

**Forestry Commission
Race Equality Scheme
2008-2011**

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FOREWORD

The Forestry Commission's mission is to protect and expand Britain's forests and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment.

As an employer, the Forestry Commission (FC) can only hope to achieve this mission if we ensure our staff are encouraged to realise their full potential. Therefore, we must recruit, retain and develop a workforce comprised of the best and most talented people for the job. We believe this requires a workforce that is representative of the diverse nature of society today.

In addition, use of the national forest estate is paramount to communities across GB. Therefore, the FC has made a commitment to include all of those who make up communities in the way the forests are managed irrespective of any individuals' race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief. Society in Great Britain today is very diverse. As a Government department managing the public forest estate, the FC respects the needs and aspirations of the many different peoples and customs present within GB society.

This mission and approach to our workforce and the forest estate is fully consistent with the obligations placed on the FC by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This Act obliges public bodies to maintain a framework of standards and principles to ensure, where appropriate, that their policies and functions are relevant to the whole population of GB and that they treat everyone fairly and that their workforce is representative of society as a whole.

This Race Equality Scheme sets out how the FC will meet its obligations under the Act. It is an important and integral part of the FC's wider equality and diversity agenda. The Scheme is formally reviewed every three years, but it is a living document that will be regularly reviewed and improved. There is no place for any form of discrimination in the FC. This Scheme and its Action Plan will help us turn our race equality objectives into reality.

As the Commissioners of the FC, we are fully committed to playing our part and leading the FC forward in its drive to become an exemplar service provider and employer within the rural industry sector. This includes promoting good race relations, eradicating unlawful discrimination and ensuring fairness of opportunity to all our customers and staff irrespective of their race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief.

The Forestry Commissioners

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Race Equality Scheme (RES)

This document is intended to articulate the way in which the FC is meeting the equality duties to reflect the commission's important role in influencing the opportunities and participation of employees regardless of their ethnicity, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin and skin colour. This document therefore describes the systems and processes needed to mainstream race equality into all of the work that the FC does and the action plans required to address race equality priorities.

Development of the RES

This RES has been compiled by the Diversity Team in conjunction with the Diversity Technical Group, wider FC colleagues, including the internal Staff Forum and Pearn Kandola, an independent consultancy.

The FC's previous RES covering 2005-2008 has been reviewed and outstanding relevant actions incorporated in this revised RES. This revised Race Equality Scheme underlines and develops our commitment to equality in the way we work and services we provide during the next three year period. It is a clear statement of FC policy on race relations and provides a strategic framework for the FC's work in this area.

Consultation

The content of the FC RES will be subject to a 12 week external consultation with the FC's main stakeholders including various forestry organisations, Government departments and agencies and relevant organisations from the public, private and third sectors.

Context

This scheme, as part of the FC's wider agenda on diversity, will be crucial in bringing about meaningful change. In order to do this, the FC will examine all its relevant policies, functions, service planning and service delivery processes to ensure that no-one is in any way discriminated against or subject to unfair opportunity/adverse treatment. Further, as an employer the FC will ensure that all staff have their awareness raised and appropriate training provided with respect to the equality and diversity agenda.

In addition, as a service provider the FC will ensure that working with community groups, other public bodies, voluntary organisations and private organisations/individuals is done in an inclusive manner, offering fairness of opportunity to all. To this end, the FC will also ensure that it does everything possible to neither procure nor receive goods from any organisation or individual/(s) that do not have or subscribe to equality and diversity values and objectives as set down in legislation.

Leadership Commitment

The senior staff group within the FC are committed to ensuring the organisation is free from discrimination as an employer and a service provider. The following specific responsibilities apply:

- The Executive Board Chair is the Director General of the FC and has taken on the role of Board level Diversity Champion.
- The Director of HR ensures that diversity issues are discussed at every meeting of the GB Executive Board, the HR Service Board and the HR Management Board.
- HR Business Partners for each of the six business areas ensure that the equality and diversity agenda is promulgated and publicised at business management boards.
- All senior managers in the FC have had mandatory training on equality and diversity to ensure that strong and consistent leadership is provided around this issue. Senior managers are expected to role model inclusive behaviours to ensure appropriate standards of behaviour are understood and applied by all employees.
- The Diversity Technical Group will facilitate the exchange of good practice; and develop, monitor and advise on the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme and subsequent broader equality work. The group reports to the FC's Executive Board as well as Management/Service Boards. The Director of Human Resources chairs this group. Each constituent part of the FC is represented and has been asked to contribute to the prioritisation and implementation of equality and diversity throughout the FC.

Equality and diversity are key drivers in the FC's mission, values and people strategy (see below for details). In addition, social justice and inclusion feature highly in each of the country forestry strategies and delivery plans. The FC is also developing an Equality and Diversity Strategy that will also be made available through the website.

The FC's Mission

The FC's mission is to protect and expand Britain's forest and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment. Therefore, the FC is committed to ensuring the forest and woodlands they manage are accessible and enjoyed by all groups in society regardless of their race, age, gender, religion, faith, sexual orientation or disability.

The FC's Values

In essence the FC's commitment to diversity and specifically race equality is embedded in the organisation's core values which influence the behaviour of all staff and their approach to service provision.

Specifically the FC aims to be an organisation that values:

- Teamwork - treating everyone equally in a team and identifying their unique contribution
- Professionalism - tapping the potential of a diverse group of people in pursuit of organisational goals
- Respect - respecting peoples' ideas, differing views and perspectives
- Communication - communicating in different ways to ensure a common understanding
- Learning - how to do things differently looking to learn from others
- Creativity - considering different ways of doing things and not always assuming that the usual way is the only way or that one size fits all.

The FC's People Strategy

The Strategy demonstrates the FC's commitment to people and how it will attract, manage and develop a diverse workforce over the next three to five years.

The corporate plans for each country and Forest Research have common themes defining how the FC wishes to work; these determine the key strategic drivers for how the organisation manages its people.

The People Strategy outlines:

- A fair and consistent approach in dealing with people; and
- A framework for ensuring that we meet FC goals of effective HR practices, demonstrating diversity through increasing representation of BME employees, developing the leaders of the FC's future and refreshing the organisation through mobility.

The People Strategy has the following high-level goals:

- To demonstrate excellence in the leadership and management of a diverse workforce
- To support people in their professional and personal development and improve organisational performance, identifying and overcoming any barriers to progression
- To maintain a safe and healthy environment and develop a diverse workforce

- To adopt people practices for the future, which support efficient and effective processes of delivery, through HR support and advice.

Structure of the RES

The document is structured in the following way:

- Foreword by the Forestry Commissioners
- Introduction
- The Forestry Commission's Structure
- Legal Obligations
- Systems for Mainstreaming Race Equality
- The Forestry Commission as a Service Provider
- The Forestry Commission as an Employer
- Race Equality Action Plan
- High Priority Actions

If anyone has any comments on, or complaints about, this Scheme, please contact us at the address below.

You can also get this publication on tape, in large print and various other formats by contacting the FC's Diversity Team at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies or to arrange for an officer to discuss with you to explain any area/(s) of the publication that you would like clarified.

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THE FORESTRY COMMISSION'S STRUCTURE

The FC is the Government department responsible for the protection and expansion of Britain's forests and woodlands.

Forestry is a devolved subject and the FC answers separately to Ministers in England, Scotland and Wales. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has responsibility for forestry in England as well as certain activities such as international forestry affairs that remain reserved by Westminster. Scottish Ministers have responsibility for forestry in Scotland and the Welsh Assembly Government has responsibility for forestry in Wales.

Forestry Ministers meet at least once a year to address topical issues of interest to all countries. The Forestry Ministers' Group also seeks to reach a common position on reserved matters or 'cross border' topical issues, including international forestry issues and other matters (such as forestry taxation and plant health) which are for the UK Government.

Forestry Commission England, Forestry Commission Scotland and Forestry Commission Wales report directly to their appropriate Minister, providing advice on policy and implementing that policy within the relevant country. This devolved structure allows the FC to focus more clearly on delivering the policies of the individual Governments while still having the ability to take a GB-wide approach to 'cross-border' issues.

The FC has a Board of Commissioners with duties and powers prescribed by statute, consisting of a Chairman and up to ten other Forestry Commissioners, including its Director General, who are appointed by the Queen on the recommendation of Ministers. The Commissioners' programmes to deliver each country's forestry strategy are set out in Corporate Plans for England, Scotland and Wales. These programmes are directed and financed by the three administrations to which the FC is directly accountable.

Therefore, the FC in each country is led by a Director who is also a member of the GB Board of Commissioners. Delivery of policy, as well as progress against strategy objectives, are overseen in each country by the FC's National Committee for England, National Committee for Scotland and National Committee for Wales.

The FC also has three executive agencies that work to targets set by Commissioners and Ministers:

- Public forests, woodlands and other lands in England and Scotland are managed by Forest Enterprise agencies on behalf of the FC in that country.

- Forest Research is a GB-wide agency that aims to deliver high-quality scientific research and surveys, to inform the development of forestry policies and practices, and promote high standards of sustainable forest management.

Ministers have agreed that, whilst most of the FC's work is now done at country level, a number of the FC's functions would be funded directly by Westminster and operated on a cross-GB basis by Corporate and Forestry Support Division. In this GB role, the FC provides advice and support to the UK Government and to the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales on the standards for sustainable forest management and encourages good forestry practice. In addition, as the FC operates across GB, central support services such as HR are provided to the entire organisation on a GB basis.

The FC also has an Executive Board which assists the Director General and Country Directors in the effective management of the Commission by providing leadership and setting direction for the Commission as an organisation.

Impact of Structure on RES

Although forestry is devolved the FC approaches race equality on a GB basis rather than a devolved basis. Responsibility for the implementation of the RES is shared but guidance and support is provided from the central diversity team based at Silvan House.

In order to appropriately monitor action and progress, the FC focus on six discrete business areas as follows:

- FC England
- FC Scotland
- FC Wales
- Forest Research
- Silvan House (HR, IT, Finance support functions to the wider FC)
- Business Units (civil and mechanical engineering, renewable energy, plant and seed supply i.e. supporting business functions to the wider FC).

These six areas impact on the reporting and analysis of employment data and service provision.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Legislation and its Implications - Legislative Context

The Race Relations Act 1976 provides the legislative basis for race equality policies in Great Britain. The Act was significantly strengthened as a result of recommendations arising from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 amended the 1976 Act in order to:

- Prohibit race discrimination in public functions not previously covered by the 1976 Act
- Place a general duty on specified public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate racial discrimination and to provide equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups
- Give the Home Secretary powers to impose specific duties on public authorities subject to the general duty and to add to the list of bodies to which the general duty applies.

The General Duty

The amended Race Relations Act 1976 places a statutory general duty on the public authorities listed in schedule 1A of the Act (this includes the FC) to promote race equality. This means that the FC is required to 'have due regard to the need' to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- Promote equal opportunities; and
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

The aim of the general duty – making the promotion of race equality central to the way public authorities work – ties in with the FC's commitment to mainstream equality and diversity. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process will assist the FC in meeting this general duty through the regular monitoring, review of policy and process as well as targeted action to ensure representation on the grounds of race.

The FC will continue to review policies and functions for their relevance under the Act. The FC's existing policies and functions most relevant to promoting all six equality themes have been prioritised for the next three years and scheduled for equality impact assessment by the relevant department area (FC England, FC Scotland, FC Wales, Forest Research, Silvan House, Business Units). Details relating to the roll out the EqIA process, together with timescales, can be found in the action plan.

All new policies and functions will start to be assessed using the EqIA process from August 2008.

An equality impact assessment tool has been developed and will be used to assess policies for their impact for employees and service users.

The use of impact assessments will also help to ensure that service areas engage with local people from minority ethnic communities to ensure their needs and priorities help shape local policy and service delivery.

All EqIA reports will be published on the external web-site. A copy of the EqIA process is included in Appendix 1.

The Specific Duty

The FC also has specific duties to help them meet the General duty. These involve:

- Preparing and publishing a race equality scheme (RES) for their policies and services; and
- Monitoring staff and applicants for jobs, promotion and training by racial group; monitoring the number of staff who receive training, who benefit or suffer from performance appraisals, who are involved in grievances or disciplinary action, and who leave the authority.

Therefore, a RES should be a detailed and realistic plan that sets out how the authority intends to meet the duty. It must include an assessment of its functions and policies, to see which of them are relevant to promoting race equality, and details of its arrangements to:

- Monitor its policies for any impacts they might have on promoting race equality;
- Assess, and consult on, the impact that policies it plans to introduce are likely to have on promoting race equality;
- Publish the results of its assessments, consultations and monitoring;
- Train its staff on the general and specific duties; and
- Make sure that the public has access to information and services.

The following sections of this document will outline how the FC has planned to meet the general and specific duties.

SYSTEMS FOR MAINSTREAMING RACE EQUALITY

For the purposes of monitoring and completion of EqIAs, the FC has been broken down into six areas: FC Scotland, FC England, FC Wales, Forest Research Agency, Business Units providing central services (civil, mechanical engineering, seed supply, radio and electronics), Silvan House - HR, IT, Finance support central services.

EqIAs

The use of EqIAs is fundamental to the FC's understanding its priorities in relation to race equality.

The FC has created an EqIA template and guidance literature to enable thorough reviews of relevant functions and policies to be completed. The most up-to-date version of the guidance and template will be available from August 2008.

The [guidance](#) document includes the following content:

- **Flowchart** – overview of the process
- **Part 1 – Introduction and Background**
 - What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?
 - What is a policy, function or service?
 - Why do we have to carry out an EqIA?
 - How does carrying out an EqIA help the Forestry Commission?
 - Who needs to complete an EqIA?
 - Working in partnership and with Contractors/Suppliers
 - Do I need to complete an EqIA?
 - What should be equality impact assessed?
 - When should an EqIA be undertaken?
- **Part 2 – The EqIA Process**
 - A guide to the process
 - Equality Impact Assessment form with guidance
 - Stage 1 – Screening
 - Stage 2 – Partial Impact Assessment
 - Stage 3 – Full Impact Assessment
- **Appendices**
 - Appendix 1 – Description of the General Duties
 - Appendix 2 – Definitions
 - Appendix 3 – Full EqIA template (without guidance)
 - Appendix 4 – Publishing template

For full details of the EqIA guidance and template, please see Appendix 1.

Assessing Functions and Policies

To initiate the process, the FC completed an initial assessment of policies and documentation. This assessment has been taken further in each part of the business to identify which of the existing policies will require full or partial EqIA and set criteria for prioritising a wider roll-out for new policy development.

Further details relating to the assessment of functions and policies can be seen below:

- FC Scotland

FC Scotland has sought external expertise to review their policy list and decide on priorities. The administration team is taking ownership of the review function. They have a list and have identified policies, priorities, policy owners for those policies that have an impact on people, employees or service users. The identified policy owners will be undertaking the EqIA training to conduct EqIAs. Training is scheduled July – March 09.

- FC England

FC England are currently identifying and agreeing criteria for EqIA and anticipate developing guidance, a rolling programme and a timetable by the beginning of 2009. Due to the possible extent of EqIA in England, a Diversity Co-ordinator is being employed for two years, to assist in embedding the process. The first tranche of training is scheduled from July – October 2008.

- FC Wales

An individual has been identified to take on the review function within the HR team. The assessment is underway.

- Forest Research Agency

An initial review of this area has been undertaken by the diversity team. The Corporate Head of Diversity will be meeting with new CEO to discuss resourcing for the policy review and prioritisation.

- Business Units

A Responsible Officer has been appointed for this area. Within the Business Units areas there is not a great deal of people focus however a review is currently underway around those policies that have a people impact.

- Silvan House

The diversity team is conducting the review process. The Corporate Head of Diversity is in the process of drafting a job description for a new HR team member who will take on the role of Responsible Officer for the internal policies that impact on all staff throughout the FC.

An initial assessment of policies within the six areas is scheduled to be completed by early 2009. The FC has also committed to the review of policy and functions every three years as

part of a formal RES review. The Diversity Team will also assess the quality of the EqlAs produced. The initial review of EqlAs will be completed in March 2009. The Diversity Team will undertake an ongoing check of the quality of the EqlAs by sampling 10% of those completed.

Results of EqlAs will be published as outlined in Step 10 of the EqlA guidance. If any adverse impact is identified through the EqlA process, appropriate action will be taken as outlined in the EqlA guidance.

The consultation and engagement processes the FC will use to assess the impact of functions and policies will comply with the central government guidelines and follow good practice in engaging target groups. A database detailing community groups to involve in the EqlA process has been developed and is being reviewed. An up-to-date version of the database was made available from August 2008.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a key priority for the FC and will form the basis, along with EqlAs, of future action. Comprehensive and meaningful data, information and research will be collected and used to build an evidence base to help the FC assess its progress in meeting its targets and goals for equality. The FC will ensure that its monitoring information in relation to employment and service provision offers:

- Comprehensive benchmarks against which the FC can monitor progress
- A quantitative basis for EqlAs with which the FC can highlight areas of required action.

The FC will continue to monitor the required areas under the employment duty and will report and benchmark progress on an annual basis. This information will be used to identify gaps in representation. Where gaps are identified, action will be taken to investigate reasons and to address discrepancies appropriately (see FC as an Employer section for details of completed monitoring for 2006-2007).

Employment Data Systems

In terms of monitoring employment practices by ethnicity the HR system used (Rebus) is updated with demographic details of employees at all stages of the employment cycle. The census breakdown forms the basis of categories of race, ethnicity and nationality.

Data is stored on the system in compliance with the 1984 Data Protection Act. The Rebus Team members are the only people who have access to the data. This team is responsible for the management, collation and production of analysis on request.

Examples of the monitoring that has already been completed can be found in the following section 'The FC as an Employer'. Analysis of employment data in terms of representation is completed using census categorisations and 2001 data.

Customer Experiences

As part of our on-going commitment to our service users we undertake a range of customer surveys. Some of these are conducted on a regular basis to compare and test customer satisfaction and explore needs. These range from public opinion surveys, mystery shopper visits, site questionnaires, focus groups, feedback forms, etc. The surveys are analysed by the Economics and Statistics team who are responsible for compiling reports based on their analysis. This team report to the Executive Management Boards within FC England, Scotland and Wales. The Diversity Team liase with this team to use the data, explore where gaps exist within the data and agree how they can be filled.

Some site managers are also using local demographic data to more strategically assess the local demand for services and facilities and compare this with actual site usage. This type of analysis will become more prevalent as the EqIA process is further embedded across the FC.

We also carry out research into better understanding attitudes, beliefs and barriers to people using and not using our services and facilities. This can be undertaken at both a site level but also at the Regional and National level. Research and evidence we collate will be analysed and made available for all staff through our Intranet.

Consultations

As part of Government we comply with the current guidance on consultation and engagement. Therefore, regulatory consultations are conducted with key stakeholders when regulations change.

Local community consultations can also occur whenever there is a new development relating to a forest area near a local community. Local office teams are responsible for the completion of the consultation process and during consultations with the public, the facilitators proactively ask whether there is anything the FC could be doing to better promote access to information and services as a matter of routine.

The FC will be developing further guidance to local office teams about best practice for inclusive consultation processes including how to engage target groups. These Guidelines will be benchmarked against other government and private sector organisations and will be completed in March 2009.

Publishing the Results of Assessments, Consultations and Monitoring

Details of EqIA and other forms of monitoring and consultation will be published by the Diversity Team on the equality and diversity pages of the FC website. Publications will be made available in different print fonts and languages as requested. A relationship has been established with the Heriot Watt University translation service in order to ensure publications are accessible.

THE FC AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

Ensuring Access to Information and Services - Working with Communities

The FC recognises that forests and woods can contribute so much to the nation in terms of opportunities for people to enjoy woodlands. The FC delivers a range of practical programmes to make sure that communities and individuals can get the most from them. For example:

- Education and learning initiatives
- Healthy living
- Play, recreation and sporting opportunities
- Volunteering
- Community forestry and woodland creation in places close to where people live.

The above list constitutes a number of ways in which the FC can directly impact on people and will be developing and following best practice to ensure equality of opportunity on the grounds of race.

All FC services and facilities are open to anyone who wishes to use them. However, we recognise that there may be barriers and reasons why a number of people may not be able to fully benefit from them. We are actively seeking to address this by adapting infrastructure, providing a wider range of activities and events, reaching out to communities by working with target groups and in some cases providing specialist equipment. To achieve this the FC is working closely with a range of partner organisations at the local, regional and national level.

Information and Communications

The FC publishes a series of publications in a variety of languages (all publications are produced in Welsh) and formats, on demand, to inform customers of news and potential activities to enjoy. The FC is currently seeking advice regarding the best way to advertise the availability of publications in different languages and formats as currently this notification is in English (and Welsh).

All hard copy information is also available on the FC website. Free publications can be picked up at visitor centres and district offices. Any priced publications are available to order via the FC website.

FC England offer Language Line, a telephone translating service, for staff and customers to use if they wish to communicate in a language other than English.

THE FC AS AN EMPLOYER

Employment Monitoring

The Act requires that the FC make clear its ethnic monitoring arrangements in relation to all aspects of employment and to publish annually the results of any such monitoring.

The HR team recognises that it has a key role to play in meeting the duties contained in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 particularly in relation to employment practice. HR will continue to meet the statutory requirements of the Act in relation to monitoring the ethnic background of current employees, applicants for employment and those who:

- Apply for formal training
- Participate in formal training
- Apply for promoted posts
- Raise a formal grievance
- Are the subject of disciplinary action
- Benefit or suffer a detriment as a result of performance assessments
- Leave the employment of the FC.

The FC will continue to use information obtained through monitoring employment practices. Monitoring data will be used to plan actions aimed to build a workforce that reflects the diversity of local communities and to ensure that employees receive equality of treatment. Employment procedures and practices will continue to be reviewed and amended, where unlawful racial discrimination or adverse impact is shown.

The EqIA and monitoring outputs will be reviewed by the policy owners in partnership with the Diversity Team. If any adverse impact is identified, it will be dealt with using the process as outlined in the EqIA guidance document. The RES action plan will be updated by the diversity team to reflect any changing priorities in relation to race equality.

Completed Monitoring

The FC has already completed a detailed monitoring process for employment data collected between 2006 and 2007, the outcomes of which are outlined below:

Ethnicity by Department / Location

On the 31 December 2007 the Forestry Commission (FC) had in total 3326 staff, with 18 of these registering themselves as Black Minority Ethnic (BME). In comparison with the GB

population where 7.9% of the population are BME, the FC's figure of 0.5% shows that the FC workforce is not representative of the national statistics. However, nearly 50% of the FC's ethnic minority staff work in England which is in line with the national trend.

In order to address this issue, the FC is reviewing current recruitment practices, including the way in which we advertise new posts. The results of this research will inform the appropriate action needed to address this issue.

Ethnicity by Department / Location and Contract Type

The FC's BME staff are almost 100% employed on full-time contracts.

The majority of our staff from ethnic minority backgrounds are employed on permanent contracts and fixed-term appointments. It should be noted that the balance of the FC's workforce is moving towards more fixed term appointments across the whole organisation.

Analysis indicates no adverse impact on BME staff by the type of contract that they are employed on. There is also no evidence that female BME staff are being treated less favourably than male BME staff in relation to the type of employment/contract.

Whilst this analysis is encouraging, the issue remains the FC's low number of BME staff in total.

Ethnicity by Pay-band

The analysis shows that existing FC BME staff are spread evenly throughout pay bands 3 – 6b (1=high, 7=low). This follows the pattern of employment for white employees but does indicate that there is only one ethnic minority staff in the senior staff group. Although not inspiring in terms of actual numbers, this is in line with the Civil Service 10 Point Plan, as in percentage terms this is over the 4% target of senior staff group to be from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Internal Recruitment Cycle by Ethnicity and Department

Analysis indicates that current staff from an ethnic minority backgrounds have not applied for internal recruitments and/or promotions. This is an issue that will be further investigated and analysed via questions in the forthcoming staff survey.

External Recruitment Cycle by Ethnicity, Contract Type and Department

The FC received 50 applications from BME individuals, of which 14 were interviewed (28%) and 5 employed (36% of those interviewed). In total, 10% of those who applied were employed.

The FC received 1,561 applications from white individuals, of which 473 were interviewed (30%) and 118 employed (25% of those interviewed). In total, 8% of those who applied were eventually employed.

This analysis suggests that there is nothing discriminatory in the FC's procedures. However, it is disappointing that we are failing to attract BME applicants which total only, 1.4% of those who apply to join the FC. The majority of applications are received in England, but it is clear that we need to complete a wide-ranging programme of work to make the FC attractive to BME applicants in all parts of the country. It is worth noting that the all of the successful BME applicants were employed in full-time posts.

After analysis, it is also clear that a high proportion of applicants fail to complete and return the ethnic minority response form. Therefore, the FC will now incorporate these questions into our main application form.

Internal Training by Ethnicity, Course and Gender

Analysis indicates that the percentage of BME staff who attended internal training courses (2006-2007) is roughly equivalent to the percentage of white staff who attended courses suggesting fair attendance of training events.

However, the FC has not gathered data on how training applications are made or monitored the training cycle to date. In addition, external training is budgeted and allocated on a cost centre/location basis according to local business needs and plans. There is no central recording of how local training budgets are allocated and utilised. Therefore, a review of how the FC manages its training is being considered by our Learning and Development team, including how local budgets are managed so that this data can be collated and analysed.

Performance Assessment by Ethnicity

Analysis of the staff performance assessment system revealed that no staff from ethnic minority backgrounds received a 'not fully effective' marking. However, the balance of marking between Top and Good performers does not correspond to the FC average of 20%. Further analysis is required in a way that protects individual privacy.

Ethnicity by Grievance and Discipline

No BME staff were subject to disciplinary procedures. Only one employee from an ethnic minority background raised a grievance. After investigation it was found that this was not related to discrimination.

Leavers by Ethnicity

Only three BME staff left the Forestry Commission during the period under review, this is because their Fixed Term Appointment contract had come to an end. One of the individuals has since returned to employment with the FC.

Bespoke Research

Analysis of the monitoring data outlined above revealed an extremely low level of BME applicants. The Social Research Team was subsequently commissioned to explore what the

reasons for this might be in order to produce an informed, targeted action plan. This research and action plan will be completed by December 2008.

FC Employee Experiences

The next staff survey will be conducted towards the end of 2008. At the start of the survey demographic data will be requested. In the body of the questionnaire, staff will be asked to detail their employee experiences e.g. whether they have been refused training / development opportunities or if they applied for an internal move / promotion whether it had been supported by managers and what the outcome was.

Analysis will be conducted on the grounds of race (amongst all demographic information) to further explore whether there is adverse impact at any stage of the employment cycle.

The Learning and Development Team are responsible for the development of the staff survey and will be consulting with the diversity team regarding diversity questions to be included. The Diversity Team will be meeting with the Learning Development Team in Autumn 2008 to discuss and finalise content.

Training

Over the next two years, the FC will deliver a four level approach to training to ensure the differing needs of employees are met.

Each individual will produce a training and development plan produced in combination with their line manager. Timing for completion of training will be negotiated with the line manager and training coordinator.

- Level 1 - All Employees

A mandatory programme of training on equality legislation and the FC's responsibility to deliver on its commitments laid out in this Race Equality Scheme as well as Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.

Level 1 training will commence towards the end of 2008. This training will be embedded into other appropriate training courses such as New Entrants' Events and Interview Skills.

- Level 2 – Managers and Specialists

This training will be designed for specialist groups such as Communications staff or Recreation, Education and Community staff. This programme is in development.

- Level 3 - Senior Managers

This training has been developed to enable managers to: understand why equality and diversity are important in the workplace, appreciate different attitudes towards equality and diversity, understand what their role is in terms of promoting and valuing equality and diversity and identify / explore discrimination and how to deal with it effectively.

- Level 4 - Policy Developers

This training has been developed to enable managers to: understand why equality and diversity are important in the workplace, appreciate different attitudes towards equality and diversity. These sections are consistent with Level 3 training. In addition, those responsible for policy development will also be made aware of the FC's legal obligations and what EqIAs are and their role in helping to improve services and workforce representation.

PROCUREMENT

The FC ask for details of larger organisations' Diversity or Equality policies to ensure that they are in line with the Duty's requirements.

For smaller organisations, they are asked whether they are prepared to comply with the FC's approach to race equality as outlined by the RES.

The process of formalising the pre-qualification questionnaire on a national level is in the process of being completed and being made mandatory.

RACE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

This action plan outlines what the FC is doing to meet the general and specific race equality duties and describes future, planned action. The actions outlined below are intended to develop an awareness of race equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of race and promote equality of opportunity.

	Key strategy documents will also be reviewed on a three year cycle.			the policies are produced
Ensuring that external suppliers are compliant in ensuring the FC upholds its Race Equality Duty.	The process of formalising the pre-qualification questionnaire on a national level is in the process of being completed	Pre-screening questionnaire has been updated	Procurement Team	December 08

Assessing and Consulting on the Likely Impact of the Proposed Policies on Promoting Race Equality

Equalities Standard	Actions	Measures	By whom	By when
Details of the Equality Impact Assessment Tool (EqIA) and consultation tool	Refine the completed initial draft	Final copy published on intra and internet	Diversity team	August 08
Details of the impact assessment and consultation process including:	Complete list of community groups to involve in consultation process	Completed list	Diversity Team	On-going, finalised March 09
A screening process		Within the EqIA - Stage 1,		Completed
Questions to enable the policy writer to consider the relevant research and evidence		Within the EqIA – Stages 2 & 3		Completed
Examples of data and research sources to be considered when undertaking EqIAs	Create a central resource centre for people to refer to when completing EqIAs Needs to be included in Stage 2	Accessible resource centre	Diversity team	October 08 onwards
Details around how the FC will formally consult on proposed policies including consultation methods and groups to be consulted		Within the EqIA – Step 5 Central government		Completed Completed

		<p>consultation guidelines are referenced and will be linked via hyperlink within the EqIA when published on the intranet</p> <p>Groups to be consulted - database with context, background info and contact person being put together</p>	Diversity team	Completed but being updated to be completed September 08
Details around how the FC would deal with adverse impact if identified through the EqIA process.		Step 6 details questions to ask to identify whether there is adverse impact and what to do if adverse impact is identified.		Completed
Details around how the FC will implement the agreed EqIA	Training will be conducted July – March 2009 to make policy owners and developers aware of the duty and EqIA process.	Training materials, delegate tracking spreadsheet	L&D team and external organisation to deliver training	In progress - to be completed July 2008
	EqIA template and	Published	Diversity	August 08

	guidance documentation to be published	template on the equality and diversity intranet pages	team	
Details for how the FC will monitor, review and evaluate the policy post implementation	Design audit process To assess the quality of EqlA completion	EqlA Step 9 - Guidance is included Process will be designed and 10% sample checked	Diversity team to liaise with internal audit team to design process	Completed March 09
Details regarding the publishing of assessment and consultation processes		Within Step 10		Completed
Arrangements to enable EqlA results to be fed in to policy development and reporting processes		Step 6 provides guidance as to what to do if adverse impact is identified		Completed

Monitoring Existing Policies for Adverse Impact on the Promotion of Race Equality

Equalities Standard	Actions	Measures	By whom	By when
The monitoring system(s) e.g. IT that will be used to monitor service delivery and employment practices by ethnicity	Update Rebus software with demographic details of employees at all stages of the employment cycle (initial application, recruitment, training, promotion, salary increases).	Rebus software in place and monitoring conducted	The Rebus team manage, collate and report demographic data on request. Diversity team liaise with Rebus team for reporting statistics required	Ongoing
The different functions and, or policy areas where the FC have ethic monitoring systems in place	The Rebus system is a centralised system used to monitor internal workforce demographics. Conduct public opinion and customer surveys on an annual basis to test customer satisfaction and explore needs.	System output and analysis Survey output and analysis	Rebus team Economics and statistics team compile, analyse and report on surveys and report to the executive	Ongoing Ongoing

	Diversity team need to complete liaison with the economics and statistics team to use data and explore where the gaps are within data gathered and how to fill them.	Updated surveys	management boards within FC England, Scotland and Wales Diversity team in collaboration with economics and statistics team	Ongoing
The success measures / monitoring criteria the FC have in place for measuring race equality performance	Comparisons are made with pervious data collections and demographic analysis. Statistics e.g. forest visits are analysed using census information to understand where greater BME usage may exist e.g. within the Midlands.	Results of opinion surveys are published on intranet and internet Comparisons made against census information in reports.	Economics and statistics team Economics and statistics team	Ongoing Ongoing

The monitoring methods the FC uses to gather and analyse data (consultation, statistical quantitative and qualitative analysis)	Prioritise recommended actions from 'Why Diverse Communities do not engage with Green Spaces' report	Report with identified priorities to be submitted to FC England Social Team	FC England Social Team	August 08
	Initiate actions as recommended in the report			August 08 onwards
	Publish examples of good practice in terms of race equality to share good practice	Published best practice	The Diversity Team	Diversity Team to update quarterly from October 08
	Develop more sophisticated indicators for success	Published indicators	Corporate Head of Diversity in collaboration with Economics and Statistics Team	October 08

<p>Details of what the FC will do when / if monitoring data presents adverse impact</p>		<p>Step 6 of EqIA details what needs to be done to identify whether there is adverse impact and if so what action should be taken to remedy - no additional action required</p>		<p>Completed</p>
<p>Indication of how the monitoring of functions and polices link to the list of functions and policies that have been assessed for relevance to race equality</p>	<p>Refine and prioritise the list of policies and functions to undergo the EqIA process.</p>	<p>Prioritised list</p>	<p>Diversity team with the responsible officers</p>	<p>August 08</p>

Publishing the Results of Assessments, Consultations and Monitoring

Equalities Standard	Actions	Measures	By whom	By when
Details as to how often the FC will publish the results of assessments, consultations and monitoring	Publish EqIA, consultations and monitoring outputs	Published outputs	Diversity team to publish on receipt of review from policy owners	Ongoing
Details as to the different publication / communication methods that the FC will employ to disseminate and make available results	Publish all EqIAs on the internet	Updated equality and diversity pages on FC internet site with posted publications	Diversity team	Ongoing

Ensuring Public Access to Information and Services

Equalities Standard	Actions	Measures	By whom	By when
Details of the information and services that the FC currently provide	Continue to produce publications to promote and advertise facilities and events in English and Welsh as standard but also additional languages and formats on request.	Publication catalogue	Publication owners	Ongoing
Summary of how the FC makes these services and information accessible	<p>Continue to make payable publications available to be ordered on line</p> <p>Free publication database exists for key publications - public can request to be sent information</p> <p>Continue to publish free publications can be picked up at visitor centres and district offices</p>	<p>Publications on internet, hard copy.</p> <p>Advertising of the service providing different language publications</p>	<p>Publication owners</p> <p>Diversity team</p> <p>Publication owners</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<p>Details of how the FC identifies:</p> <p>The information and service experiences of those the FC serves</p> <p>The information and service needs of those people using the service</p>	<p>Complete annual opinion surveys</p> <p>Complete local community consultations whenever there is a new development relating to a forest area near a local community.</p> <p>Produce best practice guidelines for consultation benchmarked against other government and private sector organisations.</p> <p>Complete EqlA on best practice guidelines</p> <p>Regulatory consultations are conducted with stakeholders when regulations change.</p>	<p>Opinion survey report with demographic breakdown and comparison data</p> <p>Consultation reports.</p> <p>Best practice guidelines</p> <p>Completed EqlA</p> <p>Consultation reports</p>	<p>Economics and Statistics team</p> <p>Local office teams</p> <p>Diversity team</p> <p>Diversity Team</p> <p>Regulation developer and owner</p>	<p>Annual</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 09</p> <p>June 09</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Details of the process the FC will follow if / when	Continue to promoting	Inclusion of	Diversity team	Ongoing

<p>barriers to equitable access to information and services are uncovered</p>	<p>the availability of publications in different languages and formats.</p> <p>Continue to ask proactively ask whether there is anything the FC could be doing to promote access to information and services during consultations</p>	<p>paragraph in publications to promote options.</p>	<p>Local Teams and Policy developers / owners</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Details of how accessibility questions criteria are integrated in to the FC's review, impact assessment and monitoring arrangements</p>		<p>EqIA Step 5 - highlights the need to consider how best to reach as wide an audience as possible / appropriate and the potential need to translate information and provide interpreters at meetings</p>	<p>Diversity team</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Training Staff in Relation to the General Statutory Duty

Equalities Standard	Actions	Measures	By whom	By when
<p>Details around how the FC will train staff specifically on the Duty and relevant articles</p>	<p>Complete design of training materials</p> <p>Complete training roll out</p>	<p>Training materials and attendance records</p>	<p>L&D developed training with the diversity team</p>	<p>Level 1 & 2 to be completed by October 08</p> <p>All other training is designed</p> <p>Levels 1 and 2 will begin November 08 and will be completed 2010</p> <p>Level 3 Completed</p> <p>Level 4 in process of delivery will be completed in Dec 08</p>
<p>How the FC will periodically identify and evaluate training needs amongst staff relating to the Duty</p>	<p>Identify training needs and plan training</p>	<p>Training plans</p>	<p>Training coordinator in</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

			combination with Line manager and each employee	
How the FC will integrate the Duty and the Order in to other training programmes	Integrate details regarding the Duty and Order in to all induction courses, line management and project management training	Updated course materials	L&D and Diversity Team to lead	December 08
How the FC will provide role-specific training for those staff whose tasks are more relevant to the Duty e.g. Policy writers and management staff need to know about EqIA, consultation, monitoring processes Communication staff will need to know about publishing and public access HR staff need to know about the Employment Duty	Design Level 3 and 4 training Design Level 2 training	Designed training materials	L&D and Diversity Team	Completed Courses to be developed by October 08

The Employment Duty

Equalities Standard	Actions	Measures	By whom	By when
<p>Details of how the FC intends to meet the Employment Duties including: Having monitoring systems in place / plans to fulfil duties Targets for fulfilment</p>	<p>Update Rebus software with employee records and demographics.</p>	<p>Rebus output</p>	<p>Rebus team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Update HR databases e.g. disciplinary hearings and training</p>	<p>HR spreadsheets</p>	<p>HR team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Details of monitoring system(s) e.g. IT to monitor employment practices by ethnicity and confirmation that the system(s) include monitoring of all relevant categories outlined in relevant articles of 2001, 02 and 03 orders.</p>	<p>As above</p>			
<p>Systems the FC has in place to regularly collate and analyse employment data by ethnicity, which should as a minimum be based upon the Census 2001 ethnic classifications</p>	<p>As above</p>			
<p>Details of what the FC will do if / when the monitoring data presents adverse impact</p>	<p>Investigate potential adverse impact as indicated by analysis of employment statistics to</p>	<p>Action plan to address issues highlighted</p>	<p>Social Research team in collaboration with the</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>investigate root cause.</p> <p>Complete research around the low number of BME applicants to understand what the causes and develop an informed, targeted action plan.</p>	Completed research report and action plan	<p>Diversity team</p> <p>As above</p>	November 08
<p>Details around how the FC will publish results of its article 5(2) responsibilities, pursuant to article 5(3) of the Order.</p>	<p>Publish monitoring reports on the internet.</p> <p>Send hard copies of monitoring to the EHRC.</p>	Monitoring reports	Diversity team	Completed annually and as and when requested by the EHRC

KEY HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS

The following key priority actions have been identified by the Corporate Head of Diversity and will form the basis of the action for the rest of the year. Following this time, RES actions will be reviewed and priorities assessed for the following 6-12 months.

July 08

- Complete further response to EHRC requests for monitoring data analysis regarding employment statistics.

August 08

- Finalise the EqIA process documentation including template for completion and the guidance documentation. This will include revisions made as a result of external consultation.

October 08

- Data sources to be identified from various points on the FC website and brought together in one resource centre to assist in the completion of EqIAs
- Complete development of Level 1 (general equality and diversity training for all staff) and Level 2 (professional / specific training e.g. for communication professionals and recreational rangers)
- Finalise the responsible officer / function in each of the six business areas to complete the EqIA process (dependent on successful recruitment exercises although it is anticipated that some of these posts will be filled internally)
- Publish examples of good practice regarding race equality to share good practice.
- Develop indicators for success to help analyse and interpret monitoring data.

November 08

- Levels 1 and 2 training to start being delivered - completion of rolled out will be within two years.
- Review outputs from the Social Research team and their gap analysis completed to understand the barriers to entry in forestry careers within the UK particularly for women, BME and disabled applicants. This report will be sent to the EHRC for review as part of the monitoring exercise currently underway. Initiate actions recommended in the report.

December 08

- Complete analysis of prioritised existing policies and functions that need to be reviewed using the EqIA process.
- Action plans need to be completed regarding the Social Research team analysis of barriers to application to the FC.

January – March 09

- Integrate relevant details regarding the Duty in to broader training materials: induction, project management and line management courses for example.
- Complete all Level 4 training (specific training around the EqIA process).
- Review the outputs of the EqIA process for quality of completion and evidence of adverse impact (ongoing action).
- Compile list of community groups to involve as part of the consultation process.