



Mrs. Suggs

I'm sure we all
needed to know about
this.

cc Mrs Edmund
File

Mrs. P. Kelly 25/11
Mr. Duffy 26/11
AS 22/11/96

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22/11

Womens
Issues file

21 November 1996

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TO: Mr Hamilton, EC Division
Mr McElrea, IR Division
Mr Gamble, Policy
Mr Kane, IDB
Ms Breslin, T&EA
Mrs Godfrey, NITB
Miss O'Hare, IRTU
Ms Latimer, LEDU

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24/11

FROM: Margaret Glass
Industrial Relations and Equality Division

MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES (EDH(W)): QUARTERLY RETURNS FROM DEPARTMENTS

Attached for your information is the composite Quarterly Return on Women's Issues for the period 1 April 1996 to 30 September 1996.

This return has been prepared for the Minister and is as yet uncleared. It contains useful information on progress on women's issues in Northern Ireland Departments as well as on specific initiatives and events.

Further information on individual items can be obtained from this Division.

John Conway

PP MARGARET GLASS (MRS)

NEQ3321JW



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
An Equal Opportunities Organisation

MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

Quarterly Return (1 April 1996-30 September 1996)

1. Initiatives by Departments as Employers and in Public Appointments

September 1995-
Ongoing

Following a research study examining organisational culture in NICS, a series of seminars by the main author of the study was held in September for training and Personnel staff across NICS Departments. The findings and recommendations of the study will feed into a range of departmental training and equal opportunities initiatives.

September 1995-
Ongoing

Most Departments have now completed equal opportunities training sessions for staff at senior levels down to Grade 7. Departments and agencies have now embarked on programmes to extend equal opportunities awareness training to all other grades.

September 1995-
Ongoing

Several Departments have undertaken monitoring of reports of staff working part-time/job-sharing hours to ensure that the annual reports of staff working non-conditioned hours do not contain unjustifiable comments relating to working patterns.

January 1996-Ongoing

DED have prepared an equal opportunities Action Plan, incorporating an Action Plan for women, which will be issued to Trade Union Side for consideration.

January 1996-
Ongoing

DANI Equal Opportunities Unit staff are developing the introduction of an equal opportunities magazine to be published on a bi-annual basis and which will contain features on equal opportunities within the Department and beyond including articles on women in non-traditional areas in the Department, interviews with senior staff (male and female).

The first magazine is due to be published in early 1997.

January 1996-
Ongoing

DED have embarked on two pilot mentoring exercises involving a Staff Officer and a Grade 5 and staff in Trading Standards Branch. In addition, as part of an initiative to encourage women into Trading Standards work, an open day for interested staff is also planned.

January 1996-
Ongoing

The NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement is being revised and is currently being considered by TUS. Work is also ongoing on producing an accompanying general equal opportunities information package for issue to staff.

January 1996-Ongoing

Central reviews of both the career break scheme and alternative working patterns in the NICS is nearing completion.

March 1996-Ongoing

In the context of the recent establishment of a number of agencies within DOE, the Department is taking forward equal opportunities awareness training for all Agency senior management and staff working in Agency Personnel branches.

March-May 1996

The Department of the Environment (DOE), the Social Security Agency (SSA) and the Police Authority for Northern Ireland (PANI) have issued guidelines to departmental agencies setting out the procedures for dealing with complaints, harassment and discrimination.

April 1996-
Ongoing

Social Security Agency (SSA) have established a network for harassment Investigating Officers within the Agency to encourage the sharing of best practice etc. Several other Departments and Agencies are considering the potential for sharing the experience and knowledge of Harassment Investigators and Contact Officers within the obligation of confidentiality.

The Department of the Environment have issued a Code of Practice for Investigating Officers on dealing with complaints of harassment and discrimination. Several Departments have also trained or are in the process of training additional Harassment Investigators.

NEQ2830JW

April 1996

On 18 April 1996, as part of the Opportunity 2000 initiative, a Conference was held for the HPSS in Northern Ireland. The Conference was designed to explore the role of women in the HPSS. The main aim of the Conference was to develop a clear agenda for action so that the growing commitment to equality of opportunity between men and women could be translated into a set of meaningful practical initiatives which will address the imbalances which still exist between men and women in employment.

April 1996

NICS Departments and agencies participated in this year's Take Our Daughters to Work Day. Over 250 girls took part. The emphasis was on non-traditional areas and areas where women are under-represented.

May 1996-
Ongoing

Social Security Agency have introduced term-time working as an alternative working arrangement. Guidelines outlining the policy have been issued to staff. Police Authority for Northern Ireland are also considering the introduction of term-time working.

Child Support Agency (NI) are considering the introduction of part-time working workshops for managers to increase their awareness of alternative working patterns.

May 1996-Ongoing

The Department of Education (DENI) have undertaken a survey of demand for childcare provision prior to considering a Value for Money case for the same.

June 1996

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS Core) have produced guidelines for staff going on maternity leave. Most Departments now provide staff with all the necessary information which they need in relation to maternity leave.

NEQ2830JW

June 1996

Within the Prison Service the equal opportunities awareness training has not yet been completed, although it was scheduled to be completed by 19 June 1996. All Principal Officers and above have received the training. Tutors have been sent to some of the establishments to provide training, but not all, as yet. However, the situation is being monitored and progress will be included in the quarterly report to the Chief Executive by Equal Opportunities Branch of the Prison Service.

August 1996

Two new female members appointed to the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, making a total of 8 females in a total membership of 17.

September 1996

A new Agreement on Job-Sharing for Academic Staff in the Further Education (FE) sector, agreed by the FE Negotiating Committee, has come into operation.

September 1996

Ms M Sykes appointed to the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

September 1996-
Ongoing

Department of Education (NI) is undertaking an evaluation of its women's network which has now been in operation for over one year.

Ongoing

A regional body, the Northern Ireland Partnership Board, and 26 district partnerships have been established with a total budget of £49m to allocate to social and economic issues. Each district partnership consists of representatives from the voluntary, private, trade union and political sectors.

DOE played a pro-active role in seeking to ensure that each partnership body achieved a good gender balance. This was particularly difficult given that the political parties, who were responsible for nominating one-third of the members, have only 11% female elected representatives. Whilst there is room for improvement, a female representation of 33% has been achieved on all the partnerships. Furthermore 9 of the 26 chairpersons of the district partnerships are women.

NEQ2830JW

Ongoing

Discussions have commenced with the Fire Brigades Union regarding the format for a 'Fairness at Work' Forum within the Brigade.

Ongoing

Training on equal opportunities for all RUC Officers is ongoing. A draft policy on the introduction of a career break scheme for the RUC has been formulated and is currently under consideration.

NEQ2830JW

MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

Quarterly Return (1 April 1996-30 September 1996)

2. Initiatives in Public Policy

Ongoing

The Domestic Violence Regional Forum met twice during this period and has asked Health and Social Services Community Trusts to set up local inter-agency groups to co-ordinate action against domestic violence in their districts.

Plans for the second half of 1996 include the issue of guidelines to agencies, information to health professionals, another TV campaign, a training programme for trainers and a pilot scheme for cautioning first time offenders.

The first programme for perpetrators of Domestic Violence has been run by the Probation Board for NI (PBNI).

May 1996

A 30 unit Women's Refuge Scheme commenced in Coleraine.

May 1996

LEDU met with the Equal Opportunities Commission on 9 May 1996. LEDU is working with EOC on a joint research proposal to look at the barriers to business start-up after training. This will consider the appropriateness of the training for women and any gaps.

The review of the audit undertaken by the Northern Ireland Small Business Institute (NISBI) on the need for a Women's Business Opportunities Forum has been completed. LEDU's Belfast Regional Office are raising issues from the audit with the Belfast City Council (BCC) Women's Group.

NEQ2830JW

June 1996

From 12 June 1996 arrears payable as a result of a backdated pay rise will be able to be taken into account in the calculation of the amount of Statutory Maternity Pay payable to a woman. This is a parity measure, giving effect to a decision of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which was the subject of considerable publicity at a national level. As is the usual practice in social security matters, there was no local publicity.

June 1996-
Ongoing

DHSS has issued comprehensive new policy guidelines on maternity services designed to promote a service which is woman-centred, offering women more choice, more information and more control over the way in which they are cared for. Specific policy objectives set out in the Guidelines, which are directed at Health and Social Services Boards, maternity units and professionals providing maternity care, include:-

- new models of care which will extend the choice available to women should be introduced;
- women should be provided with full information to help them make appropriate choices; and
- women should be given the opportunity to discuss and agree a care plan with the professionals responsible for providing their care.

September 1996

On 16 September the HSS Executive published a Charter for Maternity Services. This builds upon existing Charter rights and explains how they relate to maternity care and sets new standards specifically for maternity services. The Charter will help to give women more choice and control over their maternity services.

Copies will be made available to all pregnant women through antenatal clinics and GP surgeries.

NEQ2830JW

As part of the follow-up to a report called "Delivering Choice" the DHSS set aside funding of £100,000 this year (and next) to support new midwife-led initiatives which aim to create a woman-centred maternity service. A Regional Steering Group was set up to identify and support projects in this field and met in early September to select successful projects from the first round of applications. Details of those selected will be considered in the near future.

23 September 1996

The first round of successful applicants to the EU Peace and Reconciliation Programme, The Childhood Fund was announced.

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MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

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3. Initiatives to Encourage Others

- April 1996 Lady Mayhew was a guest at the Women's Resource and Development Agency's Day of Activities. She also opened the extension of Ballybeen Women's Centre and hosted a lunch to introduce representatives of women's organisations to Jane Morrice. Lady Mayhew also visited the Women in Enterprise Programme which included a presentation by trainees.
- 25 April 1996 Two events held at Greenmount and Enniskillen Colleges as part of Take Our Daughters to Work Day, the national educational programme which aims to broaden girls' career choices by introducing them to a variety of work opportunities, particularly in non-traditional areas.
- April-June 1996 Pilot programme on Women's Issues in Farming run by Enniskillen College and the Ulster Farmers' Union.
- April 1996-June 1996 As a response to the success of the Women in Sport Seminar in March 1996, a women's forum is currently being set up with the Chairman being Fionnuala McGrady LLB, member of the Sports Council. The forum will be convened by Miriam McAtackney, Development Officer for Women in Sport. A number of selected individuals will be asked to sit on this forum for a limited number of meetings to action the plans decided on at the Women in Sport Conference. The constituents for this forum will be selected before the end of June by Miriam McAtackney and Fionnuala McGrady. A number of prominent sports women have already shown an interest in being on this body.

May 1996 Official opening of the Women's Lives Day Display, Lisburn by Baroness Denton.

May 1996 Lady Mayhew met with the Townsend Street Women's Group at the Townsend Social Outreach Centre to discuss issues of concern, visited the Windsor Women's Centre and was a guest speaker at Derry and Raphoe's Mothers' Union Festival Service. She had lunch with Limavady's Women's Festival Committee and opened Cookstown's Festival of Women. She also attended a meeting to discuss setting up of a UK Branch of UNIFEM.

June 1996 The T&EA (Business Support Division) is supporting the Northern Ireland Science and Technology Regional Organisation (NISTRO) to organise and deliver a series of residential seminars entitled 'Insight into Engineering for Girls'. The aim of the seminars, at Queens University, Belfast and the University of Ulster, is to encourage high calibre sixth form students taking the appropriate 'A' levels to consider a career in engineering, particularly at degree level.

June 1996 Baroness Denton attended EDH(W) meeting and launched the Reaching Common Ground Conference. This event was also attended by Lady Mayhew.

June 1996 During the month of June, Lady Mayhew met with the Women's Festivals (Northern Ireland) Liaison Group, visited Sister Clare O'Mahony and colleagues to discuss their work at Sussex Place Family Services. She was guest chairperson at the Salvation Army's Divisional Home League Rally and hosted a meeting with representatives of women's organisations from Newtownabbey (this included the first ever creche at Hillsborough Castle).

July 1996 Baroness Denton launched the 'Women Shaping the Future' Conference Report and met with the Ulster Farmers' Union Farm Family Committee.

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July 1996

In July, Lady Mayhew held a reception for Women's Groups from Newry and Mourne to discuss community issues and one for Indian Women. She also met with the Women's Festival (NI) Committee.

August 1996

Baroness Denton spoke at the Associated Country Women of the World Conference organised by the Federation of Women's Institute (NI) at Greenmount College. This was the first time this conference had been held in Northern Ireland.

August 1996

Lady Mayhew met with Women Together to discuss community feelings in the community following Drumcree and had a lunch with Thelma Mehaffey, the wife of Bishop Mehaffey and churchwomen to discuss a conference for women in the Churches.

September 1996

During September Lady Mayhew attended a Women's Information Day based on "The Right to Hope" exhibition at the Old Museum Arts Centre, a Women's Festival (NI) meeting at Larne and had a discussion with churchwomen on the format for a conference for women in the Churches. She also had a meeting with Social Partners for Reconciliation and Investment in New Generations (SPRING) - a Women's Group in Armagh working on community development community relations.

September 1996

New first-year modules and a part-time University Certificate in Women's Studies are being offered at the Centre for Women's Studies, QUB, Belfast. Additionally, from September 1996, the QUB campus in Armagh is offering a Certificate course and a part-time degree in Women's Studies.

Also in the Armagh area, plans are underway to develop a progression route for women, building on the Open College Network accreditation available in community and women's centres, with QUB working with the Workers' Education Association and other providers to identify and fill gaps in the educational structure.

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Ongoing

The Inner West Team of Making Belfast Work has also made provision to address women's issues within the team's geographical area and hope to establish a climate that will facilitate personal growth and community impact for women by:

- Supporting initiatives eg childcare and family planning that will enable women to gain confidence and access training and return to work.
- Funding Steps to Excellence programmes for women participants (particularly women who have been housebound).

Ongoing

LEDU is working with DED Equality Division on the production of a "Fair Play" booklet. Likely publication date is October/November.

Ongoing

EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland 1995-1999

EU funding for the measure which covers the promotion of the inclusion of women will amount to over £7m over the period 1995-1999.

Ongoing

Approval has been given for INTERREG funding for a cross-border rural early years action and research and development project. The first 2 years of the project will cost £397,500. INTERREG will cover 75% of these costs.

Ongoing

International Fund for Ireland: Communities in Action Programme

Thirty successful projects were announced on 12 September 1996 under this pilot programme for which the International Fund is providing £7.5m over 3 years. It aims to help stop the drift of young people into social exclusion and to support

- the Women's Centre have also been awarded £5,000 towards their administrative costs in the 1996/97 financial year.

Ongoing

T&EA's Belfast regional office is also seeking MBW support for two projects. One proposes to provide a one-year 'Women into Business' supervisory management course and the second will enable premises to be acquired to facilitate a women's-only training and enterprise centre for non-traditional skills. These two projects are still under consideration.

Ongoing

T&EA's regional offices are involved in the implementation of the Early Years initiative which will provide daycare facilities especially in targeting disadvantaged areas, to facilitate the return of women to the employment market. The programme is being funded by the EU Special Programme for Peace and Reconciliation.

Ongoing

T&EA (Business Support Division) initiated the European Woman Manager Programme, Making the Most of Difference, on 21 March 1996 with 14 participants. The programme targets women managers who have established their career to at least middle management level in SMEs.

Ongoing

By Autumn 1996, a Research Project plans to analyse the companies involved in the T&EA's Executive Development Programme, to identify any specific training needs for women managers and to remove any barriers to their participation on such programmes.

Ongoing

Seven projects have been approved under the sub-programme NOW of the Community Initiative EMPLOYMENT. Letters of offer totalling £557K for the period 1995/97 have been issued.

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MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

Quarterly Return, (1 April 1996-30 September 1996)

Good News Items

WISE

The Northern Ireland WISE Network, which was established in March this year, following requests from female engineers to meet with others working in similar positions within industry has now become an established group meeting every two months. Meetings focus alternately on personal development and talks from role models.

The WISE Network is open to female engineers, women scientists and other women working in the science and engineering industry.

Awards

In April, Ms Katrina Coulter, a postgraduate student at QUB, was awarded a Zonta Amelia Earhart Fellowship, worth \$6,000, for the second year in succession. These fellowships are awarded annually to women throughout the world who are carrying out postgraduate study in aerospace-related science and engineering.

Majeda Khraisheh received a major prize of £500 in the Food Drying Subject Group at this year's Institution of Chemical Engineers annual conference held at Leeds University in April.

Training

T&EA Training Centres have continued to look at ways of attracting women into Training Centres. Evidence of some success is beginning to emerge. As a result of participating in a T&EA pre-employment course, two women have been recruited by Europa Tool which has established an Engineering Project in Pembroke Industrial Estate, West Belfast. It is hoped their success will encourage more women to seek employment in a sector of industry which has often been perceived to be a male domain.

Early Years

The URBAN "Early Years" Initiative was launched officially on 2 September 1996. Funded by the European Commission and Making Belfast Work, the initiative offers education and support to some 200 families in the Greater Shankill area. An excess of 40 jobs have been created by the programme.

Making Belfast Work

The Making Belfast Work Inner West Team has supported the following:

- The establishment of a Women's Network for West Belfast with the objective of raising the level of self-sufficiency and develop women's groups in the local area.
- The facilitation of women's involvement in the City Health Plan of the Belfast Healthy Cities Project.
- In conjunction with LEDU, supported the Women into Business Programme to promote equality of opportunity in the workplace and address the issue of high unemployment among women. With a focus on self-employment and returning to work.
- Provided funds for local women to produce a play. The comedy drama was entitled 'Just a Prisoner's Wife' and was entirely written, directed and acted by local women. The play has received a level of success and has been invited to perform throughout Ireland, Scotland and New York.
- Supported the 'Steps to Excellence' programme for women in the area who would not ordinarily be able to access such a programme designed for capacity-building, encouraging them to become more proactive members of the community. This is a vital step for women to become involved in the development and regeneration of the area. MBW facilitated the needs of women ie childcare provision and travelling costs to ensure maximum benefit.