

# Strategy for Equality and Diversity 2007/8

## Community and Non Profit Sector

### Organising

With over 600,000 organisations in the Third Sector, Amicus looking to unionise these organisations through every possible route. Over 50,000 of these organisations interface directly with one or more of the equality strands. Amicus will therefore continue to target organisations, through a planned approach, to recruit and organise in each. As an initial stage Amicus will target charities and other organisations in the sector focused on Disability this project will be for a minimum of 2 years and lead by an Amicus Organiser.

There are known to be over 37,000 organisations which relate to the disability agenda, most of which are totally unorganised, and many too small to employ anyone. Following the initial work already carried out in this sub-sector, the Community and Non Profit Sector will map out target organisations in the sector, and work with the Disability Champions @ Work project and the National Officer for Equalities to produce material to use in this sub-sector campaign, as well as build a network of representatives and activists working for Disability charities. The network will also hold an annual seminar/training session of representative. Policy issues that are discussed at this will be forwarded to the equalities structures of the union. Through promoting the wider equalities work of the union, Amicus will build a resonance of understanding with these organisations and their employees.

In mainstreaming organising across the equality stands in all organisations, the sector will take advantage of using generic material and organised events to promote the union's equality and diversity agenda, as it currently does.

Also the Sector incorporates information from the e-equalities bulletin into the sectoral e-bulletin to communicate developments and new about the equality agenda, as well as adding in sectoral information about equalities and diversity and work-life balance issues. We will continue to do this. In future publications for organising in the sector, and will feature aspects of the equalities agenda in ways that are appropriate to the targeted audience.

### Equality Representatives

Whilst there are some specialised representatives in the sector, for example Health and Safety and Lifelong Learning, and some Disability Champions, the majority of representatives cover all issues appertaining to their workplace. The

sector will therefore work with the Amicus Equalities department to promote Equality representatives, and will map out specialist representatives in this area, as well as develop the understanding of all aspects of the Equality Reps role for all ordinary Workplace representatives.

### Equal Pay

Inequality in pay systems in the sector are suspected to be widespread. However few organisations have had the capacity to undertake equal pay audits, let alone the ability to undertake job evaluation schemes, even among some of the larger organisations. The Community and Non Profit Sector has raised this issue of capacity with Government and sector infrastructure bodies, and will continue to do so. Due to the endemic HR problems across the sector, the issues of equal pay is expected to match this. This issue will be compounded as it is a sector which employs a high proportion of women, black and minority ethnic works and workers with a disability.

Amicus will continue to pro-actively use a campaign to promote auditing pay systems in the sector, and to assist organisations to use the equal pay toolkit and toolkit for small organisations. The sector is looking to carry out a survey of employers in the sector to ascertain their attitudes to equal pay and carrying out an equal pay audit, with support. We will use evidence from this work to further campaign for better HR infrastructure support to address issues like equal campaign.

The sector will also work with any national Amicus campaign around this issue, and make use of material produced by Amicus to raise awareness among members and potential members, as well as representatives.

### Domestic Violence and Violence at Work

Workers in the Third Sector work with organisations that deal with many different levels of violence, including issues around domestic violence. The Sector will therefore engage with the union's campaign on this issue in conjunction with those organisations. From some work in the sector, we have found that many employees also experience instances of violence at work. The sector will take a zero tolerance approach to issues of violence, and develop workplace policies on which not only take a pro-active approach against all kinds of violence, but also support the victims of violence and their needs, whilst educating and raising awareness across workplaces.

### Work-Life Balance

The Community and Non Profit Sector of Amicus has established a campaign on the issue of work-life balance. We are in the middle of running a series of seminars and training events on the issues of work-life balance, and how representatives can improve their own working environment. We have also carried out some research on this issues and have just published the findings of this, circulating this to every workplace representative in the sector.

We have also produces a representative's pack of information about this agenda, and material for raising awareness and recruitment.

Representatives would like material to be produced that is targeted at management abut how a better work-life balance saves organisations money due to less sickness/absenteeism and increased productivity (with example), and to pre-empt their objections. It should also emphasise how this would produce a better health and safety compliant environment.

We will be looking to raise further awareness throughout the coming year.

### Discrimination Legislation

The sector regularly promotes information on legislative changes and the impact of workers of these to representatives and members. We are also campaigning for equality legislation to apply to all Ministers of Religion (whilst maintaining the Genuine Occupational Requirements).

## **Responding to the Amicus Equalities Strategy Survey**

### **Organising and Recruitment**

1. What opportunities are there to recruit a wider diversity of members in your community?
  - This has been outlined in the sector's Strategy for Equality and Diversity (above)
2. What opportunities are there to recruit a wider diversity of members in your workplace?
  - This has been outlined in the sector's Strategy for Equality and Diversity (above)
3. What resources would assist you in recruiting apprentices and young people to the union?
  - Good events, like debates on issues that interest them, to send members/potential members to, like debates on world poverty and

environmental discussions or our own Africa Matters campaign, where there is also a social aspect to the event.

- The ability to recruit volunteers to Amicus who can then assist with this
  - To have updates on all best practice initiatives within Amicus (and even other unions)
  - A group of young organisers so like can recruit like, and to use them in organisations that recruit young workers.
4. What activities and campaigns will you carry out to recruit new members to Amicus?
- The sector has an organising strategy, however in this area, this has been outlined in the sector's Strategy for Equality and Diversity (above)
  - The Work-Life Balance campaign is the priority campaign for this sector.

### **Building Activist Base**

5. How would equality representatives work in your region/sector?
- As most workplaces are small, and even in the large workplaces, there will be few equality representatives, as most representatives are generic covering health and safety and lifelong learning as well.
  - A training module for all representatives to mainstream the issues would be key
  - Equality representatives would have to have an understanding of the whole equality agenda, however it would be our objective to mainstream this across all representatives.
  - Equality representatives in the North of Ireland with expertise in dealing with sectarianism and racism (which is now a growing problem in Belfast) is key to this, and an Regional Officer to support this work.
  - The National Sector Committee would welcome a union-wide debate on Equality Representatives, to ensure that this role will not detract from the mainstreaming agenda with the role becoming segregated from the work of other representatives.
  - In Northern Ireland it is viewed that it would be good to have a representative who could carry out an impact assessment on equalities policies across the 9 strands. This would be a useful role of the representative across the UK and Ireland, and would be of use to members and managers too.
6. What training can be provided to workplace reps to develop understanding of equality issues?
- Training is poorly attended as it is difficult for representatives in the Third Sector to priorities this over their work. However representatives want to be able to be confident in dealing with

equality issues like Equal Pay. Representatives in the sector would want on-line accredited module(s) of learning on all areas so that, in their own time, they can gain the skills and competencies to be proactive and successful on these areas.

- Amicus must reflect the legislation of all nations covered by the union, including both the North and South of Ireland, since many representatives in national organisations will have to ensure that their organisations policies meet as a minimum the national standards. Many organisations in the sector cross over to Ireland.
- Training does need to be mainstreamed for all in many different formats, so in addition to on-line training there should be weekend residential courses.
- It was felt that the STUC Equalities Toolkit was a good model for Amicus to look at and use for representatives.

7. How can we improve involvement in the Equality Campaign Networks?

- There needs to be better communication about these networks so that the sector can promote them.
- It is felt that the networks need to be promoted across all Amicus members as many people did not know about these.

8. Would you like to sign up for an equality campaign network?

- Information on these should be fully accessible from the website.
- The networks should provide briefings on legislation and activities. Again newsletters and briefings that impact on legislation outside of England should be seen as important as those based on the English legislation.
- Briefing papers on the union's campaigns should also be sent to organisations that deal with equalities agenda (i.e. those categorised under Section 75 in the North of Ireland).

## **Equal Pay**

10. Would your company or organisation benefit from policies on procurement, outsourcing and corporate social responsibility that reflect the aspirations of the Women and Work Commission report to tackle the gender pay gap?

- It would be helpful for these appropriate policies to be on the Amicus website.
- We would like copies of best practice documents readily available, e.g. workplace policies and agreements, real case studies so that representatives can talk to other representatives about their experiences.
- The sector heavily depends on procurement, so briefing papers on this work would be very helpful.

11. What sectors, companies and organisations will you target to carry out equal pay audits?
- This has been outlined in the sector's Strategy for Equality and Diversity (above)
12. Would it be useful to develop a charter for women workers in your sector or region which employers would sign up to work in partnership with Amicus to take action to close the gender pay gap, what would the charter include?
- A charter would be useful, however it would also need to include how to close the BME and Disability pay gap
  - Also how very small organisations can easily carry out an audit and have the support of rectifying the pay gap issue, as well as larger organisations
13. What would your campaign strategy for developing interest and action on equal pay amongst Amicus members and activists?
- This has been outlined in the sector's Strategy for Equality and Diversity (above)
  - For equal pay, it would be good for the union to develop a newsletter dedicated to this issue, giving examples across all sectors and regions as to progress made on this issue, tribunal cases, giving a good overview of the issue and simple guidance on how to make it happen in your workplace. The newsletter should be something that representatives can campaign with, members can understand, and representatives can use with management to make Equal Pay a reality.
14. What issues particularly affect equal pay in your sector or region?
- This has been outlined in the sector's Strategy for Equality and Diversity (above)
  - The lack of resources in the sector and the sector's infrastructure to be able to support equal pay work
  - The lack of skills within organisations, and in particular, management
  - The short-term and competitive and contractual nature of funding in the sector.

### **Age Discrimination**

15. What issues have employers, workplace representatives and members raised with you in relation to the age discrimination regulations?
- The delay in the Amicus Negotiators guide
  - Some members have seen inappropriate job adverts like advertising that state people will be working in a "young vibrant" environment.

- People wanting to work beyond 65, but the lack of funding is preventing this.
16. Are there organisations that have a retirement age of below 65 and if so has this been an issue raised with you by the employer, workplace representatives or members?
- Without carrying out an audit of organisations where we have members, of which there are over 4000 of them, it is impossible to tell.

### **Domestic Violence**

17. Does your company have a policy on domestic violence?
- I am not aware of any specific policies that have been drawn up in the sector, although we do have membership in organisations that work with victims of domestic violence.
18. Would an Amicus negotiators guide on domestic violence assist in your ability to negotiate a policy?
- This would be useful and some members have said that they would want to use this
  - If a negotiators guide is to be produced, it would be useful to have information and material for workplaces – posters, postcards and flyers to support workers.
19. Would you welcome training on this issue?
- If an on-line training module could be produced then this would be helpful
  - With all the conflicting priorities of reps in the sector, then attending training would not be a priority.

### **Well-being at work and promoting equality**

20. What are the issues in your region or sector with regards to well being and promoting equality at work?
- Work-life balance issues. Members in the sector work long hours in order to get the work done on behalf of their organisations, and they are dedicated to doing this, therefore there is little time for additional activity. For more information see our survey report.
  - However, with the sector's campaign we are addressing this issue of work-life balance.
  - The sector faces many issues of bullying, some are related to discrimination. This is mainly down to poor management in the sector.
  - Equal pay is an issue
  - Simplification of the discrimination laws into a Single Equalities Act would greatly assist management in the Sector

- We actively promote the Disability Champions @ Work project and would like a similar project for promoting diversity on grounds of race.
  - Work addressing the sectarianism in the North of Ireland would be very helpful and necessary at this time.
21. What other resources and training would you like to see from Amicus to assist in promoting well being and equality at work?
- Simple and easy to use material like viral marketing, postcard campaigning to raise the profile.
  - Survey's work well in the sector and engage members in the issues.
  - On-line modular training courses
  - Partnership seminars organised for management and representatives around the union's equalities agenda – this would need to be cross sectoral.
  - A dedicated Equalities Officer for the North of Ireland
  - As described in the Sector's strategy, representatives would like material to be produced that is targeted at management about how a better work-life balance saves organisations money due to less sickness/absenteeism and increased productivity (with example), and to pre-empt their objections. It should also emphasise how this would produce a better health and safety compliant environment.
22. Do you have company policies on these issues that deliver decent working conditions for our members? If so please can you send copies to [Karen.Cole@amicustheunion.org](mailto:Karen.Cole@amicustheunion.org) or by post to Karen Coles, Amicus, 63 Macrae Road, Ham Green, Bristol. BS20 0DD.
- Some organisations do, so we will promote representatives forwarding this information to Karen Cole.

### **Negotiating for Equality**

23. Have you tried to run any campaigns in your workplace based on equalities issues?
- Yes, our sector's main campaign has been around work-life balance, and campaigns like equal pay in individual workplaces.
24. If not, what has prevented you from doing so? Resources, information, training, confidence, other?
- With the many pressing issues facing the sector, there is a strategy for dealing with campaigning priorities for the sector
25. What are the issues in your region or sector with regards to well being and promoting equality at work?
- See response to Question 20.

