

IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE – DISABILITY COMMITTEE

A REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

- **NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE
DISABILITY COMMITTEE**

The Northern Ireland Committee represents some 200,000+ working people in Northern Ireland who are members of 32 Trade Unions. The NIC Disability Committee was formed in 1992 and its membership is comprised of representatives from the Affiliated Trade Unions in Northern Ireland. Its principle work is concerned with all aspects of training and employment covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Section 75 of the N I Act 1998 but additionally it promotes the eighteen point 1990 ICTU Disability Charter.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Disability Committee has no objection to this response being made publicly available.

- **GENERAL**

In general terms the two issues that mainly impact and create barriers for disabled people obtaining employment are transport and education. However there is a labyrinth of related issues that also contribute. Accessing advertisements would be one of those matters.

The OFM/DFM could ask themselves the questions listed below before placing advertisements in newspapers/magazines:

- ***Does this advertisement need to be accessed by a person with a disability? If not, why not?***

- ***How can the main five groups of disabled people access this advertisement?***

- ***Is the advertisement in a newspaper/magazine that is accessible to the main five groups of people with a disability?***

- ***Is the newspaper/magazine the only communication method available to people with a disability?***

- ***It has been pointed out in recent research, that it is believed that there is a low uptake of disabled people who access newspapers or other publications?***

- ***Could a support organisation utilise a database of their members to make the advertisement accessible?***

- ***If a Department uses the 'let out clause' that the information is available in other forms, how will this information be accessed by a person with one of the five main groups of disability?***

- *How can the Department monitor their advertising to ensure that it meets the spirit of the provisions of Section 75 of the N I Act 1998?*
- *Are there any other positive steps that could be taken to inform people with a disability of the contents of this advertisement?*

THESE ARE ONLY SOME OF THE POSSIBLE QUESTIONS THAT DEPARTMENTS COULD ASK THEMSELVES.

- **SECTION 6**

If Government classified advertising is put out to competition then provision must be made to ensure that the companies are fully aware of their responsibility under Section 75 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and other legislation.

Steps need to be taken by the Department to ensure that the Tenderers are knowledgeable in the field of disability and that staff at all levels of their organisation have experienced a high level of Disability Awareness training.

IF THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE ISSUE OF DISABILITY HOW CAN THEY ENSURE THAT ANY DISABILITY BARRIERS ARE REMOVED?

These statements equally apply to Government Departments that are at least covered by Section 75, whereas the Private sector is not.

Consideration should be given to the possibility of holding disabled only recruitment exercises to enhance the opportunity for a person with a disability to be successful.

Some Government Departments have a low level of understanding of the needs of disabled people in employment or training and should be monitored to improve their effectiveness.

G. Max O'Brien **5th**
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Chairperson
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