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12 November 2004



Dear Sir/Madam

### CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSED SINGLE EQUALITY BILL FOR NI

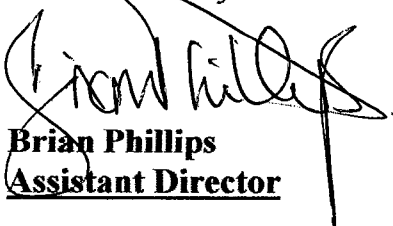
Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your consultation on the proposals to develop a Single Equality Bill for Northern Ireland.

The SEB does offer the potential to harmonise and streamline existing equal opportunities and discrimination legislation - and that is to be broadly welcomed.

However, the inclusion of volunteers within the remit of any new legislation will create very significant difficulties. In this respect I would fully endorse the response compiled by the Volunteer Development Agency following consultation within the voluntary and community sector. Any outcome that seeks to legally regulate the concept of volunteering in the same way as employment will bring about a very detrimental effect on volunteering in Northern Ireland.

I very much hope that this feedback will be given the most careful consideration as the detail of the SEB is further developed.

Yours faithfully



**Brian Phillips**  
**Assistant Director**