



TAYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE
DISABILITY EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Disability Equality Duty came into force in December 2006. It was introduced by the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 and requires public authorities covered by the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities, promote equality of opportunity, take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons and encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.

Tayside Fire and Rescue produced its first Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan on 4 December 2006 for the period December 2006 – December 2009. This is the second annual report since the introduction of the scheme and it details the considerable progress that Tayside Fire and Rescue has made.

The annual report details progress made during the period 2007 – 2008. Each Action discussed in section 2.0 is linked directly to the action plan detailed in section ten of part three in the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan published on 4 December 2006.

Tayside Fire and Rescue recognise that further improvements can be made in relation to carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. Awareness has been raised through training carried out by Angela Webb an Advisor (Diversity/Workplace Culture) within the Scottish Fire Service Advisory Unit. In addition the Equality Impact Assessment and template has been revised and will be published in due course.

A new integrated Payroll/HR system is being implemented, the payroll section is fully implemented and the HR section will be implemented in 2009. This will improve the accuracy of statistical data which will ensure that future employment statistical monitoring is accurately captured, analysed and reported.

Tayside Fire and Rescue recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce which is representative of the communities the organisation serves. As a result positive action remains a high priority and work will continue throughout 2009.

Tayside Fire and Rescue values all employees and is committed to the equality of opportunity. A priority during 2009 will be the adoption of a Single Equality Scheme and Equality and Diversity Action Plan. This will provide a framework which will mainstream equality and diversity across the organisation.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tayside Fire and Rescue introduced its first Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan for the period December 2006 – December 2009 on 4 December 2006. The introduction of the scheme meets Tayside Fire and Rescue's requirements under the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 to maintain an equality scheme for disability.

This annual report has been published to provide details of the steps that Tayside Fire and Rescue have taken during the last year in order to fulfil its Disability Equality Duty to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

2.0 PROGRESS DURING 2007/2008

An Action Plan was included as part of the Disability Equality Scheme published in December 2006 detailing the activities that Tayside Fire and Rescue intended to carry out during the duration of the scheme.

The following information provides progress of the Action Plan detailed in section 10 of part three of the Disability Equality Scheme.

Action 10.1: Emergency Translation Cards, to be carried on all appliances Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 10

All fire appliances carry an emergency phrase booklet which provides emergency questions and symbols such as people and signs.

If the emergency phrase booklet is utilised at an incident then the person can point to their flag which details their country and language. The objective is for the person to control the book however operational crew can point to questions in English which has the question in the required language beside it.

This has been a resource that has been widely used particularly for the Polish community in Tayside.

Action 10.2: Accessibility of services – communication methods for Control Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 5

The Royal Institute for the Deaf (RNID) Tynetalk is the national telephone relay service for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or who have a speech impairment. This service allows individuals to contact the emergency services efficiently and effectively.

When an individual dials 18000 they are connected with an Emergency Services Operator, at this point a Tynetalk Relay Assistant joins the call, the individual may communicate verbally or through textphone, the Emergency Services Operator will ask which service is required and the individual will state for example Fire Service. At that point the individual and the Tynetalk Relay Assistant will be connected with Tayside Fire and Rescue Control Room.

Action 10.3: Making the various smoke detectors more accessible. Develop the work being carried out in Angus.

Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 1

Tayside Fire and Rescue continue to carry out Home Fire Safety Visits across Tayside and fit smoke alarms as required.

In May 2008 two employees attended the Dundee deaf awareness open day as part of deaf awareness week. A presentation stand was set up to promote Tayside Fire and Rescue services.

The Green Watch attended a similar event in Perth and a presentation stand was set up to promote services such as smoke alarms.

○ **Angus Area**

Tayside Fire and Rescue, Angus Council, Tayside Police and Angus Care and Repair formed a partnership to provide a service to people over 60, disabled people and vulnerable people in Angus.

All requests for smoke alarms in Angus are diverted through the Safe as Houses project. Angus Care and Repair then go and fit the smoke alarm. Tayside Fire and Rescue receive a quarterly report from Angus Care and Repair stating how many 10 year domestic smoke alarms and visual or hearing impairment smoke alarms have been fitted. Since this project commenced in 2006 there have been 15 deaf smoke alarms fitted across Angus.

○ **Dundee Area**

If an individual requires a smoke alarm for a hearing impairment it is the responsibility of the housing association or landlord to arrange for a smoke alarm to be fitted.

If the house is privately owned and Tayside Fire and Rescue receive a request, with the owner's permission, the address and occupiers details are referred to Tayside Association for the Deaf. Tayside Association for the Deaf then write to the occupier to inform them of the cost and advise that a referral can be made to the Dundee Care and Repair Service, who will meet the cost up to £350.00 if the owner meets specific criteria.

○ **Perth Area**

During a Home Fire Safety Visit, if any Tayside Fire and Rescue personnel suspect, or if the householder states that they have a hearing impairment, the Perth and Kinross Council Community Care Access Team are contacted. Tayside Fire and Rescue personnel will not make any assumptions on the level of impairment during a Home Fire Safety Visit.

Depending upon the householders domestic arrangements, a visit from an Occupational Therapist (OT) will be prioritised. If the householder is living alone the OT will visit within

48 working hours however if the householder lives with another individual who does not have a hearing impairment this referral time will be lengthened.

When the OT visits an assessment will be carried out to determine whether any equipment which is deemed necessary, including smoke detectors, should be provided.

**Action 10.4: Training – internal and external trainers – Capability Scotland
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 9, 11 and 12**

Training has been provided to community fire safety personnel which incorporates input on physical and mental disabilities at the Scottish Fire Services College.

In addition there are six individuals attending an Asperger's course at Angus College in November 2008. In attendance will be community safety and community fire safety personnel.

Three support employees including our receptionist at headquarters attended Start to Sign training delivered by RNID in July 2008.

Further training in relation to disabilities and what Capability Scotland Equality Unit can provide will be considered as part of the equality training strategy which will be produced in 2009. The equality training strategy will consider the training needs of all roles in the organisation for example Firefighter through to Area Manager.

Action 10.5: Accessibility of Fire Safety information (leaflets) – BSL/ DVD/ Boardmaker format

Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 2

Tayside Fire and Rescue would like to make improvements for individuals who require information in British Sign Language (BSL) format. Tayside Fire and Rescue are investigating the purchasing of a BSL DVD which will allow the organisation to communicate fire safety information in a format which meets the needs of individuals who communicate through BSL.

In addition we attended a Deaf Awareness event with Sound Sense Project on 7 May 2008 at Central Library in Dundee. A BSL DVD was utilised on a laptop and displayed on a projector.

- **Don't give Fire a Home**

'Don't give Fire a Home' was developed by the Scottish Government with the full support of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. It is a long term national domestic fire safety campaign to reduce fire deaths and injuries by raising public awareness of fire risks in Scottish homes.

Tayside Fire and Rescue utilise 'Don't give Fire a Home' resources and an emphasis is placed on symbols rather than words. In addition there are British Sign Language videos

which can be utilised by individuals who communicate through BSL on the Don't Give Fire a Home website.

In addition Tayside Fire and Rescue utilise a 'Don't Give Fire a Home' educational inflatable unit. This conveys the fire safety messages through pictorial format.

Action 10.6: Accessibility of information. Happy to Translate Scheme/ intranet/ internet Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 2

○ **Happy to Translate**

To ensure that all the communities served by Tayside Fire and Rescue are receiving the best service possible we have joined a scheme called 'Happy to Translate'. The 'Happy to Translate' scheme provides training and materials which assist in situations where there are language barriers. The service extends to translating documents into the appropriate language and setting up a meeting with a translator if necessary. The range of languages covered is impressive with 102 different languages and dialects catered for.

Training was initially given to all reception and general office staff and its suitability assessed for frontline firefighting employees.

The 'Happy to Translate' service is free of charge and in addition we also seek to provide our information in larger fonts if requested.

○ **Tip Cards**

Tayside Fire and Rescue is a member of the Dundee Equality and Diversity Partnership. We continue to work with our partner members throughout the Dundee area to champion and promote equality and diversity issues in Dundee.

Tip Cards were produced by the Dundee Equality and Diversity Partnership and have initially been distributed throughout the organisation on a trial basis. Once an evaluation has taken place these may be distributed more widely in the organisation.

Within the Tip Cards it advises that you may need the services of a trained interpreter and we may need to provide translations of leaflets, letters and information if required. It is important for all employees to recognise that methods of communication may need adapted to suit the requirements of the diverse communities we serve.

○ **Tayside Fire and Rescue Website**

Tayside Fire and Rescue utilise a package called Dixert IT Plus, this allows individuals with hearing impairments and reading difficulties to listen to sections of the website, increase font sizes, magnify sections or change the colour of our website.

- **Tayside Fire and Rescue Intranet**

It was recognised that our internal corporate Intranet was not user friendly. Work continues to ensure that the Intranet is user friendly and information is accessible. In October 2008 amendments were made to the layout and tabs were introduced, for example, tabs for different departments.

**Action 10.7: Access to facilities – ongoing work from access audit
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 12**

Tayside Fire and Rescue is continuing to improve access to facilities across all buildings. Work will commence in November 2008 to upgrade Blairgowrie Fire Station, this will involve separate toilet and shower facilities for males and females and also incorporate disabled access.

**Action 10.8: Positive action initiatives expanded to all posts, not just for Firefighter recruitment
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 13**

Tayside Fire and Rescue currently carry out positive action information days to encourage applications from Women and Black Minority Ethnic (BME) people for operational positions as they are underrepresented in the organisation.

We also operate the Positive about Disabled People Two Tick Scheme, as part of this scheme we have made a commitment to interview any candidate who meets the minimum essential criteria. This action has been removed as positive action will not be expanded to other posts at this point in time.

**Action 10.9: Ensure inclusion of DDA requirements in Attendance Management Policies/ Procedures
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 16**

The Attendance Management Policies and Procedures incorporate a section on the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and reasonable adjustments.

Any future legislative changes or best practice in relation to the DDA will be considered and incorporated into the policies and procedures.

**Action 10.10: Better use of information from incidents/ home safety visits. (information fed back to help in future incidents)
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 5**

Tayside Fire and Rescue continually seeks to ensure that accurate information which will assist in future incidents is held, for example disabled local residents who are a wheelchair user, who have a visual impairment or have a hearing impairment. With the permission of

the individual Tayside Fire and Rescue will inform Command and Control who will record the information against that address.

If Tayside Fire and Rescue receive an emergency call from this address then this information is passed to the fire crew attending. Tayside Fire and Rescue received information of a local resident who is a wheelchair user and has no carer between 1pm and 5pm, this information has now been recorded with Command and Control.

Tayside Fire and Rescue will continue to receive information from partners such as Angus Care and Repair, Tayside Association for the Deaf and in addition will feedback information gathered from home fire safety visits.

Action 10.11: Increase involvement of stakeholders. Build on contacts made and approach new stakeholders
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 22

Tayside Fire and Rescue continually updates our central stakeholder list. The stakeholder list allows the organisation to communicate with stakeholders throughout the communities we serve during consultation exercises such as the recent race consultation questionnaire.

Action 10.12: Build on disability monitoring that is carried out, in relation to internal procedures. Introduce monitor training and appraisals
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 9, 11 and 12

Tayside Fire and Rescue monitors the number of:

- Applicants including promotions from when they apply for a position, through the various stages of selection until they are unsuccessful or successful.
- Employees who apply and receive an educational support grant
- Employees who take part in an assessment and development centre
- Employees who apply for continual professional development payments
- Employees involved in grievances
- Employees who are the subject of disciplinary action
- Employees who leave the organisation

At this present time Tayside Fire and Rescue do not have a performance appraisal scheme in place however when this is introduced in 2009 this will also be an area which is monitored.

Action 10.13: Carry out a disability audit of employees
Relating 2008 – 2009 Strategic Objective 12, 15

A disability audit of employees has not been carried out. However in May and June 2008 a Healthy Working Lives – Health Needs survey was carried out. Of the responses received twelve individuals declared that they had a disability.

3.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

It is a requirement of the disability equality duty to ensure that all new and existing policies or practices are free from discrimination and meet the General Duties of the Code.

Tayside Fire and Rescue has a robust equality impact assessment process which fulfils the obligation to assess all policies and practices for potential detrimental impact.

All new and existing policies and the practices, procedures, initiatives, functions and services which feed into that policy are subject to an equality impact assessment to ensure that as far as possible any negative consequences are eliminated or minimised.

During 2007/2008 Tayside Fire and Rescue carried out a number of equality impact assessments on new policies, existing policies and the practices, procedures, initiatives, functions and services which feed into the policies however the numbers carried out are not representative of the actual number of new policies and existing policies that were introduced.

As a result further training on equality impact assessments is required to raise awareness and improve the numbers that are carried out for both new and existing policies, procedures and practices. This will be incorporated into the Equality Training Strategy and Angela Webb an Advisor (Diversity/Workplace Culture) within the Scottish Fire Service Advisory Unit carried out cultural awareness and Equality Impact Assessment training over three days in September 2008 to thirty-one employees from representatives in the following departments:

- Corporate Services
- Personnel Services
- Technical Services
- Community Safety
- Legislative Fire Safety
- Risk Management

The Equality and Policy Advisor will now deliver this training to more employees throughout 2008 and 2009. In addition the Equality Impact Assessment policy and template has been revised awaiting publication, communication was improved via the Intranet, Email and a section will be added to the Trove Document Library Template. Further measures will be investigated to ensure compliance.

To meet the obligation placed on Tayside Fire and Rescue Action Point 35 has been agreed by Tayside Fire and Rescue Board:

AP35 Continue to carry out Equality Impact Assessments to monitor that our working practices do not discriminate against particular groups or individuals.

4.0 EMPLOYMENT

The statutory code of practice for Disability places responsibilities on public authorities with regard to employment practices. As part of this duty Tayside Fire and Rescue has recorded its workforce profile by equality strand as well as monitored the key employment practices of recruitment, promotion, grievance, discipline, dignity at work, training and those individuals who leave the employment of Tayside Fire and Rescue.

Table 1: Workforce Profile at 2008

Category	Male	Female	Declared Disabled	Declared BME
Wholetime	388	15	12	3
Volunteer	23	4		0
Retained	257	12		0
Control	2	18		1
Support	29	46		1
Total	699	95	12	5

Employment Monitoring 2008

The following data is the total of all activities occurring between 4 December 2007 and 3 December 2008 unless otherwise stated.

Table 2: Recruitment

	Total	Male	Female	Disabled	BME
Applicants	467	193	185	9	6
Shortlisted for Interview	142	87	55	2	3
Appointed	36	23	13	0	1

*Total number of applicants and Total number Appointed is comprised of male, female and those individuals who did not complete an equal opportunities form

Table 3: Promotion

	Total	Male	Female	Disabled	BME
Applicants	12	9	0	0	0
Shortlisted for Interview	8	8	0	0	0
Appointed	5	3	0	0	0

*Total number of applicants and Total number Appointed is comprised of male, female and those individuals who did not complete an equal opportunities monitoring form

Table 4: Leavers

Total	Male	Female
36	30	6

*Information gathered from resignation and retirement, no equal opportunities monitoring forms were completed and therefore statistics cannot be broken down further into Disabled and BME

Table 5: Training Employee Development Requests

	Total	Male	Female	Disabled
Courses Approved	29	26	3	0
Courses Declined	0	0	0	0

*Training Courses supported by the Educational Support Grants 2007 – 2008

Table 6: Continuous Professional Development Payments

	Total	Male	Female	Disabled	BME
Applicants	37	15	0	0	1
Approved	12	12	0	0	1
Declined	3	3	0	0	0

*Continuous Professional Development Payments 2007 - 2008

* Total number of applicants is comprised of those individuals who did not complete an equal opportunities monitoring form

Table 7: Assessment and Development Centres

	Total	Male	Female	Disabled	BME
Applicants	11	8	3	0	0
Passed	5	3	2	0	0
Failed	6	5	1	0	0

Although there have been discipline and grievance cases within the organisation there were no equal opportunities monitoring forms completed and forwarded to the Equality and Policy Advisor for statistical reporting.

The statistical data above highlights that Tayside Fire and Rescue operational employees continue to be under represented by Women and BME people. Tayside Fire and Rescue will continue to address this through positive action initiatives and working with the diverse local communities across Tayside.

In addition to the statistical data above there were 4 informal complaints raised to our Harassment Contact Advisors on Dignity at Work in 2007 – 2008 and 2 to date in 2008 - 2009. Tayside Fire and Rescue take any complaints raised either informally or formally seriously and at present do not capture whether the complainant has a disability.

Tayside Fire and Rescue recognise that further improvements are required in the recording of statistical data relating to employment practices. A joint Payroll/HR system is in the process of being implemented, the payroll section has now been fully implemented and the HR section will be implemented in early 2009. This will lead to greater improvements in the gathering of accurate statistical data which will allow Tayside Fire and Rescue to accurately analyse and report on employment statistical data.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Based on this review of the Disability Equality Scheme Tayside Fire and Rescue can demonstrate improvement in relation to meeting its objectives under the Disability Equality Duty.

In particular Tayside Fire and Rescue has made considerable progress in the information that is available to the communities we serve across Tayside. Accessibility of information has improved through the use of pictorial formats and the functionality on the Tayside Fire and Rescue website.

In addition working with our partners such as Tayside Association for the Deaf, clear arrangements are now in place for individuals who require an alternative smoke alarm.

Further improvements can be made in relation to carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. Awareness has been raised through training carried out by Angela Webb an Advisor (Diversity/Workplace Culture) within the Scottish Fire Service Advisory Unit. In addition the Equality Impact Assessment and template has been revised and will be published in due course.

A new integrated Payroll/HR system is being implemented, the payroll section is fully implemented and the HR section will be implemented in 2009. This will improve the accuracy of statistical data which will ensure that future employment statistical monitoring is accurately captured, analysed and reported.

Tayside Fire and Rescue values all employees and is committed to the equality of opportunity. A priority during 2009 will be the adoption of a Single Equality Scheme and Equality and Diversity Action Plan. This will provide a framework which will mainstream equality and diversity across the organisation.

The Action Plan has been updated to reflect the progress made during 2007 – 2008 and can be found in Appendix A.

APPENDIX A**Disability Equality Scheme
Updated Action Plan**

	Action	Relating Strategic Objective / Action Point	Relating Strategic Objective / Action Point 2008 – 2009	Lead Department	Lead Person (s)	Year
10.1	Emergency Translation Cards, to be carried on all appliances	AP38	SO10	Community Safety	Watch Manager (Control)	Completed
10.2	Accessibility of services – communication methods for Control	AP38	SO2	Community Safety/ Corporate Services	Community Safety Manager Technical Services	2009
10.3	Making the various smoke detectors more accessible. Develop the work being carried out in Angus.	AP01, AP02	SO1	Community Safety	Community Safety Manager	2007/2008/2009
10.4	Training – internal and external trainers – Capability Scotland	AP35	SO9,11,12	Personnel/ Community Safety	Equality and Policy Advisor/ Community Safety Manager	2007/2008/2009

10.5	Accessibility of Fire Safety information (leaflets) – BSL/ DVD/ Boardmaker format	AP38, AP08	SO2	Corporate Services/ Community Safety	Community Safety Manager	2008/2009
10.6	Accessibility of information. Happy to Translate Scheme/ intranet/ internet	AP38, AP08	SO2	Corporate Services/ Community Safety	Bruce Farquharson	2008/2009
10.7	Access to facilities – ongoing work from access audit	AP37, AP14,AP08	SO12	Technical Services	Facilities Manager	2007/2008/2009
10.8	Positive action initiatives expanded to all posts, not just for Firefighter recruitment	AP27	SO13	Personnel Services	Equality and Policy Advisor	Action Removed
10.9	Ensure inclusion of DDA requirements in Attendance Management Policies/ Procedures	AP 31	SO16	Personnel Services	Human Resources Assistant	Completed
10.10	Better use of information from incidents/ home safety visits. (information fed back to help in future incidents)	AP09	SO3	Risk Management	Risk Manager	2008/2009

10.11	Increase involvement of stakeholders. Build on contacts made and approach new stakeholders	AP38, SO23	SO22	Corporate Services/ Personnel Services	Equality and Policy Advisor	2007/2008/2009
10.12	Build on disability monitoring that is carried out, in relation to internal procedures. Introduce monitor training and appraisals	SO14, SO15	SO12	Personnel Services	Equality and Policy Advisor	2008
10.13	Carry out a disability audit of employees	SO14	SO13	Personnel Services/ Corporate Services	Equality and Policy Advisor	2009