

**EQUALITY COMMISSION  
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

**Public Authorities Progress Reports 2002 - 2003**

**Template for Public Authorities to report on  
implementation of the equality and good relations duties  
under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998**

The information required from public authorities will cover the period from 1 April 2002 to the 31 March 2003 and is to be submitted to the Commission by 31 July 2003, **electronically (by completing this template) and in writing, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive** or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive.

This year's progress report builds upon the guidance provided for the past two years, for purposes of consistency and comparison. It also seeks some additional information on: the status of EQIAs planned and progressed, aspects of Section 75 consultation and the identified impact/outcomes of Section 75 implementation to date.

**Please report on progress by entering information at the end of each section in the template below.** Prompts are included under each Section to allow you to assess the extent to which progress has been made within each area. Please note that these prompts are neither prescriptive or inclusive. It is important that the authority reports on what it views as being relevant in terms of progress being made on implementation of the statutory duties.

**Name of public authority:  
Department for Regional Development**

**Equality Officer name and contact details:  
Margaret Langhammer  
Central Management Branch  
Room 418  
Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
Belfast BT2 8GB  
Tel: 028 9054 0938  
Email: [margaret.Langhammer@drdni.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.Langhammer@drdni.gov.uk)**

## **Section 1: Preparation of Equality Scheme**

**(Applies only to organisations whose scheme was not approved by the Commission prior to 1 April 2002)**

- Outline measures taken during the year to develop the authority's draft Equality Scheme, including consultation, and details of the authority's formal consideration of the draft Equality Scheme, before submission for final approval to the Commission.
- Highlight any other areas of the scheme implemented prior to approval of the scheme

### Prompt:

Have affected groups, staff, service users and groups representing the nine Section 75 categories been consulted about the organisation's draft scheme.

**Not applicable**

## Section 2: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Equality Duties

- Outline evidence of progress made in developing equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets and inclusion of these in corporate and annual operating plans. This may include performance information and targets for 2003-2004.
  - Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties have been built into the Department's Corporate Plan 2002-2005, the Business Plan and Service Delivery Agreement for 2002-2003 and into Agency Corporate and Business Plans.
  - A detailed action plan, to help implement all the commitments made in the Department's Equality Scheme, has been drawn up. During 2002-2003 quarterly monitoring reports on progress were submitted to the Minister and senior officers.
  - Equality objectives and associated performance indicators are built into forward job plans of relevant staff and are reflected on in the appraisal process.
  
- Outline steps taken to work with other public authorities in progressing the duties.
  - The Director of Central Policy and Management Unit, a member of the Senior Civil Service, represents the Department on an Interdepartmental Equality and Social Need Steering Group (ESNSG), chaired by a senior OFMDFM official.
  - The Department's Principal Statistician, is a member of the Equality and Social Needs Research and Information Group (ESNRIG) which includes as members officials of Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office, along with representatives of the Equality Commission and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. The Department shares a statistician with the Department of the Environment and maintains a close relationship with that Department in developing S75 issues.
  - The Department's Equality Officer represents the Department at Equality Practitioners' meetings organised by the OFMDFM Equality Unit to discuss practical issues of mutual concern. Representatives from all Northern Ireland Departments attend these meetings.
  - The Department has given advice to its associated Trust Ports on the development of their Equality Schemes.

- Outline any details of partnership work developed with the voluntary and/or community sector as a consequence of Section 75 work? Comment on whether these partnerships have proved beneficial?
  - The Department has held biannual meetings with representatives of S75 groups. It has been recognised by all those attending that these meetings are very useful in developing S75 issues and relationships with policy makers.
  - The Department's Equality Officer's role as the Department's representative on the Voluntary and Community Sector Forum is a useful complement to S75 responsibilities.
  
- Indicate if S75 is a standard agenda item for Board and/or Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis.
  - The Departmental Business Meeting (DBM), which involves the Permanent Secretary, Deputy Secretaries, the Chief Executive of Roads Service, and the Chief Executive of Water Service, meets weekly to review and monitor the corporate management of the Department. During this report period it has steered, monitored and periodically reviewed the implementation of the S75 obligations. Members of DBM receive copies of Quarterly Progress Reports.
  - S75 issues are also standing or regular agenda items at Agency and Divisional Senior Management meetings.
  
- Provide details of steps to progress the Good Relations duty such as undertaking a good relations audit, developing a strategy or providing training.
  - The Department is awaiting the outcome of the consultation paper 'A Shared Future' which was issued in January 2003. A new cross-departmental Community Relations Steering Group, involving DEL, DE, DCAL, DSD and OFMDFM, has been established to develop an action plan to take forward and develop a strategy, following the close of the consultation period on 30 September 2003.
  - All EQIAs carried out address the implications for good relations.
  - Training on good relations has been provided for management staff as part of awareness training on S75 generally.
  - Equality Unit staff have attended a 'Diversity Matters' seminar.
  - The Department funds a range of Voluntary and Community groups to assist the development of community-based transport solutions.
  - The Transportation Unit in Roads Service is working along with Schools and the Health Promotion Agency to promote 'Safer Routes to Schools' projects.
  - The Senior Smartpass (NI Concessionary Fares Scheme) issued in May 2002.

- A Review of 'Getting Out and About' website has commenced. This is a guide to accessible transport within Northern Ireland.
  - The Transport Programme for People with Disabilities and the Rural Transport Fund continue to provide support to community organisations that provide transport to, amongst others, people with disabilities.
- Outline any factors that enhance or impede the process of Strategic Implementation.
  - The Department's Equality Unit comprising a Grade 7, Deputy Principal and Staff Officer, assisted by a Working Group of officials, representing all Divisions and Agencies across the Department, has driven forward the practical implementation of the commitments set out in the Department's Scheme. The regular meetings of the Working Group have ensured consistency of approach and the sharing of good practice across the Department.
  - The regular meetings of policy makers and representatives of S75 groups have enhanced the process of strategic implementation.
  - Responsibility for equality has been agreed and clearly designated within all parts of the Department, with individual officers, or posts, in all Agencies and Divisions assigned responsibility for S75 issues.
  - The quarterly progress reports prepared for the Minister and Senior Officers provide a useful means of focusing attention and charting progress on equality issues. In addition, Senior Officers and the Minister sign off this annual report to the Equality Commission.

Prompt:

Have the Board and Senior Officers reviewed the authority's progress report?

Has responsibility for equality been agreed and designated within the authority?

Has a clearly defined organisational structure with resources for implementation of the duties and assessment of policies been established?

Are equality objectives built into the job descriptions and performance targets of relevant staff, and are these reflected on in the appraisal process?

Is the authority on course for completing its 5-year timetable for implementation of its scheme? If not which areas of implementation are proving most difficult?

### Section 3: Screening & Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Timetable

#### 3a)

- If a Screening Report has **not yet been submitted** to the Commission please advise us on the current position with regard to producing this report and forwarding to the Commission.

#### Not Applicable

#### 3b)

- If a Screening Report and EQIA Timetable has **previously been submitted** to the Commission please provide an update (**using the matrices in Appendix A**) detailing -
  - those policies that were subject to Equality Impact Assessment during 2002-2003
  - the timetable for Equality Impact Assessments in 2003-4.
- See Appendix A.
- (If relevant) list any proposals for legislation for which an assessment for the implications for the Section 75 duties was undertaken.
  - The following proposals for legislation were assessed during 2002/2003 and screened out as having no significant impact on equality of opportunity:  
  
Street Works (Recovery of Costs) Regulations (NI) 2003  
Airport Byelaws (Designation) Order  
The River Bann Navigation Order and Londonderry Port and Harbour (Variation of Pilotage Limits) Order.  
The Bangor (Harbour Area) Order (NI)  
The Groomspoint (Harbour Area) Order (NI)  
The Ballycastle (Harbour Area) Order (NI)  
The Rathlin (Harbour Area) Order (NI)
  - In addition, the following policy proposals were similarly screened out:  
  
Procurement Strategy Review (Construction)  
Water Resource Strategy  
Provision of Road Restraint Systems on Retaining Walls and the Like  
DRD Publication Scheme  
NI Walking Action Plan  
Alleygating Schemes
- Outline any other factors that enhance or impede the process of policy screening or EQIA.
  - Good practice in EQIA is promulgated through the series of interdepartmental groups which meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual concern, such as ESNSG, ENSRIG and Equality Practitioners' meetings.

- ❑ Within the Department good practice and policy is disseminated by the Equality Working Group, which is chaired by the Head of Central Management Branch, and has representatives from each Agency and Division.
  - ❑ Progress on EQIAs is tracked closely by the Department's Equality Unit and is a major part of the regular reviews of progress prepared for the Minister.
  - ❑ As part of the preparation of an EQIA, meetings involving the Equality Unit, the Department's Statistician and the relevant Agency or Division are held to identify the major issues and impacts and to help resolve any problems anticipated. The Equality Unit and the Department's Statistician both retain a strong advisory role for the Division or Agency throughout the EQIA process.
  - ❑ A screening template has been developed for use throughout the Department.
  - ❑ Agencies and Divisions are encouraged to be proactive in speaking to affected groups at pre-consultation or screening stage. The regular meetings with S75 representatives also facilitate this.
  - ❑ Consultation procedures have been refined to facilitate a more selective, flexible approach.
  - ❑ Difficulties with data availability can make screening and EQIA processes difficult.
  - ❑ Development by OFMDFM of a 'Policy Making Guide' and an Integrated Impact Assessment tool will assist the process of policy screening and EQIA.
  - ❑ The Equality Commission's agreement to meet with members of the Water Reform Team and the Department's Equality Unit to discuss the equality dimensions of the proposals was very helpful.
- Outline how the authority, following screening of new policies, informs consultees of the outcomes from such screening exercises.
  - ❑ Consultees are generally informed of the outcomes of screening exercises by way of associated policy consultation documents and/or the Department's Annual Progress report provided to the Equality Commission.

Prompt:

Does the authority require each department/directorate to identify how its policies impact on equality of opportunity and can promote good relations?

Has the authority involved consultees in screening of new policies? If so how?

Has the authority informed consultees of the outcomes from screening of new policies? If so, how?

#### **Section 4: Training and Communication**

- Indicate if your organisation has developed a 5-year Training Plan (the Commission may wish to discuss details with individual bodies).
  - The Department has developed a 5-year training and communication plan.
  
- Outline details of staff and Management Board/Committee training provision associated with the Section 75 duties/Equality Scheme requirements. Provide details of types of training provision (e.g. general awareness raising, specialist training on EQIA, Screening, Consultation) and who this training was provided for.
  - Key staff attended seminars and awareness training in association with the preparation of the Department's Equality Scheme.
  - Equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination issues are included in all induction-training courses, training courses for new managers and the Management Development Programme being rolled out across DOE, DRD and DCAL over 5 years.
  - Each member of staff has received a synopsis of the Scheme, highlighting the main implications.
  - Overall 1581 staff in management grades, Executive Officer to Deputy Principal, has received a half-day general awareness course addressing S75 responsibilities, 97 of these in 2002-2003. Further courses will be held in 2003.
  - Overall 249 have received training on the methodology of equality impact assessments and consultation, 87 of these in 2002-2003. Further courses will be held in 2003.
  - Deaf awareness training has been delivered to staff on request.
  - Training on the operation of a textphone has been delivered to 10 staff within Roads Service.
  - Seminars were held in May 2002 to apprise Senior Civil Servants of progress on equality of opportunity generally and equality impact assessments in particular.
  - Reports of progress to the Departmental Business Meeting have kept senior staff alert to major S75 issues.

- Provide details of how affected groups have been involved in the development and/or delivery of training.
  - Meetings with S75 Groups have provided an opportunity for senior staff to be aware of, and discuss, specific issues relating to policy development, consultations and other equality matters.
  - Disability Action has delivered training to key staff in the Department on EQIA methodology and consultation training.
  - The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) has delivered deaf awareness training and training on the use of a text phone to staff.
  
- Provide a summary of any training evaluations and comments on the benefits of such training.
  - Awareness Training  
Trainers checked the understanding of attendees after each session. Positive feedback was received from those attending. Attendees found the training relevant and useful. The content of the awareness training was regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that the training material remained current.
  - Equality Impact Assessment Methodology and Consultation  
This training was delivered by way of a centralised NICS call-off contract. Positive feedback was received from those attending. The content of this training was regularly reviewed to ensure that examples of EQIAs used were up to date and relevant to the staff attending. Consideration is being given to expanding the training to cover more fully the screening process.
  
- Provide details of internal and external communication of the authority's commitment to the statutory duties.
  - The Department's Equality Scheme includes a cover message from the Minister and the Permanent Secretary. This has been posted on the Internet and the Department's Intranet.
  - The Department's Equality Working Group, made up of officials drawn from Divisions and Agencies and chaired by the Equality Unit, plays a key role in the internal communication of S75 issues and obligations.
  - Department has held meetings with representatives of all S75 groups.
  - Department's Corporate and Business Plans include a commitment to S75 duties.
  - All consultation documents include a note of the Department's obligations under S75.

- ❑ Permanent Secretary and Minister have been provided with regular progress reports, including a report on the training objectives contained within the Department's Scheme.
  - ❑ Staff have been kept aware of developments generally on S75 through articles in the equal opportunities magazine, "Equality Times" and through team briefs.
  - ❑ Equality objectives and associated performance indicators are built into the forward job plans of relevant staff.
  - ❑ The Department's equality objectives have been promoted through adverts placed in the three main newspapers.
  - ❑ A copy of the Annual Progress Report to the EC for 2001-2002 has been posted on the Department's website.
  - ❑ S75 Guidance is available on the Department's Roads Service Intranet together with details of EQIAs and policies screened out.
  - ❑ Press Releases have referred to the need to undertake Equality Impact Assessments.
  - ❑ A commitment to S75 is included in European Grant Applications.
  - ❑ At all 6 public consultation meetings on Water Reform, plus a wide range of other meetings with District Councils, stakeholder and advocacy groups etc., senior officials have explained the possible equality impacts identified in the March 2003 consultation document and the commitment to submit developing proposals for Water Reform to subsequent detailed equality impact assessment.
- Outline any factors that enhance or impede the process of communication and training.
  - ❑ The continuing focus of senior staff and the Equality Working Group on S75 issues has enhanced the overall training and communication process.
  - ❑ The Department's internal communication tools such as the Intranet, the Team Brief and the staff magazine ensure up to date information about S75 is disseminated as widely as possible amongst staff.
  - ❑ The meetings with S75 representatives have enhanced the communication process.

Prompt:

Does the authority monitor attainment of the training objectives contained within it's equality scheme?

Has section 75 training involved input from representatives of the 9 groups? If so please state how this happened and if it proved useful?

Has section 75 training been evaluated? If so how has this happened and what are the lessons learned?

Do the Board and/or Senior Officers promote the authority's equality objectives in public statements, interviews and external events such as conferences?

## Section 5: Data Collection & Analysis

- Describe systems that have been established to supplement your available statistical and qualitative research including consideration given to using internal organisational data and external networks.
- Describe systems established to monitor the future adverse impact of policies that have been equality impact assessed
- Outline any factors that enhance or impede the process of data collection and analysis
  - Bilateral meetings have been held with each Agency and Division and the Equality Unit and the Department's Statistician to ensure that the data requirements of the EQIA programme are being fulfilled.
  - Focused pre-consultation with key representatives of S75 Groups carried out on all relevant policies.
  - Consultation is focused to reflect the issue under consideration with conferences, focus groups, and seminars organised to discuss the issues involved.
  - The Department's Statistician is a member of ENSRIG. The cross-departmental Information & Research Needs Strategy sponsored by ESNRIG sets the direction in assessing and filling gaps. NISRA will start by commissioning work on disability information followed by assessing gaps in information on ethnic minorities during 2003/04. There will also be a website set up to act as a data repository for relevant Section 75 information.
  - Publication of the 2001 Census results has allowed updating of key statistics for equality analysis, as well as providing new datasets not previously available (eg. on ethnic minority numbers and on carers).
  - Roads Service carries out 2 annual customer based surveys - NISRA Omnibus Survey that provides quantitative feedback and PriceWaterhouseCoopers hold focus groups that provide qualitative feedback.
  - During the report period one final EQIA was issued, 'Regional Transportation Strategy' (RTS). The impacts of the RTS will be monitored over the period of its implementation to identify any unforeseen outcomes of the Strategy and to ensure that all objectives are being achieved. Results will be analysed to determine whether or not the impact of the RTS on any of the nine equality groups has changed significantly.
  - All policy development has a strong evidence base and data focus.

### Prompt:

Are the results of awareness or satisfaction surveys used to inform the development and review of policies?

Is relevant external data (for example Census, workforce profiles, customer surveys, focus groups) used to inform policy development?  
Have new information systems been linked to arrangements for screening policies?

## Section 6: Information Provision and Access to Services

- Outline what action has been taken to review and develop arrangements for the provision of information in accessible formats.
- Detail steps taken to make affected groups aware of information disseminated by the authority and the services it provides.
- Describe any arrangements to develop monitoring systems regarding access to information and services to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Outline any factors that enhance or impede the process of information provision and ensuring/improving access to services.
  - Bilateral meetings have been held with an Equality Forum, made up of representatives from Section 75 groups and senior officials of the Department, to provide information and review progress generally on S75 issues. The forum has reviewed accessibility of information and provided feedback on difficulties and problems. The lessons learnt and good practice is then promulgated across the Department through the Equality Working Group.
  - The Commission aims to utilise the expertise and work undertaken by ESNRIG, and coordinate those with the work of an inter-agency advisory group which it facilitates, which includes representatives of public authorities, the voluntary and community sector and trade unions. The coordination will build on the lessons from the Commission's consultation process on equality monitoring and will lead to the development of processes and mechanisms to produce additional S75 monitoring guidance for use by this Department and other public authorities.
  - Information on Section 75 is published on the Internet.
  - The Department offers a "text only" facility to enhance the accessibility of its websites by the visually impaired and the blind through the use of assistive technology. The Department is continuing to develop its websites with a view to improving their accessibility in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Office of the e-Envoy.
  - The Department is developing a Departmental strategy for providing information in accessible formats, drawing on the outcome of an internal information audit and guidance awaited from OFMDFM.
  - A text phone number is provided on all consultation documents, large print is used where possible and an undertaking is given to consider requests for accessible formats where the subject matter is such that specific formats have not been prepared in advance.
  - The Department has placed adverts in large print in the three main newspapers detailing the services provided by the Department.
  - The Department's Equality Scheme, which was copied to a wide range of S75 representatives, contains a description of all the Department's functions and services.

- The Department's funding of a range of Voluntary and Community groups to assist the development of community-based transport solutions is reviewed annually.
- Regular customer-based surveys are carried out.
- Uptake of concessionary fares is monitored. Work is underway to extend the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme to more people with disabilities. Half-fare travel will be available to people who are partially sighted, people in receipt of the mobility component of DLA, people with a learning disability and people refused a driving licence for medical reasons. This extension is due to come into operation in February 2004.
- The Department took care to communicate effectively with the Blind when it was decided to provide this category with the DRD/Translink Smartpass. Application forms and Welcome packs were both issued with audiotapes. Information relating to the registered blind was also broadcast in talking newspapers.
- A review of the "Getting Out and About" website (funded by DRD) commenced in 2002/2003.
- Community Technical Aid carried out an additional voluntary and community group consultation in respect of Planning Policy Statement 12 on Housing.

Prompt:

Are alternative formats provided where appropriate to enable people from across the nine Section 75 categories to have access to all services?

Have appropriate consultation mechanisms been developed and used to establish needs /satisfaction levels?

Does the authority monitor uptake of services as a standard procedure

## **Section 7: Complaints**

- Identify the number of Section 75 complaints received during the year.
  - Identify the number of Section 75 complaints resolved during the year.
  - Identify the number of ongoing Section 75 complaints.
- 
- In August 2002 the Department issued comprehensive guidance for staff and the public on the complaints procedure for S75 issues.
  
  - During this report period the Department received no complaints. There was further correspondence from the Equality Commission on a complaint received in the year 2001-2002 on difficulties with the application process for the Senior Smartpass.

### Prompt:

Does the authority have in place a Section 75 complaints procedure?

Does the authority monitor Section 75 complaints and the issues arising?

Have complaints led to policy changes or an undertaking of an Equality Impact

Assessment of a policy relating to a complaint?

## Section 8: Timetable

- Provide an update of on your equality scheme implementation timetable, identifying any changes since your previous report.

### Prompt:

Is the implementation timetable reviewed on a regular basis by the Board and Senior Officers?

- Appendix A reflects progress on the Equality Scheme EQIA Programme.
- Progress on all equality scheme commitments is reported quarterly to senior officers and the Minister.
- Although there has been slippage on the original EQIA timetable due to the difficulties in forecasting precisely the pace of policy development work, over the report period considerable progress has been made on the preparation of equality impact assessments, with one final EQIA issued, four draft EQIAs issued for public consultation, three draft EQIAs being prepared for issue, and research undertaken for a further six draft EQIAs. In addition a preliminary equality assessment was included in the Water Reform Consultation Document.
- Further training courses on S75 awareness and EQIA methodology and consultation were organised for staff.
- Areas such as the Good Relations Statutory Duty, the development of an accessible information strategy and refinement of data collection and monitoring systems require further work in light of Guidance awaited from OFMDFM and the Equality Commission.
- Internal guidelines on consultation have been held pending the completion of central guidance and further consideration of the issues highlighted in the OFMDFM sponsored review of consultation. In the meantime the Department has moved away from the blanket consultation commitment in its Equality Scheme towards a more tailored and flexible approach.

## Section 9: Consultation

Provide details of organisational arrangements for managing section 75 consultation exercises and processes e.g. system, processes, methods, communication channels.

### Prompt:

Describe the system put in place by the authority to plan and manage consultation exercises?

What are the main consultation methods which you have used?

Have consultation exercises involved consulting on equality/good relations in conjunction with other policy development/review areas e.g. best value, good practice reviews?

Has the authority used communication channels of umbrella groups or representative groups? If so please give examples and comment on usefulness of using such mechanisms.

- ❑ The Department's Equality Scheme affirms that it is committed to carrying out consultations in accordance with the Equality Commission's Guidelines. The main methods used to date are face-to-face meetings, conferences, advisory groups, issue of full and summary consultation documents to appropriate consultees, and advertisement of all consultations on the Internet.
- ❑ Focused pre-consultation is usually carried out as part of the policy/legislation consultation.
- ❑ The Department has moved to targeted consultation, in order to help focus on the S75 groups most likely to be affected by particular policies.
- ❑ The bi-annual meetings held with an Equality Forum, made up of S75 representatives and senior officials have proved to be a very useful method for consulting on general S75 issues.
- ❑ The public consultation on Planning Policy Statement 13, Transportation and Land Use, was carried out at the same time as the DOE public consultation on Planning Policy Statement 3, Access, Movement and Parking. This was designed to inform the public on the total range of transportation related policies at the same time.
- ❑ Where additional Departments or Local Councils or Harbour Authorities are affected the consultation papers reflect this, for example a joint making of legislation with DARD/DRD/DOE, etc.
- ❑ The Department has a representative on the Consultation Advisory Group set up to assist an OFMDFM sponsored review of consultation. The Department will be developing further internal consultation guidelines when the Group concludes its work.
- ❑ The Department is currently undertaking a Review of Communications, which will provide a means to examine the ways in which the Department's services and information can be accessed by all.

## Section 10: Impacts and outcomes

Please provide relevant information about impact of implementation of Section 75 to end of March 2003. This should include details of existing policies changed to better deliver equality of opportunity; equality proofing of new policies; information about impact of new policy (better service provision, alternative service provision, accessibility to services, information gathering on users/non-users of services, satisfaction survey information); information on improved policy/services for nine groups.

Prompt:

How is policy formulation being managed to take account of the need to mainstream Section 75 duties?

Are all new or revised policies equality proofed by the authority? If so what process is used?

How have policies subject to EQIA changed as a consequence of the process?

Is there any evidence of how newly formulated policies or existing policies changed as a result of impact assessment are better delivering equality and/or good relations?

Has Equality Impact Assessment led to better policy making and service delivery?

Please provide specific examples. These should indicate which Section 75 groups have benefited from policy changes, and how.

What, at this stage, do you perceive to be the main outcomes from implementation of the statutory duties?

- ❑ Assessment of equality implications is an integral part of the Department's policy development process.
- ❑ All new or revised policies are screened for possible equality implications using the Department's screening analysis form.
- ❑ The Department usually carries out focused pre-consultation with appropriate S75 representatives. This helps in the formulation of its policies.
- ❑ Following the consultation process on the RTS Draft EQIA the Department agreed that research into the transport needs of disabled people should be considered as part of the Accessible Transport Strategy included in the RTS.
- ❑ It is very early to assess the benefits and outcomes of the EQIA process; the Department's EQIA Programme is only now gathering pace. Main outcomes so far have been in the measures taken to develop awareness and the systems put in place to mainstream equality consideration in all aspects of the Department's work.
- ❑ With the mainstreaming of equality considerations to the early stages of policy development and the practice of detailed pre-consultation most equality issues will have been taken into account before draft EQIA stage. An example of this is the Regional Transportation Strategy where equality considerations were identified during an early consultation and the

feedback used to inform the development of the draft RTS and the associated EQIA. The EQIA process may therefore become less a means of changing policies and more a method of confirming that policies are sound with regard to promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. Progress may therefore need to be charted through wider baseline indicators.

## Section 11: Additional Information

- Report information on any other matters considered relevant to the authority's implementation of the Section 75 duties.
- Please include a general statement on whether the implementation of the duties is leading to improvement in how the authority undertakes its work?
  - The implementation of the S75 Statutory Duty has undoubtedly improved the way in which the Department carries out its responsibilities by:
    - a) promoting closer and more effective contacts between S75 representatives and departmental policy makers and business areas, thereby improving policy development and service delivery; and
    - b) fostering awareness among the departmental staff of the needs of the 9 groups, thereby improving accessibility of information and services.
  - The revised Guide to the Statutory Duties and EQIA Practical Guidance being prepared by the Commission will be useful. They will help to clarify any difficulties which have arisen so far.
  - The OFMDFM work on the Integrated Impact Assessment and the draft Policy Making Guide will be useful to the policy development process overall.

## Appendix A

### EQIA Timetables

#### Matrices

Please enter details relating to the authority's Equality Impact Assessment timetable and progress on it.

#### ***EQIA Timetable Reporting Matrices – period to end March 2003***

##### ***Existing policies – included in initial EQIA timetable***

Title of existing policy EQIA's due to be completed pre-March 2003	Stage (as per Steps 1-7 of EQIA Process)	If joint-EQIA please state partner authorities	If EQIA completed is amended policy now being implemented? Y/N	If EQIA completed is amended were adjustments to policy a result of <u>A</u> ssessment of adverse impact/ <u>C</u> onsultation, or <u>B</u> oth <i>Please enter A, C or Both</i>
1.Review of concessionary fares scheme	Stage 4 To carry out formal consultation			
2.Rural Transport Fund	Stage 1 Further data being collected			
3.Fares pricing policy	Stage 2 Following a commercial decision by Translink to review its fares pricing policy, it has been decided to defer formal consultation and wait until it has finalised its policy.			

Title of existing policy EQIA's due to be completed pre-March 2003	Stage (as per Steps 1-7 of EQIA Process)	If joint-EQIA please state partner authorities	If EQIA completed is amended policy now being implemented? Y/N	If EQIA completed is amended were adjustments to policy a result of <u>A</u> ssessment of adverse impact/ <u>C</u> onsultation, or <u>B</u> oth <i>Please enter A, C or Both</i>
4.Planning Policy Statement on Housing, PPS 12	Stage 4 Final PPS being drafted for publication.			
5. Planning Policy Statement PPS 13 Transportation and Land Use	Stage 4 Final PPS being drafted for publication.	Public consultation on PPS13 was carried out at the same time as the DOE public consultation on PPS 3, Access, Movement and Parking. This informed the public on the total range of transportation related policies at the same time.		
6. Regional Transportation Strategy	Stage 6 Final EQIA published in July 2002.		Policy/Strategy development for final RTS informed by EQIA process.	
7. Provision of pedestrian facilities	Stage 4 Formal consultation ends June 2003			
8. Operation and management of car parks	Stage 4 Preparing formal consultation document			

<b>Title of existing policy EQIA's due to be completed pre-March 2003</b>	<b>Stage (as per Steps 1-7 of EQIA Process)</b>	<b>If joint-EQIA please state partner authorities</b>	<b>If EQIA completed is amended policy now being implemented? Y/N</b>	<b>If EQIA completed is amended were adjustments to policy a result of <u>A</u>ssessment of adverse impact/ feedback from <u>C</u>onsultation, or <u>B</u>oth <i>Please enter A, C or Both</i></b>
9. Transport Programme for People with Disabilities	Stage 2 Awaiting completion of programme review.			
10. Households not connected to mains water or sewerage	Stage 1 Awaiting outcome of funding investigation – research ongoing in some areas.			
11. Developers' contributions	Stage 2 Data collection and research completed – assessment of impacts being carried out.			

***New policies, i.e. new or revised policies developed after initial EQIA timetable produced***

<b>Title of new policy EQIA's commenced pre-March 2003</b>	<b>Stage reached (as per Steps 1-7 of EQIA Process)</b>	<b>If joint-EQIA please state partner authorities</b>	<b>If EQIA completed is amended policy now being implemented ? Please enter Y/N</b>	<b>If EQIA completed is amended were adjustments to policy a result of <u>Assessment</u> of adverse impact/ feedback from <u>Consultation</u> , or <u>Both</u> <i>Please enter A, C or Both</i></b>
1. Planning Policy Statement 14 on Development in the Countryside (brought forward from year ending 31 March 2004)	Stage 1 Research ongoing			
2. Planning Policy Statement PPS5 Retailing and Town Centres (carried over from year ending 31 March 2003)	Stage 2 Research completed. First draft of new PPS prepared, prior to public consultation on draft.			
3. Review of Blue Badge Scheme	Stage 4 Formal consultation ends 10 June 2003			
4. Water Service Reform	Stage 1 Preliminary consultation ends 20 June 2003			

**EQIA time-table for 2003-4**

<b>Title of EQIA's due to be commenced during April 2003 – March 2004</b>	<b>Existing or New policy? Please enter E or N below.</b>	<b>If joint-EQIA please state partner authorities</b>	<b>Expected completion date of EQIA</b>
1. Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan	N	Linked to Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan being prepared by DOE.	
2. Planning Policy Statement 20 'The Coast'.	N		