

## NEW TARGETING SOCIAL NEED (NTSN)

### INTRODUCTION

1. This brief outlines the New TSN initiative and records the present position within DSD and early action required.

### BACKGROUND

2. The original TSN initiative was launched in 1991; the 1998 White Paper 'Partnership for Equality' endorsed the rationale and general objectives of TSN but set out proposals to establish a New TSN priority with its scope redefined and with increased effectiveness and transparency. A follow-up paper published in July 1998 by the Secretary of State provided a more detailed outline of the objectives of New TSN and further detail on the Promoting Social Inclusion Initiative, a key component of New TSN.

3. The under-pinning objective of New TSN is:

*"To tackle disadvantage by directing resources and efforts towards those individuals, group and areas objectively defined as being in greatest need, irrespective of community background."*

4. Whilst the implementation of New TSN is based on 'objective need' the community dimension remains central to TSN. The equality White Paper stated that:

*"as social disadvantage was found disproportionately in the Catholic community, it was anticipated that, over time, the socio-economic differentials between the 2 communities would be eroded".*

5. New TSN is about identifying people in areas of greatest need in our society and trying to ensure that Government programmes are more effective in helping them have a stake in the future and that the blight of chronic poverty and social exclusion is tackled.
6. New TSN will operate in 3 different ways:
  - a special focus on the problems of unemployed people and on increasing their chances of finding a job;
  - targeting other sorts of social need, which may not be directly related to employment such as inequalities in health, housing or education; and
  - a special initiative called **Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI)** which will seek new and creative ways of helping people who are disadvantaged in several ways to such an extent that they cannot enjoy the full range of life opportunities which most people take for granted.

## CURRENT POSITION

7. A New TSN Audit has been completed in all Departments. The Audit's remit was to make recommendations on:
  - increasing the relevance of Departmental activities to New Targeting Social Need;
  - more effective measurement of need in relation to Departmental responsibilities;
  - more effective targeting of need in Departmental programmes;

## WAY AHEAD

- more effective skewing of financial resources within Departmental programmes towards people, and areas in greatest need; and
  - more effective ways of monitoring uptake of services.
8. The Audit report on the areas which are the responsibility of DSD identified that New TSN is highly relevant to the different functions of the Department and that much of its activity is high on the spectrum of TSN applicability. The report concluded that TSN is either formally stated or is inherent (in the form of a focus of disadvantage) across the areas reviewed and that all areas contribute towards the main New TSN priorities. Recommendations on making the Department more TSN effective were made.
9. A separate consultation exercise has been completed on the priority areas for early consideration under the Promoting Social Inclusion initiative. The initial 4 priority areas identified include the action necessary to alleviate the needs of Travellers where DSD has lead responsibility. A Working Group chaired by DSD with representation from appropriate Departments, Agencies and appropriate community groups (including Travelling People) will be established, which will report with recommendations by the end of 1999.
10. The other initial areas for early PSI action agreed will also involve DSD:
- the unmet needs of ethnic minorities which put them at risk of social exclusion;
  - young unmarried mothers; and
  - information needs of socially excluded groups.

## WAY AHEAD

11. DSD will be a lead Department in taking ahead New TSN through all its activities. This will include both action on direct areas of responsibility and participating (and frequently leading) action required to progress "joined up Government" across other Departments and Agencies in tackling social need.
12. Specifically, the Department is committed to developing an Action Plan for New TSN (including consultation with organisations representing key interests) with a draft to be available for Minister by 30 June 1999. The Action Plan must be time-bounded, contain clear objectives and where possible targets.
13. DSD will be taking the lead on the Working Group on the needs of Travellers within the PSI initiative.
14. The Department will contribute to the first published Annual Report on the progress of New TSN due in the Autumn 1999.