

NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE HAMPSHIRE AREA

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

This “Equality Impact Assessment Form” documents the outcome of a full impact assessment on the specified function, policy or procedure, addressing the equalities strands of: Race, Gender, Disability, Sexuality, Faith and Age. It is to be completed, published as specified, and appended to policy and/or strategy documents.

1. Function Name, Policy or Procedure:

Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO's) Policy and Strategy

2. Aims and Approach of Function/Policy/Procedure

This policy is Hampshire Probation Areas response to the strategy of the Government Offices to catch, convict, resettle and rehabilitate, prevent and deter the most prolific offenders who commit a disproportionate amount of crime. It works through local Crime and Disorder Partnership's PPO scheme, which aims to identify, monitor and intensively manage PPO's in their area. The Police lead on the Catch and Convict strand, Probation lead on the Rehabilitate and Resettle strand and YOT lead on the Prevent and Deter strand.

Once a PPO is identified, using the matrix used by the CDRP, Hampshire Probation Area will identify and manage intensive interventions through a premium service for those sentenced by the Courts to reduce their offending behaviour. Interventions to be considered include satellite tracking, victim empathy module (6 sessions), Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS), essential skills and ETE, enhanced access to floating support and house advice, access to DIP projects. These interventions in themselves will already have, or have planned, an impact assessment which complements the impact assessment of this policy.

Once a PPO is registered he/she is fast tracked through to appropriate interventions and to assist with this focused work Hampshire has recruited staff with a PPO co-ordinator role.

A target has been set for sentence planning and risk screening to be completed within 5 days for all PPO's

3. What data/information is available & does it suggest differential impact for any of the groups identified as part of the impact assessment process?

Current information on PPO's in Hampshire drawn from the 13 CDRP's is that in March 2006, 224 PPO's have been identified. Of this figure 5% were from minority ethnic backgrounds, a proportion consistent with that of the general offending population in Hampshire. As such minority ethnic offenders are not over-represented on PPO registration. There are currently 3 female offenders registered and at 1.5% this means that women are under-represented on the scheme. No disability data is currently available.

There is currently no data available in terms of outcomes for different groups undertaking intensive interventions through PPO schemes.

4. What consultation has been undertaken and what are the results of this?

The policy and strategy for working with PPO's was taken to the Race Equality consultation panel in February 2006 and the manager with responsibility for the scheme spoke to the panel about the way in which this piece of work was delivered in Hampshire. It was noted that the Policy states

“at all times staff will ensure that decisions will be made solely on the basis of relevant information, guarding against bias or prejudiced attached to discriminatory or stereotyped attitudes relating to people's backgrounds”

In addition the strategy draws attention to the importance of not using the term “PPO” in court reports as this could prejudice the court sentencing process.

The panel were concerned however that discrimination could be introduced into the system through the “intelligence” element of the targeting matrix. This part of the system was deemed to be most vulnerable to the possibility of discriminatory or stereotypical attitudes and thus leading to biased decision making in who is identified as a PPO. The cross-agency work in this regard was seen as possibly mitigating against this occurrence, but further monitoring would provide some indication of whether this was an issue.

5. What changes are needed to remove any adverse impact (either approach or implementation considerations)?

It was considered that the policy and strategy as it stands did not require any amendments but that careful monitoring and review needed to be instituted in order to ensure that discriminatory bias through the targeting matrix was not leading to disproportional numbers of offenders from minority groups being registered. As such systems are to be put in place to ensure monitoring and reporting on PPO's is undertaken broken down by race, gender and disability.

Reporting on monitoring will be undertaken through the diversity performance review cycle and any concerns addressed as they arise.

6. What decisions have been taken on the basis of the impact assessment and what measures have been put in place to implement?

As above

7. Monitoring arrangements and review process

As above

8. How results will be published

.This impact assessment will be published on the internal intra-net system and will be included in the report on impact assessments contained with the Probation Annual report.

Signature of Policy Lead

Position

Date