

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Authority Annual Progress Report 2006 - 2007

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties from **1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007**. Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is submitted 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 to the Commission by **31 August 2007**.

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

Belfast Harbour Commissioners

Equality Officer (Enter name and contact details below)

Patricia Toolan
HR Manager

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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?

- Development and adoption of Good Relations policy March 2007 which recommends proactive measures to promote Good Relations
- Five year Review Report compiled and returned to the Equality Commission
- Ensured compliance with the Age Discrimination Regulations by 1 October 2006
- Providing induction training for all new staff on Section 75 duties
- Providing refresher section 75 training and training on good practice on policy making for the senior management
- Providing refresher section 75 training for staff
- Adoption of model framework for equality proofing Policies and Procedures
- Completion of major Disability Access Refurbishment
- Extension of CR programme to include individuals from the nine categories
- Attending meetings with the Belfast Employability Forums
- Attending Fit NI Forum meetings
- 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?
- Completion of EQIAs of three HR policies
- Complete refresher Section 75 training for all staff and provide Disability awareness training and Equality training for frontline employees

- Implement the Action Points detailed in the Disability Action Plan submitted to the Commission
- Develop an outreach programme connected with careers in the Port to encourage more women and other under-represented groups to consider employment in the Port.
- Review the monitoring information in relation to the policies that have already been Equality Impact Assessed and where necessary undertake further consultation
- Continue to promote Good Relations through involvement in schemes that support local schools within the two main communities
- Ongoing capital works schemes will take account of the needs of people with disabilities

Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties

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 2006-07.

- Regular reports are made to management team and to the Commissioners on the implementation of Section 75
- A commitment to the promotion of Equality and Good Relations is reflected in the Commission's corporate plan and in their performance monitoring and management documentation
- Updated policies and procedures and provided employee information on new legislation on Age, Disability and Maternity

- Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties are incorporated into the personal performance plans of those responsible for compliance duties
- Implementing a schedule of adaptations to buildings to ensure they are compliant with the requirements under the DDA
- Adoption of Good Relations Policy
- No complaints received under Sections 75

Section 2: Screening

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.
Recruitment and Selection	F	Outstanding	Y 2007/8
Harassment	F	Outstanding	Y 2007/8
Equal Opportunities	F	Outstanding	Y 2007/8

Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2006/07, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2007-08.

EQIA Timetable – April 2006 - March 2007

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 07 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant equality & good relations categories due to be affected.
None		

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2006- March 2007

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
Procurement policy	N/A	N/A

2007-08 EQIA Time-table

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2007 – March 2008	Existing or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
Recruitment and Selection	New	Complete by June 2008
Harassment	New	Complete by June 2008
Equal Opportunities	New	Complete by June 2008

The high levels of staff turnover during the period of the review, the high volumes of workload falling to Human Resources and the major review of the future strategic development of the Port resulted in a delay in finalising the EQIA reports. The Human Resources vacancies have now all been filled and the Commission has given priority to the completion of the full schedule of outstanding EQIA'S by March 2008.

Section 4: Training

Outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision, numbers attending, and conclusions from any training evaluations.

- The HR Manager attended Equality Commission briefing session on the new Disability Legislation and on Disability Action Plans
- The HR Manager attended a Disability Action Seminar
- 17-11-2006 Management team briefing session on Section 75
- September 2006 3 refresher Section 75 briefing session for staff

The Commission conducts Follow-up Evaluations on training programmes to assess effectiveness.

The management team review the attainment of training objectives at their meetings.

Section 5: Communication

Outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the statutory duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.

Communication is central to promoting equality in BHC. It is important to the organisation, to disseminate information and provide support where necessary to ensure busy staff are made aware of obligations and good practice. Equally it is important that customers are aware of how the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations is incorporated into BHC's services and activities.

The Chief Executive, Chairman and members of the Board are committed to the Equality and Good Relations agenda.

BHC's commitment to equality has been communicated in a number of ways.

- Development and implementation of a training strategy for all staff on Equality and Good Relations
- Distribution of a guide on the Equality Scheme to all staff including new recruits
- The emphasis placed on the statutory duties within BHC's current and new Strategic Development Plan
- The commitments placed in relation to the Equality Scheme and the role of BHC in the wider community as set out in the Corporate Plan
- BHC's commitment to and progress in meeting the obligations of the Equality Scheme which is set out in the Annual Report; a document distributed to all stakeholders and which is available publicly via the website
- The establishment of a key section on Equality in the BHC website with easy downloads of key equality documents.

- Internal staff meetings

Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis

Outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research.

Outline any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75.

- Staff monitoring in relation to fair employment and gender
- Paper presented annually to the Remuneration Committee and to the main Board on Diversity in the workplace and on the profile of the workforce

Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services

Detail any initiatives/steps taken during the year to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.

- Existing arrangements maintained – provision of information in accessible formats, however no requests were received
- All new capital projects take into account the need to accommodate people with disabilities

Section 8: Complaints

- Identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:
 - received by the authority;
 - resolved by the authority (including how this achieved);

- which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;
- which were referred to the Equality Commission.

No complaints received

Section 9: Consultation and Engagement

Provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.

- In March 2007, BHC formalised a Corporate Responsibility (CR) Strategy with the purpose of engaging positively and actively with Stakeholders, Customers and the wider Community. The BHC Board of Commissioners expressly requested the Executive align the CR strategy to the Statutory Duties under Section 75
- In 2007, the focus for the organisation centred on the Community dimension. BHC sought to: -
 - Reach out and engage with the Community
 - Provide help in terms of both time and Build bridges to education and training

Examples of initiatives already underway :-

- Working with Sailortown and the Dockers Club on Community Initiatives
- Provision of venue, branding materials and hospitality for Young at Art's 10th Birthday Launch of the Children's Festival in the Harbour Office
- A proactive approach was taken to entering into meaningful consultation with a range of the representative groups and attempts are ongoing to encourage participation in discussions relating to the promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations

Section 10: The Good Relations Duty

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.

- The Senior Executive Team Adopted a Good Relations Policy in March 2007 meeting the target of fulfilling a strategic objective for 2007
- BHC's CEO is a long-standing supporter and contributor to Business in the Community. He was recently awarded the honour of being made HRH Prince Charles' Ambassador for Corporate Responsibility
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Section 11: Additional Comments

Please provide any additional information/comments

- The BHC consultation list will be reviewed and updated in the near future
- BHC will continue to maintain contact with local community groups and will work with the local community to promote social and economic development
- In developing the business plan for the incoming year Equality and Good Relations targets will be set and monitored by the management team and the Commissioners