



**Northern
Ireland
Office**

Programme of NIO Consultations, Screenings and Equality Impact Assessments

**SIX MONTHLY UPDATE
(01/01/2014- 30/06/2014)**

**Corporate Governance Team
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Belfast
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SECTION 75 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the NIO is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependent's and persons without.

In addition, and without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The NIO is also required to meet our legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

Monitoring & Publication

The NIO uses the tools of **Screening** and **Equality Impact Assessments** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we must relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010); and
- Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)

In line with Schedule 9 4.(2)(d) the NIO is required to publish details of any Screening Policies & Equality Impact Assessments. Our Equality Scheme sets out that we will publish this information on a six monthly basis.

A summary of Screening Reports & Equality Impact Assessments will be included in the Section 75 Annual Progress Report.

To aid in publication of this information and the completion of The Annual Progress Report, each Business Group should provide a quarterly return detailing:

- Any Consultation Exercises
- Screening Exercises
- Equality Impact Assessments

NIO Programme of Consultations, Equality Screening & Equality Impact Assessments

i) Consultation Exercises during the period 01/01/2014- 30/06/2014

| Policy | Current Status | Last Updated | Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations) |
|--|---|--------------|---|
| Recently Completed consultations | | | |
| Updating voter-facing forms for elections in Northern Ireland. | Consultation closed, responses being considered. Legislation to follow. | 30/06/2014 | Was a limited consultation however the deadline was subsequently extended to the full 12 weeks. |
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| Current Consultations | | | |
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| Policy | Current Status | Last Updated | Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations) |
|---|----------------|--------------|--|
| Forthcoming Consultations (within the next 3 months) | | | |
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*** A limited Consultation is a consultation which lasts less than 12 weeks.**

ii) **Screening Exercises during the period 01/01/2014 – 30/06/2014**

| Policy | Current Status |
|--|----------------|
| Screening Exercises | |
| Revising the scale of fees for Returning Officer charges at local elections in Northern Ireland. | Screened Out |
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iii) **EQIA Timetable**

| Policy | Current Status |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS | |
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If require any assistance please contact The Corporate Governance Team on 028 90 765424.