



Access For All

*How the CPS is responding to the needs
and concerns of staff and managers
when addressing disability issues*

FOREWORD



As Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) Equality Champion I am really proud to be able to launch 'Access for All', which sets out some of the innovative and progressive work that the CPS has undertaken to promote disability equality and address the concerns and needs of disabled staff, their colleagues and managers; and also sets the clear blueprint for embedding our core values and for making continued improvements on this agenda in future.

We have seen tangible improvements in the declaration rates for disabled staff with levels increasing year on year from 81.6% in 2006/7 to the current rate 90.3% and representation levels increasing from 4.9% to 5.9% over the same period. We have also benefited from expert input from disabled stakeholders and experts into the development of our training and employment policies on disability issues.

In 2010 we established the Diversity Steering Group (DSG) which is chaired by our Director of Equality and Diversity with representatives from our Human Resources Directorate, Staff Networks, Operational Managers and our Departmental Trades Unions to oversee progress against our diversity action plan and to look specifically into the issues underlying the disappointing picture demonstrated by staff survey responses from our disabled staff. The DSG reports through me to the CPS Board.

Access for All details some of the key activities that have been identified and overseen by the DSG to date and reflects our commitment to disability equality and to providing a continuous response to change.

PETER LEWIS CB
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND EQUALITY CHAMPION

INTRODUCTION

Our goal, as stated in our Equality and Diversity Statement, is to be a prosecution service that performs its role fairly and transparently, addresses barriers and disproportionality effectively and works with stakeholders and the public to improve our practice so that we can achieve high quality prosecutions, a better working environment and deliver better justice for all.

We were one of the first government departments to establish a staff support network for disability The Disability Staff Network (DSN) and to introduce a process of community informed policy development; through which we have actively consulted and engaged with disability experts and stakeholders internally and externally to develop our policies and training on disability issues. Consequently we have seen a steady rise in the number of disabled staff employed by the CPS and an improvement in the quality of our training materials and policies.

We are committed to learning from our experiences and leading through change. The results of the most recent civil service staff surveys and the analysis of our equality in employment data tell us that in spite of our improvements to date the experience of disabled staff is still less favourable than that of their colleagues. Therefore the disability agenda has become an even greater priority for us within our existing diversity strategy.

We have worked closely with diversity leads across the civil service, external disability experts and representatives of the DSN to identify and address the issues that impact negatively on disabled staff and are a cause of concern for all staff and managers across the service. Five themes recur when considering the issues that impact most negatively on the experience of disabled staff at work; these are an acknowledgement that our policies are generally good but that there are inconsistencies in the implementation; difficulties with the timeliness and quality of reasonable adjustments, lack of understanding and disability awareness in practice, insufficient access to high quality expert advice on disability and inconsistent acknowledgement of the value of staff with disabilities.

We are committed to addressing the concerns expressed to us by disabled staff and to addressing the concerns expressed to us by managers and colleagues who genuinely want to build their understanding and awareness of disability issues and create a more inclusive working environment for all staff.

Access for All demonstrates the provisions that we have in place, what we are doing now and what we plan to in the future to:

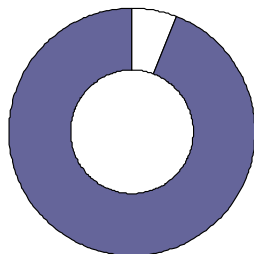
- address the concerns of disabled staff and their colleagues and managers when dealing with disability issues; and
- remove the barriers that prevent disabled staff from performing their duties to the best of their ability, from being treated with dignity and

respect within the workplace and from accessing the opportunities to career progression that should be available to all.

Access for All is far more than a statement of aims, as it is underpinned by actions that we are committed to delivering. Progress against the planned actions will be monitored by the Diversity Delivery Steering Group that is chaired by the Director of Equality and Diversity and consists of representatives from Human Resources Directorate, the CPS Staff Networks and the Equality lead for the FDA union. Progress reports will be submitted to the Community Accountability Forum who will provide external scrutiny of our progress and the Chief Executive in his capacity as Equality Champion will report annually to the CPS Board.

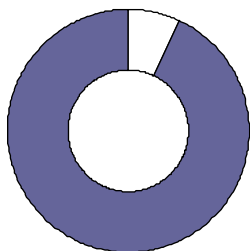
CPS DISABILITY DATA – 2010/11 SHAPSHOT¹

Workforce Profile



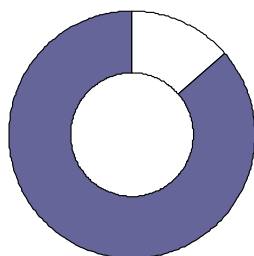
Disabled staff represented 5.9% of the CPS's workforce. This is an increase of 1 percentage point since 2006-07.

Variable Working Patterns



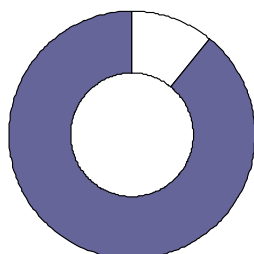
6.8% of staff who worked variable working patterns were disabled, this is an increase of 2.4 percentage points from 4.4% in 2006-07.

Grievance



13.5% (5) of all grievances were raised by disabled staff.

Attendance Management



10.7% (85) of staff who were subject to a formal attendance meeting were disabled.

¹ Data from 2010-11 CPS Equalities in Employment Report

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The CPS has worked closely with the Employers Forum on Disability (EFD), representatives of the Disability Staff Network (DSN) and the Departmental Trade Union Side (DTUS) over the last year to identify and address any gaps or weaknesses in our employment policies or practices that may adversely impact on disabled staff.

Recruitment

The CPS advertises all its vacancies through the Civil Service Jobs Portal and this provides open access to all staff to apply for vacancies. In addition, the CPS complies with the Job Centre Plus - Positive about Disabled People initiative, and displays the “two tick” symbol. All vacancies advertised internally and externally through the Civil Service Gateway have a job description and person specification, which clearly sets out the requirements of the job and the criteria upon which the individual is to be assessed. All disabled applicants who meet the minimum standards are guaranteed an interview for the position.

The induction pack for all new staff including those transferring to the CPS was introduced in July of this year; this pack contains a new section on workplace support.

Actions	Description	Timescale
Disability Positive Action Programme	Disabled staff were invited to take part in the Coaching ² positive action programme that commenced in May 2012	March 2013
Recruitment Panels	Review the training for those involved in the recruitment and selection exercises actively encourage disabled staff to undergo training in order to increase the number of disabled staff on interview panels	March 2013
Consider causes for lack of representation of disabled staff in Senior Crown Advocate (SCA) and Principal Crown Advocate (PCA) grades	Conduct analysis into the lack of representation of disabled staff in SCA and PCA grades	June 2013

Managing Attendance

A number of complaints and grievances in the workplace between disabled staff and their managers are linked to issues associated with managing attendance. To help to address the issues identified the Employers Forum on Disability (EFD) facilitated a series of Lunch and Learn sessions for managers, HR advisors and staff and all line managers were given access to the EFD Line Management Guides – on “Managing Attendance and Disability” and “Working with Disabled Colleagues”.

Representatives of the DSN and the DTUS were invited to work with our HR Department on the revision of Disability Sick Leave provisions of the CPS Managing Attendance Policy to ensure that staff concerns were taken into account.

A review of the Managing Attendance Policy and guidance to address the issues raised during discussions with disability experts, the DSN and the DTUS has now commenced; in recognition of the priority of this work interim guidance has been issued to all staff clarifying the situations when it is **not** appropriate to issue attendance improvement notices to disabled staff.

We are also currently consulting with the DSN and DTUS on the finalisation of an update to our probation policy to include reasonable adjustments.

Actions	Description	Timescale
Review the Managing Attendance Policy and guidance	Review the managing attendance policy and guidance to better reflect the considerations that need to be taken into account when dealing with disabled staff	December 2012
Publish updated CPS Probation Policy	Publish updated probation policy once consultation with the DSN and DTUS is concluded	November 2012
Managing Development Programme	To review the material on the Management Development Programme, which covers managing attendance and supporting disabled staff	January 2013

Tailored support from HR to line managers and staff	Following on from the work with the DSN, to consider developing a national workshop for Human Resources advisors on Atos referrals and how to provide improved tailored support to line managers and staff on how to meet the needs of disabled staff	March 2013
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REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Difficulties with the timeliness, quality or agreement of appropriate reasonable adjustments are the cause of the majority of complaints and concerns for disabled staff and their managers, not only within the CPS but across the civil service. Consequently, a civil service wide task and finish group has been established to consider how to address the concerns that have been raised by staff. Peter Lewis represents the CPS on this group in his capacity as Equality Champion for the CPS. Plans to create centralised hubs of expertise to deal with complicated or high value reasonable adjustment requests more efficiently are currently being piloted.

The CPS currently has a dedicated team within Business Information Systems Directorate (BIS) to deal with IT related reasonable adjustments. The procurement of all other specialist equipment such as chairs etc is handled locally by CPS Areas; some of the larger government departments have established centralised hubs of expertise to deal with these types of reasonable adjustments also. In order to assess the feasibility of this completely centralised approach for the CPS information will be gathered as to the number of staff across the service that require specialist equipment and the cost of the equipment required. The process of keeping a central record of the specialist equipment across the CPS will also help to reduce duplicate purchases of equipment by Areas and delays caused by ordering equipment that may no longer be in use in the Area that originally purchased the equipment.

Disabled staff also told us that they felt that they constantly had to prove that they were disabled to new managers in order to secure reasonable adjustments. In response to this concern the CPS are currently undertaking a trial of a Reasonable Adjustment Passport in CPS London, our largest Area. The issue of a passport removes the frequent tensions between disabled staff and new line managers, by clarifying the nature of the disability and the types of adjustments that are likely to be required; early evaluations from the pilot Area indicate that this relatively simple tool demystifies the issues and procures a better working relationship and protocol between employee and manager. Subject to satisfactory evaluation it will be rolled out across the CPS.

Actions	Description	Timescale
To continue the review of the existing reasonable adjustment process	To continue the work with the DSN to improve HR policies using products and guidance from Civil Service Learning (CSL). To look at the process and timeliness of IT adjustments	On-going

	Consider the recommendations of the reasonable adjustment centralised services pilot	
Review accessibility of T3 tablets	Continue the work already commenced with the DSN and DTUS to improve the accessibility of work tablets	On-going
Centrally record the numbers in receipt of reasonable adjustments and of the specialist equipment available across the CPS	Review the process for collating data on the number of staff in receipt of reasonable adjustments, in order to raise our corporate understanding of the needs of our disabled staff. Reduce duplication and delay in the procurement of specialist equipment	March 2013
Pilot reasonable adjustment passport	Evaluate the success of the CPS London reasonable adjustment pilot, with a view to rolling out nationally if current positive outcomes maintained	December 2012

INCREASING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF DISABILITY ISSUES

We publish an Annual Equality in Employment Report that analyses our staff profile and the comparative experiences of staff across a range of protected characteristics including disability. Our most recent report (for the period 2010/11) found that a disproportionately high number of grievances relate to disability issues. Therefore, EDU has commenced further research into the causes of this disparity and a lesson learned panel has been established to look at the outcomes of grievances and identify steps that can be taken to prevent problems recurring.

Leadership and Learning also conducted a series of Disability Master Classes for managers to help raise the awareness of managers and their capability to deal with disability related issues more effectively; and in order to improve the implementation of policies Disability Special Leave Guidance for HR advisors was issued with a supporting FAQ document for managers.

The responsibility for the development all generic civil service staff training now rests with CSL, to ensure that all training products take account of our equality concerns EDU is represented on the civil service Heads of Diversity training sub-group who equality check training products developed by CSL, including the management development programme developed by CSL earlier this year. We have also had significant input into the training modules that are currently being finalised in respect of unconscious bias and disability issues that are scheduled to be launched by December.

In 2010 the annual certificate of assurance process was amended. All Areas must now provide an evidenced assurance that they have conducted an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) when required as part of Area policy or process changes. Therefore, EDU conducted a further series of training courses for local managers involved in project management and Equality, Diversity and Community Engagement Managers (EDCEMs) to build their capability and understanding of the issues to be considered when conducting an EIA. The findings of an audit team review commissioned by EDU into the implementation of EIA practice locally is being finalised and any recommendations will be considered for implementation.

Actions	Description	Timescale
Complete the roll-out of the Management Development Programme (MDP)	The first and second tranches of the roll-out of the MDP that contains mandatory modules dealing with disability issues have commenced. The third tranche will commence	March 2013
Continue to ensure that existing and planned training packages offer,	On-going with CSL	On-going

where possible, specifics in relation to disabilities		
Introduce a central process to quality check local EIAs and share best practice.	To ensure the quality of locally prepared EIAs the EDU will introduce a process of quality checks to improve the quality of EIAs and share best practice	March 2013
Further analysis of grievance cases	To continue the ongoing analysis to identify the reasons for the apparent rise in the number of grievances brought by disabled employees	December 2012

VALUING OUR STAFF

In November 2011 the CPS launched its comprehensive People Strategy, key themes include, Getting Involved, Personal Leadership, Skills and Capability, Performance Improvement, Managing Resources and Fairness and Inclusion. A key objective of this strategy is to promote an inclusive culture that recognises individual contribution and team working and that supports the service's values of integrity, fairness and equality of opportunity. All leaders within the CPS have objectives that support delivery of the people strategy. The focus is on how all employees can contribute and work together to deliver CPS's Core Quality Standards efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the strategy is monitored by the Chief Executive in his role as Equality Champion via the People Strategy Programme Board.

In accordance with the People Strategy action plan that underpins the people strategy we launched a revised Dignity at Work Policy in March 2012. The policy now gives specific examples of unacceptable behaviour in relation to disabled people in order to help managers and staff to better understand the impact of their actions on disabled colleagues

The quarterly CPS Assurance Report to the Board considers Equality and Diversity issues as part of wider reporting against People Measures. Representation of disabled staff has been highlighted as a particular issue that the Board that will require additional assurances on.

As part of the CPS refocusing work, a specific working group has been established to revise the CPS Mission and Vision and Values statements. A key part of this work will be reinforcing the qualities that we value as an organisation and expect our staff to adhere to.

Actions	Description	Timescale
Review the CPS Vision and Values Statements	Complete the revision of the vision and value statement for the CPS commenced in September 2012	March 2013

Crown Prosecution Service
Equality and Diversity Unit
Rose Court
2 Southwark Bridge
London SE1 9HS