

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Authority 2010 – 2011 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 2010 to 31 March 2011**. This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of Section 49A of the DDO from the **1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011**. 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 2011**.

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 (Enter details below)

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Equality Officer (Enter name and contact details below)

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Please indicate whether you would prefer to receive correspondence from the Commission by:

Post

Electronically

S75 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 Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (the Commission) continues to progress the Equality agenda through all areas of its business for and with Assembly staff and with visitors to Parliament Buildings. This annual report records the activities and actions undertaken by the Commission in furtherance of its statutory obligations. It covers the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

- 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?

Equality of Opportunity Planned Initiatives April 2011 to March 2012	
1	The Assembly Commission will submit a revised Equality Scheme (with action plan by 1 August 2011)
2	The Assembly Commission will submit a revised Disability Action Plan in 2011 -2012.
3	The Northern Ireland Assembly (NIA) HR Office continually updates policies to ensure statutory compliance
4	To undertake an audit of access and services by the National Autistic Society.
5	HR will begin work on implementing its Carecall Action Plan Report published in June 2011. This followed a consultation exercise with NIA staff after a staff survey looking at staff satisfaction with the workplace.
5	The Equality Working Group will continue to function as an internal body for considering policy screening and provide updates for Revised Equality Scheme Action Plan.
6	The NIA will prepare an annual disability staff audit for the 2011 period.
7	The NIA will continue a programme of Equality Impact Assessments.
8	The NIA will continue to monitor the implementation of the Equality Employment Plan.

9	THE NIA will continue to develop services in light of completed audits by RNID, RNIB and Disability Action.
10	The NIA will facilitate a review of tours of Parliament Buildings by charities and interested parties to improve accessibility.
11	The NIA will complete the redevelopment of the NIA Website.
12	The NIA will develop and implement an accessible publications policy.
13	The NIA will participate in the Balmoral Show to engage with rural communities.
14	The NIA will participate in the Mela Festival to engage with ethnic minority communities.
15	The NIA will continue to develop the use of new social media for engagement with the citizens of Northern Ireland.
16	The NIA will obtain planning permission for access ramps at the front of the building.
17	The NIA will conclude the consultation on the Youth Assembly and decide if and how it will progress.
18	The NIA will identify best practice from other sources and adopt practice following consultation with Section 75 groups and internal stakeholders.
19	Following consultation, the NIA will implement a revised Dignity at Work Policy.
20	The NIA will aim to achieve the RNID 'Louder than Words' Best Practice charter mark.
21	The NIA will complete the installation of a 'changing places' facility.

- Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3 and reference the title of the relevant EQIA in the space provided below:

	Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes	Tick if result of EQIA
Persons of different religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Relations Action Plan implemented • Internal Good Relations Audit conducted • Completion of Fair Employment 	

	<p>Monitoring Return</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales • Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons of different political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Good Relations Audit conducted • Completion of Fair Employment Monitoring Return • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales • Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons of different racial groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales • Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons of different age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Youth Assembly consultation. • Education programme has continued to be developed. • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales • Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons with different marital status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales • Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons of different sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Men and women generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons with and without a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual staff disability audit completed. Disability Advisory Group meetings held and outcomes put in place. Changing Places facility opened. Progression on the achievement of the RNID Charter mark Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	
Persons with and without dependents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of flexible working policy Developed a fair and equitable Pay policy with a focus on shortened pay scales Increased number and profile of Harassment Contact Officers 	

- Title/s of EQIAs referenced: N/A

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 2010-11

Please refer to Appendix 1 for details of the Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat Business Plan 2010/2011 performance against objectives in relation to Equality and Good Relations as at 31 March 2011.

Section 2: Screening

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

Title of policy subject to screening	Was the <u>F</u> ull Screening Report or the <u>R</u> esult of initial screening issued for consultation? <i>Please enter <u>F</u> or <u>R</u></i>	Was initial screening decision changed following consultation? <u>Yes/No</u>	Is policy being subject to EQIA? <u>Yes/No</u> ? If yes indicate year for assessment.
Certain aspects of the policy relating to the Assembly Members (IFRS) Bill	Full	No	No
Conduct	No	No	No
Dignity at Work	No	No	No
Grievance	No	No	No
Discipline	No	No	No

Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2010-11, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2011-12

EQIA Timetable – April 2010 - March 2011

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 2011 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
Engagement Strategy	3	
Good Relations Policy	1	
Reward Policy/Terms and Conditions	1	
Recruitment	1	

- Where the EQIA timetable for 2010-11 (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.

The NIA EQIA timetable has been delayed by Assembly Elections.

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2010- March 2011

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

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

N/A

2011-12 EQIA Time-table

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2011 – March 2012	Existing or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
Engagement Strategy	Existing	March 2012
Good Relations	Existing	March 2012
Reward / Terms and Conditions	Existing	March 2012
Recruitment	Existing	March 2012
Procurement	Existing	March 2012

Section 4: 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.

4.1 Human Resources

Course Title	Provider	Numbers
Equality (EDA)	Bray Leino	110
Disability Action	Disability Action	51
Deaf Awareness	RNID	87

Vision Awareness	RNIB	59
Diversity	NIA (in house)	60

Section 5: 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.

Communications Office

5.1 The redevelopment of the NIA’s website has been driven by the desire to improve access and engagement with various groups within Northern Ireland and beyond. As part of that, the website redevelopment project group has ensured that the proposed layout of the website is more engaging and enhances accessibility, while at the same time, improves content and layout. The web project group sought input from a variety of stakeholder groups and the website will have taken into account those views.

5.2 The draft Communications Strategy recognises the need to offer a variety of methods of communication for both Section 75 and hard to reach groups, including young people. Efforts to improve communications are ongoing; particularly with regards the use of social media and targeted communications with Section 75 stakeholders.

5.3 The Communications Office has taken the lead in publicising the ways in which the NIA has become more welcoming to Section 75 groups. It highlighted when new disabled changing facilities were opened, targeting Section 75 media as well as general media and has produced leaflets about the NIA in minority languages.

Community Outreach

5.4 During the reporting period the Commission continued its commitment towards Equality and Good Relations by developing the Community Outreach Programme. The ‘Get Involved’ initiative provided information to the charity and voluntary sector, general public and Section 75 groups via presentations, conference and attendance at

events with a high footfall. During this period the NIA directly communicated with over 6,000 people.

5.5 A regular 'Get Involved' newsletter was also developed and distributed to over 200 people:

. <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/ELU/eluhome.htm>

5.6 The Assembly Commission has referred to its statutory duties through a number of written and oral questions it has answered during this reporting period. Answers are available on the website and from the Equality Team.

Reference	MLA	Question	Tabled	Answered
AQW 4340/11	Mr Pól Callaghan (SDLP - Foyle)	To ask the Assembly Commission when the next meeting of the North South Parliamentary Forum is due to take place.	08/02/2011	Answered
AQO 1016/11	Mr Paul Butler (SF - Lagan Valley)	To ask the Assembly Commission for an update on pay and conditions for Assembly staff.	27/01/2011	Answered
AQO 1017/11	Mr Raymond McCartney (SF - Foyle)	To ask the Assembly Commission what consultation was carried out when developing the Equality Scheme and how it intends to ensure that staff are aware of the scheme	27/01/2011	Answered
AQO 1014/11	Mr Barry McElduff (SF West Tyrone)	To ask the Assembly Commission what progress has been made in establishing the North South Parliamentary	27/01/2011	Answered

		Forum.		
AQO 1008/11	Mr John O'Dowd (SF Upper Bann)	To ask the Assembly Commission what measures it is taking to protect jobs in light of a reduction in its budget.	27/01/2011	Answered
AQO 1013/11	Mr Pat Sheehan (SF West Belfast)	To ask the Assembly Commission to outline the Engagement Directorate's budget for 2011/12.	27/01/2011	Answered
AQW 2786/11	Mr Trevor Clarke (DUP South Antrim)	To ask the Assembly Commission to list those people who are not required to pass through security when entering Parliament Buildings.	06/12/2010	Answered
AQW 2664/11	Mr Trevor Clarke (DUP South Antrim)	To ask the Assembly Commission to detail (i) the daily cost; and (ii) the cost since May 2007 of employing a translator to translate Irish spoken in the Assembly Chamber and in Committee	02/12/2010	Answered

		meetings.		
AQW 955/11	Mr Adrian McQuillan (DUP East Londonderry)	To ask the Assembly Commission to provide an inventory of all historically significant items held by the Commission within Parliament Buildings (i) between 1921 and 1972; and (ii) currently.	04/10/2010	Answered
AQO 302/11	Mr Conall McDevitt (SDLP - South Belfast)	To ask the Assembly Commission for an update on the Outreach to Local Schools programme.	30/09/2010	Answered
AQO 303/11	Mrs Dolores Kelly (SDLP - Upper Bann)	To ask the Assembly Commission if there are any plans to continue the hourly tours of Parliament Buildings which were successful during recess.	30/09/2010	Answered
AQO 301/11	Mr Daithí McKay (SF - North Antrim)	To ask the Assembly Commission what action it is taking to promote equality of opportunity and good relations in its work and to	29/09/2010	Answered

		ensure that the Assembly is a welcoming place for all communities.		
AQW 690/11	Miss Michelle McIlveen (DUP - Strangford)	To ask the Assembly Commission (i) to detail the cost to the Assembly of attendance at the 2010 Balmoral Show; (ii) the number of people who visited the Assembly marquee; and (iii) for an assessment of the value for money of participation in this event.	24/09/2010	Answered

Business Outreach

5.7 The Commission has increased its communication to the business community via the Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust (the NIABT). Membership increased from 31 in 2009 to 108 in April 2011. The NIABT communicates to this group via seminars, newsletters and social media. A new NIABT website has been developed to improve access to information.

5.8 In Autumn 2010 the NIABT ran two recruitment events targeting women and young people with the intention of attracting new members to the NIABT.

5.9 The first regional NIABT event took place in Derry/Londonderry in the January 2011 to encourage a greater regional spread in membership and activities.

5.11 In March 2011, Commonwealth Day celebrations took place in Parliament Buildings under the theme of 'Women Agents of Change'. The event attracted a wide audience, including women's groups and ethnic minorities.

Section 6: 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.

Business Outreach

6.1 Requests were made to the Commission's research services to give a preliminary profile on current NIABT members. The intention was to give an overview of the NIABT companies to identify gaps in the geographical spread; company size and gender representation at the NIABT.

Community Outreach

6.2 A database was created to capture the contact details of all voluntary and community groups across Northern Ireland. This will aid communication to this sector when marketing events and distributing information.

6.3 Feedback sheets were created for all events attended or organised by the NIA Community Outreach Team. The form assesses the overall

attendee experience and captures S75 information to ensure the NIA is linking with groups from across the Section 75 spectrum.

6.4 The number and background of attendees at each event is also captured to ensure we are communicating with a diverse range of people from across Northern Ireland.

6.5 A tour feedback sheet was produced and made available to all visitors in order to elicit data on the provision of services, access and the overall visitor experience.

6.6 The Schools Work Experience Programme was redesigned in 2010 to ensure students received a good overview of the NIA. A learning log was created to capture their learning experiences and a feedback form was designed to assess their experience. Information also captured the region they were from, gender and disability.

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

The Section 75 Monitoring Guide was provided to staff trained in monitoring and is the key companion document for monitoring.

Section 7: 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.

Building Services

7.1

- Induction loops were fitted in new Committee Rooms 28 and 29.
- RNID (now Action on Hearing Loss) undertook an audit on accessibility in December 2010. Work is ongoing towards achieving the 'Louder than Words' Best Practice charter mark
- Video-conferencing was installed in the Education Room to allow more interaction with schools that cannot come to Parliament Buildings.
- Work commenced on installing a 'Changing Places' facility in Parliament Buildings.

- RNIB undertook an accessibility audit in June 2010. Work is ongoing on implementing viable changes.
- A Disability Action accessibility audit was undertaken in June 2010. Work is ongoing on implementing viable changes
- A review of the Health and Safety Manual is currently underway with a view to providing leaflets for visitors.
- All Security Guards, Ushers and Events staff received training in communication tactics.
- A welcome message was added to the screen at reception in ten languages.
- A new leaflet is being drawn up in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive, Northern Ireland and the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health for MLAs and their staff regarding health and safety and fire related issues.

Publications Office

7.2 The Publications Office advertises the availability of NIA documents in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, audio cassette and compact disc on request. However, there were no such requests or complaints received during the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

IS Office

7.3 As internal Information Systems are created or revised the ability to output the documents in a variety of formats (e.g. large print or eBook) continues to be included as part of the process.

7.4 The Information Systems Office (IS) is working with Assembly Broadcasting to provide additional automated captioning on TV pictures from selected committee meetings, in line with the proposed Broadcasting Strategy.

Events

7.5 The Commission's continued commitment towards Equality and Good Relations has been demonstrated by its facilitation of events, seminars, conferences and tours on behalf of Members. During the reporting period a total of 53,383 people attended events facilitated by the NIA Events Office.

7.6 The Events Office also facilitated a number of large scale events which helped to engage members of the public with the building including: Heritage Day; Poc Fada; Earth Hour and the BBC Christmas Carol Service. These opened the building to a wide spectrum of the community.

7.7 The public tours trial (launched in Summer Recess 2010) provided an opportunity for more people to engage with the Assembly and provided greater access to Parliament Buildings.

7.8 Open and assisted access is provided for those with mobility requirements by the Events Office. Signers for tours can also be request in advance.

7.9 A DVD (virtual tour) was developed to deliver a tour where visitors cannot physically come to the building. It is available in a number of versions including sign language, closed captions and audio descriptions.

Business Outreach

7.10 The NIABT has redesigned its website to make information more accessible.

Community Outreach

7.11 The Community Outreach Newsletter has been designed following accessibility guidelines. The newsletter is provided in an electronic format and therefore can be distributed to a wide audience.

7.12 Information sheets for conferences and events organised by the Community Outreach Team can be requested in accessible formats. All components are delivered with large print, audio recording or Braille if notified in advance.

7.13 All venues for any outreach work are fully accessible and have hearing loops installed.

7.14 The team also provided support to Section 75 groups to access Parliament Buildings at key times. For example, Age NI were assisted in ensuring over 100 pensioners could view a debate in the Assembly

Chamber. The team arranged accessible facilities and provided support to those with mobility issues.

Tours

7.15 All staff conducting tours have received Disability Awareness training and specific training from RNID and RNIB, providing them with the skills to lead tours in an accessible way to all guests.

7.16 A trial was completed in Summer Recess 2010 to improve access to Parliament Buildings by providing free public tours. During the three week trial over 800 people visited the buildings for a tour.

7.17 Since 2010, all groups visiting Parliament Buildings for tours are asked if they have any access issues.

7.18 A virtual tour was developed in 2010 which is hosted on the Assembly website, providing the opportunity for people who cannot visit Parliament Buildings to view the tour online.

Education

7.19 The NIA Education Service worked in partnership with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to improve and update the Education Service website making it more attractive, interactive and relevant to young people. It is designed to meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in relation to the subjects of Citizenship, Politics & Government and History and to improve cross curricular skills e.g. communication, decision making and ICT. The new website will be launched by October 2011. It will be DDA compliant.

7.20 A DVD was produced for the 11-16 age group, called 'A Snapshot of Democracy'. There are signed and subtitled versions.

7.21 Video-conferencing equipment was purchased and the Education Service worked with C2K (responsible for the ICT managed service to all schools in Northern Ireland). A number of video conference events were held, enabling young people to connect with MLAs without visiting the building.

Section 8: 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.

8.1 Two external complaints raised in September 2010 related to recruitment competitions and allegations of age discriminations. One complaint was withdrawn prior to hearing at Industrial Tribunal. The other complaint was heard at Industrial Tribunal and was not upheld. One external complaint raised in April 2010 related to a recruitment competition and allegations of race discrimination. Correspondence from the complainant ceased in May 2010.

Section 9: 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.

Office of the Speaker

9.1 Christmas Event – 2 December 2010

The Christmas Reception at Parliament Buildings was dedicated to persons with disabilities and recognised International Day of Persons with Disabilities. It was an opportunity to acknowledge those who face the daily challenge of living with a disability and to recognise the support given to carers. The Office of the Speaker worked with the Disability Advisory Group (DAG) in arranging this event. DAG provided names of groups who should be invited, assisted in the drafting of the invite and reply cards (which indicated what each guest required in way of adjustments) and addressed possible issues in advance of the night.

Numbers: approx. 105 people

9.2 Easter Event - 12 March 2011

This year's St Patrick's Day event at Parliament Buildings recognised the contribution of people who are actively involved on the ground in reducing tensions in interface areas. This year invitations were issued to a wide range of individuals and community groups who work tirelessly behind the scenes to stabilise relations within difficult areas in Northern Ireland.
Numbers: approx. 210 people

Communications Office

9.3 The Communications Office has engaged with Section 75 groups when providing information about the work of the NIA and Committees. A Section 75 distribution list, as part of the Communications database, is used to target information of interest to Section 75 groups and media. This has resulted in a number of Section 75 groups taking part in Committee events, such as Stakeholder and Speed dating information events.

9.4 The use of social media, aimed specifically at hard to reach groups, including young people has been increased over the past year. While no formal monitoring has taken place, there has been an increase both in Facebook and twitter followers.

9.5 In addition, the new online public tour, which allows those unable to come to Parliament Buildings to take a virtual tour, has been widely promoted to all media and tourism outlets, both in Northern Ireland and internationally.

Community Outreach

9.6 Outreach activities which took place in the reporting period provided the opportunity to engage and consult with the charity and voluntary sector, the general public and Section 75 groups, engaging with over 6,000 people.

9.7 The 'Get Involved' Conference was attended by over 120 people from the voluntary and community sector. It provided a platform to raise awareness and understanding of the work of the NIA; to engage with this key group to promote better relationships and to gain input into suggested actions to meet areas of concern identified in the Public Attitude Survey 2009.

9.8 The NIA hosted a marquee at the Balmoral Show in order to increase understanding of the work of the NIA. It also provided an opportunity for the public to engage with MLAs. A total of 3,112 people went inside the marquee and took part in Assembly related activities. An additional focus outside the marquee on the first day drew an estimated 2,000 people. NIA staff teams were also positioned outside the marquee to engage with numbers of 'walk-through' attendees. They addressed a number of key messages chiefly on the theme of 'Your Assembly, Your say' and visiting Parliament Buildings. The number interacted with are estimated as being in excess of 15,000. This is based on the distribution of 15,000 leaflets.

9.9 In this reporting period, the NIA made Community Outreach presentations to over 30 groups from across the Section 75 spectrum. The presentations provided an opportunity to increase understanding of the work of the NIA, how to access information and how to get opinions heard.

Business Outreach

9.10 The Commission has developed its engagement with the business community through the increased activity of the NIABT. The NIABT has increased the number of engagement events from 14 in 2009 to 21 in 2010, with the number of attendees increasing from 320 to over 1000.

Education

9.11 A new Outreach programme was piloted and rolled out to schools which had not yet participated in the Visits Programme at Parliament Buildings.

9.12 A review of print version educational resources resulted in the decision to move away from the traditional worksheet style resources towards media better suited to young people. This resulted in the development of a subtitled DVD and a comic resource for Key Stages 3 and 4 (ages 11-16).

9.13 New video-conferencing equipment was employed to improve engagement between the NIA and young people. Several conferences were facilitated and the NIA participated in a C2K organised video-conference festival in February 2011, enabling several schools to 'meet' the Education Minister.

9.14 The project to redevelop the Education Service aims to enhance engagement with young people by providing fun, interactive activities and games through which they can learn about the NIA.

9.15 The Youth Assembly Project involved the Youth Panel engaging with a wide range of young people, youth groups and others, seeking their views in relation to a Youth Assembly for Northern Ireland. As well as inviting groups to meetings in Parliament Buildings, regional meetings were also held across Northern Ireland. Groups who presented views to the Youth Panel included Voices of Young People in Care, Youth Action, Youth Forum, WIMPS (Where is my Public Servant), the Rural Community Network and CAFRE (College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise).

9.16 The Youth Panel developed a ‘youth friendly’ online survey through ‘Survey Monkey’ to appeal to young people and encourage them to give their views on the issues relating to establishing a Youth Assembly. The Education Service team use up to date technology (SMS texting) and social media to keep in touch with the Youth Panel. The Youth Panel updated young people and other stakeholders through Facebook and twitter.

Section 10: 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.

Office of the Speaker

10.1 Easter Event - 12 March 2011

This year’s St Patrick’s Day event at Parliament Buildings recognised the contribution of people who are actively involved on the ground in reducing tensions in interface areas. This year invitations were issued to a wide range of individuals and community groups who work tirelessly behind the scenes to stabilise relations within difficult areas in Northern Ireland.

Numbers: approx. 210 people

Education

10.2 Youth Assembly Project. Residential meetings were held to help build good relations between members of the Youth Panel. Youth workers, with expertise in this area, were brought in to work with the Youth Panel. The Youth Panel met with a wide range of groups in order to ensure that their proposals for a youth assembly would take account of the need to develop good relations. Their draft report (agreed in March 2011 and currently out for consultation – in youth friendly format) in relation to recruitment of Youth Assembly members emphasises the need to support those with disabilities/special needs, and to encourage applications from all sections of the community, as defined in Section 75. The Youth Panel recommends targeting groups that are under-represented to ensure that their views are heard.

10.3 Outreach Programme – a school cross-community hub event was held in which students from Glengormley High and Edmund Rice College ‘speed dated’ with six MLAs.

10.4 The Education Service delivered an Outreach Programme at Hydebank Young Offenders’ Centre in June 2010.

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

The Guide was used when developing the Good Relations Action Plan. The implementation of the plan continued during this reporting period.

Section 11: New/Revised Equality Schemes

- If the Commission has notified you of its intention to request a new/revised scheme or formally requested a new/revised scheme and associated action plan, please outline below what progress has been made in this reporting period.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission developed a revised scheme and began consultation. A revised Equality Scheme was submitted by the statutory deadline of the 1 August 2011.

Section 12: Additional Comments

- Please provide any additional information/comments.

N/A

Annual Report 1 April 2010 / 31 March 2011
'Disability Duties' Questions

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

7

Fully
Achieved?

2

Partially
Achieved?

1

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			
Regional ⁴	Creation of Youth Panel (With 5 places for disabled young people)	First meeting March 2010	Direct input from disabled people into terms of reference for Youth Assembly
	Disability Advisory Group continued meeting	Three meetings were held during the reporting period	Direct Input from Disability groups was received on policies, access, signage, feedback, the NIA website and

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

	<p>Good Relations Action Plan consulted on</p> <p>Screening consultation concluded</p> <p>Internal Equality Working Group has been established</p>	<p>Final Action Plan amended and agreed</p> <p>Final Screening report and EQIA timetable agreed</p> <p>Members received training on Screening and EQIA's.</p>	<p>participation. The Guide for Witnesses' for people giving evidence to a Committee, document was reviewed.</p> <p>Action Plan published and implementation commenced</p> <p>Report and timetable published</p> <p>Mainstreaming of policy screening in place and supported.</p>
Local ⁵	<p>Roll out of 'Get Involved' Initiative</p> <p>Annual access audit completed, most recently in January 2010</p>	<p>Presentation, conference and event attendance</p> <p>Staff feedback collated.</p>	<p>Assembly communicated directly with over 6000 people including 3rd Sector and Section 75 Groups</p> <p>Staff feed directly into identifying and resolving access issues.</p>

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	Provide all staff with awareness training in duties and responsibilities under the DDA 1995 and update as required.	All staff received this mandatory training on induction.	Visitor feedback monitored Staff disability audit conducted annually – the numbers of staff declaring a disability has increased each year.
2	Induction process was reviewed to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.	‘Disability Awareness’ and ‘Diversity’ Training are now included as part of the corporate induction, which is mandatory for all new staff. The training has also been rolled out to all other staff.	Including this training in the induction phase has meant all staff are familiar with the legislation at the earliest opportunity.
3	Develop the AsslSt intranet system as an information and training tool to improve disability awareness.	Development of dedicated pages on intranet relating to disability issues.	Information was added from various organisations such as RNID, regarding Communication Tactics.
4	Provide specialist training for staff as necessary.	Various training has been delivered, particularly to front of house staff.	All Events, Ushers and Security staff have been trained in Communications Tactics. Bray Leino have been procured to provide all training for the Assembly,

			<p>specialist training programmes can be developed as necessary. The Equality Working Group received training on Screening and EQIAs.</p> <p>Vistor Feedback is monitored.</p>
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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	Improve access to educational materials	Ground floor room secured for education provision. Documentation redrafted, DVD with subtitles produced.	Improved access for S75 groups to the Education Service and resources.
2	AsslSt intranet carrying more relevant information for staff	External Disability Advisory Group minutes published.	Increased staff awareness.
3	Ensure Parliament Buildings is accessible to Members, visitors and staff with disabilities	Access audits undertaken by RNID, Disability Action and RNIB in 2010.	Direct input on access issues from charities leading to staff training and changing places facility being prepared.

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			
2			

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	Annual staff disability audit undertaken in January 2011	Completed.	Staff declarations of disability and reasonable adjustments up to date.

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones⁶ / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Continue to maintain accessibility of the Northern Ireland Assembly website at AA level and to ensure that it is Browsealoud enabled. Review Internet site to ensure accessibility by members of the public and internal staff.	Much work has been completed, including user testing with S75 groups.		Website not completed during this reporting period.
2	A new leaflet is being drawn up in conjunction with Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland and the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health for MLAs and their staff health and safety and fire related issues.	Consultation continues.		Consultation continues.

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
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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.

1	NIA Education Service developing an interactive, accessible website	Completion to correspond with update of entire NIA website in 2011-2012 reporting period.
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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

Customer Feedback form in place

Annual disability audit

Feedback from mystery shoppers

Staff suggestion box

Annual reviews of progress following RNID RNIB and Disability Action access audits.

(b) Quantitative

Customer Feedback form in place

Annual disability audit

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?

Please delete: No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

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?

New Disability Action Plan is currently out to consultation.

Appendix 1

Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat Corporate Plan 2008/2011

2 ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
2.1	To increase public engagement with the Assembly	Engagement Strategy recommendations implemented	31 March 2011 (80%)		Achieved
2.2	To improve the understanding of the role of the Assembly in the governance of Northern Ireland	Sectoral Assembly road shows held (eg youth sector)	31 December 2010	A number of sectoral roadshows were held, including Balmoral Show and Magee College	Achieved
		Agreed outcomes from public attitude survey implemented	31 March 2011	The Directorate's Outreach Plan now focuses on three groups as identified in	Achieved

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
				the Survey: young people, women and C2 DE	
2.3	To ensure effective partnership arrangements	Effective ongoing support for existing parliamentary partnerships eg BIPA, NIABT, CPA, etc	31 March 2011		
2.4	To promote Good Relations	Good Relations Strategy implemented	31 March 2011		Achieved
2.5	To improve access to the Assembly and its services	Assembly exhibition implemented	31 January 2011	Postponed due to spending review	Deferred due to budget cuts
		Assembly website redeveloped	31 March 2011	Delays in procuring a content management system have put the delivery of the project back to September 2011	Partially achieved

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
	To improve access to the Assembly and its services (Cont'd)	Disability Action Plan implemented	31 March 2011	The Disability Action Plan is now due to be submitted to the Equality Commission in July 2011	Partially achieved
		Equality Scheme implemented	31 March 2011	Due to changes with the Equality Commission guidance, the timescales have changed. The new Equality Scheme is now due to be submitted to the Equality Commission by 1 August 2011	Deferred due to changed timescales

3 SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING OUR STAFF

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
3.1	To develop an independent parliamentary service	Revised Secretariat Pay and Grading structure effective from August 2010	1 August 2010	Ongoing. Policies are being developed through the ERG Policy Subgroup	Achieved
		Review of agreed schedule of Secretariat Terms and Conditions of Employment and HR Policies completed	31 March 2011		Achieved
3.2	To improve the way we communicate with each other	Recommendations from Internal Communications Audit implemented	31 March 2011	Included in Staff Survey Action Plan	Achieved

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
3.3	To have in place a dedicated, professional and motivated group of staff to meet the needs of the Assembly	Corporate Learning and Development Action Plan for 2010/2012 implemented	31 March 2011	In progress. The final implementation date for the Plan is 31 March 2012	Achieved
		Attendance targets agreed and monitored	31 March 2011		Achieved
		2009/10 Staff Survey Action Plan implemented	31 March 2011	Short term actions implemented. Longer term actions included in 2011/12 Business Plans	Achieved
		Annual staff survey undertaken	31 March 2011	Deferred to 2012. Included in DG's Office Business Plan 2011/12	Deferred

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
3.4	To embed the Corporate Values within the Assembly	Guidance on practical application of Values developed and implemented	30 June 2010	Values to be taken forward by working group	Not achieved

4 ENSURING THE EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF THE SECRETARIAT

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
4.1	To ensure delivery of all Secretariat business services	Corporate Planning/Business Planning conducted to corporate timetable and Plans implemented	28 February 2011	Corporate Business Plan 2011/12 approved by SMG in February 2011 and by the Commission in March 2011	Achieved
4.3	To enhance responsible business practice within the Assembly Secretariat	<p>Sustainable Development Strategy action Plan implemented</p> <p>Environmental element of Sustainable Development Strategy to reduce environmental impact:</p>	31 March 2011	Complete third party energy audits to inform energy conservation initiatives to reduce consumption and subsequent carbon emissions	Achieved

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
		(a) Environmental Action Plan implemented	31 March 2011	EMS implemented	Achieved
		(b) Annual measurement (baseline) of environmental impact reduction	31 March 2011	Work is ongoing	Achieved
4.5	To ensure effective good governance arrangements including statutory compliance	Compliance with statutory duties in respect of Health and Safety, Equality, FOI, DDA, DPA etc monitored and reviewed annually	31 March 2011		Achieved

5 ACCOMMODATING THE ASSEMBLY

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
5.1	To seek to	Accommodation	31 March 2011		Achieved

Corporate Objective		Planned Outcome	Target date	Comments	Position at 31 March 2011
	provide appropriate accommodation which meets the needs of all building users and visitors	Audit recommendations implemented as agreed by the Commission			