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Foreword

Waterways Ireland is fully committed to considering the impact of the equality agenda on all its activities and to the implementation of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. Waterways Ireland will have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the groups listed in Section 75 and undertakes to commit the resources necessary to fulfil its obligations under the Act.

This Equality Scheme sets out how Waterways Ireland proposes to fulfil its statutory duties, envisaging a comprehensive examination of all the Body's functions and a commitment to an inclusive consultation process.

Waterways Ireland is also committed to ensuring that there are effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that the duties will be effectively complied with and for monitoring and reviewing progress. A planned programme of communication and training on the Scheme will be developed and Waterways Ireland will ensure that the programme is delivered to all staff.

This Equality Scheme sets out Waterways Ireland's strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in carrying out its functions. We commend the Scheme to you and encourage you to actively support the Body in implementing it fully.

Michael McGimpsey
Minister for Culture, Arts
and Leisure

Éamon Ó Cuív
Minister for Community,
Rural and Gaeltacht
Affairs

John Martin
Chief Executive
Waterways Ireland



Brollach

Tá Uiscebhealaí Éireann tiomanta an tionchar atá ag an gclár oibre comhionannais ar a chuid gníomhaíochtaí ar fad a mheas chomh maith le hAlt 75 d'Acht Thuaisceart Éireann 1998 a chur i bhfeidhm. Beidh an aird chuí ag Uiscebhealaí Éireann ar an ngá atá le comhionannas deiseanna idir na grúpaí a liostaítear in Alt 75 a chur chun cinn agus geallann na hacmhainní riachtanacha a chur ar fáil lena dhualgais faoin Acht a chomhlíonadh.

Leagtar amach sa Scéim Chomhionannais seo an chaoi a bhfuil sé i gceist ag Uiscebhealaí Éireann a chuid dualgas reachtúil a chomhlíonadh agus feictear go mbeidh iniúchadh cuimsitheach ar fheidhmeanna uile an Chomhlachta agus glacadh le próiseas comhairleacháin uilechuimsitheach i gceist.

Tá Uiscebhealaí Éireann tiomanta fosta a chinntiú go bhfuil socruithe inmheánacha éifeachtúla i bhfeidhm lena chinntiú go gcloítear go héifeachtúil leis na dualgais agus chun monatóireacht agus athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an dul chun cinn. Déanfar forbairt ar chlár pleanáilte cumarsáide agus oiliúna maidir leis an Scéim agus cinnteoidh Uiscebhealaí Éireann go gcuirfean an clár ar fáil don fhoireann ar fad.

Léiríonn an Scéim Chomhionannais seo tiomantas láidir Uiscebhealaí Éireann i leith chur chun cinn comhionannas deiseanna agus dea-chaidrimh i gcomhlíonadh a chuid feidhmeanna. Cuirimid an Scéim faoi bhur mbráid agus molaimid daoibh tacú go gníomhach leis an gComhlacht ina cur i bhfeidhm go hiomlán.

Michael McGimpsey
Aire Cultúir, Ealaíon
agus Fóillíochta

Éamon Ó Cuív
Aire Gnóthaí Pobail,
Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta

John Martin
Príomhfheidhmeannach
Uiscebhealaí Éireann

Forwird

Watterweys Airlann is richtlie commetit tae gíean thocht tae the impact o the agenda o coequalitie on aa its acteevities, an tae implement o Section 75 o the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Watterweys Airlann is for takan tent o the need for forderan einlie inlets atween the groups as kythes in Section 75 an taks on the commetment o resources necessar for the implement o its oblegements unner the Act.

This Scheme o Coequalitie sets out the wey Watterweys Airlann propones implementan its statutor duties, wi the veesion o a fou pruiw o aa the functions o the Curns an a commetment tae an inclusive process o speirins.

Watterweys Airlann haes a commetment tae makan sicar at thar be effective internal arrengements thar for tae mak sicar at the duties be effective compleed wi, an for the monitor an review o oncum. A planned program o communication an lear anent the Scheme is for a-takan on, an Watterweys Airlan is for makan sicar at the program is gíen tae aa its wirkars.

Watterweys Airlanns strang commetment tae the forder o einlie inlets an guid relations, an cairriean out its functions, kythes in this Scheme o Coequalitie. We haulds tae the Scheme an we ar houpan yous will anaa, an we ar aa for yous gíean active uphauld tae the Curn, an implementan the haill o it.

Michael McGimpsey
Meenister for Cultur,
the Airts, an Bytyme

Éamon Ó Cuív
Meenister for Commontie,
Landart an Gaeltacht Eesues

John Martin
Heid Executive
Waterweys Airlann



Waterways Ireland Equality Scheme

introduction



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Waterways Ireland's statutory obligations

1.1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires Waterways Ireland in carrying out all its functions, powers and duties relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious beliefs;
- persons of different political opinions;
- persons of different racial groups;
- persons of different ages;
- persons of different marital status;
- persons of different sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

1.1.2 Without prejudice to these obligations, Waterways Ireland shall have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

1.1.3 Schedule 9 of the Act requires Waterways Ireland to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 and Schedule 9, in Northern Ireland.

1.2 Waterways Ireland's Equality Scheme

1.2.1 Waterways Ireland engaged a company of external equality consultants to audit the organisation's proposed policies, procedures and activities against the key tenets of the Equality Scheme and its level of compliance with the Northern Ireland Act. This assisted the preparation of an Equality Scheme for Waterways Ireland under the terms of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

1.3 Waterways Ireland's statement of undertaking

1.3.1 Waterways Ireland undertakes:

- to meet the commitments set out in this Equality Scheme; and
- to commit the necessary resources [ie, time, money, people, equipment] to ensure that the statutory duties are complied with and that the Equality Scheme can be drawn up and implemented effectively and to managing and implementing the technical, cultural and political changes involved in enabling the organisation to meet its duties and obligations under the Act.



Waterways Ireland Equality Scheme

framework



2 WATERWAYS IRELAND AND ITS STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

2.1 The establishment of Waterways Ireland

- 2.1.1 Waterways Ireland is one of six North/South Implementation Bodies established by the British-Irish Agreement¹ on 2 December 1999. It has the status of a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) in Northern Ireland and a non-commercial Semi State body in the Republic of Ireland.
- 2.1.2 Waterways Ireland operates according to the provisions made by the Multi-Party Agreement² and implements any decisions on policies and actions taken by the North/South Ministerial Council.
- 2.1.3 Waterways Ireland prepares a business plan on an annual basis – this plan includes a description of the organisation’s proposed activities and the funding implications. The organisation receives funding, as approved by the North/South Ministerial Council and by the Northern Ireland Assembly and Dáil Éireann.
- 2.1.4 The Headquarters for Waterways Ireland is located in Enniskillen and three Regional Divisions are based at Carrick-on-Shannon (County Leitrim), Scarriff (County Clare) and Dublin.

The Body may be contacted at:

20 Darling Street
 Enniskillen
 Co Fermanagh
 BT74 7EW
 Tel: +4428 6632 3004
 Fax: +4428 6634 6237
 E-mail: info@waterwaysireland.org

- 2.1.5 It is hoped that the full complement of staff will be in place by end 2002.

2.2 Waterways Ireland’s accountability

- 2.2.1 Waterways Ireland is accountable to the North/South Ministerial Council which is ultimately accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Oireachtas for the organisation’s effectiveness and efficiency. Waterways Ireland is required to submit an annual report on its activities to the North/South Ministerial Council.
- 2.2.2 Departmental responsibility for Waterways Ireland rests with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Republic of Ireland and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland.
- 2.2.3 Waterways Ireland is required to prepare annual statements of accounts and submit them to the Northern Ireland and Irish Departments, to the North/South Ministerial Council as well as to the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland and the Irish Comptroller and Auditor General. These statements are then laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and both Houses of the Oireachtas.

1 The British Irish Agreement is an agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland, signed in Belfast on 10 April 1998.

2 The Multi-Party Agreement was reached at Belfast on 10 April 1998.

2.3 Waterways Ireland's responsibilities

- 2.3.1 Waterways Ireland is responsible for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes.
- 2.3.2 Waterways Ireland is responsible for:
- the Shannon-Erne Waterway;
 - the Shannon-Erne Waterways Promotions Ltd;
 - the Erne System;
 - the Grand Canal;
 - the Barrow Navigation;
 - the Lower Bann Navigation;
 - the Royal Canal;
 - the Shannon Navigation; and
 - taking forward studies and appraisals in relation to the possible restoration of the Ulster Canal.
- 2.3.3 Personnel located at Carrick-on-Shannon, Scarriff and Dublin are responsible for the operations in the three regions.

2.4 Waterways Ireland's organisational structure

- 2.4.1 A major task for the Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the two sponsoring Departments and the two Departments of Finance has been the preparation of proposals for an organisational structure capable of fully meeting the responsibilities placed on Waterways Ireland.
- 2.4.2 Waterways Ireland's organisational structure provides for:
- a Chief Executive Officer;
 - five Director posts to cover:
 - Operations,
 - Technical Services,
 - Finance and Personnel,
 - Corporate Services,
 - Marketing, Communication and Promotion,
 - three Regional Managers;
 - managerial staff;
 - professional staff;
 - technical staff; and
 - administration support staff.

An organisation structure is attached at Annex A.

2.5 Organisational arrangements for implementing and monitoring the Equality Scheme

- 2.5.1 Waterways Ireland fully acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that satisfactory arrangements will be in place in Northern Ireland to discharge the organisation's obligations in relation to the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. The point of contact for matters arising in relation to the Equality Scheme will be:

The Director Of Corporate Services
 5-7 Belmore Street
 Enniskillen
 Co Fermanagh
 BT74 6AA
 Tel: +4428 66 32 3004
 Fax: +4428 66 34 6257
 E-mail: info@waterwaysireland.org

- 2.5.2 The following organisational arrangements have been made for this purpose.
- 2.5.3 The Chief Executive Officer will:
- be accountable to the North/South Ministerial Council for the development, maintenance and review of the Scheme in accordance with the legislation, good practice and any guidance which may be issued by the Equality Commission;
 - put in place arrangements necessary to enable her/him to advise the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Republic of Ireland, on a quarterly basis, of progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in Waterways Ireland's Equality Scheme;
 - delegate to the Director of Corporate Services:
 - responsibility for the administration of the organisation's duties in Northern Ireland under Section 75 and Schedule 9, at a corporate level and in providing advice on the appropriateness of administrative and organisational arrangements in the context of Section 75 and Schedule 9 duties;
 - the duty to co-ordinate the implementation of the Equality Scheme and the responsibility to be the point of contact with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. (S)he will agree with the Chief Executive a process for agreeing the policies to be subjected to impact assessment and an appropriate methodology for impact assessment, in consultation with other members of the management team, as appropriate.
- 2.5.4 Waterways Ireland will undertake to assess the need for setting up an equality issues task group and, if considered necessary, to develop and put in place clear terms of reference for the group. Progress on meeting objectives will be reported upon at the most senior level on a quarterly basis.
- 2.5.5 Objectives and targets relating to the statutory obligations will be integrated into the corporate and operational plans, and these duties will be reflected at all levels of strategic planning within the organisation including staff objectives and annual plans. Once arrangements have been established to review performance against the objectives of the Equality Scheme, staff objectives and annual plans will be monitored and reviewed. Waterways Ireland's annual report will contain a report on the progress in meeting the objectives and targets set, in relation to the statutory duties.

Waterways Ireland Equality Scheme

equality

The background of the page is a close-up photograph of water ripples, creating a series of concentric circles that radiate from a central point. The water is a deep, clear blue, and the ripples are slightly darker, creating a textured, organic pattern. The overall tone is calm and serene.

3 Waterways Ireland's Equality Scheme

3.1 Areas of assessment

3.1.1 Waterways Ireland undertakes to screen all its policies, procedures and guidelines potentially impacting on Northern Ireland.

3.2 Arrangements for assessing compliance with Section 75 duties

3.2.1 Waterways Ireland will assess over a five-year period how its existing, proposed and new policies impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relations within the terms of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. This will be done through equality impact assessments [refer Section 3.3] following a timetable to be agreed by the Chief Executive Officer, the five Directors and other Senior Managers.

3.2.2 It is likely that Waterways Ireland will be drawing up its Corporate Plan, Business Plan, Equal Opportunities policy, Code of Conduct and parts of an employee handbook in the first year following approval of its Equality Scheme. The organisation will consult on this, drawing on the organisations listed at Annex B.

3.2.3 It might be the case that a number of policies may be grouped together for one assessment. Where relevant, an equality impact assessment will also include an annex on the promotion of good relations.

3.2.4 Where an assessment deals with the promotion of good relations, Waterways Ireland will consult with Community Relations Council (NI), Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Multi-Cultural Resource Centre, Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and other relevant organisations.

3.2.5 Waterways Ireland will conduct an annual review of progress made and the limitations experienced concerning the implementation of the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties. This will include progress on the good relations duty. The annual review will be submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to assist it in compiling its own Annual Report, as required by subparagraph 5(1)(b) of Schedule 8 to the Act.

3.2.6 In its first report to the Equality Commission, Waterways Ireland will specify a timetable for assessment of its current and proposed policies.

3.2.7 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, Waterways Ireland will take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out by it in relation to the policy.

3.2.8 Waterways Ireland will monitor complaints that it has not fulfilled its statutory obligations and will seek to handle these complaints according to the proposed procedure referred to in Section 3.10.

3.2.9 Waterways Ireland will liaise with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland with a view to ensuring progress is maintained. Waterways Ireland will also undertake to liaise with relevant stakeholders [as appended in Annex 'B'] in order to maintain (and develop) effective consultation, feedback and support for the implementation of its Equality Scheme.

- 3.2.10 Waterways Ireland will also undertake to provide information on the implementation of the Scheme to the following Departments:
- the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs;
 - the Department of Finance; and
 - the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- 3.2.11 Waterways Ireland will conduct reviews on an annual basis and it will commission, in the fifth year following approval of its Equality Scheme, a comprehensive review of how Waterways Ireland has complied with its Section 75 obligations and how equality of opportunity and good relations have been advanced in relation to the main policy areas.
- 3.2.12 Bodies will be drawn from the consultation list [appended as Annex B] for the purposes of all these reviews and the consultation list itself will be reviewed and updated in light of developments.

3.3 Steps for assessing the impact of policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity

- 3.3.1 Waterways Ireland will prioritise the drawing up of new policies according to the agreement covering the establishment of North/South Implementation Bodies³.
- 3.3.2 The organisation will draw up, as soon as practicable, within the first year following approval of its Equality Scheme:
- a Corporate Plan;
 - a Business Plan;
 - an Equal Opportunities policy; and
 - an employee handbook that will contain, as a minimum, a Code of Conduct, general conditions of employment, disciplinary procedures and grievance procedures.

Screening

- 3.3.3 As a general rule, in order to identify whether proposed new policies are likely to have significant implications for equality of opportunity, Waterways Ireland will use the following criteria:
- (i) *Is there likely to be any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups?*
 - (ii) *Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy area?*
 - (iii) *Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy/developing a policy in consultation with others in government or the community at large?*
 - (iv) *Have/will consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated/indicate that particular policies create problems which are specific to them?*
- 3.3.4 If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', Waterways Ireland will submit the proposed policy for a fuller impact assessment. Since most of Waterways Ireland's policies are in draft form, all of its proposed policies will be subject to a screening exercise to determine those which have significant implications for equality of opportunity and which should be subject to full equality impact assessment.

³ This agreement refers to the North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

- 3.3.5 Priorities will be established based on the following factors:
- social need;
 - effect on people's daily lives; and
 - effect on economic, social and human rights.
- 3.3.6 Waterways Ireland is also aware that relevant data – both quantitative and qualitative – would be needed to further the screening process. In addition, and in the absence of such data, Waterways Ireland will consult with relevant groups listed in annex 'B' as a minimum and/or commission research studies or surveys to obtain the data. It is likely that this might be carried out in partnership with one or more of the bodies the organisation liaises with. Consultation will be undertaken on the screening exercise and will include consultation on the proposed policies for equality impact assessment, their prioritisation and a timetable for conducting assessments. Again, any consultation will be with all groups listed in Annex B.
- 3.3.7 Waterways Ireland will include information on the screening exercises in its annual reports to the Equality Commission. Reports of any consultations that occur on the screening exercises will detail which policies will be subject to impact assessment and which policies proposed by those consulted as appropriate for impact assessment have not been included and why. These will also be included in Waterways Ireland's annual reports to the Equality Commission, as will the timetable as indicated at Sections 3.12.3 to 3.12.7.

A desk audit

- 3.3.8 To date, Waterways Ireland has undertaken a desk audit of some of the functions of the organisation.
- 3.3.9 The results of this initial consideration are based on a critical review of documentation by an external consultant, followed by consultation with internal stakeholders. They are set out below:

(Proposed policies relating to) functions	Provision of services and facilities	Promotion	Recruitment and selection	Personnel development and training
Criterion (i)	yes	yes	yes	yes
Criterion (ii)	yes	yes	yes	yes
Criterion (iii)	yes	yes	yes	yes
Criterion (iv)	yes	yes	yes	yes

- 3.3.10 Waterways Ireland believes that the impact of each policy/function will vary across people of different religious belief, political opinion, gender, 'race', sexual orientation, age, marital status, people with dependants and those without, and people with and without disabilities.

Equality impact assessment

3.3.11 Waterways Ireland will conduct equality impact assessments in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex 1 of the Guidelines. To determine whether a proposed policy will have an impact on each of the nine groups, Waterways Ireland will test each policy against the following criteria:

Does/is the proposed policy (likely to) create a difference between this group and the population at large in respect of:

- (a) *rights, ie, access to justice in the legal, political or socio-economic environment?*
- (b) *resources, ie, distribution of resources such as time, space, information, money, political and economic power, education, training, job and professional career, new technologies, health care services, housing, transport or leisure?*
- (c) *participation, ie, representation in decision-making positions?*
- (d) *values and norms, ie, traditional roles, division of labour, attitudes and behaviour?*

3.3.12 If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', then consideration will be given to submitting the policy for a full impact assessment.

3.3.13 Waterways Ireland will do this by consulting with those listed at Annex B. Waterways Ireland acknowledges that the causes of disadvantage are manifold and often hidden, that people are affected by disadvantage in different ways and that the resulting unmet needs are multi-layered.

3.3.14 Once again, both quantitative data and qualitative or evaluative information from research and surveys (derived from non-governmental, academic and governmental sources) will be used selectively to assist Waterways Ireland in identifying disproportionate differential impacts on groups affected by the policy.

3.3.15 Waterways Ireland recognises:

- the need to be clear about the rationale, objectives and terms of reference of the policy under review;
- that persons and groups most likely to be affected by the policy, both positively and negatively, need to be identified;
- the need to compare with the population as a whole; and
- that where the policy is restricted to a localised area, relevant group(s) in that area should be identified and comparison(s) should be restricted to the defined local area.

3.3.16 Where relevant data are not available, Waterways Ireland will make arrangements to commission new data. In the absence of available data, consultations with target groups or representative bodies of target groups will become all the more necessary for ensuring valid contribution to this process of promoting equality of opportunity. Lack of particular data, unless it is crucial to properly advise a policy decision, will not be used by the organisation as a reason for delaying the assessment of policy.

Handling disproportionate impact

- 3.3.17 Should adverse impact be anticipated, Waterways Ireland will ask, and record in detail the answers to, the following questions:
- (i) *Is there illegal direct discrimination⁴ under the terms of Northern Ireland legislation? If so, the policy proposals cannot be proceeded with.*
 - (ii) *Is there direct discrimination, which is not illegal under current Northern Ireland law, eg, on grounds of age or sexual orientation? If so, see question (iv).*
 - (iii) *Is there indirect discrimination⁵ in terms of any of the nine categories? If so, see question (iv).*
 - (iv) *Can any of the discrimination noted in (ii) and (iii) above be lawfully justified by wider policy objectives? In particular –*
 - (v) *Was the justification case based on affirmative action⁶?*
 - (vi) *If the answers to questions (iv) and (v) are ‘no’, can the desired policy outcome be achieved by other means? [Refer paragraph below on alternatives.]*
 - (vii) *If no alternatives can reasonably be adopted, can the differential impact be mitigated in any way? [Refer paragraph below on mitigation.]*

Alternatives

- 3.3.18 When disproportionate differential impact is lawful and justifiable, Waterways Ireland will take steps to consider if there are other alternatives for achieving the desired outcome without incurring that impact, or perhaps better promote equality of opportunity for relevant groups.
- 3.3.19 In order to determine this, Waterways Ireland will address the following questions to every group identified as being likely to be affected by the policy:
- (i) *What effect will this option have on equality of opportunity for the relevant group? Will it promote or hinder equality of opportunity?*
 - (ii) *Does this option rest on the traditional assumptions as regards attitudes and behaviour of the relevant groups, ie, does it reinforce or challenge stereotypes?*
 - (iii) *What are the implications for Waterways Ireland and the groups concerned of adopting this option, or of adopting another option more favourable to equality of opportunity?*
 - (iv) *If cost is the main consideration, does the additional cost of this option outweigh the anticipated social benefits of the new policy to the relevant group and can these be quantified?*
 - (v) *Does this option shift the differential impact from one group to another? Would this secondary differential impact be justifiable?*
 - (vi) *Would international obligations be breached or furthered by this option?*

4 Direct discrimination occurs where a proposal refers separately to a particular group or groups and may result in less favourable treatment between these and others. For example, if a member of one religion was given access to services or facilities which would not be available to someone of a different religion in identical circumstances.

5 Indirect discrimination arises where a condition or requirement, although applied equally to all, has the effect of excluding, penalising or treating less favourably any group, whether intentionally or not; cannot be shown to be justifiable; and will be to the detriment of those who cannot comply with it.

6 Affirmative action may be an appropriate response to redressing inequalities and a valid means of enhancing equality of opportunity. It is an important method of combating inequality. When affirmative action is proposed as a recommendation of an impact assessment there should be a clear rationale for its application, drawing on objective evidence of disadvantage and inequality.

- 3.3.20 Waterways Ireland will document any alternative policy emerging as a valid alternative or alternatives to the policy originally considered. Recommendations to senior officers and Ministers will highlight consideration of reasonable alternatives.

Mitigation

- 3.3.21 Where no alternative options are considered feasible or acceptable, Waterways Ireland will examine the possibility/possibilities for softening the effect of disproportionate adverse impact on the relevant group through mitigation, by considering the following two questions:
- (i) *Is it possible to lessen the severity of the differential impact within the scope of the original policy?*
 - (ii) *Can some other remedy be provided to the relevant group to compensate them for the effects of a disproportionate differential impact?*
- 3.3.22 Options considered under mitigation will be fully documented as in the case of alternatives. Waterways Ireland will particularly note where an option for mitigation is considered feasible but unacceptable and by which party.

3.4 Arrangements for consultation

Consultation re the draft Equality Scheme

- 3.4.1 The North/South Ministerial Council has approved Waterways Ireland's approach and process for consulting on and producing a draft Equality Scheme.
- 3.4.2 Waterways Ireland undertook a series of measures to ensure that its key stakeholders had an opportunity to comment on the draft Scheme. A public notice was placed in the Belfast Telegraph, the Irish News and the News Letter on 30 June 2000 and a targeted mailing also took place [refer Annex 'B'].
- 3.4.3 Waterways Ireland indicated in the public notice that it will take comments on the draft Scheme in other languages and formats. A request for an Irish translation was received and met by Waterways Ireland.
- 3.4.4 All key internal stakeholders received printed copies of the draft Equality Scheme and consultations with them took place on 22 June and 31 August 2000. In addition, all staff have been given the opportunity to read and provide feedback on the draft Scheme.
- 3.4.5 Waterways Ireland sent out printed copies of its draft Equality Scheme to:
- sixty-two organisations representing a wide range of interests;
 - five North/South Implementation Bodies;
 - the twenty-six District Councils in Northern Ireland;
 - the five Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland;
 - the five Health and Social Services Councils in Northern Ireland;
 - the four Health and Social Services Boards in Northern Ireland;
 - the ten Northern Ireland Departments;
 - the Northern Ireland Office;
 - the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister;
 - the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs;
 - the Department of Finance; and
 - the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform,
- inviting them to comment on the draft Scheme.

3.4.6 The public notice generated further requests for copies of the Scheme and additional copies were passed to:

- ATGWU (Ireland);
- Arthur Cox (NI) Ltd;
- Bell, David;
- Campbell, Daniel;
- Carrickcraft;
- Cavanagh, John;
- Coalisland Canal Restoration Committee;
- Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network;
- Ferguson McIlveen Consulting Engineers;
- Fermanagh Wetlands Project;
- Fisheries Sectoral Development Programme;
- GMB;
- Hewitt, David;
- King, T;
- Letterbreen Development Association;
- Magee, John;
- McGinn, Pat;
- McGlaughlin, Glen;
- McGuigan, Sean;
- McQuillan, Henry;
- Morgan, Francis;
- Northern Ireland Youth Forum;
- Ó Gribín, Éamon;
- Owen Aillew Diving Club;
- Payne, John;
- Rossigh Angling Club;
- Sectoral Development Programme;
- Sheridan, N;
- Stormont Strategy;
- Tourist Development International;
- Ulster Waterways Group; and
- University of Ulster, School of Environmental Studies

3.4.7 The above individuals and organisations have been included in Waterways Ireland's revised consultation list.

3.4.8 Waterways Ireland issued invitations to one hundred and fifty-five organisations who represent/support/are led by the following groupings:

- children;
- minority ethnic people;
- older people;
- people of different political opinions;
- people of different religious beliefs;
- people with dependants;
- people with disabilities;
- the lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgendered community;
- women; and
- young people,

urging them to comment on the Scheme and/or attend one of two focus group consultation sessions held on 16 and 23 August 2000 at Oaklin House Hotel (Inn on the park Hotel) in Dungannon.

3.4.9 Printed copies of the draft Equality Scheme were sent with the letters of invitation.

3.4.10 An additional eight invitations, along with a printed form of Waterways Ireland's draft Equality Scheme, were also sent to:

- five waterways interest groups;
- the National Trust;
- the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside; and
- the Ulster Wildlife Trust,

inviting them to comment or attend one of the two focus group consultations organised for 16 and 23 August 2000 at Oaklin House Hotel (Inn on the Park Hotel) in Dungannon.

3.4.11 There was a clear statement in all invitations that any access or communication requirements would have been met. Waterways Ireland offered to make alternative arrangements to facilitate face-to-face interviews at a mutually convenient place, time and date with people unable to attend focus group interviews.

3.4.12 The two focus groups meetings took place as planned. They were attended by representatives from:

- Armagh Travellers Support Group;
- Coalisland Canal Restoration Committee;
- Coalisland Dungannon District Council;
- Ferguson McIlveen Consulting Engineers; and
- Ulster Waterways Group.

3.4.13 Written responses/communications were received from:

- Armagh Travellers Support Group;
- Banbridge District Council;
- Committee on the Administration of Justice*;
- Community Relations Council (NI);
- Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network;
- Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside;
- Department of Education;
- Department of the Environment*;
- Disability Action;
- Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (NI Branch)*;
- La Societa Italiana Irlanda del Nora*;
- Lough Neagh and Lower Bann Advisory Committees*;
- Lurgan Council for Voluntary Action*;
- Mencap Northern Ireland;
- Northern Ireland Women's European Platform;
- Northern Ireland Youth Forum;
- Ulster Waterways Group;
- Victim Support NI*; and
- West Belfast Economic Forum.

[* acknowledgement only]

3.4.14 Four one-to-one interviews took place with the following people:

- Brenda Campbell of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland;
- Denis Arnold of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure;
- Paddy Sloan of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission; and
- Paul Lynch of the Community Relations Council (NI).

3.4.15 The internal and external focus group consultations as well as the one-to-one interviews were facilitated by a skilled facilitator external to the organisation.

3.4.16 A summary of the responses from consultees and Waterways Ireland's response to the comments is appended at Annex C.

Waterways Ireland's commitment to consultation

- 3.4.17 The purpose of consultation, as a whole, will be to enable Waterways Ireland to receive the views of those who may be affected by its activities and for these views to be considered as new policies are developed and existing policies are reviewed. Waterways Ireland will work with representative groups and individuals of the Section 75 categories in order to identify how best to obtain their views. This may involve face-to-face meetings, advisory groups, surveys, consultative panels, internet discussions, citizens juries, and other innovative ways of consulting as there will be different means of consultation for different groups and it will be important to establish the basis for dialogue and engagement during the life of the Scheme.
- 3.4.18 Waterways Ireland will consult, as appropriate, with the Equality Commission, the Community Relations Council, voluntary, community and trade union groups and organisations representing the various categories included in Section 75 on issues relevant to the fulfilment of the Section 75 obligations. (The full list of bodies is set out at Annex B.) Waterways Ireland will take account of proposals from those bodies relating to its compliance with the Section 75 obligations.
- 3.4.19 Waterways Ireland will consult on equality impact assessments with public bodies, voluntary, community, trade union and other groups with a legitimate interest in the matter, including those directly affected by the policy, whether or not they have a direct, economic or personal interest.
- 3.4.20 Those listed at Annex B will be consulted in relation to equality impact assessments. Waterways Ireland recognises that the list is not exhaustive and will, therefore, be amended in the light of experience.
- 3.4.21 In addition to consultation on equality impact assessments, Waterways Ireland will also, from time to time, have a need to consult on strategies, reviews and other plans. Those listed at Annex B will be consulted in relation to all matters relevant to the Section 75 duties.
- 3.4.22 In consulting the affected groups, Waterways Ireland will aim to provide a period of response of at least eight weeks and to begin consultation as early as possible.
- 3.4.23 Waterways Ireland recognises that consultation periods may need to be longer than eight weeks for some constituent groups. This will ensure that the consultation process itself does not discriminate against marginalized groups.
- 3.4.24 A consultation process which involves, for example, people with a learning disability and their carers, or young people, will need to incorporate a number of activities including pre-consultation preparation and information to allow individuals and groups to determine their interest in taking part.
- 3.4.25 Waterways Ireland is committed to ensuring that there are no barriers to the consultation process. Waterways Ireland will, therefore, strive to accommodate the range of specific needs, including timescale, before and during consultations and will operationalise this commitment in terms of talking with the relevant individuals and representative organisations to determine the most effective ways of consulting with the relevant groups.

- 3.4.26 On the other hand, there may be circumstances where this timescale is not feasible. Such occurrences will be monitored, kept under review, justified very clearly and reported on in Waterways Ireland's annual review. Waterways Ireland has identified the following circumstances where it will be necessary to have a shorter consultation period than the minimum eight weeks:
- policies which must be implemented immediately to protect health and safety;
 - policies which must be implemented urgently to comply with a court judgement; and
 - policies that must be implemented to address a situation with immediate and/or severe economic or social consequences.
- 3.4.27 In consulting on any matter to which this Scheme relates, Waterways Ireland will write to the relevant bodies drawn from the list in Annex B. Waterways Ireland may also consult through face-to-face meetings, small-group meetings, focus groups, discussion papers with the opportunity to comment in writing, questionnaires and Internet discussion groups.
- 3.4.28 Consideration will be given to specific training for staff engaged in consultation exercises to ensure that those facilitating consultations have the necessary skills to communicate effectively. This training will be developed in consultation with the affected groups.
- 3.4.29 Waterways Ireland will draw on the many good practice guidelines available from a range of organisations, for example, the Age Sector Reference Group, Community Technical Aid, Mencap, Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network, Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust, Rural Community Network, Speechmatters, the Sustainable Northern Ireland Project and the Workers Educational Association.
- 3.4.30 Waterways Ireland will consult with different target groups and take their advice on the best routes to ensuring accessibility in terms of language and appropriate formats. Information will be made available in consultation with the affected groups, to ensure the highest level of inclusivity in any policy decision-making.
- 3.4.31 Systems will be put in place to ensure that on request, information will be made available in a timely fashion, in accessible formats, including Braille, large print, audiocassette, signed video cassette, Mekaton and other similar formats, Irish, Ulster Scots and other languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.
- 3.4.32 In organising consultation meetings, and in line with the best practice outlined in the Equality Commission's Guiding Principles, Waterways Ireland will aim to ensure a full participation in setting the time, venue and accessibility, the provision of childcare facilities, the use of appropriate language and how the meeting is to be run, eg. the use of a signer. Waterways Ireland considers it particularly important that sufficient, timely and appropriate information is provided to enable all affected groups and individuals consider the full implications of proposals, and it will take steps to ensure this.
- 3.4.33 In relation to the equality consultation process, Waterways Ireland will release all relevant quantitative and qualitative data and other documentation, such as consultants' reports to groups and individuals involved in the equality consultation process and others who request it. Information which has informed, or been directly responsible for a decision taken by the Body will be made available to those being consulted. The arrangements to release this information will be available for all consultations.

3.5 Arrangements for monitoring

- 3.5.1 Knowledge of the dissemination of information and the uptake of services provided by Waterways Ireland and the impact of its policies on the different groups within the Section 75 categories will be of assistance in assessing progress towards equality of opportunity. Within one year of approval of this Scheme, a system will be established to monitor the impact of policies in order to identify their effects on the relevant groups. This will be reviewed on an annual basis and the results will be widely and openly published (Refer Section 3.6.4). Waterways Ireland will develop and implement monitoring of access to information and services and within each of its main policy areas in order to ensure equality of opportunity.
- 3.5.2 In Years 2 to 5, Waterways Ireland will also undertake to review the extent of existing monitoring systems within each of the main policy areas and over the groups identified in the Act and consider the scope for extending the systems. In addition to the value of any additional information required for assessing progress towards equality of opportunity, this assessment will also take into account resource implications and the readiness of the public to supply information.
- 3.5.3 In some cases, seeking such information may be difficult or sensitive and Waterways Ireland would then consider other means to identify the impact of its policies, eg, through consultation and discussion with relevant representative groups. The review will also assess the resource implications for Waterways Ireland in taking on the additional monitoring.
- 3.5.4 Where equality impact assessments have identified an anticipated differential adverse impact on particular groups within Section 75 categories and no alternative policy had been feasible, steps would have been taken – where possible – to mitigate such anticipated adverse impact. Waterways Ireland will conduct/commission special monitoring and analysis to confirm the extent of the adverse impact and/or the success of any mitigating measures.
- 3.5.5 Key issues likely to be considered will be:
- (i) *Has the anticipated adverse impact actually occurred?*
 - (ii) *Has a greater than anticipated differential impact occurred?*
 - (iii) *Was this as a result of assumptions which were later proven to be inaccurate?*
 - (iv) *Using the actual outcome data, would this have changed the original policy decision?*
 - (v) *Have extraneous factors subsequently prevented the anticipated differential impact?*
 - (vi) *Have extraneous factors subsequently allowed the greater equality of opportunity to be promoted within the relevant group?*
 - (vii) *Does the situation warrant an early review of the policy?*
 - (viii) *Does the situation indicate that additional research should be commissioned?*
 - (ix) *Does the situation indicate that continued or additional monitoring is necessary?*
- 3.5.6 Information collected in this special monitoring will be taken into account in any future review of the policy.

3.6 Arrangements for publication of assessments and monitoring

- 3.6.1 Waterways Ireland will consult on the outcome of any equality impact assessment and of any monitoring undertaken.
- 3.6.2 Consultation will also take place with target groups to determine what formats and languages will be most appropriate for ensuring maximum access to information on equality impact assessments and monitoring.
- 3.6.3 Relevant information will be available in printed form and in a range of alternative formats (ie, Braille, large print, audiocassette, signed video cassette, Mekaton and other similar formats, Irish, Ulster Scots and other languages) through a request to Waterways Ireland's Director of Corporate Services.
- 3.6.4 Waterways Ireland will inform the general public about the availability of this information through press releases, including publications and media associated with the Section 75 categories, e.g. talking newspapers, and publications in languages other than English. It will also directly inform bodies listed at Annex B when this material is available. Once Waterways Ireland's Internet website has been set up, the information will also be placed on it. Consideration will also be given on how best to communicate the information to young people and those with learning disabilities.
- 3.6.5 Published documentation of an equality impact assessment will include:
- the aims of the policy;
 - details of the outcome of the assessment highlighting if an adverse impact has been identified;
 - associated available monitoring data;
 - details of any consideration given to mitigate any adverse impact of the policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity;
 - details of any consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.
- 3.6.6 Where monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in a greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the policy will be revised.

3.7 Waterways Ireland's commitment to training and communication

Training

- 3.7.1 Waterways Ireland aims to:
- promote equal opportunities training as a part of a wider learning process in the organisation, for example, in courses relating to team management, effective customer relationships, communication skills, interviewing skills and people management skills;
 - maintain and develop any equal opportunities changes made, enabling the organisation to become centres of equal opportunity creativity; and
 - ensure that staff are aware of their legal obligations under Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998.

- 3.7.2 Waterways Ireland believes that in order for the organisation to achieve this vision, it needs to:
- (i) *commission a training needs analysis (TNA) of prevailing levels of knowledge about equal opportunities issues, general awareness and levels of skills;*
 - (ii) *use the results of the TNA to provide a baseline from which to set training objectives and targets, and measure outcomes and performance change following training;*
 - (iii) *design a training programme with the assistance of a team of external trainers, where appropriate, from relevant constituencies. This programme will provide, as a minimum:*
 - a. *knowledge of Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998;*
 - b. *knowledge of organisation's own Equal Opportunities policy and the implications for the organisation;*
 - c. *knowledge of the organisation's Equality Scheme, and the implications of its implementation for the organisation;*
 - d. *the necessary skills and experience to implement the different elements of the Equality Scheme;*
 - e. *the necessary skills to identify and deal effectively with prejudice and discrimination in the scope of their influence and action; and*
 - f. *regular access to information on the development and implementation of the organisation's Equality Scheme;*
 - (iv) *pay particular attention to the training for staff in management roles and other specialist staff, such as trainers, staff involved in research and data collection, policy development, monitoring and evaluation;*
 - (v) *include in all induction programmes:*
 - a. *the legal requirements of Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998;*
 - b. *a general overview of the organisation's own Equal Opportunities policy;*
 - c. *information of the organisation's Equality Scheme and the implication of its implementation for the organisation.*
- 3.7.3 The different aspects of Waterways Ireland's equal opportunities training programme will commence in Year 1 following approval of the Equality Scheme. Training will be provided as staff are recruited. Staff will have received the minimum training by the end of Year 2. Focused training for managerial and specialist staff will be completed in Year 2.
- 3.7.4 The impact of such training will be evaluated and reviewed to ensure best practice throughout all areas relating to policies including procedures and protocols and to assess the extent to which staff fully understand their role in implementing the statutory duties.
- 3.7.5 Waterways Ireland is committed to providing the necessary resources for implementing its equal opportunities training programme, to publishing the results of evaluation of the programme and to reporting the extent to which the training objectives have been met in its annual reviews to the Equality Commission starting from Year 2.
- 3.7.6 Following the receipt of further guidance on training, Waterways Ireland will be drawing up a planned programme of its delivery in line with the published guidelines and advice provided by the Commission. The key training objectives will be:
- To prepare a detailed training plan in consultation with affected groups for all Waterways Ireland staff over the 5-year period to which the Equality Scheme refers, which will aim to achieve the objectives outlined below;

- To raise awareness of current anti-discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland, including the provisions of Section 75, Schedule 9 and Section 76 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. This should include an explanation of the duties and their implications for all employees;
- To provide those employees involved in the screening of policies with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- To provide those employees involved in the equality impact assessment of policies with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- To provide those employees who deal with complaints in relation to the implementation of the Scheme, with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
- To provide those employees involved in the consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- To provide those employees involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of Waterways Ireland's Equality Scheme to do this work effectively; and
- To evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.

Communication

- 3.7.7 Waterways Ireland will make available copies of its Scheme for all its staff.
- 3.7.8 The Corporate Services Director will ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively, any resistance to political, cultural and technical changes is handled sensitively and the process of change is carefully documented. (S)he will communicate this information in the form of quarterly reports to the Chief Executive.
- 3.7.9 Waterways Ireland will publish a summary of communication activities in its annual reports to the Equality Commission and is currently considering other elements of a wider communications strategy.

3.8 Arrangements for ensuring public access to information and services

- 3.8.1 Waterways Ireland is committed to providing the necessary resources to allow for effective communication with the public about its services. It recognises, however, that there is a risk that:
- some sections of the public will not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information provided by Waterways Ireland. The following are examples of areas to which particular attention will be paid:
 - people with sensory and learning disabilities may have particular difficulties with information in print;
 - members of some groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English;
 - some local newspapers are read predominantly by members of only one of the major religio-political groups [ie, Protestants/Unionists or Catholics/Nationalists].
 - some of Waterways Ireland's information may contain images or photos which are offensive to/unrepresentative of certain categories of people mentioned in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. For example, there are risks associated with general assumptions in society that:
 - Northern Ireland society is not multi-ethnic;
 - people of different sexual orientations should not be openly acknowledged;
 - people with disabilities are invariably wheelchair users; and
 - users of inland waterways are people from the white, settled community.

- some sections of the public may not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing Waterways Ireland's services. There are risks that some facilities may not cater for the needs of users:
 - of different ages, young and old;
 - of different physical abilities;
 - of different religious persuasions⁷ and with different religious needs; and
 - with different health needs.
- 3.8.2 In disseminating information through the local press, Waterways Ireland will ensure that press statements and public advertisements are carried by all three Belfast daily newspapers and the North-West version of the Belfast Telegraph. Where press statements or public advertisements are aimed at a particular area in Northern Ireland, Waterways Ireland will ensure that the information is disseminated through at least two local newspapers circulating in that area, ensuring that the information is accessible to both main religio-political sections of the community. Press statements and public advertisements will also be carried in publications associated with the Section 75 categories, e.g. talking newspapers, and publications in languages other than English. Where appropriate consideration will also be given on how best to communicate information to young people and people with learning disabilities.
- 3.8.3 Waterways Ireland will, within the first year following approval of this Scheme, assess its arrangements for providing information in Braille, large print, audiocassette, signed video cassette, Mekaton, and other language formats. These arrangements will be publicised widely now and once the assessment has been carried out. The assessment will take account of:
- the statutory requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995;
 - the likely demand for information in such formats across its main policy areas;
 - resource implications; and
 - in particular, the recommendations of the cross-departmental Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) working groups on minority ethnic people and on access to information.
- 3.8.4 The assessment will make recommendations on how public access to information can be better ensured by improving arrangements for providing information in different formats and languages. Waterways Ireland will consult on these recommendations and will implement them appropriately.
- 3.8.5 Waterways Ireland will subject all of its information made available to the public (and, in particular, its promotional materials) to equality-proofing to ensure that:
- the relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 are adhered to; and
 - images and photos are inclusive and representative of all people mentioned in Section 75 of the Act.
- 3.8.6 Waterways Ireland will undertake to carefully appraise the location of its new offices especially that of its Headquarters in Enniskillen and to ensure that all its accommodation and facilities for which the Body is responsible will be equally accessible to all groups. These locations will strive towards a welcoming and harmonious environment and the relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 will be adhered to.
- 3.8.7 The results of these assessments will influence the development and management of Waterways Ireland's dissemination and outreach strategies.

7 For the avoidance of doubt, 'religious persuasions' refer to all religions.

Dissemination strategy

3.8.8 During the first year following approval of this Scheme, Waterways Ireland will undertake to develop a dissemination strategy that will specify:

- its rationale;
- its objectives;
- its target groups;
- its target areas;
- the expected outcomes;
- the organisational constraints;
- the capacity of the organisation;
- the different methodologies to be engaged in;
- the intended level of dialogue/contact with community, voluntary and statutory sectors;
- the different languages and formats that materials will be made available in;
- the resources that accompany the activities;
- the personnel responsible for implementing the different elements of the strategy; and
- the dissemination timetable.

Outreach strategy

3.8.9 During the second year following approval of this Scheme, Waterways Ireland is committed to developing an outreach strategy that will specify:

- its rationale;
- its objectives;
- its target groups;
- its target areas;
- the expected outcomes;
- the organisational constraints;
- the capacity of the organisation;
- the likely obstacles (external and internal);
- the sources of support (external and internal); and
- the different outreach methodologies to be engaged in.

3.8.10 Waterways Ireland is committed to providing the necessary resources to enable the production of equality-proofed promotional materials and the appropriate dissemination of such; and, the publishing of the results of evaluation of both its dissemination strategy in its annual reviews starting from Year 2 and its outreach strategy from Year 3, following approval of this Scheme.

3.9 Arrangements for accessing copies of publications of the Equality Scheme

Obtaining copies of the draft Scheme

3.9.1 Apart from its current print format, the draft Equality Scheme is available on demand in the following formats:

- large print;
- print form (in Irish and Ulster Scots);
- Braille; and
- audio form (in a variety of languages, subject to demand).

A briefing in other formats and languages will be provided, subject to demand. Waterways Ireland will take comments on the draft Scheme in other languages and formats.

3.9.2 Requests for copies of the draft Equality Scheme should be directed to:

Waterways Ireland
20 Darling Street
Enniskillen
BT74 7EW

Tel: +44 (0)28 6632 3004
Fax: +44 (0)28 6634 6237
E-mail: info@waterwaysireland.org

Obtaining copies of the submitted Scheme

3.9.3 Following submission of the Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission, Waterways Ireland intends to make it available in the following formats and languages where practicable and subject to demand:

- print form (including large print);
- print form (in Irish and Ulster Scots);
- print form (in a variety of languages, subject to demand);
- Braille;
- audio form (in English, Irish and Ulster Scots);
- audio form (in a variety of languages, subject to demand);
- signed video form; and
- Mekaton and other similar formats.

Obtaining copies of the approved Scheme

3.9.4 Following approval of the Scheme by the Equality Commission, Waterways Ireland will issue a press statement and place prominent advertisements in the Belfast Telegraph, the Irish News and the News Letter.

3.9.5 This Scheme will then be circulated to all the bodies listed in Annex B as well as to any other individuals and organisations who have requested the draft Equality Scheme. Specific consideration will be given to how best to communicate the Scheme to young people and people with learning disabilities.

3.9.6 Waterways Ireland will also consider using specialist publications relating to constituent groups to disseminate information on the approved Scheme.

3.9.7 The approved Equality Scheme will be made available in the formats and languages specified for the submitted Scheme.

3.10 Proposed arrangements for taking and handling complaints

3.10.1 Waterways Ireland is committed to ensuring the accessibility of its complaints procedure. When a person believes that (s)he has been directly affected by Waterways Ireland's failure to comply with the organisation's Equality Scheme, (s)he should, in the first instance, bring her/his complaint to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer. (Refer Section 3.10.8)

3.10.2 Waterways Ireland will facilitate individuals/groups in bringing complaints to the Body.

3.10.3 Waterways Ireland will endeavour to let the complainant know, within five working days of receipt that the complaint has been received.

- 3.10.4 Waterways Ireland will then carry out an initial investigation of the complaint and, in most cases, will respond to the complainant within fifteen working days. If a full reply cannot be given in that time, Waterways Ireland will write to tell the complainant why, and to let her/him know what the organisation is doing to respond to the complaint.
- 3.10.5 If the complaint is complex, Waterways Ireland aims to let the person have a full reply within two months.
- 3.10.6 In setting out a response to the complainant, the Chief Executive Officer will inform her/him of the procedure for pursuing the complaint further, if necessary with the Equality Commission. Waterways Ireland will respond in a format appropriate to the complainant.
- 3.10.7 Where the Equality Commission decides to investigate the complaint or any other related matter, Waterways Ireland will co-operate fully, providing access to any documentation which the Commission may require.
- 3.10.8 Communication with the Chief Executive Officer should be addressed to:
20 Darling Street,
Enniskillen, BT74 7EW.
Tel: +44(0) 28 6632 3004,
Fax:+44(0) 28 6634 6237
e-mail: info@waterwaysireland.org

3.11 Arrangements for promoting good relations

- 3.11.1 Waterways Ireland is conscious that community relations are inextricably linked with equality of opportunity. It is clear that equality of opportunity can only be realised if there are good relations.
- 3.11.2 Waterways Ireland will liaise with Community Relations Council (NI), Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Equality Council for Northern Ireland, Multi Cultural Resource Centre, Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and any other relevant groups in order to develop its commitment to the promotion of good relations between persons of differing religious beliefs, political opinions or racial groups. Waterways Ireland will publicly subscribe to the three principles of community relations (as outlined by the Community Relations Council (NI) in its 'Guidelines for a Community Relations Strategy for Public Bodies'), that is, those of:
- equity – equality of access to resources;
 - respecting diversity – recognition, understanding and tolerance of difference [NB: Waterways Ireland will aim to ensure acceptance, rather than tolerance, of difference]; and
 - interdependence – obligations and commitments to others, inter-connectedness.
- And to any other subsequent materials developed to enable public authorities to better promote good relations.

3.12 Waterways Ireland's proposed timetable for implementing different elements of the Scheme

- 3.12.1 The following timetable summarises the measures that Waterways Ireland proposes to take during the five years following approval of this Equality Scheme and when the organisational structure is in place. It is hoped that the full complement of staff will be in place by the end of 2002.
- 3.12.2 A commencement date will be agreed with the Equality Commission taking account of these factors.

3.12.3 Year 1:

Screen all policies, procedures and protocols in consultation with the nine constituent groups.

Develop and manage arrangements for screening and for consulting on equality impact assessments.

Set up arrangements for monitoring numerical/quantitative and qualitative/evaluative data.

Draw up policies and procedures:

- a Corporate Plan that will reflect different elements of the Equality Scheme;
- a Business Plan that will reflect different elements of the Equality Scheme;
- an Equal Opportunities policy;
- a Code of Conduct;
- general conditions of employment;
- disciplinary procedures;
- grievance procedures;
- job descriptions; and
- others, as directed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Recruitment and selection:

- Draw up policies and procedures to promote equality of opportunity including for the nine groups of people in Section 75;
- Specify, as a core competency in job descriptions for all relevant posts, an awareness of equality schemes and a commitment/an ability to implement them.

Progress a baseline survey of knowledge, skills and value base in relation to promoting equality of opportunity.

Assess arrangements for providing information, examining language, presentation, content and formats.

Develop a dissemination strategy.

Produce an initial phase of equality-proofed promotional materials.

Develop a timetable for assessing in Years 2 to 5 current and proposed policies within all its functions.

Formulate and commence implementation of a tailor-made equal opportunities training programme.

Commission new data crucial to properly advise policy decisions.

Consult with the public and relevant organisations, as appropriate.

Make available the outcome of any equality impact assessment and of any monitoring undertaken.

Prepare an annual review of the progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties.

3.12.4 Year 2:

Screen all policies, procedures and protocols in consultation with the nine constituent groups.

Commission research or new data to properly advise policy decisions.

Continue to consult with the public and relevant organisations, as appropriate.

Complete an employee handbook on contractual and non-contractual terms and conditions of employment.

Produce further equality-proofed promotional materials.

Continue to provide, and evaluate, equal opportunities training.

Recruitment and selection:

- Identify under-representation of any groups, draw up and apply affirmative action measures to attract more applications from under-represented groups, and set in place systems to monitor them.

Ensure staff have an adequate knowledge of the implementation targets and a commitment to achieving them, through regular monitoring of progress.

Carry out/commission an appraisal of services and facilities offered to the public.

Implement the dissemination strategy, and monitor.

Develop an outreach strategy.

Develop a policy on contract compliance, and implement.

When appropriate, commission special monitoring and analysis to confirm the extent of adverse impact and/or the success of any mitigation measures.

Review monitoring systems, considering the scope for extending the systems in each policy area.

Carry out equality impact assessments of:

- a range of affirmative action measures;
- elements of equal opportunities training;
- parts of the dissemination strategy;
- different arrangements for providing information to the public; and
- any other policies, procedures and protocols drawn up.

Make available the outcome of any equality impact assessments and of any monitoring undertaken.

Prepare an annual review of the progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties.

3.12.5 Year 3:

Implement and monitor the outreach strategy.

Develop other new policies and procedures, as directed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Continue to:

- provide, and evaluate, equal opportunities training;
- apply affirmative action measures in recruitment and selection;
- monitor staff progress on and commitment to the implementation of Equality Scheme targets;
- implement the policy on contract compliance;
- monitor the arrangements for providing information to the public; and
- monitor the dissemination strategy.

Commission research or new data to properly advise policy decisions.

Carry out/commission an audit to determine the state of relations in the organisation and develop an action plan for addressing issues emanating from the report.

Continue to consult with the public and relevant organisations, as appropriate.

When appropriate, commission special monitoring and analysis to confirm the extent of adverse impact and/or the success of any mitigation measures.

Continue to review monitoring systems, considering the scope for extending the systems in each policy area.

Carry out equality impact assessments of:

- a range of affirmative action measures;
- elements of equal opportunities training;
- parts of the dissemination strategy;
- parts of the outreach strategy;
- parts of the strategy for promoting community relations;
- elements of contract compliance;
- elements of staff commitment and progress towards the achievement of Equality Scheme targets;
- different arrangements for providing information to the public; and
- any other policies and procedures drawn up.

Make available the outcome of any equality impact assessments and of any monitoring undertaken.

Prepare an annual review of the progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties.

3.12.6 Year 4:

Develop other new policies and procedures, as directed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Continue to:

- provide, and evaluate, equal opportunities training;
- apply affirmative action measures in recruitment and selection;

- monitor staff progress on and commitment to the implementation of Equality Scheme targets;
- implement the policy on contract compliance;
- monitor the arrangements for providing information to the public;
- monitor the dissemination strategy;
- monitor the outreach strategy; and
- monitor the strategy for promoting community relations.

Commission research or new data to properly advise policy decisions.

Continue to consult with the public and relevant organisations, as appropriate.

When appropriate, commission special monitoring and analysis to confirm the extent of adverse impact and/or the success of any mitigation measures.

Continue to review monitoring systems, considering the scope for extending the systems in each policy area.

Carry out equality impact assessments of:

- a range of affirmative action measures;
- elements of equal opportunities training;
- parts of the dissemination strategy;
- parts of the outreach strategy;
- parts of the strategy for promoting community relations;
- elements of contract compliance;
- elements of staff commitment and progress towards the achievement of Equality Scheme targets;
- different arrangements for providing information to the public; and
- any other policies and procedures drawn up.

Make available the outcome of any equality impact assessments and of any monitoring undertaken.

Prepare an annual review of the progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties.

3.12.7 Year 5:

Develop other new policies and procedures, as directed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Continue to:

- provide, and evaluate, equal opportunities training;
- apply affirmative action measures in recruitment and selection;
- monitor staff progress on and commitment to the implementation of Equality Scheme targets;
- implement the policy on contract compliance;
- monitor the arrangements for providing information to the public;
- monitor the dissemination strategy;
- monitor the outreach strategy; and
- monitor the strategy for promoting community relations.

Commission research or new data to properly advise policy decisions.

Continue to consult with the public and relevant organisations, as appropriate.

When appropriate, commission special monitoring and analysis to confirm the extent of adverse impact and/or the success of any mitigation measures.

Continue to review monitoring systems, considering the scope for extending the systems in each policy area.

Carry out equality impact assessments of:

- a range of affirmative action measures;
- elements of equal opportunities training;
- parts of the dissemination strategy;
- parts of the outreach strategy;
- parts of the strategy for promoting community relations;
- elements of staff commitment and progress towards the achievement of Equality Scheme targets;
- elements of contract compliance;
- different arrangements for providing information to the public; and
- any other policies and procedures drawn up.

Commission a comprehensive review of:

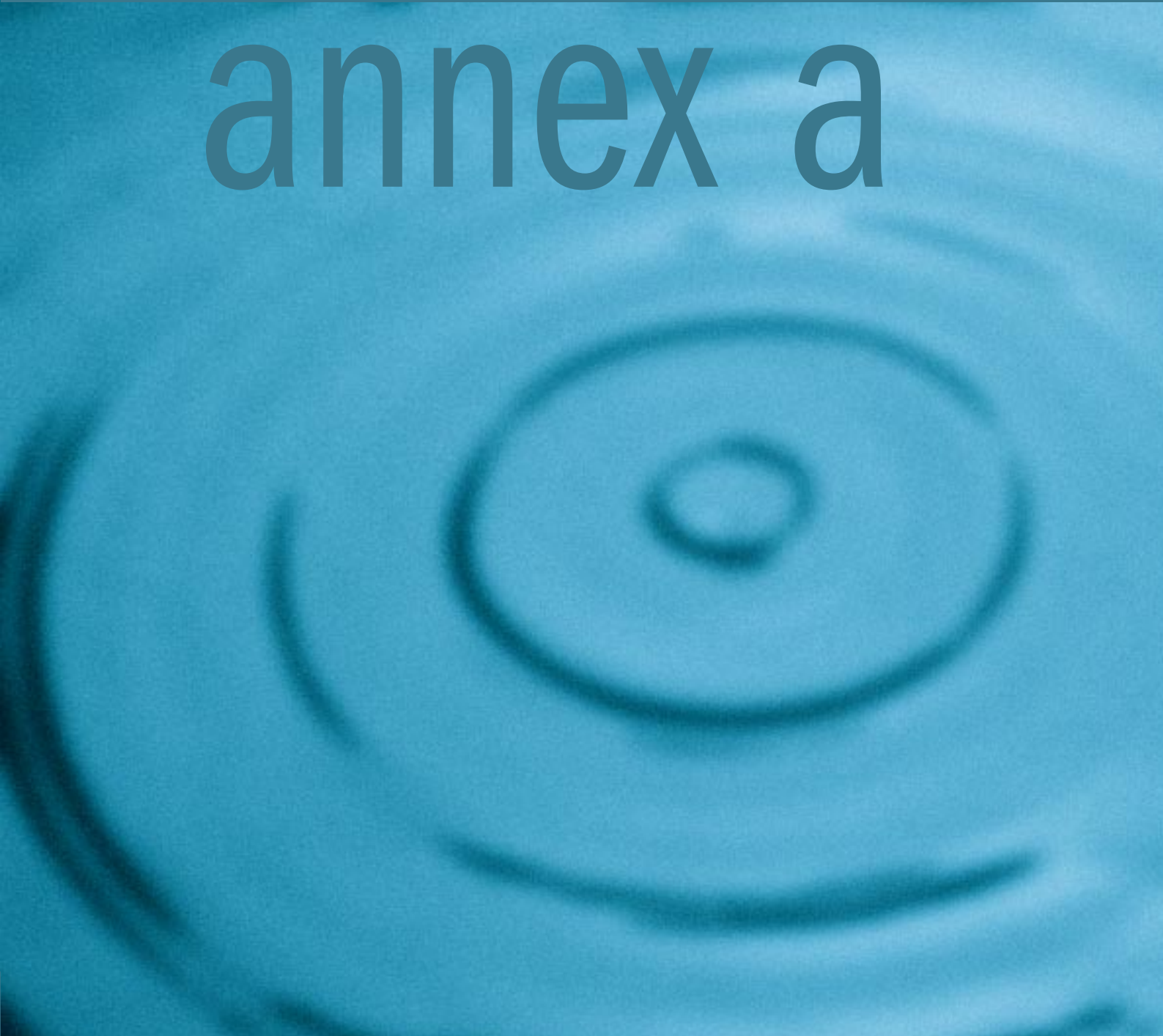
- how well the Equality Scheme is working for Waterways Ireland; and
- the organisation's progress towards the full implementation of the Equality Scheme, detailing the outcome of any equality impact assessments and of any monitoring undertaken.

Prepare, and publish, a report of the five-year review.

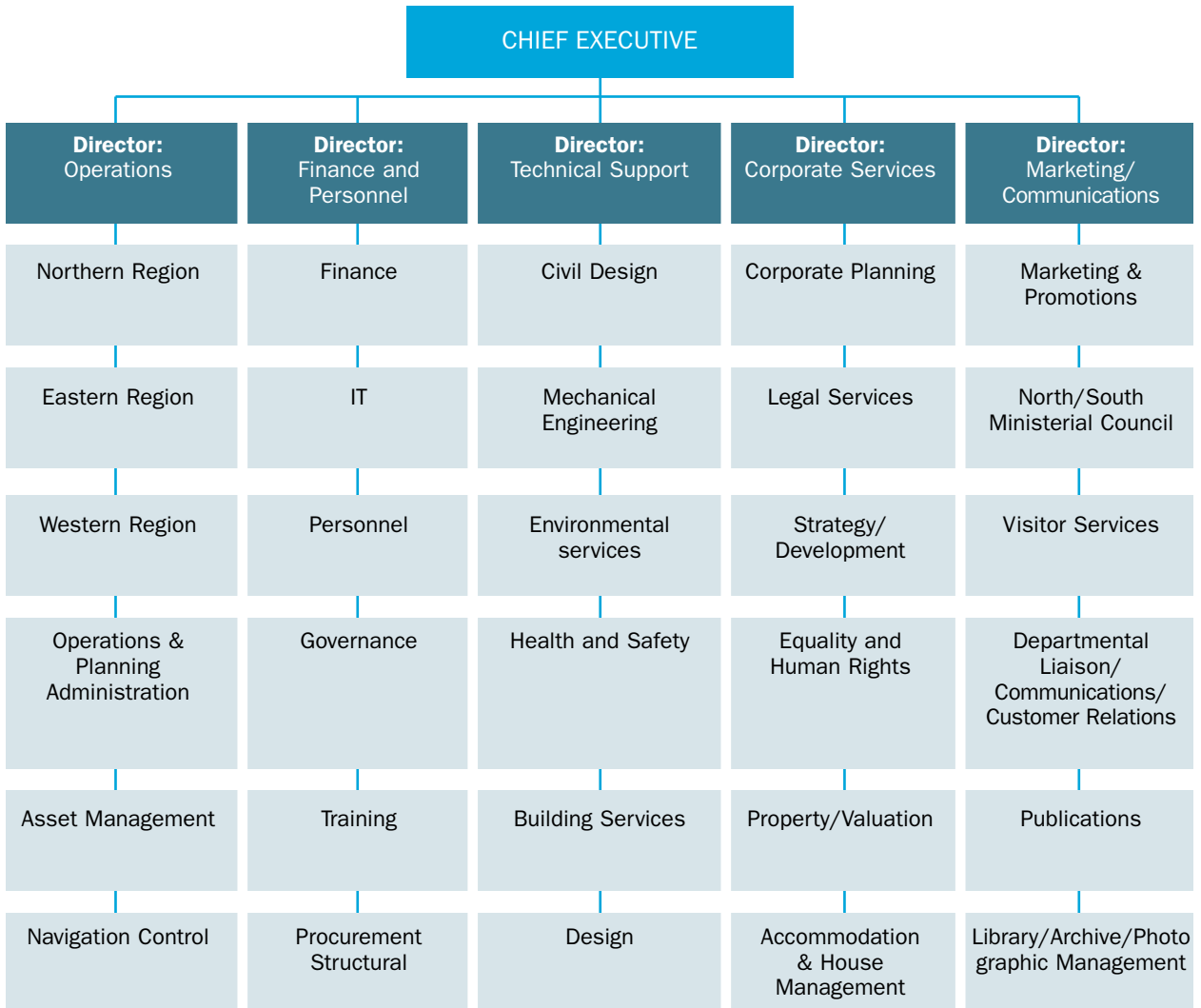


Waterways Ireland Organisational structure

annex a



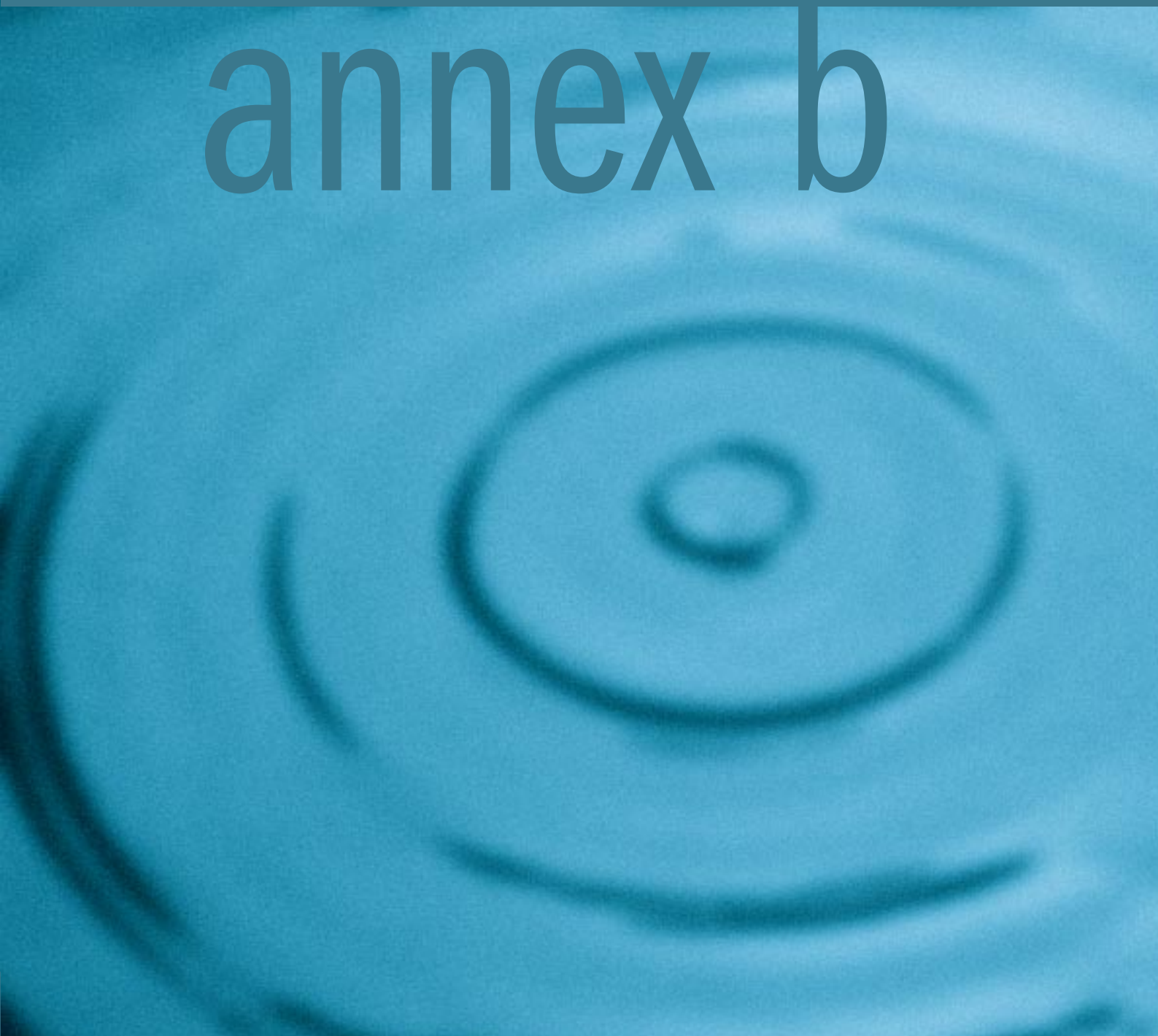
Organisation chart





Consultation list

annex b



Annex B – Consultation list

(The list of consultees provided below is the list of those to be consulted in relation to all consultation, including on the Equality Scheme, and on issues relevant to the fulfilment of the Section 75 obligations.)

Internal stakeholders

(Interim) Chief Executive Officer
 Deputy Chief Executive
 Engineer-in-charge, Design
 Engineer-in-charge, Northern Region
 Engineer-in-charge, The Shannon
 Engineer-in-charge, Canals
 Engineer-in-charge, Mechanical and Safety
 Finance and accounting consultant
 Head of Corporate Services
 Head of Operations and Administration
 Head of Property and Promotions
 Human Resources Management consultant

External stakeholders

Waterways interest groups (5)

Lough Erne Advisory Consultative Group
 Lower Bann Advisory Committee
 Ulster Waterways Group
 Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (Northern Ireland Branch)
 Erne Charter Boat Association

Other interest groups (18)

ATGWU (Ireland)
 Arthur Cox (NI) Ltd
 Carrickcraft
 Coalisland Canal Restoration Committee
 Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network
 Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
 Ferguson McIlveen Consulting Engineers
 Fermanagh Wetlands Project
 Fisheries Sectoral Development Programme
 GMB
 Letterbreen Development Association
 National Trust
 Owen Aillew Diving Club
 Rossigh Angling Club
 Ulster Wildlife Trust
 Stormont Strategy
 Tourist Development International
 Ulster Waterways Group
 University of Ulster School of Environmental Studies

Central Government Departments (15)

- The Northern Ireland Office
- The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and the other nine Northern Ireland Departments
- The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
- Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (for information only)
- Department of Finance (for information only)
- Department of Justice Equality and Law (for information only)

North/South Implementation Bodies (5)

District Councils in Northern Ireland (26)
 Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland (5)
 Health and Social Services Councils in Northern Ireland (4)
 Health and Social Services Boards in Northern Ireland (4)
 Political parties (10) : (listed in alphabetical order)

Alliance Party
 D.U.P
 N.I. Unionist Party
 N.I. Womens' Coalition Party
 P.U.P
 S.D.L.P
 Sinn Féin
 U.D.P
 U.K. Unionist Party
 U.U.P

Organisations representing a wide range of interests in Northern Ireland (64)

174 Trust
 Arts Council NI
 Association of Chief Officers of Voluntary Associations
 Association of Independent Advice Centres
 Belfast Regeneration Office
 Catholics Bishops Commission on Justice and Peace
 Centre for Voluntary Action Studies
 Chrysalis Women's Centre
 Church of Ireland
 Combat Poverty Action Group Northern Ireland
 Committee on the Administration of Justice
 Community Care Forum
 Community Development Centre
 Community Relations Council (NI)
 Community Relations Training/Learning Consortium
 Community Technical Aid
 Community Work Education and Training Network
 Corrymeela Community
 Democratic Dialogue
 Employers' Forum on Disability
 Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
 Equality Forum NI
 Equality Unit
 Fermanagh Shadow Council
 Heritage Lottery Fund
 International Fund for Ireland Communities in Action Project
 Law Centre NI
 Londonderry Regeneration Initiative
 Methodist Church in Ireland
 National Lottery Charities Board
 Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
 Northern Ireland Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux
 Northern Ireland Committee – Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NIC-ICTU)
 Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
 Northern Ireland Economic Council



Northern Ireland Environmental Link
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum
Northern Ireland Partnership Board
Northern Ireland Pre-school Playgroup Association
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust
Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency
Northern Ireland Youth Forum
Playboard
Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Proteus
Salvation Army
Share Centre
Sports Council Northern Ireland
Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards
Sustainable Northern Ireland Programme
The Local Government Staff Commission for NI
Training for Women Network
Ulster People's College
Ulster Scots Heritage Council
UNISON
Voluntary Activity Unit
Workers Educational Association Northern Ireland
Worknet
Youth Council for Northern Ireland
Youthnet

Target groups (155)

Action Cancer
Action for Dysphasic Adults
Action MS
Age Concern
Age Sector Reference Group
AIDS Helpline
Amputees Association of Northern Ireland
Ar Ais Ar An Omaigh
Ar Ais Arís
Armagh Travellers Support Group
Arthritis Care
ASBAH
Asthma Society
Baha'i Community
Barnardo's
Belfast Islamic Centre
Belfast Traveller Sites Project
Belfast Travellers' Education and Development Group
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Body Positive
British Deaf Association NI
British Diabetic Association
British Epilepsy Association
British Sport Association for the Disabled (BSAD)
Brook Advisory Centre
Brownlow Community Trust
Cairde

Carafriend
Carers National Association
Catholic Boy Scouts Foundation NI
Chest, Heart and Stroke Organisation
Child Care Northern Ireland
Child Poverty Action Group
Childline NI
Children's Law Centre (NI)
Chinese Chamber of Commerce (NI)
Chinese Health Project
Clogher Valley Rural Centre
Coalition on Sexual Orientation
Coiste na n-Irchimí
Community Development and Health Network
Confederation of Community Groups
Confederation of Community Groups Newry
Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network
Craigavon Asian Women and Children Association
Craigavon Travellers' Support Committee
Craigavon Vietnamese Group
CRUSE Bereavement NI
Cumann na Meirleach
Cystic Fibrosis Trust
Derry Travellers' Support Group
Derry Well Women
Disability Action
Down's Syndrome Association
Dyslexic Association of Northern Ireland
East Down Rural Community Network
Extern
Family Farm Development Ltd
Family Planning Association NI
Fermanagh Rural Community Network
Fermanagh Women's Network
First Key
Focus on Family
Forum for Action on Substance Abuse
Foyle Friend
Gay and Lesbian Youth NI
Gingerbread NI
Glen Road Heights Women's Group
Goitse
Guide Association
Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sikh Temple
Health Action Zone
Help the Aged
Huntington's Disease Association
Iar Chimí Fhear Manach
Indian Community Centre
Industrial Therapy Organisation
Irish Central Border Area Network
Japan Society of NI
La Societa Italiana Irlanda del Nord
Lesbian Line
LUPUS Group
Lurgan Council for Voluntary Action
ME Association

MENCAP
 Mid-Ulster Women's Network
 Monagh Road Women's Steering Group
 Multi-Cultural Resource Centre (NI)
 Multiple Sclerosis Society
 Muscular Dystrophy Group of GB and NI
 Northern Ireland Association of Mental Health
 Newry and Mourne Senior Citizens' Consortium
 Newry and Mourne Women
 Newry Interagency Consortium for Travellers
 Newry Travellers' Early Years Action Group
 Newtownabbey Senior Citizens' Forum
 NIACRO
 North West Ethnic Communities Association
 North West Forum of People with Disabilities (2)
 Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre
 Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
 Northern Ireland Council for the Homeless
 Northern Ireland Disability Council
 Northern Ireland Filipino Association
 Northern Ireland Filipino Community in Action
 Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association
 Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation
 Northern Ireland Women's European Platform
 NSPCC (NI)
 NUS USI
 Oi-Kwan Chinese Women's Group
 Omagh Women's Area Network
 Organisation for the Unemployed
 Parents and Professionals and Autism
 PHAB
 Pobal
 Praxis
 Putting Children First
 Queer Space
 Regeneration of South Armagh Rural Development Council
 RNIB
 RNID
 Save the Children
 Scouting Association NI
 SENSE Northern Ireland
 Shelter
 Simon Community
 Society for Speech Impaired
 South Armagh Farmers and Residents Association
 Southern Travellers' Early Years Partners
 Sperrin Lakeland Senior Citizens' Consortium
 Strabane Community Network
 Swedish Society of Northern Ireland
 Tar Abhaile
 Tar Anall Uir Cinn Trá
 The Cedar Foundation (formerly NICOD)
 The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
 The Rainbow Project
 The Special Olympics (Northern Ireland Branch)
 The Women's Centre
 Traveller Movement Northern Ireland
 Travellers Support Group for Playgroup Workers
 University of the Third Age
 Victim Support
 Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC)
 Wah Hep Community Association
 WAVE
 West Belfast Economic Forum
 Women Seen and Heard

Women's Forum NI
 Women's Information Group
 Women's Resource and Development Agency
 Women's Support Network
 Young Help NI
 Youth Action NI

Individuals (14)

Bell, David
 Campbell, Daniel
 Cavanagh, John
 Hewitt, David
 King, T
 Magee, John
 McGinn, Pat
 McGlaughlin, Glen
 McGuigan, Sean
 McQuillan, Henry
 Morgan, Francis
 Ó Gribín, Éamon
 Payne, John
 Sheridan, N



Summary of comments

annex c

Annex C - A summary of comments from consultees and Waterways Ireland's response to them

I One- to-one interviews

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
Community Relations Council (NI)	<p>Specific comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to see a commitment to the three principles of community relations <p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends that Waterways Ireland use the 'Guidelines for a Community Relations Strategy for Public Bodies' to assist it in the development of the Scheme • Need to develop and implement different ways of promoting equity and interdependence, and ensuring respect for diversity • Need to set in place systems to consult with clients about how Waterways Ireland is performing in relation to promoting good relations, both internally and externally • Part of the screening process should be about reviewing methodologies and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted by Waterways Ireland
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found the draft Scheme to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - very comprehensive; and - well-prepared • Has nothing further to add • Commends Waterways Ireland in its commitment to putting together an employee handbook and not allowing the lack of available data "as a reason for delaying the assessment of policy" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted by Waterways Ireland



Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
<p>Equality Commission for Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Specific comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To put paragraph numbers throughout the document in order to facilitate the Commission Process • To ensure that the Scheme relates to how the public authority carries out all its <u>functions, powers and duties relating to Northern Ireland</u> [1(a)(ii) of Checklist] • To specify in the foreword, the commitment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring that there are effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that the duties are effectively complied with and for monitoring and reviewing progress; and - the development and delivery of a planned programme of communication and training on the Scheme [1(a)(i); 1(e)(ii) of Checklist] • The Scheme to be jointly signed by the (interim) Chief Executive and the Ministers in the two sponsoring Departments • The Scheme does not specifically mention that objectives and targets relating to the statutory obligations are reflected at all levels of strategic planning within the organisation including staff objectives and annual plans. The last sentence in the last para of p7 of draft Scheme is "too vague" • To ensure that there is a commitment to conducting an annual review of progress made in implementing the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties [2(b)(i) of Checklist] • To establish the priority issues for equality impact assessment • To add "listed in Annex B" to the 2nd sentence of the 2nd para after (iv) on p10 of draft Scheme • To change the 3rd para after (iv) on p10 of the Scheme to incorporate specifically the last 2 (bullet point) requirements listed on p14 of Checklist • P17 para 1 of draft Scheme – To delete "in appropriate circumstances..." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated into the Scheme • The commitment regarding functions included in para 1.1 of draft Scheme covers all of the Body's responsibilities in the Implementation Bodies legislation and is consistent with Section 75 of th Northern Ireland Act • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer new 3rd para of foreword] • Provision has been made to invite the two Ministers to sign the Foreword in the final Scheme • Changes made to the last sentence in the draft Scheme [Refer 2.5.5 of Scheme] • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer 3.2.5 of Scheme] • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer3.3.5] • Included in Scheme [Refer 3.3.6] • Included, as recommended [Refer 3.3.7] • Phrase deleted, as recommended [Refer 3.4.24]

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
<p>Equality Commission for Northern Ireland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P17 para 4 of draft Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To delete "Depending on the policy to be consulted ..." - To add "Systems will be set in place to make sure information is available, in a timely fashion, to young people and those with learning disabilities [2(c) (iii) – bullet point 7 of Checklist]" • P17 of draft Scheme – To add a last para to 3.4 "Waterways Ireland will release all relevant quantitative and qualitative data and other documentation such as consultants' reports to groups and individuals involved in the consultation process and others who request it." • In 3.7.1 – Training p19 and p20 of Scheme, there should be more detail about the induction programme; also, there needs to be a clearer definition of when all staff would have received the training planned • The fact that the consultation list appended in Annex B is not exhaustive should be made clear in the Scheme [2(d)(iii) of Checklist] • To ensure that the Scheme contains a commitment, in making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, to take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy [Criterion 6 of Checklist] • To ensure that Waterways Ireland specifically mentions putting in place arrangements for ensuring and assessing, public access to information and to services provided [Criterion 8 of Checklist] • To ensure that the Scheme details a procedure for dealing with complaints including where and how complaints may be raised and a timetable for responding - refer Schedule 10 of Guidelines • Waterways Ireland was also provided with a copy of the Equality Commission's consultation checklist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations taken on board [Refer 3.4.28] • The Body believes the proposed consultation arrangements will ensure equality in the consultation process across all groups, including young people and those with learning disabilities • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer 3.4.31] • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer 3.7.2 and 3.7.3] • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer 3.4.17 and 3.4.18] • Included in the Scheme [Refer 3.2.7] • Incorporated into the Scheme [Refer 3.5.1] • Included, as recommended [Refer 3.10]

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes that the implementation of an Equality Scheme will be a difficult process • Expressed concern that actual content of legislation will not become lost in the implementation process • Expressed concern about over-bureaucratisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways Ireland will bear in mind the need to properly resource the management and implementation of the technical, cultural and political changes involved in enabling the organisation to meet its duties and obligations under the NI Act 1998 [Refer 1.3.1]
Banbridge District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciates the opportunity to be included in Waterways Ireland's consultation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted by Waterways Ireland
Community Relations Council (NI) [CRC(NI)]	<p>A letter signed by the Chief Executive Officer which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stated that the "development of the Scheme and its ultimate adoption is only the start of the process of mainstreaming equality and good relations across the sector" • CRC(NI) is not able to "offer individual advice and assistance to bodies at this stage in the process", hence the development of a "generic approach" as contained in the copy of the 'Guidelines for a Community Relations Strategy for Public Bodies' provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted by Waterways Ireland • Waterways Ireland will consult with CWSAN, as appropriate
Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network [CWSAN]	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways Ireland should ensure it has specific measures and objectives for addressing rural poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion within the different categories • Waterways Ireland should ensure the Scheme is sensitive to the needs of the constituency area/community which it serves • Rural proofing should be a vital aspect of the Scheme • Waterways Ireland should ensure that its consultative approach is "fully transparent/inclusive", catering for "the widest possible section of the rural population" 	
Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comments to offer in relation to the draft Scheme 	
Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No substantive comments to make about Waterways Ireland's draft scheme 	

II Written responses

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
Disability Action	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes the opportunity to participate in consultation process • Reminds Waterways Ireland that disabled people have other dimensions to their lives beyond disability and may have an interest in other issues, hence the need to make the necessary arrangements to provide the opportunity for disabled people to participate in consultation with other groups <p>Specific comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways Ireland's introductory statement does not include all the elements specified in the Equality Commission's Guidelines p31; acknowledges, however, that many of these requirements are contained within the main body of the Scheme • Central point of contact to be described more fully • A chart outlining areas of responsibility in relation to preparation, monitoring and review to be incorporated in order to enable the consultee to make a full assessment of the suitability of the internal arrangements and status of those appointed to the possible equality issues task group • Notes that Waterways Ireland is in a unique position in that all its policies are yet to be decided and, therefore, urges that Waterways Ireland does not miss the opportunity to set an example of good practice in respect of the implementation of Section 75 • Expresses concern that a number of policies may be grouped together for impact assessment if they fall under a particular function • Encourages Waterways Ireland to broaden the monitoring process to detail why an impact assessment was judged unnecessary, or if an impact assessment did not negate alteration to a policy, justification that the policy is not considered discriminatory to any of the named groups • Encourages Waterways Ireland to screen all policies and to consult with relevant statutory, voluntary and community bodies in relation to that screening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments noted • Waterways Ireland will liaise with Disability Action, as appropriate • Incorporated into revised Scheme [also refer response to Equality Commission's specific comments, bullet point 2] • Suggestion incorporated into revised Scheme • Comment noted. Waterways Ireland will consult with Disability Action as appropriate • Comment noted • Waterways Ireland will only group policies together for assessment where impact outcomes would not be diluted or lost in a collective approach • Incorporated into revised Scheme • Commitment to consultation as appropriate incorporated in revised Scheme

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
Disability Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages Waterways Ireland to make available for scrutiny a comprehensive list of policies not included for consideration for full impact assessment • Urges Waterways Ireland to provide a brief outline of each policy area as they are listed • Recommends that Waterways Ireland establishes a system to monitor the impact of a policy in order to find out its effect on the relevant group and for this to be reviewed annually and to be reported • Feels strongly that 'good practice' dictates that a three-year review takes place which would highlight early on areas that need adjustment to ensure compliance with the statutory duty • Encourages Waterways Ireland to report in its annual reporting process the frequency and number of consultations which will not meet the minimum eight-week consultation period • Advises that requiring confirmation in writing for alternative formats is inappropriate • Advises the replacement of the term 'wheelchair-bound' with 'wheelchair users' • Encourages Waterways Ireland to make its information available in specialist newspapers such as the Talking Newspapers • Welcomes Waterways Ireland's commitment to ensuring accessibility to its accommodation and encourages Waterways Ireland to apply the same policy to the accessibility of premises and lands which are managed by Waterways Ireland • Advises the complaints procedure should outline how it will support the individual to bring his/her complaint and to respond at all times in the format preferred by the complainant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment noted and incorporated into revised Scheme • Advice noted and will be used to guide Waterways Ireland's screening exercise • Incorporated into revised Scheme • Continuous monitoring and annual reporting will identify adjustments to ensure compliance with the statutory duties • Comment noted • Comment noted and amendment made to Scheme • Incorporated into revised Scheme • Advice noted and will inform Waterways Ireland's dissemination strategy • Already incorporated into Scheme • Incorporated into revised Scheme

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
<p>Mencap NI Specific comments:</p>	<p>Specific comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the opportunity to comment on draft Scheme <p>Provided information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to overcome barriers to securing equality of opportunity experienced by people with a learning disability and their carers • the barriers experienced by people with a learning disability and their carers <p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways Ireland needs to ensure its information is accessible to people with a learning disability [Refer 'Making Ourselves Clear' which was sent with the comments] • Waterways Ireland needs to ensure its services are accessible • Offered advice on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the facilitation of consultations; - screening and who to involve in the review of policies; - impact assessments; and - monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All comments and information noted by Waterways Ireland. They will be incorporated into the organisation's policies, procedures, guidelines and protocols and they will influence Waterways Ireland's outreach and dissemination strategies. • Advice provided by Mencap NI noted by Waterways Ireland
<p>Northern Ireland Women's European Platform [NIWEP]</p>	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes opportunity to respond to Waterways Ireland's draft Equality Scheme • States that, as a membership organisation, NIWEP is keenly aware that equality provisions affect the diverse experiences of women - older and younger, carers and dependants, married and not married, with and without disabilities, differing in race, religion, politics and sexuality • Pleased to see the considerable care devoted to producing this Scheme <p>Specific comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a few minor concerns, ie, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how will Waterways Ireland decide whether an equality group is necessary? - will groups be consulted on the terms of reference? • Strongly recommends the formation of an equality group which should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at least meet quarterly; - have adequate representation from constituency groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General comments noted • Waterways Ireland will liaise with NIWEP as appropriate

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
Northern Ireland Women's European Platform [NIWEP]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where policies must be implemented immediately, wonders whether: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consultation will be issued with a view to amendments, or policies will be reviewed internally at a regularly scheduled interval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterways Ireland have already undertaken to monitor the impact of policies using the arrangements specified in the Scheme
Ulster Waterways Group	<p>General comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pointed out that "all of Northern Ireland's network of canals and rivers should be included within the remit of Waterways Ireland as soon as ever possible" Recommends Waterways Ireland "start studies and corridor land acquisition" Feels strongly that "restored waterways can be a great influence in cross-community development and local pride building" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments noted by Waterways Ireland
West Belfast Economic Forum	<p>Specific comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreword should contain an active commitment to promoting equality of opportunity Welcomes the inclusion of all the body's functions, powers and duties in relation to the examination of the statutory duty and to the proposed inclusive consultation The commitment to actively promote equality of opportunity should be signed by both the relevant Ministers as well as the Chief Executive Welcomes the specified commitment to the necessary resources to management and implementation of the statutory duty Welcomes the proposal to assess the need for an equality issues task group with terms of reference Urges Waterways Ireland to establish an equality issues task group with clear terms of reference and lines of responsibility Urges Waterways Ireland to carry out the screening process in consultation with interested parties and representatives of groups under the Section 75 categories Very much welcomes Waterways Ireland's commitment to inclusive consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision has been made to invite the two Ministers to sign the Foreword in the final scheme Comments noted by Waterways Ireland

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
West Belfast Economic Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned at the prioritisation of Counteract and Cooperation Ireland as key organisations on the promotion of good relations • Urges Waterways Ireland to ensure that the annual statement of the steps taken during the year to promote equality of opportunity is also circulated to the consultation list in Annex B • Welcomes the proposed use of both quantitative and qualitative data in the screening process • Urges Waterways Ireland to enlist the expertise and experience of groups representing the various Section 75 categories in gathering and processing data • Welcomes the stated recognition of the complexity of the equality issues and the disadvantage that is the outcome of discrimination and inequality • Welcomes the proposal of Waterways Ireland to commission new data • Urges that representatives from Section 75 categories are consulted on this and their expertise utilised wherever possible • Welcomes the clearly stated commitment to provide information in Irish • Believes Waterways Ireland's commitment to training on the equality duty is very thorough • Welcomes the systematic approach taken by Waterways Ireland to developing and delivering training • Encourages Waterways Ireland to consult with representative groups on the ongoing training and its evaluation and to involve representatives of the Section 75 categories in the development and delivering of the training programme • Have some concerns about the approach to promoting good relations – the analysis contained in the draft Scheme appears to give priority to the promotion of good community relations which is contrary to the equality duty in Section 75 • Encourages Waterways Ireland to engage in consultation with local groups working on community relations issues rather than relying solely on the advice of the Community Relations Council 	

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
West Belfast Economic Forum	<p><u>General comments</u> were also provided on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the general introductory statement;• arrangements for assessing compliance with Section 75 duties;• functions and policies;• the consultation process;• impact assessments;• monitoring;• training;• arrangements for publishing the results of equality impact assessments and of monitoring of any adverse impact of the policies adopted;• ensuring and assessing public access to information and services provided by the public authority;• timetabling;• publication of the Equality Scheme;• complaints; and• reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comments noted by Waterways Ireland

Organisation	Comments	Waterways Ireland's response
Armagh Travellers Support Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleasantly "overcome by the commitment of Waterways Ireland" to embracing equality Would like to see young Travellers consulted and included in the planning of Waterways Ireland's services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All comments noted by Waterways Ireland
Coalisland Canal Restoration Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterways Ireland's draft Scheme is very thorough and detailed – "it will be a good framework to work from" It would be important for Waterways Ireland to put in place an infrastructure to enable effective implementation of the Scheme Would like to see the Ulster Canal considered as part of Waterways Ireland's remit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All comments noted by Waterways Ireland
Dungannon District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is of the view that pending the opening of Ulster Canal, the potential of what can be achieved can be piloted with Coalisland Canal relatively quickly and cheaply Informed about the establishment of the Local Government Partnership on Travellers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterways Ireland will include the Local Government Partnership on Travellers in its consultation list
Ferguson McIlveen Consulting Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referred to the cross community and social/economic potential of the inland waterways system Referred to a study being carried out by Ferguson McIlveen Consulting Engineers and ESB International on behalf of Waterways Ireland in relation to the feasibility of reopening of the Ulster Canal and discussed the equality implications particularly in relation to consultation with target groups and accessibility of services/facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All comments noted by Waterways Ireland
Ulster Waterways Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see all of Northern Ireland's network of canals and rivers included within the remit of Waterways Ireland. Where this view needs to be represented, Ulster Waterways Group pledges a commitment to making it available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All comments noted by Waterways Ireland