

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Public Authority 2011 – 2012 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 2011 to 31 March 2012 (Part A)*.

This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of **Section 49A of the DDO** from the *1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 (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 2012**.

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

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)

Equality Officer

S75: *Miss Linda M. Gogarty, Equality Officer, AFBI HR Unit,
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DDO (if different from above): *as above*

Part A: Section 75 Annual Progress Report 2011 - 2012

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?
 - ◆ *Article 55 Review for AFBI (07-09) completed and submitted to the ECNI.*
 - ◆ *Recommendations arising from Article 55 Review presented to AFBI SMT and actioned, including use of Welcoming statement in recruitment.*
 - ◆ *First Equality Scheme for AFBI progressed.*
 - ◆ *Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Report (2011) completed & submitted to the ECNI.*
 - ◆ *Equality Section on the AFBI Intranet activated, enhanced and updated.*
 - ◆ *Equality awareness training provided to staff through AFBI Corporate Induction programme and Criteria Based Interview training programme. Programmes enhanced and updated. Positive feedback received.*
 - ◆ *Formal Equality Training attended by Equality Unit staff.*
 - ◆ *Completion of a comprehensive review of community background information on all AFBI staff.*
 - ◆ *Equality Networking links established and maintained with Equality Commission contact (Ciaran Trainor) and NICS Equality Units.*
 - ◆ *Equality Training, events and forums attended by Equality staff.*
 - ◆ *Development and implementation of an equality screening process for AFBI policies in progress.*
 - ◆ *AFBI guidelines and policies (scientific & technical) screened.*
 - ◆ *Development and implementation of process for equality screening eligibility criteria for recruitment (internal/external).*
 - ◆ *Equality events/issues promoted via intranet.*
 - ◆ *Guidance developed regarding Engaging with Vulnerable Groups.*

- What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year (2012-2013) 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?
 - ◆ *Periodic monitoring and updating of community background information on all AFBI staff.*
 - ◆ *Carry out a monitoring exercise to determine the composition of the workforce regarding the 9 equality categories and address any inequality issues arising from these.*
 - ◆ *Maintain and update the Equality section on the AFBI Intranet.*
 - ◆ *Issue equality reminders to staff via the Intranet.*
 - ◆ *Enhance Equality Awareness in Corporate Induction & Criteria Based Interviewing training programme.*
 - ◆ *Provide Equality Awareness training to all AFBI employees including the AFBI Board.*
 - ◆ *Progress an equality screening process for AFBI policies.*
 - ◆ *Ensure strict adherence to Equality Commission guidance on policy development, i.e. screening, impact assessment.*
 - ◆ *Complete monitoring reports as required by ECNI and address any issues arising from these.*
 - ◆ *Complete AFBI's Equality Scheme (due November 2012).*
 - ◆ *Establish AFBI Equality Policy.*
 - ◆ *Review AFBI procedures and guidelines as required.*
 - ◆ *Provide equality guidance and information to staff.*
 - ◆ *Promote equality throughout AFBI.*
 - ◆ *Provide updates to Senior Management and AFBI Board.*
 - ◆ *Make staff aware of Equality Reports through publication on the Intranet, either in full or summarized format.*
 - ◆ *Review the Equal Opportunities statement in recruitment exercises.*
 - ◆ *Continue formal screening process for all recruitment/appointment opportunities.*
 - ◆ *Continue to develop and establish links with ECNI, DARD and other bodies.*
 - ◆ *Equality Officer to keep up-to-date with training and awareness on equality issues.*
 - ◆ *Creation of Equality section on the AFBI Internet/website.*
 - ◆ *ECNI invited to make presentation to AFBI Board/SMT regarding governance.*

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?

AFBI received formal notification in May 2012 and the NEW scheme is to be submitted to the ECNI by 1-Nov-2012.

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 2011-12.

Since the establishment of AFBI's Equality Unit in January 2011, progress has been as indicated in S75 Executive Summary above.

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.

None

- 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:

None

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

None

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 screening decision? E.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA...	Were any concerns raised about screening by consultees; including the Commission?	Is policy being subject to EQIA? Yes/No If yes indicate timeline for assessment.
<i>Costing and Charging Policy (Draft)</i>	<i>Internal: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>AFBI Fraud Policy Statement & Fraud Response Plan</i>	<i>Internal: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (updated May 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>Visiting Worker Information Security Policy (updated Aug 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>Internet and E-mail Usage Policy (updated Aug 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>Data Protection Policy (updated Aug 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>Software Licensing Policy (updated Aug 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>

<i>Information Security Policy (updated Aug 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>Health and Safety Policy Statement (updated Sept 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>ICT Strategy Policy (updated Nov 11)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>AFBI Records Management Policy & Strategy (Mar 12)</i>	<i>Internal Policy: Screened Out</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>AFBI Guidance for the Procurement and Operation of IA Services (Jun 11)</i>	<i>Guidance Notes</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>
<i>AFBI Guidance for Use of Prescribed Medicines by Employees (Feb 12)</i>	<i>Guidance Notes</i>	<i>Not required</i>	<i>Not required</i>

Section 4: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2011-12, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2012-13.

Nil Return

- EQIA Timetable: April 2011 - March 2012

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 2012 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
<i>Not Applicable</i>		

- Where the EQIA timetable for 2011-12 (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. *Not Applicable*

- Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities: April 2011- March 2012

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
<i>Not Applicable</i>		

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. *Not Applicable*

2012-13 EQIA Timetable

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2012 – March 2013	Revised or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
<i>Not Applicable</i>		

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 awareness has been included in AFBI Criteria Based Interviewing courses to ensure that panel members are aware of their legal obligations and duties regarding recruitment and selection.*
 - ◆ *Inclusion of Equality Awareness within the Corporate Induction Programme.*
 - ◆ *Information and awareness accessible to staff through the Intranet.*
 - ◆ *Consultation with Equality Commission regarding AFBI's Equality Scheme.*
 - ◆ *During 2011/12 the Equality Officer and other HR staff have attended*
 - *a range of Equality training provided by ECNI: How to Complete an Article 55 Review; Reasonable Steps Defence; Equality Impact Assessment Workshop; Equality Awareness; Sex Equality; Intro to Age Regulations; Disability in the Workplace; Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace; Recruiting Fairly; Positive Action; Employing Migrant Workers; Flexible Working.*

- *meetings, forums, talks, focus groups, workshops and seminars including DARD Equality Steering Group, ECNI focus group, ECNI network meeting, Ask First – Children in NI seminar, talk by Rainbow Project.*
- ◆ *Further training has been agreed for the Equality Officer and other key staff and includes Introduction to Section 75, Public Consultation and Engagement, Policy Screening.*

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.
 - ◆ *Equality Section established on AFBI Intranet for staff awareness.*
 - ◆ *Reports and summaries made available to staff via the intranet and line management.*
 - ◆ *Progress on the Equality Unit work reported to Senior Management.*
 - ◆ *Article 55 Report and ECNI recommendations presented to Senior Management.*
 - ◆ *Senior Management made the AFBI Board aware of the outcome of the A55 Review and the actions that AFBI will be taking forward following this.*

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.
 - ◆ *Feedback questionnaires for internal recruitment were implemented to highlight any action required to improve the recruitment process for staff, including reasonable adjustment needs.*
 - ◆ *Staff whose community backgrounds were recorded as missing or unknown were resurveyed.*
 - ◆ *DSE assessments are on-going through the H&S unit to identify adjustments required.*

During 2012/13 and following on from AFBI's Equality Scheme, AFBI will carry out an Audit of Inequalities.

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

Used for reference, background information, creating monitoring forms and letters and regarding decisions for residuarising community backgrounds.

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.

This will be addressed during 2012/13, as an action in AFBI's Equality Scheme.

Section 9: Complaints

- Please identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:
 - received and resolved by the authority (including how this was achieved);
No cases
 - which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;
No cases
 - which were referred to the Equality Commission.
No cases

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.
 - ◆ *Responses provided on AFBI & Non-AFBI draft policy/guidance consultation:*
 - *AFBI Guidance for Use of Prescribed Medicines by Employees*
 - *AFBI Site Security Policy*
 - *DARD Sexual Orientation Action Plan*
 - *AFBI Dairyman Funding Project*
 - *EQIA for DARD Review of the Agricultural Wages Board in NI*
 - *ECNI corporate plan Input to Improving people's lives.*

- ◆ *Continued contact with ECNI.*
 - ◆ *Creation of Guidelines on Engaging with Vulnerable Groups – contact with DHSSPS, DoJ (Access NI), Volunteer Now.*
 - ◆ *Equality Officer attendance at DARD Equality Steering Group meetings.*
 - ◆ *Equality Officer attendance at presentation given by member of the Rainbow Project.*
- Please outline any use of the Commission's guidance on consulting with and involving children and young people.

Used for information and awareness.

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.

Following Article 55 recommendations from the ECNI, AFBI included a Welcoming statement in external recruitment advertisements to encourage applications from Roman Catholics.

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

Used for information and awareness.

Section 12: Additional Comments

- Please provide any additional information/comments.
 - ◆ *AFBI, as a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by DARD, complies fully with the terms and conditions of the NICS. AFBI also adheres fully to all HR related policies and procedures operating within the NICS to ensure adherence to equality of opportunity in all aspects of our business.*
 - ◆ *The Equality Unit will ensure that AFBI is best placed to provide and promote equality of opportunity and good relations, working closely with the Equality Commission and other key stakeholders to achieve this.*
 - ◆ *AFBI will act on any recommendations and advice provided by ECNI and implement these, where feasible.*

Part B: 'Disability Duties'
Annual Report 1 April 2011 / 31 March 2012

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

10

Fully
Achieved?

2

Partially
Achieved?

2

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			
Local ⁵	<i>AFBI have established links with Ulster Sheltered Employment Ltd (USEL) to provide employment to persons with a registered disability.</i>	<i>Staff employed.</i>	<i>Potential opportunities for further staff to be employed through USEL.</i>

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

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	<i>Equality Officer attended training courses at ECNI on: Reasonable Steps Defence, and Disability in the Workplace.</i>	<i>Awareness and knowledge gained by officer and disseminated to workforce through intranet.</i>	<i>Staff to be aware regarding reasonable adjustments and disability. Appropriate action taken where necessary.</i>
2	<i>Criteria Based Interviewing Training included Reasonable Adjustment/Disability awareness.</i>	<i>Interview panels made aware of the requirements and legislation around reasonable adjustments and disabled candidates.</i>	<i>Panellist awareness.</i>

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	<i>Equality section, including area on disability/reasonable adjustments, established on AFBI Intranet.</i>	<i>Staff informed of this via Intranet and line management.</i>	<i>Awareness for staff.</i>
2	<i>Equality Officer available for staff seeking advice and information.</i>	<i>Help and advise offered to staff.</i>	<i>Encourages harmonious workplace, benefits staff wellbeing.</i>

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			
2			
3			
4			

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	<i>All staff who declare a disability or long-term health condition will be assessed to determine their needs in relation to workplace access assessment.</i>	<i>Managed through the Recruitment and Induction process for any cases identified/declared.</i>	<i>Appropriate adjustment made. AFBi continues to review its procedures in line with this measure.</i>
2	<i>All staff who declare a disability or long-term health condition will have their posts assessed to determine their needs in relation to their disability.</i>	<i>Managed through the Recruitment and Induction process for any cases identified/declared.</i>	<i>Appropriate adjustment made. AFBi continues to review its procedures in line with this measure.</i>

3	<i>All staff who declare a disability or long-term health condition will be assessed to determine their needs in relation to building evacuation.</i>	<i>Personal emergency evacuation plans will provide individual support for all disabled staff.</i>	<i>Appropriate adjustment made. AFBi continues to review its procedures in line with this measure.</i>
4	<i>All job applicants who declare a disability or long-term health condition will be accommodated, as far as possible, in relation to applications and interviews.</i>	<i>Managed through HR & H&S if necessary.</i>	<i>Reasonable adjustments made.</i>
5	<i>Systems in place for disabled persons e.g Loop system, Ramps, Lifts, automatic doors, flashing alarm lights</i>	<i>Systems and aids in place in order to facilitate staff & visitors with disabilities. Maintained by Estates.</i>	<i>To facilitate disabled.</i>

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	<i>Provision of Disability Discrimination Act Awareness e-learning package.</i>	<i>To be made available to all staff via the Intranet.</i>	<i>To make staff aware of the Act.</i>	<i>Under development, still to be fully tested and agreed.</i>
2	<i>Review guidance for written communication policies, practices and procedures.</i>	<i>To ensure compliance with legislation and good practice.</i>	<i>To ensure compliance and promote awareness.</i>	<i>Under development will be achieved by 31-Mar-13.</i>

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	<i>Formal training and guidance for staff on disability awareness and legislation.</i>	<i>AFBI has not had the resources to undertake this.</i>
2	<i>Establishment of an AFBI Disability Forum.</i>	<i>AFBI has not had the resources to undertake this.</i>

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.

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

To be defined and agreed.

(b) Quantitative

To be defined and agreed.

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			

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?

AFBI will develop its action plan in relation to its disability duties.
