



# Screening Report

Section 75 & Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

## NIFRS Finance Policies (3) – Vehicle and Ancillary Equipment Fuel Policy

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**Protecting Our Community**

# Equality screening under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

## Background

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75) NIFRS has a specific statutory obligation as a public authority to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the following groups:

Section 75	Categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;</li><li>• men and women generally;</li><li>• persons with a disability and persons without; and</li><li>• persons with dependants and persons without.</li></ul>	

Under Schedule 9 of the Act, NIFRS must also have regard to the promotion of good relations between those of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. Our Equality Scheme explains how we implement our Section 75 obligations. A copy of the most recent Scheme, approved by the Equality Commission, is available on our website at [www.nifrs.org/equality](http://www.nifrs.org/equality)

We are required under Section 75 to screen and, where necessary, conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) on strategies, policies, plans and key decisions. The primary function of screening is to assess whether policy proposals would have a differential impact and in particular, an adverse differential impact on the categories of persons listed in Section 75, and any sub-groups within those categories.<sup>1</sup> If a policy shows a possible 'adverse impact' on any group, we must consider how this might be reduced. This would include how an alternative policy or approach might lessen this effect and serve to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

The Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies e.g relating to our employees and to external policies relating to the community we serve.

Equality screening involves gathering evidence on the potential impacts of the proposal, focusing on the nine Section 75 equality groups. This information is used to help inform the 'screening decision', i.e. whether a full EQIA is required where a potential for *significant* impact on equality of opportunity has been identified.

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<sup>1</sup> Equality Commission for Northern Ireland 'Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment' April 2001 (revised 2005)

Section 75 equality screening outcomes are defined in terms of impact eg **‘major’**, **‘minor’** or **‘none’**. Possible screening decision outcomes are as follows:

<b>Section 75</b>	<b>Equality Screening Outcomes</b>
<p>If the conclusion is that there is a <b>‘major’</b> impact for one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should be given to carrying out a full EQIA (<i>described as ‘screened in for EQIA’</i>).</p> <p>If the conclusion is <b>‘minor’</b> for one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an EQIA, <b>or</b> to measures/ amendments to mitigate the adverse impact; or to consider an alternative policy (<i>described as ‘screened out for EQIA – with mitigation’</i>).</p> <p>Where the conclusion is <b>‘none’</b> in that no significant impact has been identified on all of the Section 75 categories, then decision can be taken to not proceed with a full EQIA (<i>described as ‘screened out for EQIA – no mitigation’</i>).</p>	
<b>Section 75</b>	<b>A conclusion in favour of a ‘major’ impact would arise when:-</b>
<p>a) The policy shows actual or potential for unlawful discrimination.</p>	
<b>Section 75</b>	<b>A conclusion in favour of a ‘minor’ impact would arise when:-</b>
<p>b) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;</p> <p>c) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;</p> <p>d) Any equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people; and</p> <p>e) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.</p>	
<b>Section 75</b>	<b>A conclusion in favour of ‘none’ eg no impact, would arise when:-</b>
<p>a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations; and</p> <p>b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.</p>	

The NIFRS Screening Report on the NIFRS Vehicle and Ancillary Equipment Fuel Policy, has indicated no significant adverse impact for any of the Section 75 groups and decision has been taken ‘screen out’. A copy of the Screening Report is attached overleaf. The Screening Report will be reviewed and updated following this consultation exercise.

# Section 75 Screening Report on NIFRS Vehicle and Ancillary Equipment Fuel Policy

## Part 1: Policy Scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy or policy area. Policy scoping helps prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

You should note that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for NIFRS), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by NIFRS).

## Information about the policy

**Name of the policy or policy area:**

Vehicle and Ancillary Equipment Fuel Policy

**Is this an existing, revised or a new policy/policy area?**

Existing	Revised	New
		X

**Brief Description**

Policy establishes guidelines and direction on the most common areas of fuel management. It presents the overall approach and methodology of fuel usage. It also promotes efficient and efficient maintenance of records and reporting of information.

**What is it trying to achieve? (Intended aims and outcomes)**

Policy aims to sustain effective fuel management. It outlines the controls in place for issuing, monitoring and auditing all transactions to prevent any fraud or misuse in respect of NIFRS vehicle and ancillary fuel. It aims to inform NIFRS staff and those accountable for the control and reporting of fuel usage of their responsibilities.

**Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?**

YES	NO	N/A
		X

**If YES, explain how:**

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**Who initiated or wrote the policy?**

Finance Department
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**Who owns and who implements each element of the policy?**

<p><b>Finance Director</b> – responsible for issue, periodic review and revision of policy.</p> <p><b>Transport Department</b> – maintaining record of locations of NIFRS vehicles, ensuring fuel card retained with vehicles at all times, liaising with procurement</p> <p><b>Procurement Department</b> – ordering fuel card for new vehicle, cancelling online redundant fuel cards</p> <p><b>NIFRS Staff Fuel Purchasers</b> – accurate recording of purchase details</p> <p><b>Accounts Office</b> – analysis of fuel invoices, issuing copies of All-Star invoices</p> <p><b>Area Business Managers</b> – reconciliation of fuel usage and stocks and submission of figures to Accounts Office, submission of fuel drawn on account approved invoices, reporting lost or stolen fuel cards</p>
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## Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

YES	NO	N/A
X		

If YES, are they

Financial? YES/NO (If YES, please detail)

### Financial factors that would contribute to successful implementation of the policy

- Good communication and awareness of policy and protocols
- Robust controls for management
- Consistent record keeping across Service
- Consistent application throughout Service

### Financial factors that would detract from successful implementation of the policy

- Lack of awareness amongst managers and staff of responsibilities
- Inconsistent controls and application of policy
- Lack of appropriate resources
- If not applied appropriately:-
  - Inflation of business operating costs
  - Occasion unwarranted costs
  - Increase the risk of fraud occurring

Legislative: Y / N (If YES, please detail)

### Legislative factors that would contribute to successful implementation of the policy

- Good communication and awareness of policy and protocols
- Robust controls for management
- Consistent record keeping across Service
- Consistent application throughout Service

### Legislative factors that would detract from successful implementation of the policy:-

- Lack of awareness amongst managers and staff of responsibilities
- Inconsistent controls and application of policy
- Lack of appropriate resources
- If not applied appropriately:-
  - Inflation of business operating costs
  - Occasion unwarranted costs
  - Increase the risk of fraud occurring

**Other, please specify:**

Non applicable

**Main stakeholders affected**

**Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?**

**Employees:**

- Finance Department
- Board Members
- Corporate Management Team
- Particular responsibilities under the Policy for the Finance Director, Transport Department and Procurement Department
- All NIFRS staff who purchase/provide fuel for use in the performance of their duties and reclaim the cost of that fuel from NIFRS
- All NIFRS staff who in the course of their duties use fuel purchased/provided by NIFRS
- Managerial (such as Area Business Managers), supervisory and Accounts Office staff with responsibility for the approval, authorisation, payment, control and recording of the usage and cost of fuel.

**Service users:**

- Suppliers of goods and services

**Other public sector organisations:**

- Department of Health– Sponsoring Branch
- Department of Finance– Reporting
- Northern Ireland Audit Office (Auditors)
- Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

**Voluntary/community/trade unions:**

- N/A

**Other, please specify:**

Not applicable

### **Other policies with a bearing on these policies**

**What are they and who owns them?**

**Finance Department**

- The Management Guidance on the Use of NIFRS Vehicles

## Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for relevant Section 75 categories.

Section 75 Category	Details of Evidence/Information
	<p>The Vehicle and Ancillary Equipment Fuel Policy has been developed from both legislation and guidance within the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Financial Reporting Manual (FreM);</li><li>• The Financial Memorandum – May 2011;</li><li>• The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006;</li><li>• Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (2008) (MPMNI);</li><li>• The Management Guidance on the use of NIFRS Vehicles</li><li>• Guidance issued directly from Department of Health and</li><li>• HMRC guidance.</li></ul> <p>The Policy will be implemented based on the above statutory documents and guidance uniformly to all Section 75 categories</p>

## Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

<b>Section 75 Category</b>	<b>Details of Needs/Experiences/Priorities</b>
All categories	<p>The Policy outlines the controls in place for issuing, monitoring and auditing all transactions to prevent any fraud or misuse in respect of NIFRS vehicle and ancillary fuel. It aims to inform NIFRS staff and those accountable for the control and reporting of fuel usage of their responsibilities.</p> <p>Based on the sources listed below, the policy has been developed in line with best practice and statutory provisions. This necessitates a uniform approach in the application of the policy which does not impact on the Section 75 categories.</p>

## Part 2: Screening Questions

### Introduction

1. If the conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 categories, then you may decide to screen the policy **out**. If a policy is 'screened out', you should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.
2. If the conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to an EQIA.
3. If the conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an EQIA, or to measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or an alternative policy.

Taking into account the earlier evidence, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity / good relations for those affected by this policy, by applying the following screening questions and the impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

### Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 grounds? Minor/Major/None		
Section 75 Category	Details of Impact of Policy	Level of Impact? Minor/Major/None
All categories	Policy is governed by best practice in accounting and governed by both legislation and protocols under the Financial Memorandum; the Financial Reporting Manual (FreM) and Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI).	None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within any of the Section 75 categories?		
Section 75 Category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide reasons
All categories		No  Principles of policy are based on financial and accounting best practice.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? <b>Minor/Major/None</b>		
Good Relations Category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact <b>Minor/Major/None</b>
Religious belief		None  Principles of policy are based on financial and accounting best practice.
Political opinion		
Racial group		

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide reasons
Religious belief	Policy is based on accountancy best practice and adherence to guidance such as Financial Reporting Manual and the Financial Memorandum.	None
Political opinion		
Racial group		

### Additional considerations

#### Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Not applicable

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

Not applicable

### Part 3: Screening Decision

In light of your answers to the previous questions, do you feel that the policy should:  
(please underline one):

1. Not be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required)
2. Not be subject to an EQIA (with mitigating measures /alternative policies)
3. Be subject to an EQIA

If 1. or 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons why:

1. Not subject to EQIA.

The policy is applied based on an uniformed approach as it has been developed using guidance from documentation such as the Financial Reporting Manual; the Financial Memorandum; Managing Public Money Northern Ireland and Prompt Payment of Invoices Circular.

If 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), in what ways can identified adverse impacts attaching to the policy be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced?

In light of these revisions, is there a need to re-screen the revised/alternative policy at a future date? YES /NO

**If YES, when & why?**

If 3. (i.e. to conduct an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons:

### **Timetabling and Prioritising EQIA**

**If 3. is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? YES/ NO**

**If YES, please provide details:**

**Please answer the following questions to determine priority for timetabling the EQIA. On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for EQIA.**

<b>Priority criterion</b>	<b>Rating (1-3)</b>
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	Not applicable
Social need	Not applicable
Effect on people's daily lives	Not applicable
Relevance to a public authority's functions	Not applicable

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for EQIA. This list of priorities will assist you in timetabling the EQIA. Details of your EQIA timetable should be included in the quarterly Section 75 report.

Proposed date for commencing EQIA: Not applicable

## Any further comments on the screening process and any subsequent actions?

## Part 4: Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy which may lead you to conduct an EQIA, as well as help with future planning and policy development. You should consider the guidance contained in the Equality Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007). The Commission recommends that, where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, then you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

### Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

This Policy will be reviewed as deemed appropriate (and when impacted by legislative and accounting best practice).

A review is planned in three years

## Part 5: Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Caroline Smyth	HR Advisor – Equality, Inclusion & Legal	10 August 2016
Lisa Doran	Assistant Financial Accountant	10 August 2016
Josephine Kelly	Director of Finance	10 August 2016

**Note:** A copy of the Screening Report for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy. The Policy Lead Officer will have involved the HR Manager (Equality, Inclusion & Legal) from the outset and will make the Report accessible on the NIFRS website following completion. This is in compliance with Equality Commission for Northern Ireland requirements.