

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME REPORT

This report covers the activities and outcomes we achieved during the first year of our Disability Equality Scheme (DES). The DES was first published in December 2006. The DES and our progress is published on our web site and communicated to staff.

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a general duty on public authorities when carrying out their functions to promote disability equality and eliminate disability discrimination.

As one of the authorities covered by the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 the Agency is covered by both the Regulations' General Duty and Specific Duty.

General duty

This is the requirement on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Specific Duty

To support the Agency in meeting the obligations of the General Duty, the Specific Duty requires us to undertake a range of practical measures including:

- publishing a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) that includes within it an action plan;
- involving disabled people in producing the Scheme and action plan;
- demonstrating that we have taken the actions set out in the Scheme and achieved appropriate outcomes;
- reporting on progress; and
- reviewing and revising the Scheme.

As narrated in our DES our action plan captures how we support the requirements and essence of the General and Specific duties; this report narrates the progress we have made against our action plan with examples of what we have introduced and work still to be done.

In addition to the work we have done with the action plan we have also been involved with the following initiatives:-

The Abercorn Secondary School in Glasgow approached the Agency and asked if we could design and present a workshop on preparing for work for their 4th year students who were about to start a work experience programme; the school were keen to expose their students to the world of work to help prepare them for leaving school and finding and starting work. The Agency also supported the schools' health awareness week by demonstrating our Hand washing Kit. Abercorn is a school for children with Learning Difficulties. As a result of our involvement with the school we asked the school if they would like to design the Agency Christmas card. The student who designed the winning card received a gift voucher and the school was presented with a digital camera. Working with the school and the students brought benefits to

all involved; for the students we were able to expose them to positive work models in an open and friendly way with our staff gaining confidence and experience meeting and communicating with the students.

In Edinburgh we continue to work with Bonnington Resource Centre, Bonnington is a centre for adults with Learning Difficulties. This year we did a workshop with them covering Health & Safety and preparing for work. Other community work has involved working with nurseries in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the design and publishing of recipe cards and calendars.

Disability Forum

The Agency established a Disability Forum to develop our DES action plan; the Forum monitors progress and discusses disability issues. In July 2007 the Agency moved the location of its registration business unit in Glasgow from St.Vincent Street to Hanover House. This move became the main focus of discussions for the Forum during the year; it also discussed issues relating to work objectives, absence management and OHS referrals.

Review of Action Plan

The following action plan shows our progress during the year, recording whether actions have been completed, if they are ongoing, new or rescheduled to next year.



Registers of Scotland Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

Date of publication: 20 December 2006

Date last updated: 27 November 2007

Human Resources Directorate

(Incorporating Personnel, Training & Staff Relations)

Year 1 (1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
To Impact Assess Agency policies	Select appropriate methodology	30/4/07	We selected Scotland's Government Impact Assessment Tool-kit
	Establish procedures and guidelines	31/5/07	Due to other work commitments this work was not completed in year 1; this is now an action for year 2, once in place we will progress our Impact Assessments, this will ensure that our policies and procedures are inclusive.
	Mainstream guidelines into the development of new policies	31/5/07	As mentioned this is a priority for year 2.
	Issue guidelines to Agency Project Managers so they can import guidelines into 'Prince' Management procedures	31/5/07	As mentioned this is a priority for year 2.



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
	Impact Assess four HR policies	31/10/07	As mentioned this is a priority for year 2.
Review outcomes from Recruitment process and report to HR Director	Record all relevant information for monitoring purposes	31/3/07	It has been agreed to extend this date to the end of the business year for formal reporting; we have assessed outcomes for the campaigns covering the first half of the business year. This is now an action for year 2.
Create Disability Equality Site on Agency Intranet (with support of Disability Forum)	<p>Launch site –</p> <p>Re-Launch Two Ticks Symbol</p> <p>Publish Good News Stories</p> <p>Publish examples of adjustments we have made</p>	30/3/07	<p>The updated site was posted on the Agency's Intranet. Our Disability Forum was asked for their views prior to publication, and their comments were incorporated into the updated site.</p> <p>Incorporated on new site</p> <p>Incorporated on new site – with staff being invited to share their experiences</p> <p>Incorporated on new site</p>



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
	<p>Develop & publish Frequently Asked Questions</p> <p>Develop points of contact and support both internally & externally</p>		<p>As this information is available elsewhere on the Intranet it has been decided to remove it as an action. However, we published guidance on the work of the Agency's contact officers.</p>
<p>Ensure Agency contact details are up to date</p>	<p>Names and locations of First Aiders, Evacuation Chair volunteers</p>	<p>31/1/07</p>	<p>Contact details checked on a monthly basis and updated as required. This procedure is now a standard process and ensures staff can have confidence in the information published on the Intranet.</p>
<p>Ensure sufficient numbers of First Aiders, Evacuation Chair volunteers are provided</p>			<p>First Aiders: We are classed as a low level risk environment; we have a ratio of 1 first aider for 50 staff which exceeds the number required. The First Aiders take part in continuous training and development. The Agency's Welfare Officer co-ordinates the provision of the Agency's First Aid service and notifies the Enterprise Risk manager of changes as well as Communications Section for the Intranet contact details to be updated.</p>



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
			<p>Evacuation Chair: The Health & Safety Adviser co-ordinates the evacuation chair volunteers and their training programme, they also review the numbers required following staff moves. When new volunteers are required a request is sent out to staff via the Intranet. Staff who would like to make use of the evacuation service are asked to contact the Health & Safety Adviser and existing users are asked to contact the Health & Safety Adviser to make them aware of any changes to their circumstances.</p>
<p>Ensure staff with access issues have up to date personal emergency egress plans (Peep) and that these are reviewed every six months</p>	<p>Staff with Peeps will be made aware of their responsibility to inform Staff Relations of any change in their requirements</p>	<p>31/5/07</p>	<p>The Health & Safety Adviser has updated all Peeps and has a programme to review every six months. When staff moves are undertaken staff are reminded to check the currency of their Peeps and staff who feel they would benefit from one are asked to contact the Health & Safety Adviser. Regular information is highlighted to staff in the quarterly Health & Safety</p>



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
			report published to staff.
<p>Explore options for the default font size for Agency paperwork and IT Network desktop to be increased (with support of Partnership Management Team)</p>		31/3/07	<p>Progress on this has been limited; initial discussions within the Partnership Management Team suggest the work in relation to the Network desktop would involve considerable investigation and regression testing if we were to explore this action; this brings into question the business benefits that would be realised by this. Currently users are able to customise elements of their font to show normal, large and extra large. Alternatively we could investigate with the small number of users who may benefit from a larger text size the use of additional software to achieve increased text size. It is recommended that we undertake an impact analysis of this action to identify the costs and business benefits and that this be progressed by our Business Change Team. Consequently this is an action for continuation in the next action Plan.</p>



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
To provide all CSC and HR staff with Disability Awareness Training		31/5/07	This training is scheduled to take place in January and February 2008. Capability Scotland are the training provider for these courses, they have delivered similar training for us in the past and provided training on developing a Disability Equality Scheme for our Disability Forum. This training will cover the 'Social Model', Best Practice in Interacting with Disabled People and Attitudes Towards Disabled People. This will help equip our staff with the confidence and understanding required to provide a good quality service to disabled people.
Provide training to managers on Disability awareness & Health & Safety		30/6/07	The procurement of this training is currently being progressed. We will extend this date as an action for year 2.
Confirm all disabled staff have equal access to training and that training records can capture this information (with	Discuss options with BT and HR (Records)	28/9/07	Training Section record requests for training from all staff. We have been able to check that training requests from disabled staff have been completed or have been scheduled. At the



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
support of BT)			moment this has to be a manual check as our software is not able to report on requests and outcomes. We will continue to manually check until systems can provide this for us.
Explore options for secure storage of essential medication (with support of the Disability Forum)		31/3/07	Preliminary investigations have uncovered that this is not as straightforward as we had expected. The Disability Forum had concerns about the integrity of medications stored and confidentiality of staff accessing medications where other members of staff are also storing their medication. To date we have been able to offer workarounds for staff who require storage within a temperature controlled environment. Should there be an increase in the numbers of staff who require this facility we will progress this.
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business activities are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/07	Considered



Human Resources

(Incorporating Personnel, Training & Staff Relations)

Year 2 (1 December 2007 – 30 November 2008)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Review outcomes from year 1 and identify actions for this year		1/12/07	Paper presented to the November meeting of the Executive Management Team, comments on the content collated, with the updated version published on the Intranet & RoS website.
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business activities are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/08	
Review outcomes from Recruitment process and report to HR Director	Record all relevant information for monitoring purposes	31/3/08	
To complete the Impact Assessment of HR policies	Establish procedures and guidelines Mainstream guidelines into the development of new policies Issue guidelines to Agency Project Managers so they can import guidelines into 'Prince' Management	31/5/08 31/5/08	



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
	procedures		
	Impact Assess remaining HR policies	1/12/08	
Explore options for the default font size for Agency paperwork and IT Network desktop to be increased (with support of Business Change Team		31/7/08	
To provide all CSC and HR staff with Disability Awareness Training		31/3/08	
Provide training to managers on Disability Awareness & Health & Safety		30/5/08	
Look at options for developing Disability Awareness for staff		30/7/08	
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/08	
Update Disability Equality Site on Agency Intranet		31/10/08	



Human Resources

(Incorporating Personnel, Training & Staff Relations)

Year 3 (1 December 2008 – 30 November 2009)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business performance are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/09	
Update Disability Equality Site on Agency Intranet		31/10/09	
Review outcomes from Recruitment campaigns and report to HR Director	Record all relevant information for monitoring purposes	31/3/09	
To review progress and prepare feedback for the Managing Director's 6 month review		15/5/09	



Communications & Customer Services Directorate

Year 1 (1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Progress training for all Customer Service Centre (CSC) staff in handling enquiries from disabled customers (with support of Training Section)		31/7/07	This training is scheduled to take place in January and February 2008. Capability Scotland are the training provider for these courses, they have delivered similar training for us in the past and provided training on developing a Disability Equality Scheme for our Disability Forum. This training will cover the 'Social Model', Best Practice in Interacting with Disabled People and Attitudes Towards Disabled People. This will equip our staff with the confidence and understanding required to provide a good quality service to disabled people.
Review contents of the CSC Questionnaire and include questions about accessing our services and participation in market research (with support of	Review information provided, and respond to comments	31/1/07	The CSC questionnaire has been updated.



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
the Disability Forum)			
Enable our CSC customers to complete CSC questionnaire online	Record and respond to feedback	13/7/07	It is not yet available for completion online but is being progressed. This is now an action for year 2.
To establish contact with the Law Society of Scotland's Equality Advisory Group to discuss how the profession transacts and communicates with the Agency		31/5/07	Allan Jenkins, Account Manager, has made contact and had discussion with Neil Stevenson at the Law Society. Information on their Equality and Diversity Strategy has been obtained.
Produce large print version of our Multi – Language Information leaflet		31/3/07	This is now available.
Evaluate the effectiveness of the signage within the Customer Service Centres (with support of Facilities Management)		31/5/07	Facilities Management has reviewed signage and updated it where necessary. Signage will be reviewed during any refurbishment of the CSCs.
Complete an access audit of the Agency's external web site	Arrange for external accreditation	29/6/07	This is on hold pending the introduction of a Content Management System and the rebuild of our website. This will form an action for year 2.
Review layout of the customer area in George Square CSC & provide new	Install new seating to offer a variety of options to our	29/6/07	This is ongoing. The actual layout of the CSCs is under review with a reorganisation



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
seating in both CSCs (with support of Facilities Management and the Disability Forum)	customers Review location of terminals for easy access for customers		planned. Seating and terminals will form part of the review. This will form an action for year 2.
Explore options for establishing links with representatives of disabled groups	Progress with our Market Research Company	30/11/07	Our market research company manages a disabled group for Capability Scotland. We have accessed into this to recruit disabled mystery shoppers.
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/07	
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business activities are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/07	Considered



Communications & Customer Services Directorate

Year 2 (1 December 2007 – 30 November 2008)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Progress training for all Customer Service Centre (CSC) staff in handling enquiries from disabled customers (with support of Training Section)		31/3/08	
Complete an access audit of the Agency's external web site	Arrange for external accreditation after the introduction of a Content Management System and rebuild of our website	31/10/08	
Enable our CSC customers to complete CSC questionnaire online	Record and respond to feedback	13/7/08	
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business performance are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/08	
Review contents of the CSC questionnaire to assess and capture appropriate information		29/2/08	
Review layout of the customer area in George Square CSC & provide new seating in both CSCs (with	Install new seating to offer a variety of options to our customers Review location of	29/6/08	



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
support of Facilities Management and the Disability Forum)	terminals for easy access for customers		
Consider the outcomes from the Mystery Shopping Report along with Facilities Management		30/5/08	
Continue to explore options for establishing links with representatives of disabled groups	Progress with our Market Research Company	30/11/08	
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/08	
Explore options for research following analysis of CSC questionnaire	These will be held when there's a sufficient number of participants selected from customers to our CSCs and our external exhibitions	30/9/08	



Communications & Customer Services Directorate

Year 3 (1 December 2008 – 30 November 2009)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business activities are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/09	
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/09	



Finance & Business Planning Directorate
(Incorporating Facilities Management and Procurement)
Year 1 (1 December 2006 – 30 November 2007)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Ensure access issues in our shared accommodation buildings is raised with the Landlords (with support of the Disability Forum)	Discuss with the Disability Forum	30/7/07	A number of issues raised e.g. mystery shopping experience at Edinburgh Customer Service Centre (CSC). Specific proposals put to Glasgow CSC landlord following recommendations from our access audit were rejected. We will continue to highlight any access issues with the landlords of our shared accommodation.
Ensure common access areas are clear and unrestricted		Ongoing	FM continues to use its best efforts to achieve this including on going monitoring of the Agency's estate.
Evaluate the effectiveness of the signage within the CSCs (with support of Customer Relations)		31/5/07	No issues relating to signage were raised by the mystery shopping exercises. Signage will be considered as part of the redesign of the CSCs.
On receipt of guidance from the Scottish Government on how to incorporate disability equality into the procurement process we will review our procedures	No Guidance published as yet.	Date will depend on when guidance is received	We have included the following in all our Terms and Conditions <i>'The Contractor shall not commit an act of discrimination within the meaning and</i>



Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
to ensure they commit our suppliers to comply with all relevant equality legislation			<i>scope of the Race Relations Act 1976, The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, the Equality Act 2006 or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof relating to discrimination in employment. The Contractor shall take all reasonable steps to ensure and secure the observance of the provisions of Condition 13 by all servants, employees, agents and consultants of the Contractor and all sub-Contractors.'</i>
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/07	
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business performance are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/07	Considered



Finance & Business Planning Directorate
(Incorporating Facilities Management and Procurement)
Year 2 (1 December 2007 – 30 November 2008)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business performance are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/08	
Ensure access issues in our shared accommodation buildings is raised with the Landlords (with support of the Disability Forum)	Discuss with the Disability Forum	30/7/08	
Consider the outcomes from the Mystery Shopping Report along with Customer Services		30/5/08	
Ensure common access areas are clear and unrestricted		Ongoing	
Evaluate the effectiveness of the signage within the CSCs (with support of Customer Relations) Signage will be considered		31/5/08	



as part of the redesign of the CSCs			
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/08	

Finance & Business Planning Directorate
(Incorporating Facilities Management and Procurement)
Year 3 (1 December 2008 – 30 November 2009)

Objective	Milestones	Target Date	Progress
Ensure any objectives in this Scheme that impact on business performance are recorded in the Agency's Business Plan		15/1/09	
To review progress and prepare feedback for the 6 month review		15/5/09	