



18 December 2008

Human Resources Officer
Electoral Office for Northern Ireland
St Anne's House
15 Church Street
BELFAST
BT1 1ER

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Draft Good Relations Strategy and Call Recording/CCTV Policy

Please find enclosed Disability Action's response to the above document.

Disability Action welcomes this opportunity to work with the Electoral Office and looks forward to continued dialogue.

Yours faithfully


Monica Wilson
Chief Executive

Enc



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**ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN
IRELAND CONSULTATION ON
ELECTORAL OFFICE DRAFT GOOD
RELATIONS STRATEGY AND CALL
RECORDING/CCTV POLICY**

DECEMBER 2008

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 Disability Action is a pioneering Northern Ireland charity working with and for people with disabilities. We work with our members to provide information, training, transport awareness programmes and representation for people regardless of their disability; whether that is physical, mental, sensory, hidden or learning disability.
- 2 More than one in five (300,000) people in Northern Ireland has a disability and over one quarter of all families here are directly affected by disability issues.
- 3 As a campaigning body, we work to bring about positive change to the social, economic and cultural life of people with disabilities and consequently our entire community. In pursuit of our aims we serve 45,000 people each year.
- 4 Our network of services is provided via our Headquarters in Belfast and in three regional offices in Carrickfergus, Derry and Dungannon.
- 5 Disability Action welcomes the opportunity to respond to this draft and to aid our response has put the relevant page/paragraph of the draft in brackets at the end of our comments.

SPECIFIC COMMENTARY

- 6 Disability Action would ask the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland to provide us with details of the level of accessibility of its website and whether or not it meets current European Standards. w3c
- accessibility
statement
international
standards.
 - 7 Disability Action welcomes the offer of alternative formats, however requests the electoral Office to list the range available e.g. large print, audio cassette, Braille, computer disc etc. - will be added.
 - 8 Whilst noting that Electoral Office do have a textphone installed Disability Action notes that the number is absent from the contact details. (Covering Letter) - letterheads - all ~~to~~ letterhead!
- ### Call Recording and CCTV Policy
- 9 Regarding signage Disability Action seeks clarity on the accessibility to all people with disabilities. (Item 3, CCTV)

10 Disability Action agrees with the Electoral Office decision not to EQIA the call recording and CCTV policy. (Pages 2-6)

11 Appendix A lists the main groups relevant to the categories under Section 75 for Northern Ireland. Please amend persons with a disability to read - persons with a physical, sensory, **mental** or learning disability as defined in Section 1 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. (Annex A)

lis-
screening
for.

Draft Good Relations Strategy

✓ 12 Disability Action believes that to ensure meaningful consultation the Electoral Office must include individual affected people as well as representative organisations when consulting. (Item 7.2, Consultation)

- focus
groups

13 Regarding Browsaloud Disability Action believes that the Electoral Office should ensure that it is designed to the WC3 guidance on web accessibility. There are levels A, AA and AAA, Disability Action would recommend that the Electoral Office website should be at least AA but preferably AAA. (Item 7.2, Information Services)

- no
control. over
Bcl.

✓ 14 Disability Action seeks information regarding the accessibility of the Registration Form and accompanying materials. Are they available in large print? (Item 7.2, Information Services)

yes.

✓ 15 Disability Action seeks further information as to whether the Mystery Shoppers extends to the other six categories listed under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998? (Item 7.2, Information Services)

physical
access

16 Regarding the Good Relations Strategy Action Plan 2009 Disability Action would like to make the following comments:-

- All information disseminated to the general public must be made available in alternative formats. (Action 3) ✓
- Disability Action recommends that all job advertisements must include a statement welcoming applications from people with disabilities. (Action 5) ✓
- Disability Action recommends that all forms and guidance notes be made available in a range of alternative formats. (Action 6)

- Disability Action recommends that the Career Leaflets must be made available in a range of alternative formats. (Action 7) ✓
- Regarding the Electoral Office website Disability Action refers the Electoral Office to paragraph 6 above. (Action 8) ✓
- All media communications must be reviewed to ensure that they positively portray people with disabilities. (Action 9) ✓

17 As the electoral Office has decided not to EQIA this policy Disability Action recommends that this policy be monitored for future adverse impact on an annual basis.

CONCLUSION

18 Disability Action recognises the time and effort that have gone into producing this document for consultation and thanks the Electoral Office for the opportunity to respond and looks forward to continued dialogue.