

DOE SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

Section 1

Introduction

This form is intended to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise and will be referenced in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission. Copies of completed forms should be retained on file within business areas (**and a copy sent to the Equality Unit**) and reference should be made to the outcome of the screening exercise and subsequent consultation in any submission made to the Minister.

Background

The Legal Background

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

The main groups within each of the nine categories, highlighted above, are identified at Appendix 1.

In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, the Department is also required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion or racial group.

Advice on Completion of the Screening Form

It is important that the screening form is completed carefully and thoughtfully. Your Divisional or Agency Equality Officer and the Department's Equality Unit in room 413A Clarence Court (ext 40855/40813) will be happy to assist with all aspects of the screening process and will help with the completion of the form, if required.

Further advice on the screening process can be accessed at Section 4 of the Equality Commission's Guide to the Statutory Duties.

Policies included for EQIA

If, after screening, it is decided that a policy will require a full EQIA, a decision will be required on the priority and timing of the assessment. The screening form should be noted accordingly, signed off and copied to the Equality Unit for inclusion in the EQIA programme.

Policies excluded for EQIA

If a decision is taken to screen out the policy or where there is ambiguity about the equality implication of the proposal, the screening form should be signed off by a senior officer responsible for the policy and a copy sent to the Equality Unit. Copies of all screening out forms will be placed on the Department's website.

Section 2 – Policy to be Screened

Definition of Policy

There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of Section 75. To be on the safe side it is recommended that you consider changes to or any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies. The policies covered in the Equality Scheme EQIA programme are a reasonable guide both to the nature of external departmental policies and the level at which they should be considered.

The revised Guidance from The Equality Commission emphasises that the Statutory duties apply to **internal** policies (relating to people who work for the organisation) as well as **external** policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the organisations).

It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in respect of an "overarching" policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if a further EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

OFMDFM Guidance on Legislative Procedures (Primary and Subordinate) sets out clearly the stages at which equality of opportunity considerations should be taken into consideration in the development of legislation.

Overview of Policy Proposals

The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and well defined. You must take into account any available data or evidence that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the S75 categories. Evidence may be qualitative and or quantitative and may include research or internal information and or experience in relation to service and customer monitoring exercises. Where appropriate, arrangements should be made to obtain any data necessary to assist screening. The Equality Unit or Central Statistics & Research Branch (Stephanie Harcourt ext 40878) are available to provide advice on data requirements.

2.1 Please insert below a brief description of the policy/legislation, including the title and all the main aims and objectives

Title **Relocation of Driving Test Centre in Londonderry from Waterside House, Duke Street to Skeogh Road.**

Aims Current premises are unsuitable for receiving candidates for test and for carrying out the full range of manoeuvres normally required on a test. There is insufficient parking and candidates are at times required to park on the footpath on a very busy road. The building is not DDA compliant and the Agency is unable to modify it as it is a tenant in the building.

A number of options for relocation have been considered, amongst which is the Skeogh Road building which is a new large fit for purpose site which will offer the Agency additional facilities such as conference and training areas. It will provide for a more relaxed and spacious environment in which to meet and greet candidates and in addition to allowing candidates more room to carry out the 'bay parking' exercise, the building will be DDA compliant for the benefit of customers and staff. In addition the building is located in an industrial estate which would be regarded as neutral in terms of religious belief and political affiliation. The building will provide for additional office space and facilities for driving examiners. This will remove current restrictions in capacity to test, increasing numbers of candidates and enable DVTA to reduce and maintain waiting times to a satisfactory level.

The Agency considers that use of this building as a driving test centre will greatly enhance our service to customers. Driving test routes will not be affected.

It is essential that all the aims/objectives of the policy be clearly and fully defined.

2.2 On whom will the policies/legislation impact? Please specify

Driving test candidates in Londonderry area.

Driving instructors.

3 x Driving examiners.

2.3 Who is responsible for (a) devising and (b) delivering the policy, eg is it DOE, a Whitehall Department or EU? What is the relationship and have they considered this issue and any equality issues?

(a) Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency responsible for both devising and delivering this policy.

2.4 What linkages are there to other NI Departments/NDPBs in relation to this policy/legislation?

None in respect of this issue.

2.5 What data are available to facilitate the screening of this policy/legislation?

Some data available in relation to gender, political affiliation and religious belief.

The Agency conducts an annual customer survey in which the s75 make-up of Agency customers is analysed. In the 2005 survey 48% of driver respondents identified themselves as Protestant and 43% identified themselves as Roman Catholic. These figures are similar to the community background breakdown of 17 – 59 year olds in Northern Ireland, which shows 53% of the population are Protestant and 44% are Catholic. These figures are taken from the Northern Ireland 2001 Census.

In terms of gender, statistics derived from the Agency's booking database in the first 6 months of 2005 show an almost equal number of men (51%) and women (49%) applied for a driving test. This reflects the Northern Ireland 2005 mid-year population estimates for 17 – 59 year olds which shows that 50% are men and 50% are women.

The Agency customer survey does not analyse s75 groups down to individual centre level, but we feel that the global figures would suggest that the s75 breakdown is likely to be representative of the population currently being serviced by the Londonderry test centre. We have no reason to suppose that this mix of customers will alter when the premises are re-located.

The acquisition of a driving licence is for most a life changing event (sometimes taking many months training) and the location of a centre which candidates visit on a very few occasions is unlikely to deter them from embarking on this process.

In terms of customers with a disability, most if not all visitors to driving test centres arrive by car. Bookings can be done by phone or by post so the centre need only be visited on the occasion that a person is doing their test. Most other Agency centres are located within industrial estates and the consultation process conducted for the 2004 EQIA on driving tests did not indicate any other issues that need to be taken into account in respect of access.

2.6 Is additional data required to facilitate screening? If so, give details of how and when it will be obtained.

No.

See Appendix 4 of the Equality Commission Practical Guidance on EQIA which provides a list of Sources of S75 data or speak to Central Statistics and Research Branch (Stephanie Harcourt, ext 40878) or Equality Unit (Alex Boyle, ext 41194, or Una Downey, ext 40855).

Section 3 – Screening Analysis

In cases where there is no available quantitative evidence, you will need to take a pragmatic, common sense judgement as to whether the policy/legislation you are screening may have a particular/differential impact on any of the groups. Discussions with Equality Unit, Statistics Branch and organisations representing the Section 75 Groups will be important and helpful at this stage in obtaining qualitative evidence of impacts. Every effort should be made to ensure that assessments are evidence based.

The following criteria must be considered when screening.

3.1 Is there any indication or evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by the following Section 75 groups?

| | Yes | No |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|
| Religious belief | | x |
| Political opinion | | x |
| Racial group | | x |
| Age | | x |
| Marital status | | x |
| Sexual orientation | | x |
| Gender | | x |
| Disability | | x |
| Dependants | | x |

Please give details

The proposed location at Skeogh Road is within an industrial estate and as such is a neutral location. We do not feel that this re-location will adversely impact on any S75 group.

Only 3 members of staff will be required to work at the new site and they have not raised any S75 concerns. No administrative staff are affected.

Disabled users of the facility will have DDA compliant access to all areas within proposed test centre.

3.2 Is there any indication or evidence that any of the following Section 75 groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy issue?

| | Yes | No |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|
| Religious belief | | x |
| Political opinion | | x |
| Racial group | | x |
| Age | | x |
| Marital status | | x |
| Sexual orientation | | x |
| Gender | | x |
| Disability | x | |
| Dependants | | x |

Please give details

One of the major drivers of this policy change is that disabled users of the facility will have DDA compliant access to all areas within the proposed test centre. In addition current premises are unsuitable for receiving candidates for test and for carrying out the full range of manoeuvres normally required on a test. There is insufficient parking and candidates are at times required to park on the footpath on a very busy road. The Skeogh Road building which is a new large fit for purpose site will offer the Agency additional facilities such as conference and training areas. It will provide for a more relaxed and spacious environment in which to meet and greet candidates and in addition to allowing candidates more room to carry out the 'bay parking' exercise, the building will be DDA compliant for the benefit of customers and staff. In addition the building is located in an industrial estate which would be regarded as neutral in terms of religious belief and political affiliation. Driving test routes will not be affected.

3.3 Have consultations with the relevant representative organisations or individuals within any of the Section 75 categories, indicated that policies of this type create problems specific to them?

| | Yes | No |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|
| Religious belief | | x |
| Political opinion | | x |
| Racial group | | x |
| Age | | x |
| Marital status | | x |
| Sexual orientation | | x |
| Gender | | x |
| Disability | | x |
| Dependants | | x |

Please give details of any consultations carried out, and any problems identified.

Informal discussions with the North West Association of Driving Instructors indicate that there would be no objections to the site.

Likewise driving examiners who would be required to work from the site have not raised any accessibility issues.

- 3.4 Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or community relations by altering the policy, or by working with others, in Government, or in the larger community in the context of this policy?**

No

Please give details

- 3.5 It may be that a policy/legislation has a differential impact on a certain Section 75 group, as the policy has been developed to address an existing or historical inequality or disadvantage. If this is the case, please give details below:**

- 3.6 Please consider if there is any way of adapting the policy to promote better equality of opportunity or good relations.**

Please give details

None identified.

Section 4

EQIA Recommendation

You should consider carefully in this section whether full EQIA is necessary, particularly where answers to any questions in Section 3 are affirmative.

- 4.1 Full EQIA procedures should be carried out on policies considered to have significant implications for equality of opportunity. Please fill in the following grid in relation to the policy/legislation.

| Prioritisation Factors | Significant Impact | Moderate Impact | Low Impact |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Social Need. | | | x |
| Effect on people's daily lives. | | | x |
| Effect on economic, social and human rights. | | | x |
| Strategic significance | | | x |
| Financial significance | | | x |

Please give details

We expect for the reasons mentioned in sections 2 and 3 that the proposed relocation will have positive impacts for all customers.

- 4.2 **In view of the considerations in Section 3 and 4 do you consider that this policy/legislation should be subject to a full EQIA? Please give reasons for your considerations. If you are unsure, please consult with affected groups and revisit the screening analysis accordingly. Yes/No/Unsure**

No

4.3 If an EQIA is considered necessary please comment on the priority and timing in light of the factors in table 4.1.

N/A

4.4 If an EQIA is considered necessary is any data required to carry it out/ensure effective monitoring?

Please give details

N/A

Section 5

Endorsement

I can confirm that the proposed policy has been screened for equality of opportunity and good relations implications and has been screened out for equality impact assessment/~~requires a full equality impact assessment.~~

Signed: T. Dancer

Agency/Division: DVTA

Date: 7-12-06

PLEASE FORWARD A COPY OF THE COMPLETED FORM TO:

**DOE EQUALITY UNIT
ROOM 413A
CLARENCE COURT
10-18 ADELAIDE STREET
BELFAST
BT2 8GB**

**QUERIES TO: ALEX BOYLE, EXT 41194
alex.boyle@doeni.gov.uk**

**UNA DOWNEY, EXT 40855
una.downey@doeni.gov.uk**

Section 6

For Completion by Equality Unit

Date

Screening result recorded: _____

Placed on website: _____

Screening out completed: _____

Screening to be reconsidered: _____

Give reasons:

Agency/Division notified date: _____

| Main Groups Relevant to the Section 75 Categories | |
|--|--|
| <u>Category</u> | <u>Main Groups</u> |
| Religious belief | Protestants; Catholics; people of non-Christian faiths; people of no religious belief |
| Political opinion | Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party |
| Racial Group | White people; Chinese; Irish Travellers; Indians; Pakistanis; Bangladeshis; Black Africans; Black Caribbean people; people with mixed ethnic group |
| Gender | Men (including boys); women (including girls); trans-gendered people |
| Marital status | Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people |
| Age | For most purposes, the main categories are: children under 18, people aged between 18-65, and people over 65. However, the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration |
| “Persons with a disability” | Disability is defined as: A physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 |
| “Persons with dependants” | Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with an incapacitating disability; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person |
| Sexual orientation | Heterosexuals; bi-sexuals; gays; lesbians |

