

SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE
POLICY**

March 2003

CONTENTS	PAGE
Executive Summary	2
1 Introduction	5
2 Background	5
3 Information, Advice and Assistance Policy	7
4 Methodology	8
5 Formal Consultation	9
6 Assessment of Impact on Equality of Opportunity	9
7 Consideration of Alternative Approaches/Mitigation of Adverse Impact	12
8 Monitoring arrangements	14
9 Publication of Equality Impact Assessment	14
10 Conclusion	15
Appendix 1 - Social Security Office Network Locations	
Appendix 2 - Informal Consultation List	
Appendix 3 - Formal Consultation List	
Appendix 4 – DSD New Targeting Social Need – Agency Action Plan	

Social Security Agency

Equality Impact Assessment – Information, Advice and Assistance

Executive Summary

The Policy

1. The Social Security Agency is committed to a policy of providing comprehensive information, advice and assistance about the social security benefits it administers as far as possible at a single location.
2. The aim of the policy is
 - to ensure that potential and existing customers have access to comprehensive information, advice and assistance on their entitlement to benefits; and
 - to allow entitled customers to receive their full benefit entitlement.

How the policy is delivered

3. The Agency provides information, advice and assistance to the public through a comprehensive range of leaflets, directly advertising services through the media and a series of benefit information and uptake days and through a network of local, community and centralised benefits offices, (including a Belfast city centre based Benefit Shop, a Benefit Enquiry Line for people with a disability, a Teleclaims Service for Pensioners claiming Retirement Pension and Minimum income Guarantee and a Fraud Benefit Hotline). Information on social security matters is also available on the Internet, including the facility to report suspected benefit fraud. The Agency also works with the Voluntary and Community Sectors providing them with information and through direct secondment of staff.

The Equality Impact Assessment

4. This Equality Impact Assessment has been completed using qualitative and quantitative analysis, and is based on the framework contained in Annex 1 of the Guide to the Statutory Duties, issued by the Equality Commission. Details are set out in Section 6 of the main report.

Conclusions

5. There is no detailed quantitative data held, but the assessment recognises that while the intent of the policy is not to discriminate, qualitative evidence obtained from discussions with voluntary sector representatives suggests that in the delivery, some groups may have difficulty with regard to accessing information, advice and assistance. The Agency's customers include some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Providing Information, Advice and Assistance to potential and existing customers is an integral part of the administration of the benefits system – from advice on potential entitlement, through to providing information, advice and assistance to make a claim and to consider changes of circumstances.
6. The Agency recognises the important complementary role that the voluntary and community sectors play in advocacy for and advice and assistance to the public on their potential entitlement to benefits. However, given the volumes of claims, enquiries and requests for advice and assistance, and the integral nature of advice and assistance to the delivery of the social security process there is no alternative to the policy on Agency provision of comprehensive information, advice and assistance. The Agency recognises, however, that there is a role for both it and the voluntary and community sectors to work together to ensure that information, advice and assistance is best targeted.

Improving delivery of the policy

7. The Agency recognises that benefits are targeted at people with particular needs, for example, the elderly, and people with disabilities and that its corporate communication and marketing strategy needs to ensure a focus is maintained and improved on better benefit awareness/take up, facilitated by targeted information, advice and assistance, better access to services and improved customer service. Government policy sees an “outreach” type service as being integral to the total social security provision.
8. The Agency seeks to continuously improve all its services to the public. It has taken a number of steps over recent years to improve the provision of information, advice and assistance. Examples are set out in paragraph 7.5 of the main report.

Monitoring Arrangements

9. The outcomes of the Agency's policy on Information, Advice and Assistance are intrinsically connected to its policy on uptake of benefit. Volumes of contact for information and advice, through claims investigation, callers at local offices and telephone contacts make recording of detailed quantitative data in an equality format non cost effective for individual contacts. However, arrangements to collect indicative data relevant to the Agency policy on information, advice and assistance provision and its outcomes have been made as follows through–
 - The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey;
 - Customer Satisfaction Surveys;

- Consultation with and active involvement of the Voluntary sector;
 - Building in equality requirements to its Customer Research programme
10. In addition, in order to establish any gaps in social security provision to customers, the Department for Social Development has arranged to obtain baseline data on benefit take up, through extending the Family Resources Survey to Northern Ireland during 2002/3. Whilst continuing to encourage take up in the interim, the Agency will develop a formal strategy to enhance benefit take up by April 2004.
11. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment is available on audio tape and in Braille, large print, and in ethnic minority languages on request. An easy to follow leaflet to help people with learning difficulties has also been produced. To obtain a copy in any of these formats please contact Trevor Patterson at 028 9056 9167 or through the following e-mail address: trevor.patterson@dndni.gov.uk or by writing to –

Trevor Patterson
Corporate Planning Unit
Social Security Agency
First Floor
Churchill House
Victoria Square
Belfast
BT1 4SS

11. The Equality Impact Assessment can be found on our Internet site at:
<http://www.ssani.gov.uk>
12. Contact can also be made through the following Text-phone numbers –
- Pensions Service Tele-claims – 0808 100 2198; and
Minicom Benefit Enquiry Line – 0800 243 787

1. Introduction

1.1 This document has been produced in accordance with guidance issued by the Royal National Institute for the Blind and is available in print form, alternative formats and minority languages for those who are not fluent in English upon request. Details of how to obtain these are included in Section 9.

1.2 The Northern Ireland Social Security Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Social Development. Its aim is to provide a fair system of financial help to those in need. The Agency's main services are to:

- assess and pay benefits accurately and securely under the various social security schemes;
- give advice, information and assistance about these schemes;
- support people in getting employment;
- process reviews and appeals;
- prevent and detect benefit fraud, prosecute offenders and recover benefit paid incorrectly;
- recover benefit paid in compensation cases;
- assess the financial means of people applying for legal aid; and
- provide agreed agency services to the Benefits Agency in Great Britain.

The Agency's vision is that "we will deliver high-quality, customer-focused welfare services in Northern Ireland." Directly linked to our Vision, we have three values –

- Put customers first;
- Treat staff fairly; and
- Be innovative and deliver value for money.

2. Background

2.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Department for Social Development in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine Section 75 categories:

- 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; and
- persons with dependants and persons without

and without prejudice to its obligations above, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

2.2 Section 9 of the Act requires the Department to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposed to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75. the Department for Social Development did this through its Equality Scheme published in March 2001.

2.3 Existing policies were screened to assess whether they impacted on the promotion of equality of opportunity or the good relations duty using the following criteria –

- is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups within any of the nine categories?
- is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular main policy area?
- is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering policy or working with others in government or the community at large? and
- have consultations with relevant representative organisations or individuals within groups indicated that particular policies create problems that are specific to them?

It should be noted however, that given the nature of the Agency’s business, benefits are targeted at particular needs. As a result, for example, people with different needs such as those with disabilities and elderly people will make more use of our information, advice and assistance service than people without a disability or young people.

2.4 The Department considered that its operational policy delivered through the Social Security Agency to “*Provide relevant, accurate and timely information, advice and assistance about social security benefits*” had implications for equality of opportunity in relation to some of the nine categories. Following public consultation, the Department committed itself to carrying out a full Equality Impact Assessment on the policy.

3. The Policy

- 3.1 The Social Security Agency is committed to ***providing comprehensive information, advice and assistance about the social security benefits it administers as far as possible at a single point/location.***
- 3.2 The aims of the policy are twofold –
- to ensure that potential customers have access to comprehensive information, advice and assistance on their entitlement to benefit; and
 - to allow entitled customers to receive their full benefit entitlement.
- 3.3 The Agency provides information, advice and assistance to the public on the whole range of its benefits and other services –
- through a comprehensive range of leaflets (including the Benefit Leaflet Information Service);
 - through information on specific web sites on the Internet;
 - using targeted promotion in the media and other outlets;
 - through its local and central benefit offices;
 - by a Benefits Enquiry Line for people with a disability;
 - by a Fraud Benefit Hotline;
 - By a Tele-claims service to Pensioners;
 - through a series of outreach campaigns and benefit information and uptake days; and
 - through working with the voluntary sector to target agreed areas.
- 3.4 To deliver its service to the people of Northern Ireland the Agency has a network of local Social Security Offices situated in all the major towns and cities in Northern Ireland. In addition, there are 3 Community Benefit Offices, 2 large centralised benefit offices and a Benefit Shop in Belfast city centre. Home visits are also available through Visiting Officers attached to local Social Security Offices and staff in Castle Court for disability benefits. Details of office locations are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Local offices, Community Benefit offices and the Benefit Shop are open to the public from 9.00am to 4.30pm each weekday. Existing and potential customers can call at any of the public offices for information about any social security matter, advice on which benefits to claim and for assistance with filling in forms.
- 3.6 Customers can also contact any Agency office for help by telephone from 9.00am to 5.00pm each weekday. In addition, a confidential telephone service (the Benefit Enquiry Line) is available during those hours for people with disabilities and their carers enquiring about Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Invalid Care Allowance. A Pensions Tele-claim Service also gives advice and information to potential customers on retirement Pension and Minimum Income

Guarantee and helps with the completion of application forms. In addition, there is an answering service outside these hours and any messages left are returned within 24 hours. The Fraud Hotline is available from 8.30am to 6.30pm each weekday and a call centre handles any calls received between 6.30pm and 11.30pm and at the weekend. A facility also exists to report suspected fraud via the Internet.

Training of Staff

- 3.7 The Agency recognises that the social security system is complex and that the customers need to be given accurate and timely information advice and assistance on which to make informed choices. It is critical, therefore, that staff are knowledgeable and are able to understand and communicate clearly with customers.
- 3.8 Benefit training continues to be a priority area in the Agency. For example, Training within the Agency has recently been restructured and greater focus is being placed on skills such as:
- Customer Service (including dealing with ethnic minorities, disability awareness, and dealing with victims);
 - Benefit specific knowledge; and
 - Marketing Techniques;

Information Technology is in place in all Social Security Offices to enable staff to give advice on the full range of benefits. The Agency is also working with the Voluntary Sector to identify ways of further improving training across benefits.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 This Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out using both quantitative and qualitative data and is based on the framework contained in Annex 1 of the Guide to the Statutory Duties, issued by the Equality Commission. Quantitative data on the Agency's policy on information, advice and assistance is very limited. Because of the volume of customer contacts with the Agency and the cost of recording equality data on each individual contact the Agency has not, as a matter of course, collected data in the necessary format. Details on telephone enquiries other than to the Benefit Enquiry Line and Fraud Hotline are not maintained. The information that is held is illustrated below. All of the information given relates to the period from April 2000 to March 2002.

Type of contact	2000/01	2001/02
Callers at local social security offices	556498	588112
Callers at the Benefit Shop	110823	116307
Visits made to customer by visiting officers (re: Jobseeker's Allowance and Income Support claims)	5246	6142
Telephone calls to Benefit Enquiry Line	18631	17054

- 4.3 Qualitative data has been obtained through work carried out in consultation with a number of groups as part of the Agency's work on New Targeting Social Need action plans and through existing consultation forums with customer representatives in the voluntary and community sectors. A list of organisations where informal consultation took place is contained in Appendix 2.

5. Formal Consultation

- 5.1 This Equality Impact Assessment has been sent for comment to all organisations shown in Appendix 3. The consultation period lasted for 8 weeks. This list is not exhaustive and others were offered the opportunity to request a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment from the named contact shown in Section 9. During the consultation period, arrangements could be made for face to face meetings with representative groups. In either event, no additional copies were requested or meeting sought to discuss the draft Equality Impact Assessment.

6. Assessment of Impact Assessment on Equality of Opportunity

- 6.1 An assessment of the impact of the Agency's policy on information, advice and assistance on the equality of opportunity duty under the nine categories identified under the Section 75 statutory duties is set out below.
- 6.2 The rules for entitlement to any of the family of social security benefits are specified in legislation. It is the role of the Agency to apply the benefit entitlement rules and to provide information, advice and assistance. The onus to claim benefits lies with customers. The Agency's policy to provide information, advice and assistance to existing and potential customers is universal. The Agency recognises that many of its customers fall into a number of the Section 75 categories.

Religion

- 6.3 Data is not collected on the religion of Social Security Agency customers.

Political Opinion

- 6.4 Data to permit assessment of the policy in terms of political opinion is not available.

Racial Group

- 6.5 Information on race is not collected from social security customers. There is therefore no quantitative data available on the number of Agency customers from each racial group. However, consultation as part of the Agency's work to target social need confirmed that in obtaining information and accessing services, a key

concern was the language barrier and the problem it represents to minority ethnic communities. Research showed that –

- many of the minority ethnic population do not speak English and the lack of a common language with the indigenous population presents barriers to communication;
- minority ethnic customers rely heavily on welfare rights/community advisors, family and other members of their community for advice on benefits as they have very little knowledge of the benefit system; and
- promotion of services to minority ethnic communities was not consistent.

Age

- 6.6 Benefits are targeted at particular age groups and benefit entitlement rules apply. Evidence exists that elderly people in particular do not always claim their full entitlement to benefit. The Agency has taken steps under the Minimum Income Guarantee Campaign to identify and target individuals with information, advice and assistance. Similar arrangements to market the new State Pension Credit (from October 2003) are being made. Research with Voluntary Groups has also identified similar problems for the elderly in accessing information, advice and assistance as those shown for people with a disability at paragraph 6.10 below. Difficulties faced by young benefit claimants have also been identified.

Marital Status

- 6.7 Again, benefit entitlement rules apply. Information on the marital status of current benefit customers is available. However as no data is currently available on take up of benefits, it is not possible to draw valid conclusions on the impact of the information, advice and assistance policy on this category.

Gender

- 6.8 Data on customers and potential customers seeking information, advice and assistance about social security benefits is not held. Details on the gender of current benefit customers are available. However as no data is available on take up of benefits, it is not possible to draw valid conclusions on the impact of the policy on this category.

Sexual Orientation

- 6.9 Data is not collected on the sexual orientation of customers or potential customers.

Disability

- 6.10 Benefits for people with a physical and mental disability include Severe Disablement Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Industrial Injuries Benefit and Incapacity Benefit. There are also premiums acknowledging extra needs in a number of other benefits, eg Income Support. People with Learning Difficulties can claim low-income benefits or disablement benefits where they also have a physical or mental disability. There are currently some 373,500 live claims to disability benefits. Data on people with learning difficulties is not held.
- 6.11 Consultation with people with a disability and their representatives and people affected by the Troubles, many of whom are victims with various levels of disability, as part of the Agency's New Targeting Social Need action plan has revealed, among other things-
- that current methods to promote benefit take up, including the provision of information, advice and assistance on benefits, appeared to be inadequate and not reaching those individuals most in need;
 - rural areas seemed to have particular difficulties in receiving information and support;
 - distribution of leaflets to service areas outside the Agency e.g. Voluntary Sector Advice givers and the Post Office was too limited;
 - application forms for individual benefits did not advise customers of other potential benefits they might be entitled to;
 - communication and literature was not always tailored to the needs of people with a disability; and
 - people with a disability may be deterred from contacting the Agency due to the cost of telephony or poor access to offices in some cases.

Dependants

- 6.12 Legislatively stipulated amounts for dependants are available to customers who claim particular benefits. Data on existing customers is routinely collected. Carers can claim Invalid Care Allowance. Discussion on the needs of carers was an integral part of research with people with disabilities and is reflected at paragraph 6.10 above.

Overall conclusions

- 6.13 The Social Security Agency’s policy is to offer information, advice and assistance to all existing and potential customers equally, based on benefit entitlement rules set out in legislation. Some qualitative evidence suggests that some groups (for example people with disabilities, older people or people from ethnic minority groups) may have difficulty with regard to accessing information, advice and assistance.

7. Alternative approaches/ Mitigation of Adverse Impact

- 7.1 The Agency’s customers include some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Providing Information, Advice and Assistance to potential and existing customers is an integral part of the administration of the benefits system – from advice on potential entitlement, through to providing information, advice and assistance to make a claim and to consider changes of circumstances.
- 7.2 The Agency recognises the important, complementary role that the voluntary and community sectors play in advocacy for and advice and assistance to the public on their potential entitlement to benefits. However, given the volumes of claims, enquiries and requests for advice and assistance, and the integral nature of advice and assistance to the delivery of the social security process there is no alternative to the policy on Agency provision of comprehensive information, advice and assistance.
- 7.3 It must be stressed that benefits are targeted at people with particular needs and information, advice and assistance is essential to help people obtain their entitlement. The Agency recognises that there is a role for both it and the voluntary and community sectors to work together to ensure that information, advice and assistance is best targeted to ensure equality of provision.
- 7.4 The Agency recognises that its corporate communication and marketing strategy needs to ensure a focus is maintained and improved on better benefit awareness/take up, facilitated by targeted information, advice and assistance, better access to services and improved customer service. Government policy sees an “outreach” type service as being integral to the total social security provision. The Agency has taken a number of steps to pursue this, working alongside other service providers and the voluntary and community sectors. Examples are set out in paragraph 7.5. The Agency has also focused through its New Targeting Social Need Action Plan on particular customer profiles (for example people with a disability, ethnic communities, those with literacy problems etc); or on particular social groups and areas of deprivation.
- 7.5 To respond to the points mentioned in Section 6, the Agency set out the actions it proposes to take and the timescales in Section 19 of the Department’s New Targeting Social Need Action Plan. In addition, to facilitate the production of an Agency strategy for take up of social security benefits, the Department has arranged for the Family Resources Survey to be undertaken in Northern Ireland

during 2002/3. Initial details will be available in the Autumn of 2003. Details of the relevant action plans are set out in Appendix 4. Plans are updated on an annual basis.

7.6 Examples of steps taken to meet identified information, advice and assistance needs, include –

- in October 2000, a new Customer Charter was launched , which among other things –
 - reflects a commitment to improve the quality of information, advice and assistance with form filling, a key concern of many existing and potential customers,
 - is part of a Charter Pack which includes leaflets detailing the range and rates of social security benefits and how and where to contact the Agency for information.
 - is available in five additional languages, in Braille and on audio tape.
- information, including some benefit leaflets and posters are made available on demand in languages other than English;
- discussions have been ongoing since 2001 with Travellers to address the equality and equity of treatment and service provision, including staff attitude towards Travellers, support services for those looking for advice, post not sent direct to Traveller Sites, engagement on complaints, and the length of time taken to process claims.
- since 2001 as part of a cross- cutting initiative along with other service providers the Agency has supported interpreter facilities in its South District;
- In May 2001 and June 2002 A to Z guides were developed jointly with the Voluntary Sector for Pensioners and People with Disabilities;
- the Minimum Income Guarantee Campaign (where potential customers were targeted with information and advice and offered assistance to complete the necessary forms) by March 2002 had resulted in some 8500 pensioners receiving increased benefits averaging some £23 a week;
- In 2002 an Equality Policy Statement for customers and staff was launched;
- During 2002/3, piloted a facility in its East Down District to help customers who do not have English as a first language; (this facility will be extended throughout all Agency offices during 2003/4);
- During 2002/3 piloted the placement of Pensions Advisers in 2 of its Social Security Offices to work in and with the local community. (This initiative will be rolled out across the whole of Northern Ireland in 2003/4);
- Over the last 2 years a programme of Information and Uptake days in customer friendly locations across Northern Ireland has been in place;
- In December 2002, as part of the Taskforce on Long Term on Employability and Long Term Unemployment, the Agency has committed to -
 - undertaking the marketing of existing and new benefits and credits,
 - examining the potential for further innovative ways of providing services;and

- strengthening of existing links with the voluntary and community sector in terms of information provision, joint publications, seminars for benefit customers and closer IT links; as part of its marketing objectives, developed an Internet strategy and implementation plan;
- as part of its marketing objectives, the Agency has made major improvements to its Internet site;

8. Monitoring Arrangements

8.1 As mentioned at paragraph 4.1 above, quantitative data on the Agency's policy on information, advice and assistance is negligible. In addition, the outcomes of the Agency's policy on Information, Advice and Assistance are intrinsically connected to its policy on uptake of benefit.

8.2 During the year 2001/2, the Agency received a total of 537,238 claims for the main benefits. Some 650,000 customers called at Agency offices to make social security enquiries. In addition the Agency receives literally millions of telephone calls from customers every year and many of these contacts include requests for information, advice and assistance, for example, with the completion of forms. Recording of detailed quantitative data in an equality format would not be cost effective. However, arrangements to collect indicative data relevant to the effectiveness of the Agency policy on information, advice and assistance provision have been made as follows through –

- The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey;
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys;
- Consultation with and active involvement of the Voluntary sector; and
- Building in Equality requirements to its Customer Research Programme.

8.3 In addition, in order to establish any gaps in social security provision to customers, the Department for Social Development has arranged to obtain baseline data on benefit take up, through extending the Family Resources Survey to Northern Ireland during 2002/3. Whilst continuing to encourage take up in the interim, the Agency will develop a formal strategy to enhance benefit take up by April 2004.

9. Publication of Equality Impact Assessment

9.1 This Equality Impact Assessment is also available on audio tape and in Braille, large print and ethnic minority languages, on request. To obtain a copy of any of these

formats please contact Trevor Patterson at 028 9056 9194, through the following e-mail address: trevor.patterson@dndni.gov.uk, or by writing to –

Trevor Patterson
Corporate Planning Unit
Social Security Agency
First Floor
Churchill House
Victoria Square
Belfast
BT1 4SS

9.2 The Equality Impact Assessment can also be found on our Internet site at:

<http://www.ssani.gov.uk>

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Through its initial screening the Department for Social Development considered the impact of the Social Security Agency's information, advice and assistance policy on equality of opportunity. This Equality Impact assesses whether a differential impact exists on any of the nine equal opportunity categories identified under the Section 75 statutory duties and whether this differential impact is adverse.
- 10.2 Given the volumes of claims, enquiries and requests for advice and assistance, and the integral nature of advice and assistance to the delivery of the social security process there is no alternative to the policy on Agency provision of comprehensive information, advice and assistance.
- 10.3. Benefits are targeted at people with particular needs. The Agency recognises the important, complementary role that the voluntary and community sectors play in advocacy for and advice and assistance to the public to help them obtain their entitlement. The Agency recognises that there is a role for both it and the voluntary and community sectors to work together to ensure that information, advice and assistance is best targeted to ensure equality of provision.
- 10.4 Major improvement to customer service, of which the provision of information, advice and assistance is an integral part, will be delivered over the next few years, through implementation of the Governments' Welfare Reform Programme and Modernisation Agenda. In tandem with this, the Agency has commenced and will continue to undertake a programme of measures, along with other service providers (including the voluntary and community sectors) to provide enhanced information,

advice and assistance. Particular emphasis will be on targeting known vulnerable or socially excluded groups.

Social Security Office Network



District HQ
 Social Security Office
 Community Benefit Office

Belfast Offices

Belfast North & East Antrim
 1 Corporation St.
 Shankill
 Newtownabbey

Belfast West & Lisburn
 2 Falls Road
 Shaftesbury Sq
 Andersonstown

East Down
 3 Knockbreda
 Holywood Road

INFORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Action Mental Health
Mourne House
Knockbraken Healthcare Park
Belfast

Age Concern
3 Lower Crescent
BELFAST
BT7 1NR

Arthritis Care NI
52 Church Road
Gracehill
Ballymena
BT42 2NL

Association of Independent Advice Centres
303 Ormeau Road
BELFAST
BT7 3GG

Belfast Resource Centre for the Unemployed
45-47 Donegall Street
BELFAST
BT1 2FG

Bloody Sunday Trust
39 Shipquay Street
Londonderry
BT48 6DL

CALMS
3rd Floor, 44-46 Waterloo House
Londonderry
BT48 6BW

Chinese Welfare Association
17 Eblana Street
BELFAST
BT7 ILD

INFORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Coiste na n-Iarchimi
10 Beechmount Avenue
Belfast
BT12 7NA

Cunamh
171 Sunbeam Terrace
Londonderry
BT48 6UJ

Disabled Police Officers' Association
Seapark
151 Belfast Road
Carrickfergus
BT38 8PL

Disability Action
2 Annadale Avenue
BELFAST
BT7 3GG

EPIC
33a Woodvale Road
BELFAST
BT13 3BN

Indian Community Centre
86 Clifton Street
BELFAST
BT13 1AB

Law Centre NI
124 Donegal Street
Belfast
BT1 2GY

Lisburn Prisoner Support Project
126 Grand Street
LISBURN
BT27 4UE

INFORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Mencap
4 Annadale Avenue
BELFAST
BT7 3JH

Mutli-Cultural Resource Centre
12 Upper Crescent
BELFAST
BT7 1NT

NI African Culture
60 Lisburn Road
BELFAST
BT9 6AF

NI Association of Citizen's Advice Bureaux
11 Upper Crescent
BELFAST
BT1 2GY

NI Association for Ethnic Minorities
77 Botanic Avenue
BELFAST
BT7 1JL

NI Islamic Centre
Wellington Park
Malone Road
BELFAST
BT9

NOVA
Bocombra Lodge
2 Old Lurgan Road
PORTADOWN
BT65 5SQ

PAIN
10 Hamilton Road
BANGOR
BT20 4LE

INFORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Prisoner Enterprise Group
John McMichael Centre
127-145 Sandy Row
BELFAST
BT12 5ET

RIR Benevolent Fund
St Patrick's Barracks
Ballymena
BFPO 808

RNIB
Northern Ireland Service Bureau
40 Linenhall Street
BELFAST
BT2 8BG

RNID
Wilton House
5 College Square North
BELFAST
BT1 6AR

Soilders, Sailors and Airmens Families Association
War Memorial Building
9-13 Waring Street
Belfast
BT1 2DW

South Down Action for Healing Wounds
37 Downpatrick Street
Rathfriland
BT34 5DG

Strabane Befriending and Counselling Service
Koram Centre
3 Mourne Villas
Lower Main Street
STRABANE
BT82 8BG

INFORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

The Blind Centre NI
70 North Road
BELFAST
BT5 5NJ

Traveller Movement NI
30 University Street
BELFAST
BT7 1FZ

VAST
1a Rockmore Road
Belfast
BT12 7PD

Victim Support
54c Edward Street
LURGAN
BT66 6DB

WAVE (Belfast)
5 Chichester Park South
BELFAST
BT15 5DW

West Tyrone Voice
55 Dublin Street
Newtownstewart
BT78 4AQ

FORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Active Community Unit, Home Office
Advice Services Alliance
Age Concern
Age Sector Reference Group
Archbishop of Armagh and primate of All Ireland
Armagh Travellers' Support Group
Association of Chief Officers of Voluntary Organisations
Association of Independent Advice Centre
Baha'i Office for Northern Ireland
Barnardos
Barnardos Tuar Ceatha Project
Belfast Butterfly Club
Belfast Partnership Boards
Belfast Resource Centre for the Unemployed
Belfast Traveller education and Development Group
The Blind Centre NI
British Deaf association
Bryson House
Business in the Community
Carafriend
CARE
Carers National Association NI
Centre for Voluntary Action Studies, University of Ulster
"Challenge"
Chartered Institute of Housing
Child Care Northern Ireland
Child Poverty Action Group
Children's Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Chrysalis Women's Centre
Coiste na n-Iarchimi
Clerk to the Committee of the Centre
Coalition on Sexual Orientation
Committee on the Administration of Justice
Community Development and Child Health
The Community Relations Council
Community Relations Training/Learning Consortium
Community Technical Aid
Confederation of British Industry
Co-operation Ireland
Council for the Homeless (Northern Ireland)
Counteract
Craigavon Standing Conference of Women's Organisations
Cruse Bereavement Care (NI)
Democratic Dialogue

FORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Departmental Solicitor's Office
Derry Well Woman
Disability Action
District Councils
Down's Syndrome Association
East Belfast Community Development Agency
Education and Library Boards
Employers' Forum on Disability
Equality Commission
Equality Forum NI
The Equality Unit
Falls Community Council
Falls Women's Centre
Family Planning Association NI
Fermanagh Women's Network
First Division Association
First Key
Foundry Regeneration Trust
Foyle Friend
Foyle Women's Information Network
Foyle Women's Network
Gay and Lesbian Youth NI
General Consumer Council
Gingerbread
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
Health and Social Services Boards
Help the Aged
Housing Rights Services
Indian Community Centre
Industrial Development Board
Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers
Irish Congress of Trade Unions
International Fund for Ireland
Laganside Corporation
The Law Centre (NI)
The Law Society
LEDU
Lesbian Line
Library, Parliament Buildings
The Local Government Staff Commission for NI
Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly
Mencap (Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults)
Methodist Church in Ireland
Mid-Ulster Women's Network
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre

FORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

National Association of Pension Funds
Newry and Mourne Senior Citizens Forum
Newry and Mourne Women
Newtownabbey Senior Citizen's Forum
NIACRO
NIC/ICTU
Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
Northern Ireland Association of Citizen's Advice Bureaux
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Equality
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
Northern Ireland Economic Council
Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations
Northern Ireland Gays Rights Association
Northern Ireland Government Departments
Northern Ireland Housing Council
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
Northern Ireland Islamic Centre
Northern Ireland MPs and MEPs
Northern Ireland Partnership Boards
Northern Ireland Political Parties
Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance
Northern Ireland Spokespersons in the House of Lords and House of Commons
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
Northern Ireland Tenants Action Project
Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment
Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency
Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust
Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation
Northern Ireland Women's European Platform
North West Community Network
North West Forum of People with Disabilities (Derry)
North West Forum of People with Disabilities (Enniskillen)
NSPCC
NUS/USI Northern Ireland Student Centre
OFREG
Omagh Women's Area Network
Parents Advice Centre
Parents and Professional and Autism
POBAL
Post Office Counters Limited
Presbyterian Church in Ireland

FORMAL CONSULTATION LIST

Putting Children First
Queer Space
The Rainbow Project
Relate
Rent Officer for Northern Ireland
Royal National Institute for the Blind
Royal National Institute for the Deaf
Royal Ulster Constabulary
Rural Community Network
Rural Development Council
Save the Children
Sense NI
Shelter (Northern Ireland)
Sikh Cultural Centre
Simon Community (Northern Ireland)
Sperrin Lakeland Senior Citizens' Consortium
Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards
Traveller Movement for Northern Ireland
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
Ulster People's College
Ulster Scots Heritage Council
ULTACH
UNISON
Urban Institute
The Most Reverend Bishop Walsh
West Belfast Economic Forum
The Women's Centre
Women's Forum
Women's Information Group
Women's Resource and Development Agency
Women's Support Network
Women Together for Peace
Youth Council for Northern Ireland

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - NEW TSN ACTION PLAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY COMMITMENTS

Business Area:		Social Security Agency	
Social Need to be tackled:		Financial difficulties experienced by disadvantaged people.	
Desired outcome:		Greater take up of benefits and entitlements by disadvantaged people.	
New TSN objectives		Targets or actions and time-scales	
DSD 19	To develop and promote policies and programmes of action which aim to reduce disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Complete the evaluation of the New Deal for Lone Parents programme and prepare an action plan by March 2003; b. By March 2003, implement a rolling programme to improve the delivery of social security services for: disabled people, older people, people with literacy problems, people in isolated an deprived areas, those affected by the conflict, and those belonging to minority ethnic groups; c. To implement the recommendations of the Disability Audit by March 2002; d. During 2002 - 2003 continue to promote benefit take-up by pensioners and prepare for the introduction of Pensions Credit from October 2003 by delivering key milestone targets from the Pension Credit Project Plan by march 2003. e. By April 2004 to produce a strategy for take up of Social Security Benefits. 	

