

Equality Objectives

6 April 2012 – 31 March 2016

Context – Legal Requirements

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) streamlined and strengthened equality law in a number of ways and extended legal protection to additional groups with 'Protected Characteristics'. The Protected Characteristics under the Act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The General Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act imposes a 'general duty' on all public bodies covered by the Act to pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between those who share Protected Characteristics and those who do not.

These three requirements together comprise the 'public sector equality duty'. The Department for Transport is a public body within the meaning of the Act and must comply with the duty in the exercise of its functions on an ongoing basis.

The Specific Duties

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 came into force on 10 September 2011. The new regulations impose specific duties (in addition to the general duty referred to above) on public bodies including government departments.

The specific duties require public bodies to be transparent about how they are demonstrating compliance with the public sector equality duty by publishing:

- (i) information to demonstrate their compliance with the duty by 31 January 2012 (and then at least annually) and
- (ii) one or more equality objectives, by 6 April 2012 and then at least every four years.

DfT Approach

Our equality objectives reflect the breadth of our work and cover both our business priorities and our workforce.

In setting the service delivery objective, we have taken into account the cross-cutting Equality Strategy which clearly states that government's aim is to remove barriers to social mobility and equal opportunities. Our service delivery objective is based on statistical and survey data that show that some individuals still experience barriers to using public transport.

In setting the employment objectives, we have considered what we have learned from the equality information we currently hold and consulted with a range of stakeholders. The main sources of data are the annual equality monitoring reports for DfT and each of our seven Executive Agencies. In addition we undertake an annual staff engagement survey which also provides useful feedback. Based on that information, for employment, our objectives are:

Our service delivery objective is:

- To deliver better access to jobs and key services through an accessible and socially inclusive transport system, by

removing the barriers to travel and ensuring that social impacts are addressed in policy development and service delivery.

Our employment objectives are:

- To promote an inclusive culture where the needs of a diverse workforce are valued and promoted and
- To successfully encourage talented people from a broad range of backgrounds to join and progress through DfT

Each of our objectives will be underpinned by a specific action plan and measurable outcomes. The actions focus on the areas which the Department has chosen to target over the period. They do not seek to cover every area of the business or to represent all of the Department's equality-related activity.

We will report annually on progress against our objectives as part of the publication of equality information on our website.

Consultation

Within the DfT family there are a number of Staff Networks representing various strands of diversity. The Staff Networks, Equality/Diversity Champions, Executive Agencies and employees have all been invited to comment on (or contribute to) the development of these objectives and their accompanying action plans (q.v.).

Civil Service Diversity Strategy

The Civil Service has had a diversity strategy which has been in place for a number of years and which has recently been amended. This strategy is relevant to all Government Departments and focuses on key themes of:

Behaviour and culture change

Leadership and accountability

Talent management and representation and

Capability

All aspects of the strategy are relevant to DfT but our employment objectives are specific to the themes of behaviour and culture change and talent management and representation.

The Action Plans

Each employment objective is supported by an action plan showing the owners and expected outcomes which will be reviewed annually. This may result in further amendment or additions. The seven Executive Agencies have signed up to the objectives but their action plans are designed to suit local circumstances. Executive Agencies and DfT(c) are at liberty to set additional targets or local objectives and are indeed expected to do so. These will also be subject to review but are not subject to the statutory obligation.

The role of Diversity Champions and Staff Networks

The Permanent Secretary is the overall corporate Diversity Champion for DfT and is supported by Equality/Diversity Champions in DfT(c) and in each of the Executive Agencies who work closely with the DfT Staff Networks. Both stakeholders will play an important role in driving the diversity agenda on the one hand and by acting as a critical friend on the other. The equality objectives and accompanying action plans were signed off at a meeting of Equality/Diversity Champions on 9 March 2012. Progress in meeting the outcomes shown in the action plans will be reviewed by Equality/Diversity Champions and the Executive Committee (EXCO) at least once a year.

Diversity Objectives 2012 – 2016

Objective 1- To promote an inclusive culture where the needs of a diverse workforce are valued and promoted

Why are we doing this?

- To ensure that everyone who works with us will feel that they are treated fairly and inclusively.
- To build a culture where the way in which we operate on a day to day basis takes account of diversity.
- To create an environment of trust in which people feel confident to declare relevant personal information concerning one or more protected characteristics. Declaration rates will vary from agency to agency but the whole group will aim for an increase in rates.

Evidence

In the 2011 Staff Survey :

DfT had a positive score of 69% on the fairness and inclusion section. The Department aims for this figure to continually improve over the 4 year period.

DfT had a positive score of 33% on leadership and managing change. The Department aims for this figure to continually improve over the 4 year period.

14% of staff say they have been discriminated against and 13% say they have experienced bullying or harassment at work. DfT aims for a continual decrease in these figures.

DfT(c)'s Action Plan for Objective 1

Action	Owner	Outcome
<p>Reinforce the importance of equality and diversity at all levels by creating a climate that encourages creativity and innovation, enabling staff to contribute different views and take managed risks, through a variety of means e.g. through new and better ways of working, innovation schemes, Staff Networks and diversity champions.</p>	<p>All Staff but with Champions playing a lead role</p>	<p>A successful innovation scheme where all staff feel able to suggest better ways of working.</p> <p>Staff Networks continue to support and challenge working practices in DfT(c). The success of co-operation between networks, Champions and HR sees a continual decline in the Staff Survey of staff saying they have personally experienced discrimination at work (in 2011, 8% of staff in DfT(c) said they had experienced discrimination).</p> <p>Results of the DfT(c) staff survey show continuous improvement in response to questions on inclusion and fair treatment.</p> <p>People with relevant knowledge and experience of a particular diversity will be included in relevant meetings and discussions</p>
<p>Working with the Trades Union to ensure that the diversity strategy is in line with good practice.</p>	<p>Trades Union and HR Diversity</p>	<p>Progress on diversity forms a regular part of discussions with the Trades Union. This results in tangible progress in the Department taking action to create an inclusive culture.</p>
<p>Enable staff to</p>	<p>Line</p>	<p>We are able to demonstrate that we value the contribution of all our staff, irrespective of their working</p>

<p>have a better work/life balance through the use of flexible working arrangements within reasonable business constraints.</p>	<p>Managers HR Employee Relations teams and Business Partners</p>	<p>patterns (2011 DfT(c) staff survey: a positive score of 76% on respecting individual differences we aim to at least maintain and improve on this score).</p> <p>Information is made available to staff on their right to ask to work flexibly and managers are aware of the legal entitlement of staff with caring responsibilities.</p>
<p>To create an environment of trust in which people feel confident to declare personal diversity information through a communications campaign.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Staff are aware that whilst personal declaration is not mandatory, it is collected by HR for an important reason (i.e. to help inform better employment policy making and to ensure the needs of employees from each diversity strand are taken into account). Information collected is stored confidentially and reporting is done using statistical data, which does not allow individuals to be identified.</p> <p>To address issues where particular groups might be experiencing discrimination and, as a result, do not feel confident in providing this data.</p> <p>Targeted response rates achieved or exceeded for staff declaring their ethnicity (maintained or improved at 85%), disability status (maintained or improved at 90%), sexual orientation (including the prefer not to say option) and declaration of religion/belief to maintain or improve.</p> <p>Better informed leaders and staff who are clear about DfT policy and obligations.</p>
<p>Provide appropriate equality and diversity training for staff at all levels.</p>	<p>Staff/Line Managers</p>	<p>100% of new staff complete the diversity e-learning modules offered by Civil Service Learning.</p>

Objective 2 – To successfully encourage talented people from a broad range of backgrounds to join and progress through DfT

Why are we doing this?

To build a department which embraces all talents by:

Filling posts from broad resource pools and ensuring that unnecessary barriers, which might restrict their attractiveness to different sections of the workforce, are removed.

To identify people with potential from under-represented groups and to take responsibility for helping them develop their career aspirations and achieve their potential.

Evidence

The DfT Equality Monitoring annual summary 2010/11 shows:

60% of staff are male (apart from in DVLA) with female staff tending to be in lower pay bands.

There are fewer staff minority ethnic and disabled staff in DfTc and some Agencies than might be expected and lower levels of representation of staff from minority diversity strands at senior levels.

There are more disabled staff in lower pay bands and less representation at senior levels.

Women, staff working part-time and disabled staff reported less training than other groups.

DfT(c)'s Action Plan for Objective 2

Action	Owner	Outcome
Line Managers continue to develop staff; identify talent within under-represented groups of staff (particularly in lower pay bands) and take responsibility for helping them to develop their career aspirations and achieve their potential.	All Managers	Measured by staff survey responses for Learning and Development activities (DfT(c), 2011 Staff Survey has a positive score of only 43% and we aim for a year on year increase with groups from protected characteristics achieving or exceeding DfT(c) averages over the 4 year period).
Identify and encourage staff with high potential from under-represented groups to join positive action pathways run by Civil Service Learning. (and other initiatives)	Line Managers/HR Business Partners	Number of staff wanting to join the talent pools is increased as a direct result of action taken by Line Managers. By 2016, 30% of staff who have joined positive action pathways have gained promotion.
Make sure advertisements	All recruiting Line	We attract, recruit and retain a diverse pool of people. Over the longer term our staff profiles reflect the diverse make-up of the local community.

<p>reflect the needs of the role and are attractive to different sections of the workforce.</p>	<p>Managers with support from HR</p>	
<p>Take action to encourage students/school children to consider different transport related professions as a career choice, e.g. through participation in “Inspiring the Future” programme and providing information to career advisers.</p>	<p>Led by Heads of Profession supported by HR</p>	<p>By 2016, the building blocks are in place so that a wider group of people making career choices are aware of the opportunities in transport professions and (over a 20 year horizon) more women work in accident investigation and in engineering and science.</p>
<p>Disabled people to have access to opportunities for employment by continuing to support positive action measures</p>	<p>All recruiters, with support from HR</p>	<p>Job Centre Plus continues to authorise the Department’s use of the Two Ticks symbol.</p> <p>To deliver any agreed actions arising from decisions of the cross government working group for disability</p> <p>To provide disability confident training for managers of disabled employees</p>