Transport Advisory Committee (Imtac) as an independent body to advise Government,

transport providers and others on issues that affect the mobility of older people and people with disabilities; and

- the Bay Watch campaign to highlight the abuse of disability parking bays.

2.5 As part of the Review we worked with Imtac to gauge the impact of the ATS on older people and people with disabilities. The findings that emerged indicated a positive response to:

- improvements to the pedestrian environment introduced by Road Service, such as high quality walking surfaces, dropped kerbs and tactile surfaces making it easier to get to bus stops to access public transport;
- the introduction of accessible buses on the Metro service and fully accessible trains on most routes by Translink which has resulted in making public transport now an option for older people and people with disabilities;
- the expansion of the Door-2- Door transport service supported by DRD to urban areas with a population of 10,000 as this has increased travel choices for many and encouraged an uptake in social activities;
- the Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement which, according to comments received, means that there are more spaces available in town centres; and
- more inclusion in the consultation process.

2.6 The RTS is now being reviewed. We carried out a full equality impact assessment on the RTS. In the initial EQIA we recognised that transport presents particular issues for older people, people with dependants and people with disabilities. We will consider evidence presented of impacts on these or other groups and the underlying reasons as we develop the final review proposals and the associated EQIA.

2.7 We will also carry out an equality impact assessment on our review to ensure that we fulfil our Section 75 statutory duties. A key element of the impact assessment will be collating and considering available data and research on the differential impacts of proposals across the range of Section 75 groups. Where we find adverse impacts, we will identify alternative or mitigating measures. We will also seek opportunities to improve Good Relations.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 The long lead in time for the transportation proposals contained in the three transport plans means that there has not been sufficient time for the impacts to have been extensively experienced by the Section 75 categories. The Department will continue to monitor the transport plans and analyse the results to determine whether or not the impact on any of the Section 75 groups has changed significantly.

3.2 With 58% of the actions achieved within the first two years and positive feedback from Imtac, the ATS has had a positive impact.

Many of the remaining actions extend beyond the two year Action Plan period and remain on target for completion.

- 3.3 The Department is committed to undertaking a fundamental review of the RTS, including its equality impacts. The findings and outcomes of the Review will be subject to further equality considerations. It is anticipated that a draft Revised Regional Transportation Strategy, including a draft EQIA, will be published for consultation later in the year.