

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Authority 2012 – 2013 Annual Progress Report on:

- **Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and**
- **Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006**

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the **Section 75 statutory duties** from *1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 (Part A)*.

This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of **Section 49A of the DDO** from the *1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 (Part B)*.

Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is **submitted** electronically (by completing this template) and in hardcopy, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his / her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive to the Commission **by 31 August 2013**.

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

Name of public authority

Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS)

Equality Officer

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Part A: Section 75 Annual Progress Report 2012 - 2013

Executive Summary

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

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) was established in 2005 by the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 and designated as a public authority for the purposes of S75 compliance in 2006. Since that time, the Service has changed from a centrally based organisation to a regionally based operation in line with the recommendations of the Criminal Justice Review.

Regional offices have been established in Londonderry, known as Foyle Chambers, Belfast (which also serves as the headquarters of the PPS), Ballymena, Lisburn, Omagh and Newry. The provision of regional offices has allowed the Service to better assess and address local issues through increased accessibility to local community and voluntary organisations.

Following the devolution of policing and justice matters in April 2010, the PPS was established as a non-ministerial government department. In accordance with Section 42(1) of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 the functions of the Director are exercised by him independently of any other person.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act. It must be noted that matters relating to the prosecution of offences are excluded from Section 75 by Section 38 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002.

Approved Equality Scheme

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland approved the PPS's revised Equality Scheme on 28 March 2012, following a period of consultation between 8 July 2011 and 7 October 2011.

Corporate Activity

The PPS Corporate Plan for the period 2011-2014 was published in June 2011.

The Corporate Plan is supported by Annual Business Plans which set out PPS priorities for the year, the measures and milestones we will use to assess our progress and the risks we will have to manage in order to ensure that we deliver. The Annual Business Plan for 2012-13 was published in May 2012.

The Annual Business Plan contained commitments to meet Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Action Plan objectives for 2012-13; submit annual DDA/s75 review to Equality Commission; and meet Equality Scheme/Action Plan objectives for 2012-13. Performance against these objectives / milestones and other corporate milestones such as the Intermediaries Scheme is outlined at Section 1 below.

Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG)

The Service's Equality Officer is a member of the PPS Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG), chaired by the PPS Equality Champion. The EDSG is a group consisting of staff representing a range of business areas within the PPS. The role of the EDSG is to provide assurances to the Director and Management Board that the PPS complies with all its statutory obligations in relation to equality and diversity and DDA.

The EDSG has reviewed the role of 'Equality Driver' within the Service, which had been established to improve communication in respect of equality and diversity issues. As a result of the review, several new Equality Drivers have been nominated and a briefing on roles and responsibilities has taken place. In a new development, quarterly meetings of the Equality Drivers will also be arranged in order to share good practice across the various PPS regions and sections.

Section 75 Outcomes / Impacts

A number of measures within the PPS Equality Action Plan address key inequalities. For example, one of the measures was to review the services provided to victims and witnesses, including consideration of the GB Witness Care Model and other alternative unified service provision models. All Section 75 categories were affected.

A Project Board was established with representatives from DOJ, VSNI, PPS, PSNI and NICTS and a Project Plan produced to take forward the new Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU) Project. An initial pilot was established in November 2012, covering the Magistrates', Youth and County Courts in Belfast. Pilot arrangements in the Belfast Crown Court were subsequently implemented in April 2013.

The VWCU initiative provides a number of clear benefits, for example:

- It provides for a single point of contact for victims and witnesses, via their preferred means.
- VWCU staff conduct a three stage needs assessment to identify particular needs.
- Victims and witnesses are provided with information regarding the progress of their case.
- The VWCU arranges victim/witness attendance at court and can direct people to appropriate support services throughout what can be a stressful process.

An evaluation of the VWCU concept will be conducted to refine procedures, prior to implementation across Northern Ireland in early 2014.

Screening / Consultations

The Service continued to screen policies for equality and good relations impacts. During 2012-13 equality screening exercises resulted in four policies being screened out.

The Service also consulted on a number of policies throughout the year.

Training

Equality and Diversity remained a key training priority for the Service during 2012-13.

During the year, 22 staff completed Diversity training (classroom and on-line based training); ninety percent of current staff have now completed Diversity training. An e-learning training platform is currently being sourced to enable staff to undertake mandatory 'refresher' training on equality and diversity at 3 yearly intervals. Classroom training will remain in place for new entrants to PPS.

Opportunities were also taken throughout the year to raise awareness of the Service's Section 75 commitments, including the new Equality Scheme/Action Plan, for example via the staff brief, e-mail and intranet.

Communication

The main channel for communicating information to service users on the PPS's Section 75 commitments is the dedicated equality section on the PPS website at <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Equality-5023.html>.

The site contains background information on our Section 75 commitments, including our new Equality Scheme (plus an Easy Read version); consultation summary reports; the Annual Progress Reports; Equality Action Plan; PPS Users Guide on Consultation; Disability Action Plan; Equality and Human Rights Screening Forms; Equality Screening Reports; and Current Consultations. The site will continue to be updated and expanded with relevant information.

During 2012-13, the Equality Officer continued to circulate information and provide updates on equality and diversity issues / progress on the implementation of actions set out within the Equality Scheme / Action Plan and Disability Action Plan. Such updates were provided to staff, the Service's Equality and Diversity Steering Group, the Senior Management Group and Management Board as appropriate.

The PPS Staff Brief, launched in June 2011, is a key tool for the dissemination of information. It is published every two months and used as the basis for team meetings throughout the PPS. Staff also have an

opportunity to raise issues for inclusion in the Brief and to provide feedback.

Data Collection and Analysis

The PPS has maintained its research capacity, focusing primarily on the development of internal (staff) and external (stakeholder) surveys such as the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey.

Other data collected included information provided through membership of, and engagement with, a large number of interagency groups and through other meetings with external voluntary and community organisations; complaint follow-up questionnaires; and the monitoring arrangements established to record the numbers and types of outreach events which the PPS has delivered or supported.

Over the coming months the PPS will conduct a postal survey of victims and witnesses who have been in contact with the new Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU). At various stages a short follow-up questionnaire will be issued by staff asking victims and witnesses to provide feedback on the services and information provided. All respondents will be asked to provide key S75 information (e.g. gender, age etc.).

Information Provision, Access to Information and Services

The Service has undertaken a number of initiatives / steps during the year to improve access to services. These have included the review of correspondence to victims and witnesses; implementation of the new Victim and Witness Care Unit; provision of quarterly updates to consultees; reviewing and updating its S75 consultation list; and the provision of information in accessible formats.

Complaints

The Service did not receive any Section 75 complaints during 2012-13.

Consultation and Engagement

Under the umbrella of the PPS community outreach strategy, senior staff across all regions and business areas participate in events throughout

the year. The broad aim is to provide a clearer understanding of the work of the PPS and the role of the prosecutor, via engagement with the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, politicians, schools and universities, health professionals and the wider public.

The Service continued to support the Employee Support Volunteering Programme through Business in the Community, by participating in a hospice shop challenge, ongoing fundraising for Marie Curie and other events such as the redecoration of a women's shelter.

The Service participated in community events such as MELA and Belfast Pride.

The Service also continued to hold information events at which disability equality speakers, such as Action on Hearing Loss addressed key staff within the organisation, with the aim of increasing the knowledge and understanding of the attitudinal barriers facing staff and/or service users.

The Service also produced, in conjunction with colleagues in the Department of Justice, a 'PPS Users Guide on Consultation'. This is aimed at all staff working in the criminal justice system. Its purpose is to provide staff with guidance in an accessible form which will assist in promoting good practice in the crucial area of stakeholder consultation.

- **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?**

During 2013-14 the Service will continue to monitor progress on the agreed objectives detailed in the new Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan for 2011-2014 and the Disability Action Plan (DAP) which covers the three year period to 31 March 2014. Copies of these documents are available on the PPS Website at <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Equality-5023.html>.

The Service will develop new Equality and Disability Action Plans to take effect from 1 April 2014.

The Service will carry out a review of court witness expenses during 2013-14. This review was deferred from 2012-13 to allow the PPS

Finance Team to focus on the detailed preparatory work needed to join Account NI and to implement new arrangements for the payment of fees to external counsel. It is recognised that some groups, for example people with certain types of disability may require more support than other witnesses in order to be able to attend court. Issues such as this will be explored as part of the review.

The Service will continue to screen policies for equality and good relations impacts and carry out full equality impact assessments as appropriate.

The Service will continue to prioritise Equality and Diversity training during 2013-14, for example Disability Awareness Training.

The PPS will continue to develop its research capacity, focusing primarily on the development of internal (staff) and external (stakeholder) surveys, for example the VWCU postal survey and complaint follow-up questionnaires.

The PPS website will be updated regularly with relevant information, for example, Annual Progress Reports and quarterly equality screening reports to consultees.

The Service will continue to participate in outreach events and activities and will play an active role in various forums, groups, interagency groups etc.

The Service will continue to hold information events at which disability equality speakers will address key staff within the organisation with the aim of increasing the knowledge and understanding of the attitudinal barriers facing staff and/or service users. Equality Drivers will be encouraged to organise such events locally on a regular basis.

The Service will continue to support the Employee Support Volunteering Programme through Business in the Community.

Staff will be updated regularly on progress or developments within the PPS to fulfill the Section 75 obligations and the Disability Discrimination Order 2006 duties through, for example, regional 'roadshows' and the Staff Brief.

On an annual basis the Service will continue to monitor access to information and services across all of its functions, to ensure that equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

The Service's Equality and Diversity Steering Group and Equality Drivers will continue to meet on a regular basis.

The Equality Officer will review and update the Service's Section 75 consultation list annually and on request.

Planned Policy Development

Work has progressed in the development of policies in relation to Human Trafficking, Prosecuting Cases Involving the Use of Social Media and a revised Code for Prosecutors, with a view to their launch during 2013.

It is also intended to develop policies relating to Youth Offenders, Cases involving People with Mental Health Problems and Alternatives to Prosecution during 2013-14 or as soon as relevant legislation is implemented.

An updated Victims and Witnesses policy will also be published for consultation.

New / Revised Equality Schemes

- **Please indicate whether this reporting period applies to a new or revised scheme and (if appropriate) when the scheme was approved?**

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland approved the PPS's revised Equality Scheme on 28 March 2012, following a period of consultation (between 8 July 2011 and 7 October 2011). Consequently, this report refers to the new Equality Scheme.

Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties

- **Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting *equality and good relations objectives*, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2012/13.**

The PPS Corporate Plan for the period 2011-2014 was published in June 2011.

The Corporate Plan is supported by Annual Business Plans which set out PPS priorities for the year, the measures and milestones we will use to assess our progress and the risks we will have to manage in order to ensure that we deliver. The Annual Business Plan for 2012-13 was published in May 2012.

There are 4 strategic priorities for the Service. These are:

- Delivering an efficient and effective prosecution service;
- Building the confidence and trust of the community we serve;
- Strengthening our capability to deliver; and
- Building the capability of our people.

Strategic priority 2 “building the confidence and trust of the community we serve” includes objectives to “provide an enhanced service to victims and witnesses” and “to engage effectively with stakeholders and the wider community”. Performance against these objectives / milestones is outlined below.

Strategic Priority 2:

Building the confidence and trust of the community we serve

2012-13 Objective / Milestone	Outcome
Objective 2.1 To provide an enhanced service to victims and witnesses	
- Meet PPS VWCU objectives for 2012-13	Achieved

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet Victim and Witness Task Force objectives for 2012-13 - Publish updated Victims and Witnesses Policy for consultation - Revised Court Witness Compensation Scheme in place - Implement Intermediaries service for vulnerable witnesses 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Deferred to 2013-14</p> <p>Not Achieved</p> <p>Deferred to 2013-14</p>
<p>Objective 2.2 To engage effectively with stakeholders and the wider community</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement agreed actions arising from the revised 2012-2014 Communication Strategy and Action Plan - Meet DDA Action Plan objectives for 2012-13 - Submit annual DDA/s75 review to Equality Commission. - Meet Equality Scheme/Action Plan objectives for 2012-13 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Partially Achieved</p>

Disability Action Plan

The Service's current Disability Action Plan (DAP) covers the three year period to 31 March 2014. The plan sets out a range of actions through which the PPS will seek to implement its disability duties in areas such as communication, partnership working and staff training. Issues addressed during the year included a review of the correspondence issued to victims and witnesses and publication of a guide to stakeholder consultation. However several matters, such as a planned review of special measures, were deferred until 2013-14. This was mainly due to the availability of resources.

PPS Equality Scheme/Action Plan

A new PPS Equality Scheme, which sets out how the PPS proposes to fulfill its obligations under s.75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, was approved by the Equality Commission on 28 March 2012. The Service has also published a detailed equality action plan covering the period to the end of the 2013-14 financial year. Key objectives achieved during 2012-13 included the launch of the Victim and Witness Care Unit Pilot. Any outstanding issues, such as the provision of training for PPS staff in respect of mental health, will be addressed during 2013-14.

The Annual Progress Report on section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006 was sent to the Equality Commission in September 2012.

Copies of the Equality Scheme, Action Plan and Disability Action Plan are available on the PPS website at <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Equality-5023.html>

Other Corporate Milestones

Victim and Witness Care Units

Improving services and support is vital to building effective relationships between victims and witnesses, the PPS and the criminal justice system.

A key initiative in this area is the implementation of new Victim and Witness Care Units (VWCUs) which are being developed with PSNI and partners, including the Department of Justice and Victim Support NI. The purpose of the VWCU model is to improve the experience of victims and witnesses by, for example, providing a single point of contact and identifying particular needs at key stages throughout the prosecution process.

An initial pilot was established in November 2012, covering the Magistrates', Youth and County Courts in Belfast. Pilot arrangements in the Belfast Crown Court were subsequently implemented in April 2013. An evaluation will be conducted to refine procedures, prior to implementation across Northern Ireland, in early 2014.

Victim and Witness Task Force

The PPS is a member of the inter-agency Victim and Witness Taskforce (VWTF) and has contributed to the new five year 'Making a Difference' Strategy.

PPS Victims and Witnesses Policy

A planned revision of the PPS Victims and Witnesses Policy was deferred to 2013-14. This was to allow for a review of the policy on the 'Giving of Reasons for No Prosecution', and also for the consideration of any lessons learned from the Belfast Victim and Witness Care Unit Pilot. It will also enable the implementation of new developments, including the Victim Charter, the Victim Personal Statement Scheme and the EU Victims Directive.

Court Witness Expenses

The Service will carry out a review of court witness expenses during 2013-14. This review was deferred from 2012-13 to allow the PPS Finance Team to focus on the detailed preparatory work needed to join Account NI and to implement new arrangements for the payment of fees to external counsel.

Intermediaries Scheme

Work was advanced during the year to plan for the introduction of a new special measure, Registered Intermediaries. The intermediaries will assist witnesses and defendants who have communication difficulties and who may otherwise be unable to give their best evidence.

A copy of the PPS's Annual Report and Resource Accounts 2012-13 is available on the PPS Website at <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Annual-Reports---5077.html>

Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG)

The Service's Equality Officer is a member of the PPS Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG), chaired by the PPS Equality Champion. The EDSG is a group consisting of staff representing key

business areas within the PPS. The role of the EDSG is to provide assurances to the Director and Management Board that the PPS complies with all its statutory obligations in relation to equality and diversity and DDA.

Equality Drivers are also in place within the PPS. Their role is to promote and raise awareness of Equality and Diversity matters at Region/Section level within the PPS and to act as points of communication for the Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) and the Equality Officer.

During the year the EDSG has reviewed the role of Equality Driver to include a broader remit, such as playing a role in the development and monitoring of local Community Outreach plans. Several new Equality Drivers have been nominated and a briefing on roles and responsibilities has taken place. A quarterly meeting of the Equality Drivers will be arranged to improve communication and share good practice across the PPS regions and sections.

Section 2: Examples of Section 75 Outcomes / Impacts

Given the renewed focus of Section 75 aiming to achieve more tangible impacts and outcomes and addressing key inequalities; please report in this section how the authority's work has impacted on individuals across the Section 75 categories. Consider narrative in the following structure:

- ***Describe* the action measure /section 75 process undertaken.**
- ***Who* was affected across the Section 75 categories?**
- ***What impact* it achieved?**

- **Please give examples of changes to policies or practices using *screening or EQIA*, which have resulted in outcomes or impacts for individuals. If the change was a result of an EQIA please indicate this and also reference the title of the relevant EQIA.**

N/A

- **Please give examples of *outcomes or impacts on individuals* as a result of any *action measures* undertaken as part of your Section 75 action plan:**

One of the measures within the PPS's Equality Action Plan was to review the services provided to victims and witnesses, including consideration of the GB Witness Care Model and other alternative unified service provision models. All Section 75 categories were affected.

Within the new Victim and Witness Care Unit model, all victims and witnesses would benefit from the provision of a single point of contact through partnership working. It would also result in increased witness attendance at court and increased satisfaction levels with the level of support received during the process. Through an early and formal Witness Needs Assessment, specific needs of victims and witnesses would be identified and addressed to assist them in attending court and providing their evidence.

A Project Board was established with representatives from DOJ, VSNI, PPS, PSNI and NICTS and a Project Plan produced to take forward the Victim and Witness Care Unit Project. An initial pilot was established in November 2012, covering the Magistrates', Youth and County Courts in Belfast. Pilot arrangements in the Belfast Crown Court were subsequently implemented in April 2013. An evaluation will be conducted to refine procedures, prior to implementation across Northern Ireland, in early 2014.

A key inequality previously identified was that advocates appointed to Junior and Senior Counsel Panel were not allocated an equal share of available work. All S75 categories were potentially affected. A new Prosecution Fee Scheme was implemented in November 2012 and will result in increased transparency regarding fees paid to Counsel briefed by the PPS.

A refresh has also been taken forward, via an open competition, of junior and senior panel counsel in November 2012. Monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure a fair distribution of briefs.

Measures completed during 2012-13 are listed below:

Key Inequality identified	Action Measure	Performance Indicator/Outcome	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
<p>2. Current arrangements for liaison between PPS staff and victims and witnesses are not always fully effective in dealing with their concerns or in gaining their confidence in the process</p>	<p>A corporate review of services provided to victims and witnesses will be completed which will include consideration of the GB Witness Care Unit Model and other alternative unified service provision models:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Joint Project Team will be established with PSNI and a Project Plan produced 	<p>It is expected that all victims and witnesses would benefit from the provision of a single point of contact through partnership working. This should result in increased witness attendance at court and increased satisfaction levels with the level of support received during the process.</p> <p>Through an early and formal Witness Needs Assessment, specific needs of victims and witnesses will be identified and addressed to assist them in attending court and providing their evidence.</p>	<p>Senior Assistant Director (Regions)</p> <p>By 31/07/12</p>
Key Inequality identified	Action Measure	Performance Indicator/Outcome	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
<p>3. The processes and criteria for appointment to the current Panels of Junior and Senior Counsel instructed by the PPS may not have provided sufficiently broad access of opportunity to advocates to work on behalf of the prosecution</p>	<p>Launch of appointment process to select new Panel members incorporating any revised selection criteria.</p>	<p>Advertising will meet EU Part B (legal services) obligations. Broader advertising will ensure as wide an applicant pool as possible is targeted from across the Section 75 groups</p> <p>New Panels appointed from pool of applicants</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>New Panel appointed by end November 2012</p>

Key Inequality identified	Action Measure	Performance Indicator/Outcome	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
<p>4. Advocates appointed to the current Panels of Junior and Senior Counsel may not all be assigned an appropriate amount of the work available</p>	<p>Introduction of revised procedures and clarity of process put in place for staff responsible for the allocation of briefs – mini Panels established in each Region.</p> <p>Monthly reports presented to Senior Management Group and Management Board re: financial and operational performance.</p> <p>Introduction of a new Prosecution Fee Scheme.</p>	<p>All Panel Members are offered appropriate briefs which will ensure a fairer distribution of work during the life of a Panel in line with briefing guidance issued to staff</p> <p>Increased transparency regarding fees paid to Counsel briefed by the PPS</p>	<p>Senior Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)</p> <p>Introduced during 2011 and will be subject to ongoing monitoring</p> <p>By 01/11/12</p>

A copy of the Equality Action Plan is available on the PPS website at <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Equality-5023.html>

- **Please give examples of *outcomes or impacts* on individuals as a result of any other Section 75 processes e.g. consultation or monitoring:**

The PPS consulted on the following during the period from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013:

- Draft Equality Action Plan / Community Outreach Strategy / Making a Complaint about the PPS which issued on 31 January 2012 and closed on 20 April 2012.
- PPS Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Human Trafficking which issued on 8 June and which was subsequently extended, closing in December 2012.

Copies of these documents are available under the 'Consultation Archive' section of the PPS Website www.ppsni.gov.uk .

Draft Equality Action Plan / Community Outreach Strategy / Making a Complaint about the PPS

A number of detailed comments were received as part of these consultation exercises. Careful consideration was given to the comments raised and a number were actioned within the documents. A summary of the comments raised together with the PPS's response is available on the PPS Website.

PPS Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Human Trafficking

A new policy statement on the handling of cases involving human trafficking was published for consultation in June 2012. This policy statement addresses the significant degree of public concern about this class of offending. Release of the final policy document was deferred due to the number of competing demands on the Policy and Information Section, including liaison with CJINI and a range of new initiatives brought forward by the Department of Justice. This will now be published later in 2013.

Section 3: Screening

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

For those authorities that have started issuing of screening reports in year; this section may be completed in part by appending, to this annual report, a copy of all screening reports issued within the reporting period.

Where screening reports have not been issued, for part or all of the reporting period, please complete the table below:

Title of policy subject to screening	What was the <i>screening decision</i>? E.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA...	Were any <i>concerns raised about screening by consultees</i>; including the Commission?	Is policy being subject to EQIA? Yes/No If yes indicate timeline for assessment.
PPS Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Human Trafficking	Screened out	None	No
Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy	Screened out	None	No
Public Prosecution Service Fees Scheme	Screened out	None	No
Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan	Screened out	None	No

Section 4: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2012/13, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2013/14.

- EQIA Timetable: April 2012 - March 2013

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 2013 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
Recruitment and Use of Panel Counsel	Step 5, moving to Step 6	<p>This EQIA considers the appointment process and the constitution of the two Panels of junior and senior independent Counsel that are called upon to work on PPS cases. It also considers the policy around the allocation of such available work amongst these Panel members since the Panels were established.</p> <p>Revised arrangements as set out in the EQIA remain in place.</p> <p>A refresh of the scheme has been taken forward, via an open competition, with new panels of junior and senior counsel appointed in November 2012.</p> <p>Due to the number of competing demands on the Policy and Information Section this EQIA will now be finalised later in 2013.</p>

Where the EQIA timetable for 2012/13 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.

None were scheduled within the 2011-12 Annual Report.

- Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities: April 2012- March 2013**

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
NONE APPLICABLE		

Please outline any proposals, arising from the authority’s monitoring for adverse impacts, for revision of the policy to achieve better outcomes the relevant equality groups:

N/A.

- 2013-14 EQIA Timetable**

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2013 – March 2014	Revised or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
NONE CURRENTLY SCHEDULED		

Section 5: Training

- **Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties / Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.**

Equality and Diversity remained a key training priority for the Service during 2012-13. PPS staff are NI Civil Servants, recruited through the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) process. The Centre for Applied Learning (CAL) is contracted to provide a range of generic training courses to the whole of the NICS.

The following training was provided during the year:

Training Course	Attendees
Diversity (Classroom)	19
Diversity (E-Learning)	3
Disability Awareness for Frontline Staff	10
Mindwise Wellbeing Seminar (DoJ)	5
Introduction to S75	1
Special Measures	47
Children's Evidence in Legal Proceedings	15
Registered Intermediaries	30
Vulnerable Witness Seminar	19
Communicating With People With Communication Impairments	1

Equality and Diversity training

During 2012-13, 22 staff completed Diversity training (classroom and on-line based training); ninety percent of current staff have now completed Diversity training. An e-learning training platform is currently being sourced to enable staff to undertake mandatory 'refresher' training on equality and diversity at 3 yearly intervals, with classroom training remaining in place for new entrants to PPS.

One staff member attended an Introduction to S75 training course provided by CAL.

Disability Awareness Training

In November 2012 EDSG members attended 'Disability Awareness Training from Frontline Staff', conducted by CAL, with a view to assess the effectiveness of the training for other PPS staff. Training options are currently being considered.

Vulnerable Witness Seminar

The DoJ hosted a seminar delivered by Voice UK, and a National Vulnerable Witness Adviser on 19th June 2012. This was a multi-agency event. A range of PPS staff including Regional Prosecutors, Crown Court staff, Community Liaison and nominated Prosecutors attended the seminar, which covered subjects relating to Vulnerable Witnesses.

Awareness Raising

Opportunities were also taken throughout the year to raise awareness of the Service's Section 75 commitments, including the new Equality Scheme/Action Plan (including quick guide and easy read version), summary of consultation responses, and Annual Progress Report for example via the staff brief, e-mail and intranet.

The PPS Staff Brief, launched in June 2011 is also a key tool. It is published every two months and used as the basis for team meetings throughout the PPS. Staff also have an opportunity to raise issues for inclusion in the Brief and to provide feedback.

Senior Management within the PPS present regional Roadshows on a regular basis throughout the year which all staff are expected to attend. The Roadshows are used to keep staff up to date with developments within the organisation at a corporate level, for example, to provide updates on the Victim and Witness Care Unit Pilot. The Roadshows will continue to be a valuable method of communicating with a large number of staff and will be utilised in 2013-14 to raise staff awareness.

Corporate Induction

No new entrants have attended the Corporate Induction Programme during this year as this programme is currently being reviewed. However corporate induction packs have been provided, including key policies in relation to areas such as ICT, S75, DDA, Equal Opportunities, Human Rights and Freedom of Information, which have been explained to all new staff at their initial induction session.

Section 6: Communication

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

External Communication

The main channel for communicating information to service users on the PPS's Section 75 commitments is the dedicated equality section on the PPS website at <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Equality-5023.html>.

The site contains background information on our Section 75 commitments, including our new Equality Scheme (plus an Easy Read version); consultation summary reports; the Annual Progress Reports; Equality Action Plan; PPS Users Guide on Consultation; Disability Action Plan; Equality and Human Rights Screening Forms; Equality Screening Reports; and Current Consultations.

The site will continue to be updated and expanded with relevant information, for example, further progress reports, EQIAs and others. Details of our textphone and a specific equality 'mailbox' have been provided in our new Equality Scheme, as well as names and direct contact details of the staff responsible within PPS for equality issues. A 'public consultations' area is also available on the website and is used to publicise policy consultations as they issue.

Equality Screening Reports to Section 75 consultees, providing information on all policy screening exercises, current, forthcoming and closed consultations, and EQIAs (if appropriate), are issued quarterly in line with the PPS's commitments within the new Equality Scheme. These reports and full screening documents are also made available on the PPS website. Consultees were also notified of the approval and publication of the new Equality Scheme and publication of the Equality Action Plan and consultation summary reports.

The Service issued its 2011-12 Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission in September 2012. This report includes progress on the actions contained within the Service's Equality and Disability Action Plans.

The PPS Communication Strategy recognises the need to develop systems to ensure that information is available in accessible formats, where it is appropriate and practicable to do so. Where necessary, the PPS will also consult with relevant interested parties. The PPS is fully committed to meeting its equality obligations and its communications will be timely, inclusive and informed.

A review of the PPS Media and Communications function, to include staffing and structures, as well as the PPS approach to communication was completed in June 2013 by DFP's Business Consultancy Service. These recommendations are currently being considered by the Management Board.

The PPS Section 75 Consultation List is reviewed and updated annually and on request throughout the course of the year.

Community Outreach

The PPS Community Outreach Strategy for 2012-2014 published in July 2012 includes a number of key milestones which the Service will seek to achieve over those three years in order to deliver the objectives of the strategy.

Over the course of 2012-13 there was a series of outreach events and activities across the PPS. These included:

- Meetings with victims and witnesses and victim and witness groups;
- Presentations to various groups within the CJSNI and to voluntary sector, community and minority groups such as NI Council for Ethnic Minorities, Domestic Violence Partnership and Women's Aid;
- Representation on many working groups both within the criminal justice system and outside agencies such as the Sexual Referral Centre Project Board, the Council for the Homeless and a cross border working group on the Mutual recognition of Penalty Points;
- Meetings with elected representatives such as MPs and MLAs;
- Presentations to prosecutors from other jurisdictions;

- Participation in Business in the Community initiatives such as the annual 'Hospice Shop Challenge' (in aid of Marie Curie) and redecorating a women's shelter;
- Participation in community events, such as MELA and Belfast Pride;
- Radio and television broadcasts and articles in newspapers and journals; and
- Facilitating visits by lawyers and students from the USA, Staffordshire and Leeds.

Internal Communication within the PPS

The staff intranet site has a dedicated equality section. This makes available our Annual Progress Report, Disability Action Plan, Equality Scheme/Action Plan, Section 75 Consultation List, minutes from the Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) and current consultations.

For staff in policy areas, who are involved in screening or equality impact assessments, the site provides other useful information on Section 75 implementation, together with links to other organisations' websites, (for example the Equality Commission, Participation Network), and specific equality publications and good practice guidance, such as the PPS User Guide to Stakeholder Consultation. There is also a dedicated area on the staff website for diversity issues. Staff are encouraged to provide ideas for inclusion on the site.

During 2012-13, the Equality Officer continued to circulate information and provide updates (for example on equality and diversity issues / progress on the implementation of actions set out within the Equality Scheme / Action Plan and Disability Action Plan) to staff, the Service's Equality and Diversity Steering Group, Senior Management Group and Management Board as appropriate. This was achieved via the PPS intranet, e-mail etc.

The PPS Staff Brief, launched in June 2011 is also a key tool. It is published every two months and used as the basis for team meetings throughout the PPS. Staff also have an opportunity to raise issues for inclusion in the Brief and to provide feedback.

On 23 May 2012 the Equality Officer provided the PPS People and Resources Sub-Committee with an overview of how the Service promotes Equality of Opportunity and how it complies with Section 75 statutory duties. A similar presentation will be provided to the Management Board over the coming months.

During the year, the Equality Officer also met with relevant staff to discuss Section 75 issues.

Section 7: Data Collection & Analysis

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

PPS Research

The PPS has maintained its research capacity, focusing primarily on the development of internal (staff) and external (stakeholder) surveys. The key surveys conducted during 2012-13 included the following:

- **Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey**

In January 2013, the PPS commissioned questions for inclusion in the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey, which is carried out by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). A total of seven questions were included in the survey to gauge public awareness of the PPS and its role. Just under seven-tenths (68%) of those who had heard of the PPS were very or fairly confident regarding the fairness and impartiality of the Service. This compared with 70% in 2012 and 67.5% in 2011. Confidence levels among Catholic and Protestant respondents in 2013 were at the same level (68%).

The results of the survey, which were published in April 2013, are being considered by the Management Board and will help to inform the development of PPS policy.

- **Informal Feedback**

PPS policy staff have developed a wide network of informal contacts through their membership of, and engagement with, a large number of interagency groups and through other meetings with external voluntary and community organisations. These contacts provide qualitative data to the team which is used to inform policy development on an ongoing

basis and is shared with other criminal justice partners where appropriate.

- **Complaint Follow-up questionnaire**

The PPS is committed to ensuring that the complaint handling arrangements are effective. Therefore on completion of each complaint case, a short follow-up questionnaire is sent to complainants asking them to provide feedback on the way their complaint was handled.

Monitoring is undertaken in a confidential way. All information provided is held securely and questionnaires can be submitted anonymously. In addition, complainants are asked to provide some information about themselves (for example, age and gender). Monitoring of complaints is essential in this regard and can assist the PPS to deliver a better service.

- **Community Outreach**

Monitoring arrangements have been established to record the numbers and types of outreach events which PPS has delivered or supported. These results are analysed on a monthly basis to ensure consistency of approach, to identify particular sectors of the community with which PPS has not engaged and to ensure that the widest possible audience is reached.

- **Victim and Witness Care Unit**

Over the coming months the PPS will conduct a postal survey of victims and witnesses who have been in contact with the Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU). The purpose of the VWCU model is to improve the experience of victims and witnesses by, for example, providing a single point of contact and identifying particular needs at key stages throughout the prosecution process. Therefore at various stages a short follow-up questionnaire will be issued by staff asking victims and witnesses to provide feedback on the service provided.

Monitoring will be undertaken in a confidential way. All information provided will be held securely and questionnaires can be submitted anonymously. In addition individuals will be asked to provide some

information about themselves (for example, age and gender). Again such monitoring can assist the PPS to deliver a better service.

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

The Equality Commission's Section 75 Monitoring Guide is available to staff within the PPS. The publication can also be accessed by staff on the Intranet site and is used in the development of questionnaires etc.

Section 8: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services

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

Work began towards the end of 2010-11 on a systematic review of the format and content of 55 letters and forms that PPS issues to victims and witnesses. The purpose of this review was to produce correspondence in an easily read format, using plainer language and in an empathetic style that is more appropriate. Special focus has been given to reaching young offenders. In doing so, the views of legal and administrative staff and victims' representatives were sought and taken into account. This review is now complete and formal consultation has taken place with other agencies, including Victim Support, the Youth Justice Agency and CJINI, in order to advise as to the preferred content and to quality assure all final documents. The new/revised letters have been forwarded to PPS ICT Branch so that the necessary changes can be made to the Case Management System. This work is ongoing.

On a quarterly basis the Service has issued a letter to S75 consultees containing a list of policies both external and internal for which the PPS carried out screening exercises and forthcoming, current and closed consultations. This allowed consultees the opportunity to request consultation documents, to register an interest in forthcoming work and in respect of screened out policies, whether they wanted to challenge the decision. In addition consultees could also request documents in alternative formats and comment on any aspect of the Service's equality work. These details were also posted on the PPS website.

The Service reviewed and updated its S75 consultation list, seeking confirmation from consultees if they wished to remain on the list or if they wished their details to be removed, as well as their preferred method of contact. In addition, consultees were asked to identify other organisations which may wish to be added to the list.

The Equality Officer continued to maintain and update the Equality page on the Service's intranet and internet sites. Information available on

these pages includes our new Equality Scheme (including an Easy Read version); consultation summary reports; the Annual Progress Reports; Equality Action Plan; PPS Users Guide on Consultation; Disability Action Plan and current consultations.

All new PPS publications include a statement to the effect that the document may be available in alternative formats upon request.

The Service continued to provide alternative formats such as Braille and audio CDs of prosecution documents (e.g. summons packs) and provided interpreters as appropriate.

Improving services and support is vital to building effective relationships between victims and witnesses, the PPS and the criminal justice system. As outlined above, a key initiative in this area is the implementation of new Victim and Witness Care Units (VWCUs) which are being developed with PSNI and partners, including the Department of Justice and Victim Support NI. The purpose of the VWCU model is to improve the experience of victims and witnesses by, for example, providing a single point of contact and identifying particular needs at key stages throughout the prosecution process.

The PPS is working with the Youth Justice Agency, PSNI and other partners in piloting a new 'Early Youth Engagement' initiative. The underlying idea is that if the young person is provided with more support early in the process to help them to make a properly informed decision about the offer of a diversion, it should be possible to avoid cases being taken to court that do not need to be there. In turn, it is hoped that that this should create capacity in the Youth Courts and allow the judiciary and the wider system to focus more effort on cases that are not suitable for diversion.

The pilot has been taken forward on a phased basis, and was initially launched in one part of PSNI's B District on 1 October 2012. Arrangements have since been extended to the remainder of that District and also to A District. The pilot ran until the end of May, and subject to a positive evaluation, it is anticipated that rollout across Northern Ireland will commence in the autumn.

The PPS retained its IIP accreditation in August 2012. The Service recognises the Investors in People (IIP) standard as a benchmark for the

quality of its people management and training and development. The assessment report included a number of recommendations for continuous improvement which are being developed as part of an action plan.

The PPS is committed to adhering to the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and all subordinate legislation to ensure that staff and service users enjoy the benefits of a safe environment. Throughout the year a range of health and safety assessments were carried out, not only on an individual level, but in relation to buildings and various facets of the work within the PPS. The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) carried out inspections of all PPS premises during 2012. A full programme of inspections was also carried out on PPS accommodation in the regional courthouses.

During 2012-13 HSENI carried out a Stress at Work Survey within the PPS. A working group has been established by the People and Resources Sub-Committee to consider the findings and recommendations and ensure that priority issues are addressed as a matter of urgency.

A 'public consultations' area is also available on the PPS website and is used to publicise policy consultations as they issue. Previous consultations are stored under in the 'Consultation Archive'.

Section 9: Complaints

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

The Service did not receive any Section 75 complaints during 2012-13.

Section 10: Consultation and Engagement

- **Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with *individuals* and representative groups during the year.**
- **Please outline any use of the Commission's guidance on consulting with and involving children and young people.**

Under the umbrella of the PPS community outreach strategy, senior staff across all regions and business areas participate in various forums and events throughout the year. The purpose of outreach is to provide a clearer understanding of the work of the PPS and the role of the prosecutor, through engagement with the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, politicians, schools and universities, health professionals and the wider public.

Regional Prosecutors are involved in a wide range of community activity at a local level, having established links with Court User Forums, Community Relations Forums and other community groups, including groups working with victims of sexual or domestic violence. A member of the PPS legal staff also visited the University of Ulster to engage in discussion with students re human trafficking.

Senior Policy and Information Section staff also continued to take an active role in outreach engagement throughout the year. They participated in a wide range of inter-agency groups, many of which cut across the criminal justice organisations, and also include voluntary sector representation - for example, Women's Aid and NSPCC. Policy Section staff represent the Service on numerous working groups both within the criminal justice system and with outside agencies such as the Sexual Referral Centre Project Board, the Council for the Homeless and a cross border working group on the Mutual recognition of Penalty Points.

Presentations were made to various groups within the Criminal Justice System and to the voluntary sector, community and minority groups such as Justice Committee Members, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, NI Council for Ethnic Minorities, Domestic Violence Partnership and Women's Aid.

Policy and other senior staff have regularly attended conferences and events arranged by voluntary and community sector organisations during the year, particularly to hear about issues which impact on the service provided by the PPS. A focus during the year has been on raising awareness in relation to the issues and challenges in the prosecution of hate crime.

One event of this nature was the launch of the NI Council on Ethnic Minorities Report, 'Race and Criminal Justice in NI – Towards a Blueprint for the Eradication of Racism from the CJSNI' (January 2013), where a PPS representative gave a presentation.

The Service continues to work closely with the Youth Justice Agency to address issues that affect young offenders, particularly through the Early Youth Engagement initiative.

Members of the Service also provided training to statutory and voluntary organisations, for example, to Women's Aid in respect of sexual offences and training to NSPCC volunteers.

Where appropriate, senior staff met with members of the public to address issues of particular concern. This commonly arises where a victim seeks a meeting to discuss the decision taken in a particular case.

The Service continued to support the Employee Support Volunteering Programme, through Business in the Community, by participating in the hospice shop challenge, ongoing fundraising for Marie Curie and the redecoration of a women's shelter.

The Service participated in community events such as MELA and Belfast Pride.

The Service also continued to hold information events at which disability equality speakers, such as Action on Hearing Loss, addressed key staff within the organisation with the aim of increasing the knowledge and understanding of the attitudinal barriers facing staff and/or service users.

The Service also produced, in conjunction with colleagues in the Department of Justice, a 'PPS Users Guide on Consultation', which is aimed at all staff working in the criminal justice system. Its purpose is to provide staff with guidance in an accessible form which will assist in

promoting good practice in the crucial area of stakeholder consultation. This guidance has been presented at a meeting of key Policy Section staff to raise awareness and ensure compliance. The guidance offered includes a series of practical steps which should be followed when setting out to consult. For example, it emphasises the need to plan well and to build sufficient time within the process for early engagement with stakeholders. Sources of advice and support are also provided. This guidance was issued to all staff and is available on the PPS website/intranet.

Section 11: The Good Relations Duty

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

The PPS works in partnership with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service, the Northern Ireland Prison Service, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Youth Justice Agency and the Department of Justice, as part of the Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland. The PPS is represented on the Criminal Justice Board which comprises the Heads of these Services.

The Director is a member of the Criminal Justice Delivery Group which is chaired by the Minister of Justice. This was established by the Minister to improve engagement between the most senior leaders within the criminal justice system, and to provide strategic oversight to the work of the Criminal Justice Board.

The provision of a regionally based service has provided new opportunities for Regional Prosecutors and their senior legal staff to increase direct engagement with community and voluntary groups and local criminal justice partners. The 2012-14 Community Outreach Strategy sets out the Service's commitment to strengthen and widen its engagement with all sections of the community. Through the outreach programme, the Service works to increase confidence across the whole community in the PPS as an organisation which provides an independent, fair and effective prosecution service to every section of society.

To this end, the PPS continues to work with its partner agencies, such as the police and the NI Courts and Tribunals Service, to help ensure that the whole criminal justice process brings perpetrators of hate crime to justice. The procedures set out in the PPS Hate Crime policy (which was published in December 2010) is aimed at ensuring consistency of approach in prosecuting hate crime and particularly in making the Court aware of its enhanced sentencing powers in relation to offences aggravated by hostility. Effective implementation and monitoring of this

policy should improve the confidence of the affected Section 75 groups and increase the reporting levels of such incidents.

Policy and Information Section staff are currently reviewing the implementation of the Hate Crime Policy within the PPS.

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

The Equality Commission’s Good Relations Guide is available within the PPS. In addition, it is also available on our Intranet site along with other reference material on the statutory duties placed on public authorities.

Section 12: Additional Comments

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

Part B: 'Disability Duties'
Annual Report 1 April 2012 / 31 March 2013

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

9

Fully
Achieved?

2

Partially
Achieved?

5

Not
Achieved?

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

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

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ¹	Outcomes / Impact ²
National ³	The PPS does not have any responsibility for public appointments.	N/A	
Regional ⁴			

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

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

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

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

Local ⁵	<p>Consider additional ways to establish links with disabled people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to provide advice or assistance to PPS in relation to improving services or evaluating policy and practice. • to encourage inclusion of disabled people or their representatives within interagency groups. 	<p>Policy Team continues to actively participate in a range of meetings at which this group is represented.</p> <p>Examples include the Interagency Hate Crime Sub Group of the Community Safety Forum and the Criminal Justice Social Diversity Project Advisory Group.</p>	<p>Increased participation of disabled people in the policy development process resulting in more effective service provision.</p> <p>Increased participation of disabled people in these groups will provide insight on the impact of hate crime leading to better understanding of their needs.</p>
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⁵ **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	We will review and update the information included in the PPS Induction Training Pack which sets out the requirements of the DDA and the PPS Disability Action Plan will be reviewed and updated.	Induction Pack reviewed and updated to set out requirements of the DDA and the PPS Disability Action Plan.	New entrants will receive relevant disability legislation awareness and be aware of their individual responsibilities as soon as they take up employment with PPS.

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

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	A yearly request will be issued to staff to invite them to provide HR with confidential disability declarations.	'PEEPs' Forms – all staff were circulated and where appropriate advised to complete the form.	Improved data held and increased awareness of individual needs. Increased levels of staff confidence.

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Set out our commitment to disability equality in the Corporate and Business Plans, of which this action plan forms a part.	The Corporate Plan 2011-14 and Annual Business Plan 2012-13 include commitments to take forward Equality and DDA requirements.	Key PPS planning documents take account of, and reinforce commitment to implementation of the disability duties and other requirements under DDA legislation.

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

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Review the Terms of Reference and the membership of the PPS Equality & Diversity Steering Group. PPS staff who have an awareness of issues affecting disabled people through their own experiences or through caring for dependants with disabilities will be encouraged to join the group. [Measure deferred from 2011-12.]	EDSG Terms of Reference and membership reviewed.	Increased knowledge and understanding of the attitudinal barriers facing staff and/or service users will help to promote positive attitudes across the wider PPS; Policy development in this area will be better informed and support the participation of disabled people who need to engage with PPS.

2	The Equality and Diversity Steering Group will monitor delivery of the actions within the Disability Action Plan and report to the Management Board/Senior Management Group	Regular updates are provided to the Management Board and Senior Management Group.	Commitment of senior management / policy makers will ensure a top down approach to embedding the disability duties and encouraging positive attitudes across the organisation.
3	Use will be made of staff Roadshows, core briefs and other regular staff forums to maintain the awareness of disability equality legislation and PPS Disability Action Plan.	Staff are regularly updated via for example the staff brief and email.	Staff are aware of the continuing need to create and maintain a harmonious working environment and to ensure equality of service provision.
4.	PPS will participate in the recently established Consultative Methods Working Group to explore how the criminal justice sector can improve its methods of consultation. We will seek to ensure that this group, and any proposals for an Equality Consultative Forum, will include membership that can represent disabled people's interests.	PPS Users Guide on Consultation published March 2013.	Development and adoption of new good practice guidelines will improve the participation of, and feedback from, people with disabilities and their representative groups.

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones ⁶ / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Conclude the review of correspondence to victims and witnesses, including accompanying leaflets, taking into account the specific needs of people with a range of disabilities or learning disabilities.	Review of correspondence to victims and witnesses completed. Revised letters agreed following consultation process.	Recommendations of the review implemented. Victims and witnesses with disabilities receive information from the PPS in a suitable format which will encourage their engagement the criminal justice process.	Review of accompanying leaflets and alternative formats still to be completed mainly due to the availability of resources.
2	The Diversity section on the intranet will be reviewed. Staff will be encouraged to provide articles or other items of interest and publicise events of particular interest to disabled staff or staff caring for disabled dependants.	Review completed.	Promotion of good staff attitudes, increased support for, and inclusion of, disabled staff	Work is ongoing in relation to the development of the Diversity section of the intranet.

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

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1.	Review the effectiveness of the 'special measures' arrangements to be introduced by the provisions of the Justice (NI) Bill 2010.	Deferred to 2013-14 due to the availability of resources
2.	PPS will seek the views of disabled people and their representative organisations within its review of the Court Witness Expenses policy.	The Service will carry out a review of court witness expenses during 2013-14. This review was deferred from 2012-13 to allow the PPS Finance Team to focus on the detailed preparatory work needed to join Account NI and to implement new arrangements for the payment of fees to external counsel.
3.	We will seek the views of staff in the Staff Survey on identifying 'positive action' measures that PPS could put in place.	The PPS has now moved to the NICS Staff Survey. Equality/disability is now a separate module within the survey. Action not now applicable.
4.	PPS will allocate a proportion of the overall Corporate Training Budget for provision of disability equality related training and will consider the use of external disability organisations to deliver training whether this may be appropriate.	In November 2012 EDSG members attended 'Disability Awareness Training from Frontline Staff', conducted by the Centre of Applied Learning, with a view to assess the effectiveness of the training for other PPS staff. Disability Equality Training options are currently being considered.

5.	Review current disability legislation/awareness training provision and materials, including provision from the disability sector to ensure PPS staff continue to receive appropriate training.	As above.
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5. What monitoring tools have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Progress with the implementation of the Disability Action Plan is overseen by the Equality Officer and the Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) throughout the life of the plan. The EDSG consists of managers from across a wide range of business areas and includes both administrative and legal staff, as well as volunteer staff with an interest in diversity issues. The group is chaired by the Equality Champion, who is a member of the PPS Management Board. Regular reports are provided to both the Senior Management Group and the Management Board.

(b) Quantitative

The PPS is committed to ensuring that the complaint handling arrangements are effective. Therefore on completion of each complaint case, a short follow-up questionnaire is sent to complainants asking them to provide feedback on the way their complaint was handled.

Monitoring is undertaken in a confidential way. All information provided is held securely and questionnaires can be submitted anonymously. In addition complainants are asked to provide some information about themselves (for example, age and gender). Monitoring of complaints is essential in this regard and can assist the PPS to deliver a better service.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- **made any revisions to your plan during the reporting period or**
- **taken any additional steps to meet the disability duties which were not outlined in your original disability action plan / any other changes?**

No.

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

To be reviewed in 6 months by EDSG members