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NORTHERN IRELAND Information Service

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE FOURTH REPORT OF THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES UNIT

Details of the composition of the Northern Ireland Industrial and Non-Industrial Civil Service at 1 January 1991 were published today by the Department of Finance and Personnel in the Fourth Report of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Equal Opportunities Unit. The Report provides a detailed analysis of recruitment, promotion and wastage during the 2-year period to 1 January 1991.

Regular publication of the personnel profile of the Service in terms of sex, community background and disability is an integral part of the NICS's equal opportunity policy. As with earlier Reports, the compositional analysis in the Fourth Report is based on detailed monitoring of both applicants and employees over the period in question.

The main points of the Report are as follows:

Composition of the Northern Ireland Civil Service

Of the 29,057 (industrial and non-industrial) staff in the workforce at 1 January 1991 56.6% were classified as Protestant and 35.9% as Roman Catholic. The community background of the remaining 7.6% could not be determined.

In terms of gender, the workforce contained more males (57.7%) than females (42.3%). The non-industrial Service comprised approximately equal proportions of men (49%) and women (51%).

Higher Grades

Among the higher grades (ie at Deputy Principal level and equivalent and above) the proportion of women increased from 10.6% in 1989 to 13.2% at 1 January 1991. Roman Catholic representation, previously 16.3% in 1985 and 18.6% in 1989 rose by a further 2.1 percentage points to 20.7%.

Recruitment

Recruitment competitions which closed between 1 January 1989 and 31 December 1990 attracted 17,712 applications. Of these 56% were from Protestants, 37% from Roman Catholics and 7% from those whose community background could not be determined. Men accounted for 63% of applications whilst 37% were from women. Of those offered an appointment 58% were Protestant, 35% Roman Catholic and 7% Not Determined. The male:female proportions of those offered an appointment were 58% and 42% respectively.

Examination of 179 recruitment competitions brought to a conclusion during 1989 and 1990 showed that in 166 (93%) there was no substantial difference between the actual and expected outcomes in equal opportunities terms. Following more detailed, selective, review of the remaining competitions a number of modifications have been made to relevant recruitment procedures.

Application Rates

Application rates for Protestants and Roman Catholics varied according to recruitment categories with strong Roman Catholic representation among applicants for General Service, Legal and Computer grades and significantly lower Roman Catholic representation among applicants for Centralised Services grades. Follow-up research work into application rates for earlier clerical and Executive Officer II competitions (ie between 1986 and 1990) confirmed somewhat higher than expected application rates from Roman Catholics with a corresponding lower application rate for Protestants. These findings will be discussed

with the Civil Service Commissioners and with the Fair Employment Commission.

Promotion

Monitoring of the 283 promotion boards brought to a conclusion during 1989 and 1990 has confirmed that in 255 boards (90.1%) there was no substantial difference between the actual and projected outcomes in equal opportunities terms. As with the review of recruitment competitions follow-up work on the remaining boards has led to a number of modifications in promotion procedures.

Disability

At 1 January 1991 there were 1290 staff (4.4% of the Service) who self-reported a disability. Of these, 361 (1.2% of the Service) were, or had been, registered as disabled.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. It is the policy of the Northern Ireland Civil Service that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the Northern Ireland Civil Service on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work.
2. Responsibility for developing, formulating and co-ordinating the Service's equal opportunities policy, and for monitoring its delivery in practice, rests with the Equal Opportunities Unit of the Department of Finance and Personnel. Previous reports on the work of the Unit were published in July 1986, December 1987 and October 1989.
3. Copies of the Fourth Report can be obtained at a price of £6 (including postage) from the Equal Opportunities Unit, Department of Finance and Personnel, Rosepark House, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3NR. Cheques should be made payable to the Department of Finance and Personnel No 1 Account.
4. The main points in the Report are summarised at Section 2 of the Report.