

MHS Race Equality Duty and Race Equality Scheme

Issue

To inform the MHS Board on work currently underway to:

- (i) review MHS functions, policies and proposed policies for relevance to the statutory race equality duty; and
- (ii) review / revise the MHS Race Equality Scheme and Associated Action Plan.

Summary

To comply with articles 2(3) and 2(4) of the Race Relations Act (Statutory Duties) Order 2001, the MHS is currently undertaking a review of its functions, policies and proposed policies for relevance to the statutory race equality duty.

Additionally, in line with guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality, the MHS will undertake a full review of its Race Equality Scheme and Associated Action Plan, including formal consultation with both internal and external stakeholders, during 2005/06 with a view to agreeing and publishing a revised Race Equality Scheme in 2006.

Recommendations

The MHS Board is invited to note the work being undertaken to ensure that the MHS both meets statutory requirements and upholds good practice as advised by the Commission for Racial Equality.

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Issue

1. To update the MHS Board on work currently underway to:
 - (iii) review MHS functions, policies and proposed policies for relevance to the statutory race equality duty; and
 - (iv) review / revise the MHS Race Equality Scheme and Associated Action Plan.

Background

2. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 created a statutory duty for public bodies to promote race equality and put in place arrangements to eliminate race discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations.
3. The MHS Race Equality Scheme outlines the organisation's strategy for ensuring that the MHS complies with the general and specific duties of the Act.
4. The current Race Equality Scheme was initially published as a draft for consultation on 31 May 2002. Following a 12 week consultation period, the final version was agreed and published on 31 January 2003.

Discussion

Three Year Statutory Review

5. To comply with articles 2(3) and 2(4) of the Race Relations Act (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 the MHS is currently undertaking a review of its functions, policies and proposed policies for relevance to the statutory race equality duty. This work will be completed by 31 May 2005 (as required by the legislation) and published as an Appendix to the MHS Race Equality Scheme.
6. The review will seek to ensure that there are proper arrangements in place for the ongoing and effective implementation of the Race Equality Scheme and that the Scheme is kept up to date and relevant to the work of the MHS.

Race Equality Scheme and Associated Action Plan

7. In line with guidance from the Commission for Racial Equality, the MHS will undertake a full review of its Race Equality Scheme and Associated Action Plan, including formal consultation with both internal and external stakeholders, during 2005/06 with a view to agreeing and publishing a revised Race Equality Scheme in summer 2006.
8. The MHS proposes to establish a MHS Diversity Working Group to take forward the review of the Race Equality Scheme. It is anticipated that the first meeting of the group will be held in September 2005 and that the working group will have representation from the MHS Regions, Headquarters and UNISON. The Group will advise on the development and support the implementation of the MHS Race Equality Scheme and Associated Action Plan for 2005/6 – 2007/08; and oversee

the implementation of the MHS Diversity Action Plan 2005/06 – 2007/08.

9. An outline timetable is at Appendix 1.

Recommendations

10. The MHS Board are invited to note the work being undertaken to ensure that the MHS both meets statutory requirements and abides by best practice as advised by the Commission for Racial Equality.

Appendix 1

Review / revision of MHS Race Equality Scheme: outline timetable

Action	Key Date
Submit information paper to MHS Board	5 May 2005
Information paper considered by MHS Board	26 May 2005
1 st meeting of proposed Diversity Working Group to discuss initial draft of Race Equality Scheme	September 2005
2 nd meeting of Diversity Working Group to sign off final draft of Race Equality Scheme	Early November 2005
Submit final draft Race Equality Scheme to MHS Management Board	24 November 2005
Final draft Race Equality Scheme considered / approved by MHS Management Board	6/7 December 2005
Internal / external 12 week consultation begins	By end of January 2006
Internal / external consultation ends	By end of April
Comments from consultation reviewed and Race Equality Scheme revised as appropriate	May 2006
Paper prepared for presentation to MHS Management Board	End of May 2006
Present final Race Equality Scheme to MHS Management Board for approval	June 2006