

**Candidate  
Information  
Booklet**

**IRC193933**

**Gas Compliance Officer**

**Health & Safety Executive  
Northern Ireland (HSENI)**

**Completed Application Forms  
must be returned to HRConnect  
no later than 12 noon (UK time)**

**on**

***Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016***



### **Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

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## **FOREWORD**

Thank you for the interest you have shown in the role of Gas Compliance Officer (GCO) in the HSENI. As the regional authority for health and safety at work in Northern Ireland, HSENI is committed to working in partnership with industry to raise standards and create a safer working environment. Through a programme of targeted inspection and investigation activities, HSENI aims to reduce the numbers of injuries and incidents of ill-health at work which are often devastating to the individual and costly to the local economy.

The purpose of the job is to carry out inspection and investigation functions under the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 at all gas users' premises within the enforcing remit of HSENI. This includes privately owned and rented domestic properties as well as at the many workplaces and building sites where gas installers carry out their work. Such premises include offices, hospitals, hotels and catering establishments.

The GCO will also be responsible for the enforcement of health and safety at work legislation at premises they visit and will be given the opportunity to obtain a recognised certificate in health and safety. The intrinsic hazards of gas and its widespread use by untrained members of the public means that there will also be a high level of work directed at safety promotion and awareness raising amongst the public and gas installers.

HSENI's overall aim is therefore to protect employees, the consumer and the wider public alike by ensuring, when it comes to the storage and use of all types of gas, a safe installation and a safe distribution system.

The post affords the opportunity to join a growing team of dedicated professionals who are working to bring about a culture change in the way in which workplace risks are managed. The work can and will make a real difference in helping to minimise risks, reduce costs and save lives. It is the perfect opportunity for someone with practical experience of gas installation, maintenance or main laying techniques who is confident and decisive enough to function effectively on their own in an enforcement environment and who possesses good analytical, communication and influencing skills to use these to best effect. The work is interesting and varied and above all, delivers enormous job satisfaction.

I hope this information pack will encourage you to apply for this post and look forward to hearing from you.

**Keith Morrison**

**Chief Executive  
HSENI**

## BACKGROUND

HSENI is the lead body responsible for the promotion and enforcement of health and safety at work standards in Northern Ireland. It aims to inform, stimulate, guide and, where necessary, compel those with duties of care and others concerned with health and safety at work, in actions leading to higher standards.

HSENI was established in April 1999 as an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI). It is a Crown body and its staff are civil servants.

HSENI plays a leading role in overseeing all aspects of health and safety promotion, information and advice, enforcement and legislation relating to work activities.

**HSENI's vision** is "A place where the sensible control of work-related risk is the norm and work-related deaths, injuries and ill health are the exception".

**HSENI's mission** is "To significantly reduce the number of work-related fatalities, injuries and cases of ill health in Northern Ireland".

To oversee its operation and to provide strategic guidance, HSENI has an up to ten member Board, which is appointed in accordance with the guidelines published by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland.

The HSENI Executive currently comprises its Chief Executive, three Deputy Chief Executives and approximately 120 officials who collectively represent a broad range of administrative and professional skills, expertise and experience. HSENI works in close co-operation with the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Northern Ireland Departments, the Northern Ireland Office and the District Councils in developing its policies and delivering its services.

Further information on vision and mission objectives is set out in a range of HSENI publications including its corporate and operating plans and annual reports. These are available on the HSENI website: [www.hseni.gov.uk](http://www.hseni.gov.uk)

### **Major Hazards Group**

As part of HSENI Major Hazards Group there already is 1 GCO reporting to an experienced Health & Safety inspector. The Major Hazards Group sits within HSENI's Specialist Sectors Division.

HSENI has responsibility for the enforcement of health and safety at work legislation for natural gas distribution and transmission from the point of entry to NI of the natural gas interconnectors to final consumption in domestic and commercial premises. HSENI has similar responsibility in respect of the import and use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). However, HSENI, as the lead authority in NI would wish to see greater improved installation standards.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Appointment**

There is currently one permanent full-time position. The successful candidate will be an employee of the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland. He/she will be part of Major Hazards Group, and will ultimately report to the Head of that Group, a Principal Health and Safety Inspector. On day-to-day operational issues he/she will report to the group designated Health & Safety Inspector. This competition may be used to fill other similar vacancies that may arise in the future.

### **Salary**

The salary will be in the range £25,871- £27,271, within which progression will be as per the current NICS pay policy.

Starting salary will normally be the minimum of the scale.

### **Working Hours**

The successful candidate will be required to work 37.5 hours per week. Normal flexible working arrangements apply. In addition the duties may occasionally involve evening and weekend work.

### **Pension**

This is a pensionable appointment. Further information on the pension scheme is contained at page 20 of this Information Booklet.

### **Annual Leave**

In addition to the usual public and privilege holidays (currently 12 per annum pro rata), there is an annual leave allowance of 25 days pro rata. The annual leave allowance would increase to 30 days after five years satisfactory service.

### **Probation Period**

The successful candidate will be required to serve a one year probationary period.

### **Location**

The successful applicant will be based at HSENI HQ, 83 Ladas Drive, Belfast, BT6 9FR.

### **Travel**

The post-holder will also be required to travel throughout Northern Ireland, Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and on occasion Europe. The successful candidate must, therefore, have access to a form of transport which will enable them to fulfil the responsibilities of the post and be prepared to travel throughout Northern Ireland and elsewhere, as required. This includes occasional travel to other HSENI satellite offices in Northern Ireland.

**Demands of the role**

This role is physically demanding (lifting, bending, carrying and stretching) and will require the successful candidate to work in confined spaces, for example, roof spaces, etc.

**Training**

Successful applicants who do not hold the NEBOSH Certificate in health and safety will be required to complete the certificate.

**Conflicts of Interest**

HSENI must ensure that the individuals it appoints are committed to the principles and values of public service. It must take account of actual, or perceived, conflict of interest. Therefore, applicants, in their application form, must disclose information or personal connections that could lead to a conflict of interest, or be perceived as such if they were to be appointed.

**Further Information**

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may contact Adrian Harris by telephone on 028 9054 6853, or emailing [Adrian.Harris@hse.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.Harris@hse.gov.uk).

If you have any questions about the competition process, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: [recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net](mailto:recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net).

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The GCO will work as part of a team with responsibility for delivering the gas safety inspection and investigation function in Northern Ireland and for ensuring the highest standards of health and safety at work during installation of downstream pipework and appliances at all premises.

The main activities associated with the post are as follows:

- **Routine Visits**  
Make routine visits to premises where gas installations have been carried out to ensure installation standards are being complied with. During these inspections the GCO may be required to discuss technical / safety issues with a range of customers including members of the public / contractors / companies H&S officers and managers.
- **Investigate Complaints and Reporting of Injury's, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDORs)**  
Investigate assigned complaints and RIDDORs received about work activities, consider and initiate the appropriate follow-up action, which may include conducting a site visit to investigate the complaint further, propose action needed for satisfactory closure, or assist other team members in preparing the necessary casework.
- **Interpret, apply and keep abreast of gas safety and health and safety at work legislation and pertinent standards.**
- **Promote awareness of Health & Safety at Work.**  
Work proactively with a range of organisations and individuals to promote awareness of health and safety at work, including organising or attending seminars and exhibitions and representing HSENI at meetings with stakeholders and networking with contacts, contribute to information leaflets and gas related information on the HSENI web-site.
- **Annual Programme of Inspection Visits**  
Undertake an annual programme of inspection visits assigned by the Head of Group and to issue enforcement notices as appropriate, and in accordance with HSENI's Enforcement Guidelines. Non gas related examples include working at heights, asbestos awareness, and safe maintenance practices which are delivered as specific topics and all information, decision trees and outcomes are provided.
- **Assistance to Gas Safety Register / Councils**  
Respond to requests for assistance from Gas Safety Register or local councils re complaints of unsafe gas work by visiting the premises of the complainant to determine whether or not the complaint relates to unsafe work with gas fittings, and if so, what remedial action should be applied and to advise on the appropriate follow-up action;

- **Assist in Investigation Work**

Assist in investigation work including evidence handling e.g. taking routine witness statements, accompanying Health and Safety Inspectors during PACE interviews to provide evidence when requested and to be able to challenge / correct any inaccurate gas related technical information and, if required, attend court as a witness.

Whilst the focus of duties will be concentrated towards the natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas supply chains, the GCO may be required to assist with other assigned duties relevant to compliance in other industry sectors e.g. with gas fired industrial equipment. It is envisaged that approximately 90% of time will be spent on inspection and investigation duties associated with the work assigned to the GCO and in supporting the compliance work of Health and Safety Inspectors. The rest of the time will be spent carrying out other office based and advisory activities e.g. researching the most up to date standards and training available for other industrial environments and new equipment coming to market where CE marking may or may not be applicable. Advising inspectors on issues relating to gas appliances in an industrial setting where the usual gas appliance regulations do not apply.



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

By the closing date for applications, applicants must have:

- 1) At least a NVQ level 2 (or equivalent) in gas installation and maintenance.

### AND

- 2) At least 3 years' experience\*, gained within the last 5 years, in one of the following areas:
  - gas mains and gas services installation;
  - gas installation and/or maintenance of appliances;
  - an equivalent gas related area deemed relevant to HSENI.

\* **Experience must be supported by relevant ACS training modules in Domestic Natural Gas and at least one of the following areas:-**

- Commercial (Non Domestic)
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)
- Commercial Catering
- Emergency Service Provider / Meter installer

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

**Relevant** or **equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

## SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

In addition applicants should be aware that after an eligibility sift, should it be necessary to shortlist candidates to go forward to interview, the following shortlisting criteria will be used in order:

1. Relevant ACS training modules will be increased to two from the four areas listed on page 9.
2. Relevant ACS training modules will be increased to three from the four areas listed on page 9.
3. Relevant ACS training modules will be increased to all four areas listed on page 9.
4. At least a NVQ level 3 (or equivalent) in gas installation and maintenance.
5. NEBOSH Certificate in health and safety.

### **Please note:**

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post.**
- **The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information available, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.**
- **Further information on the Core Competences for this grade can be accessed through [www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk)**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the eligibility criteria and shortlisting criteria (if applicable). In addition, they will also be required to demonstrate the skills and competencies set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) competency framework at **Level 2** for the purposes of personal and professional development.

Gas Compliance Officer is analogous to EOI in the NICS.

### **What is the NICS competency framework?**

The competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results. Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

### **How does the NICS framework look?**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed through [www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk](http://www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk)

**It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of the assessment / interview criteria as outlined below.**

## INTERVIEW CRITERIA

Applicants will be expected to display the following qualities and skills at interview:

### 1. Seeing the Big Picture

Seeing the big picture is about having an in-depth understanding and knowledge of how your role fits with, and supports, organisational objectives and the wider public needs.

**Marks Available: 25**

**Minimum Standard: 15**

### 2. Making Effective Decisions

Effectiveness in this area is about being objective, using sound judgement, evidence and knowledge to provide accurate, expert and professional advice.

**Marks Available: 25**

**Minimum Standard: 15**

### 3. Collaborating and Partnering

People skilled in this area create and maintain positive, professional and trusting working relationships with a wide range of people within and outside the NICS, to help to achieve business objectives and goals.

**Marks Available: 15**

### 4. Building Capability for All

Effectiveness in this area is having a strong focus on continuous learning for oneself, others and the organisation.

**Marks Available: 20**

### 5. Managing a Quality Service

Effectiveness in this area is about being organised to deliver service objectives and striving to improve the quality of service, taking account of diverse customer needs and requirements.

**Marks Available: 20**

## **6. Delivering at Pace**

Effectiveness in this area means focusing on delivering timely performance with energy and taking responsibility and accountability for quality outcomes.

**Marks Available: 15**

**Total Marks Available: 120**

**Overall Pass Mark: 72**

## **COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS**

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

## **INTERVIEWS**

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Belfast during week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

## INTERVIEW GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

**If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:**

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

**A competence-based interview does however require you to:**

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

**In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:**

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

## SELECTION PROCESS

### **The Merit Principle**

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org).

### **Making your application:**

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria.

### **Guidance for Applicants**

- The space available on the application form is the same for all applicants and must not be altered.
- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet, eg an organisational chart.
- Should an organisational chart be required this must be submitted to HRConnect by the closing date for applications.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either typescript font size 12, or legible, block capitals using black ink.
- Applicants must not reformat application forms.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline;
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your *unique* role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.

### **Application Form Submission**

- Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before completing an application.

- **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- All applications must be received by the advertised closing date. Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1<sup>st</sup> class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is also the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to HRConnect. HRConnect will not accept any application where they are asked to pay any shortfall in postage.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit online applications wherever possible. However, all requests for hard copy application packs are welcomed and all applications will be treated equally regardless of whether they are hard copy or online.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- Please note - the session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- Please do not attempt to reformat application forms as this will result in disqualification.

### **Changes in personal circumstances**

Please ensure HRConnect are informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances.

### **Communication between HRConnect and you**

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

### **Transgender Requirements**

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration in confidence to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.



## **Further appointments from this competition**

Where a further position in the NICS is identified which is considered broadly similar to that outlined in this candidate information booklet, consideration will be given to filling the position from this competition. The merit list resulting from this competition will be valid for a period of up to one year.

## **Disability Requirements**

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments, due to disability, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process. If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please contact HRConnect.

## **Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form**

**Please note, this form is regarded as part of your application and failure to complete and return it will result in disqualification.**

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to page 22.

**The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

## **Assessment Information**

It is HRConnect policy that all candidates invited to attend for assessment bring sufficient documentation to satisfy the eligibility/shortlisting criteria and the Nationality and Vetting requirements. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that these documents are readily available.

## **Nationality Requirements**

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Gas Compliance Officer posts are classified as Non-Public Service, therefore certain nationality requirements apply. Applicants must be either:

- (i) A UK national; or
- (ii) A Commonwealth citizen; or
- (iii) A British Protected Person; or

- (iv) An EEA national; or
- (v) A Swiss National; or
- (vi) A person who is not an EEA or Swiss national, but is a family member of an EEA national who has moved to the UK from another EEA Member State for an approved purpose.

For further guidance on Nationality requirements please see Annex A.

Advice on Nationality for (i), (ii) and (iii) above may be obtained from the Home Office website, [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

### **Vetting Procedures**

#### 1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For Gas Compliance Officer posts in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard. For this check you will be required to provide the following:

- a) Your passport OR
- b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) AND your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
- c) Other acceptable documents are listed on [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).
- d) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

#### **Basic Disclosure Certificate**

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made.

For more information, the address of the AccessNI website is: <http://www.accessni.gov.uk/>. Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. This can be downloaded from the AccessNI website. Guidance notes of the completion of the form are also included on the website. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment. Failure to complete the above form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

## **Order of Merit**

The selection panel will assess candidates against the interview criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standard(s) and pass mark will be deemed suitable for appointment. The selection panel will then list those suitable for appointment in order of merit with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. The order of merit is valid for one year.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Pensions:**

The NICS offers all new employees an attractive pension package. Further details can be found on the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (Northern Ireland) website at:

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni/index/new-members.htm>

or

if you are unable to access the website please contact Civil Service Pensions as follows:

Civil Service Pensions  
Waterside House  
75 Duke Street  
Londonderry  
BT47 6FP  
Tel: 02871 319000  
Email: [cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:cspensions.cpg@dfpni.gov.uk)

### **Feedback**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF  
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

**Completed application forms should be sent to the HRConnect Recruitment Team:**

HRConnect  
PO Box 1089  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
The Metro Building  
6-9 Donegall Square South  
Belfast  
BT1 9EW

**NOTE:** Late applications or applications received by fax or by email will not be accepted.

**Contact Details:**

**If you have any queries regarding the competition process please contact HRConnect at the address above or by:**

**Email:** [Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net](mailto:Recruitment@HRConnect.nigov.net)  
**Tel:** 0800 1 300 330  
**Fax:** 028 9024 1665

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

### Policy Statement

The Northern Ireland Civil Service Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy statement is set out below.

“The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) has a strong and clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the NICS on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere where they are treated with dignity and respect. We aim to provide opportunities for all sections of the community and continue to strive to create an inclusive working environment in which difference is recognised and valued. Bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and giving each person the opportunity to contribute their skills and experience will help us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve”.

We all want to work in an harmonious workplace where we feel valued, respected and included, irrespective of gender, including gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race/ethnic origin, religious belief or political opinion, disability, having or not having dependants, sexual orientation and age.

In order to provide a high quality service to the people of Northern Ireland the NICS needs to attract, recruit, develop and retain the very best people at all levels. Our approach is based on three key principles:-

**Equality** – we promote equality of opportunity by seeking to remove barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups of people.

**Diversity** – we accept each person as an individual. Our success is built on our ability to embrace diversity – and we believe that everyone should feel valued for their contributions. By working together we will deliver the best possible service for our staff, customers and stakeholders.

**Inclusion** – we create a working culture where differences are not merely accepted, but valued; where everyone has the opportunity to develop in a way that is consistent with, and adheres to NICS values of impartiality, honesty, integrity and objectivity. Our aim is to be an organisation where people feel involved, respected and connected to our success.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Both Management and Trade Union Side are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.

## **Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information that is relevant to and necessary for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons. This section sets out what information is collected, the reasons for doing so and what it is used for.

You should note that the Monitoring Form is regarded as part of your application and failure to fully complete and return it will result in disqualification. The Monitoring Form will be processed separately and neither the form nor the details contained in it will be available to those considering your application.

Monitoring equality and diversity in the workforce enables the NICS to examine how our employment policies and processes are working and to identify areas where these appear to be impacting disproportionately on certain groups of staff.

### **Legislative Context**

This section explains the reasons for gathering this information by setting out the legislative background.

#### **Gender**

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her sex. Information on gender is also provided in the annual statutory monitoring the, as required by the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between men and women generally.

#### **Age**

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006 make it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on grounds of age. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different ages and age groups.

#### **Community Background**

The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religious belief or political opinion. The Order also requires the NICS to submit an annual monitoring return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. This takes the form of a statistical return, providing information on the gender and community background composition of all people working in the NICS at the 1st January each year.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief and political opinion. Following guidance issued in July 2007 by the Equality

Commission for NI the NICS has decided to use “community background” information as a proxy for political opinion.

### **Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (the DDA) provides protection for disabled persons against discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The DDA defines disability as a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

This definition is interpreted as follows:-

**Physical Impairment:** this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc) caused through illness by accident or from birth. Examples would be blindness, deafness, paralysis of a leg or heart disease.

**Mental Impairment:** this includes mental ill health and what is commonly known as learning disability, and social functioning.

**Substantial:** put simply, this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carryout normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

**Long-term adverse effect:** the effect has to have lasted or be likely to last overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is of course covered if the effect is likely to last for the whole of that time.

**A normal day to day activity:** this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something so individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or doing everything involved in a particular job.

### ***What sort of effect must there be?***

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; ability to take part in normal social interaction and form social relationships; or perception of risk of physical danger.

### ***What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?***

Broadly speaking, the effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters is the effect that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.



***Are there any types of condition covered by special provisions in the DDA?***

Yes, because some people with particular conditions might not otherwise be counted as disabled. These are provisions covering:

Recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis, where the effects can sometimes be less than substantial, which are treated as continuing to have a substantial adverse effect so long as that effect is likely to recur;

Conditions which progressively deteriorate, such as motor neuron disease, which count as having a substantial effect from the first time they have any effect at all on ability to carry out normal day to day activities even if it is not substantial, so long as there is eventually likely to be a substantial adverse effect; and

People with cancer, HIV, or multiple sclerosis are deemed to be disabled people from the point of diagnosis, regardless of whether or not they have any symptoms.

***Are any conditions not covered?***

Yes, the following conditions specifically do not count as impairments:

Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless resulting from the substance being medically prescribed);

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) unless it aggravates the effect of another condition;

Tendency to set fires, or steal, or physically or sexually abuse other persons;

Exhibitionism and voyeurism;

Severe disfigurements consisting of tattoos, non-medical body piercing or attachments to such piercing are not treated as having substantial adverse effects.

***What if someone has recovered from a disability?***

Much of the DDA also applies to people who have had a disability in the past (for example, someone who was disabled by mental ill health) but have now fully recovered. People who were registered disabled under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (NI) 1945 both on 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996 will be regarded as having had a disability in the past if they do not in any case fall within the definition of the DDA.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without.

**Race**

The Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial group(s).

**Sexual Orientation**

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) Order 2003 makes it unlawful for employers and others to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. In order to monitor the effectiveness of NICS policies

information is gathered on sexual orientation. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different sexual orientation.

### **Marital Status**

The Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended), makes it unlawful to discriminate against married persons and civil partners in employment. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions in NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different marital status.

### **Dependants Status**

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions in NI, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with dependants and persons without.

### **Confidentiality of Monitoring Information**

The following general principles will be applied to all individual monitoring information:-

- individual monitoring information will be afforded a high degree of confidentiality;
- misuse of monitoring information will be viewed as a disciplinary offence; and
- individual monitoring information will only be disclosed to members of staff or officials of a trade union, members of which are employed in the NICS, if it is necessary to do so for the appropriate discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

In addition to the above internal safeguards on the protection of equality monitoring information generally, the confidentiality of community background monitoring information is protected through Regulations made under the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (FETO). These make it a criminal offence, subject to specific exceptions, for an employer or employee to disclose information on the community background of an individual which has been obtained, or is used, for the purpose of monitoring under FETO.

As with other forms of personal data, the obtaining, use, storage and disclosure of monitoring information is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). Monitoring information is held on computer and is protected by a high level of security. Access to this data is restricted to those NICS staff, employees of HRConnect and Trade Union officials whose duties make it necessary for them to have it. Misuse of monitoring information is viewed as a disciplinary offence.

## ANNEX A

### Nationality

(i) 'UK National' means a person who is a British citizen (including persons from the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), a British subject under Part IV of the British Nationality Act 1981 having the right of abode in the UK or a British Dependent Territories citizen acquiring his/her citizenship from connection with Gibraltar.

(ii) 'Commonwealth Citizen' means any person who has the status of a Commonwealth citizen under the British Nationality Act 1981, not covered by the 'UK Nationality' definition above. This includes British Dependent Territories citizens (other than Gibraltarians), British Overseas citizens, and from 1986 those persons in the category British National (Overseas).

(iii) 'British Protected Person' means a member of any class of persons declared to be British Protected Persons by Order in Council under the British Nationality Act 1981, or by virtue of the Solomon Islands Act 1978.

(iv) 'EEA National' means a national of one of the following countries:

|                |         |               |                |
|----------------|---------|---------------|----------------|
| Austria        | Finland | Latvia        | Portugal       |
| Belgium        | France  | Liechtenstein | Romania        |
| Bulgaria       | Germany | Lithuania     | Slovakia       |
| **Croatia      | Greece  | Luxembourg    | Slovenia       |
| Cyprus         | Hungary | Malta         | Spain          |
| Czech Republic | Iceland | Netherlands   | Sweden         |
| Denmark        | Ireland | Norway        | United Kingdom |
| Estonia        | Italy   | Poland        |                |

N.B. nationals from Switzerland also have the same free movement and employment rights.

'Family member of an EEA or swiss national' means:

- (i) That national's spouse\*; or
- (ii) A direct descendant (child, grandchild etc.) of that national or his/her spouse who is under 21 years of age or is their dependent; or
- (iii) A dependent relative in the ascending line (parent, grandparent etc) of the EEA national or his/her spouse.

\*Note: 'Spouse' does not include a party to a marriage of convenience and in the case of EEA national vocational students; family members are restricted to spouses and dependent children only.

\*\*Croatian nationals who want to work in the UK must obtain authorisation prior to commencing employment. They require a certificate of sponsorship and must also apply for an accession worker card before they can commence employment. There are no provisions for Croatian nationals to take up low-skilled work. Further guidance on nationality can be obtained at [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

**ANNEX B**  
**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS**

**CSC      NI**  
**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS**  
**FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

**AN INTRODUCTION**

**Ensuring appointment on merit**  
**And safeguarding ethics**

**WHO ARE WE?**

**Brian Rowntree, CBE (Chairperson)**  
**Marian Matchett, CBE**  
**James Scholes**

**LOCATION**

**Our Office is in Stormont House.**  
**The full address is:**

**Stormont House**  
**Room 105**  
**Stormont Estate**  
**Belfast**  
**BT4 3SH**

**OPENING HOURS**

**The Office is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm,**  
**Monday to Friday, except Public and Bank Holidays.**

**How to contact us**

- **write to us at the address at the top of the page**
- **telephone us on 028 90523599**
- **visit us at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)**

## **Annex B CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS**

### **WHAT ARE WE HERE TO DO?**

Civil Service Commissioners are appointed by the Crown to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Civil Service should be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

### **WHERE DO WE GET OUR AUTHORITY FROM?**

Commissioners derived their responsibilities from prerogative Orders made by the Secretary of State. Our authority currently derives from the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999.

### **HOW DO WE DO IT?**

We do it by:

- making General Regulations.
- publishing and maintaining a Recruitment Code setting out the essential principles and procedures on which recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service must be based. Departments and Agencies must follow this Code. A copy is available online at: [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)
- it is inevitable that occasions will arise when special circumstances lead to Departments needing to depart from the Merit Principle. The Commissioners have set out the circumstances in which they are prepared to look at requests to depart from the Merit Principle. These 'exceptions' must be notified to, and in some instances approved by, the Commissioners before an appointment can be made.
- auditing recruitment policies and practices followed by Departments and Agencies in making appointment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Each year, the Commissioners decide on a particular aspect of recruitment to examine in detail (an audit) and request management consultants to carry out independent investigations on their behalf. The results of these audits are published in the Commissioners' Annual Report.
- requiring Departments and Agencies to publish information about their recruitment activity.
- approving procedures for appointment, through open competition, to the Senior Civil Service in Northern Ireland.

- hearing and determining appeals under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics. Under the Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999, we have been assigned the role of providing an independent appeals mechanism for Northern Ireland civil servants. The Code of Ethics sets out the constitutional framework within which civil servants work and the values they are expected to uphold. Details of the number and nature of the appeals received by the Commissioners are published each year in our Annual Report.

## **WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?**

If you have ever applied for a post in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, you can be assured that, whether or not you were successful, the Department or Agency was obliged to make that appointment in accordance with directions for good practice set out by the Commissioners.

We are concerned that civil servants are not fully aware of the appeals mechanism under the Code of Ethics. We would strongly encourage any civil servant who believes that he or she has been asked to act in a way which

- is illegal, improper or unethical;
- is in breach of constitutional convention or a professional code;
- may involve a possible maladministration; or
- is otherwise inconsistent with the Code

to report the matter in accordance with procedures laid down in the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions Code or Departmental guidance.

Where the matter has been reported in the appropriate manner and a civil servant believes the response does not represent a reasonable response to his or her concerns, s/he may report the matter in writing to the Civil Service Commissioners.