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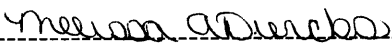
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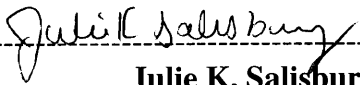
QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR PRISONERS ABROAD

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report
Submitted to the Faculty of
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Science

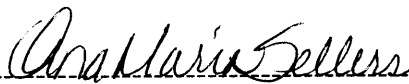
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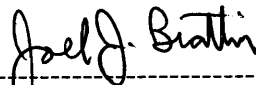
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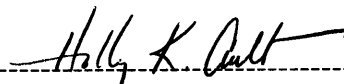
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- 1. best practices
- 2. policies
- 3. quality assurance

Abstract

Prisoners Abroad is in the process of adopting PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) as its quality assurance system. Achievement of these nationally recognised standards will ensure that the agency is capable of running efficiently and providing the best possible services to its clients. This project developed policies and guidelines that help in meeting the standards set by PQASSO in the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. We evaluated the agency's current policies in these areas, researched the policies of similar agencies for quality assurance, recommended new policies and procedures for Prisoners Abroad, and developed a plan by which the organisation can meet our recommendations.

Acknowledgements

We would like to recognise the individuals that contributed to the completion of our project. We would like to thank all Prisoners Abroad employees for welcoming us into the organisation. We especially would like to thank our liaison, Steve Szumski, and the employees who participated in our discussion groups. We are grateful for the time they offered and for the advice and knowledge they provided. We would like to extend our thanks to Professor Wes Jamison for providing us with the skills and knowledge necessary to complete this project. We would like to acknowledge the Global Perspective Program for arranging the projects in London, especially Jennie Hawks, Local Coordinator. We appreciate the opportunity to complete our Interactive Qualifying Project abroad. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to our advisors, Professors Joel J. Brattin and Holly K. Ault. Their suggestions and support were instrumental in the success of our project.

Executive Summary

Prisoners Abroad is a small non-profit organisation that advocates for the rights of Britons who have been incarcerated in foreign countries. It provides services to prisoners, their families and friends, and released prisoners. As part of a three-year plan, Prisoners Abroad is in the process of adopting PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) as its quality assurance programme. PQASSO is a quality assurance system intended for voluntary and self-help organisations. PQASSO is designed to help organisations “improve the quality of their service and to meet the growing expectations of their users” (PQASSO 1997). The goal of this project was to develop policies for the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities that would allow Prisoners Abroad to comply with the PQASSO standards.

In order to develop policies for each of these four areas, we first evaluated the current policies and practices in place at Prisoners Abroad through employee questionnaires and interviews. We then studied the policies of other non-profit organisations, best practices, and current legislation regarding these areas. The information we gathered served as a reference for developing the preliminary sets of policies and guidelines for resource management, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. All of the policies then went through numerous revisions based on employee feedback in discussion groups and management interviews. Lastly, we finalised the policies and plans and presented them to Prisoners Abroad.

Each policy includes a brief policy statement that expresses the objective of the policy and method for implementation. Each of these policies includes a procedure for regular review and revisions when necessary. It is necessary for Prisoners Abroad to review these policies regularly in order to adapt them to fit their changing needs.

According to PQASSO, “A quality organisation manages its resources effectively, efficiently, and economically. Resources include premises, equipment, transport, information technology, food, and suppliers.” The Resource Management Policy includes sections on stock control, purchasing procedures, and premises. The stock control section outlines a specific procedure for purchasing, storing, and distributing supplies within the office. Presently, Prisoners Abroad does not have a specified system for this. The section of the policy on purchasing procedures gives best practices for purchasing products economically. The section regarding the premises gives guidelines by which Prisoners Abroad can maintain a safe and secure workplace.

Prior to this project, Prisoners Abroad did not have any specified policies for monitoring and evaluation. PQASSO states that “a quality organisation collects, collates, and analyses relevant information appropriately and systematically to assist review and evaluation by the staff, management, purchasers, funders, and users.” Prisoners Abroad was not aware of what exactly required monitoring and evaluation within the organisation. We met with employees that dealt with monitoring and evaluation as part of their job tasks to determine what needed to be included in this policy. We then developed a policy that specifies service users, service provision, and personnel as the major areas that Prisoners Abroad needs to monitor and evaluate.

According to PQASSO, a quality organisation should adopt policies and practices that reflect its concern for the environment. This includes increasing awareness of environmental issues amongst employees. We developed the Environmental Issues Policy to address the many concerns identified through the employee questionnaire. The Environmental Issues Policy includes responsibilities of both the employer and the employee regarding the environment.

In reference to equal opportunities, PQASSO states that “A quality organisation is committed to equal opportunities for all, leading to positive attitudes, policies, planning, action, and review across all aspects of its work.” We developed the Equal Opportunities Policy for Prisoners Abroad to include the areas of Recruitment and Induction, Communication and Training, Monitoring, Service Provision, and Implementation. Each of these areas includes procedures that will allow Prisoners Abroad to reach the PQASSO standards. The Implementation section includes guidelines for forming an equal opportunities group within the organisation. The responsibility of this group is to enforce the policy and educate the employees of their responsibilities regarding equal opportunities.

The goal of this project was to develop policies and guidelines to help Prisoners Abroad to meet the standards set by PQASSO for the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. The developed policies will serve as guideline for Prisoners Abroad. The policies will also aid the organisation in complying with the standards set by PQASSO and eventually reaching its highest level. However, we feel it is necessary for the organisation to review these policies regularly in order to adapt them to fit their changing needs.

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The above indicates the author primarily responsible for the indicated section. However, all members participated in additions and revisions to the contents of each section.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Prisoners Abroad is a non-profit organisation that advocates for the rights of Britons who have been incarcerated in foreign countries. It provides services to the prisoners, their families and friends, and released prisoners. These services include advice and support, help in finding lawyers, and essential needs for the prisoners and their families. Prisoners Abroad is the only organisation of its kind in Great Britain; it currently supports 1200 people in over 60 countries.

In current times it is necessary for organisations to commit to quality and make continuous improvements. In keeping with its commitment to quality, Prisoners Abroad is in the process of adopting PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) as its quality assurance system. The PQASSO standards focus on sixteen major areas of quality. Organisations attain quality assurance in each area by meeting the requirements of three levels; level one being the most basic and level three being the most advanced. Achievement of these nationally recognised standards will ensure that the agency is capable of running efficiently and providing the best possible services to its clients.

The goal of this project was to develop policies and guidelines that will help in meeting the standards set by PQASSO in the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. In each of these four areas, we evaluated the current policies and practices in place at Prisoners Abroad and determined what changes needed to be made to these policies in order to comply with the PQASSO standards. Studies of the policies of similar organisations provided useful information for developing successful policies for Prisoners Abroad. We developed specific policies and guidelines for Prisoners Abroad from the information we gathered. Completion of our project was achieved when these plans were approved by Prisoners Abroad and ready for implementation at the organisation.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 PRACTICAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR SMALL ORGANISATIONS

A quality assurance system is “a systematic approach to identifying and responding to the needs of your users by providing an appropriate service consistently and to agreed standards” (PQASSO 1997). The Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO) is intended for voluntary or service organisations, but self-help organisations, campaigning, and research organisations can also find it useful. The PQASSO workpack is a system designed to help organisations “improve the quality of their service and to meet the growing expectations of their users” (PQASSO 1997). Refer to Appendix B for selected sections of the PQASSO workpack. Organisations use this workpack to develop their own quality assurance systems.

2.1.1 The Benefits of PQASSO

The PQASSO quality assurance system is beneficial to organisations and is an important management tool. It establishes set criteria for quality, provides an organisational self-assessment, and enables the organisation to prove its achievements. The PQASSO system also supports continuous improvement, helps the organisation focus on quality improvement, and supports prevention rather than correction. PQASSO helps:

- “Keep your values at the forefront of your work
 - Induct new staff and volunteers
 - Support front-line staff
 - Provide agreed levels of service consistently
 - Provide a path for continual development”
- (PQASSO 1997).

2.1.2 The Quality Areas

Sixteen areas of quality are important to voluntary organisations. The PQASSO work pack treats each of these areas. The areas of interest for this project are resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues and equal opportunities. Each area comes with a standard against which an organisation can measure its progress. In the quality area of managing resources, the intention of the standard is to aid managers in ensuring that “physical resources support the delivery of a high quality service” (PQASSO 1997). Physical resources cover all that is necessary for the delivery of a service. These resources include premises, equipment, transport, information technology, food, and suppliers. The quality area of monitoring and evaluation deals with performance measurement and the conclusions drawn from these data. An organisation can also use monitoring and evaluation as evidence of success to funders. The area of environmental issues makes sure an organisation is complying with local environmental laws and is proactively caring for the environment. The last focus area of quality we address in this report is equal opportunities. This area addresses anti-discrimination legislation.

2.1.3 The Levels

Each quality area is divided into three levels of assessment. All organisations should aim to achieve level one in all the quality areas relevant to the organisation. The organisation should move on to levels two and three gradually to ensure continuous improvement. According to PQASSO, level one will take one year to eighteen months to complete. Once level one is met, an organisation can move on to level two if resources and funding allow. This level is more advanced than level one and it assumes that all the criteria of level one have been met. The highest level, level three, is a progression from level two. This level puts a greater “emphasis on

establishing systems to review and evaluate your work” (PQASSO 1997). Level three also assumes that an organisation has met all of the criteria for levels one and two (PQASSO 1997).

2.2 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Most companies are made up of owners, executives, managers, and employees in relation with customers, suppliers, and subcontractors. A business’s use of a quality system promotes confidence between all these groups so as to satisfy each other’s requirements. All firms need a quality system to verify the fulfilment of their own activities in order to win the confidence of the targeted customer in an effective and efficient manner (Todorov 1996).

During the last few decades, experts have been interested in finding methods that would help buyers of goods and services have greater confidence in the quality systems of their suppliers. Experts agreed that there was a need for more effective methods of ensuring product quality before delivery, instead of finding defects too late. This is why quality assurance and management systems were developed (Tibor and Feldman 1996).

Among the quality assurance systems, there is the widely adopted ISO series. ISO stands for International Organization for Standardization and it is based in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a specialised international organisation whose members are the national standard bodies of 111 countries. ISO standards facilitate international trade by increasing the reliability and effectiveness of goods and services (Tibor and Feldman 1996).

2.2.1 Development Process of a Management System

ISO follows a few key principles in its standards development process. Included is consensus, which is taking the views of all interests (manufacturers, vendors and users, consumer groups, governments, engineering professions, and research organisations) into account. Also

included are industry-wide principles; this means that one of the goals is to draft standards that satisfy industries and customers worldwide. In addition, the key components include voluntary principles. International standardisation is market-driven and therefore based on voluntary involvement of all interests in the marketplace (Tibor and Feldman 1996).

ISO technical committees (TC) develop international standards through a five-step process. The first two stages are the proposal and preparatory stages. Then comes the committee stage, the approval stage, and then finally the publications stage. The proposal stage confirms the need for a new standard, and the preparatory stage involves groups of experts developing drafts of the proposed standards. When these drafts are completed, they are forwarded to the subcommittee and advanced to the committee stage. During the approval stage, the standards circulate to all ISO member bodies for voting and comment within a period of six months. The final stage is publication. If the standard is approved, a final text is prepared, incorporating comments submitted during the approval stage. The final text is sent to the ISO Central Secretariat, which publishes the International Standard.

2.2.2 ISO 9000

The ISO 9000 series includes generic standards for quality management and quality assurance. The basic rationale of ISO 9000 is that consistently meeting specifications for quality products and services depends partly on implementing and maintaining a systematic quality system. The ISO 9000 family is a set of twenty independent guidelines and standards for the establishment, improvement, support, and registration of quality systems. The universality of the ISO 9000 guidelines and standards allows for their use in all business sectors. The structure includes the quality terminology, the principal concepts of quality, the quality system models, and guidelines for quality systems support.

The ISO 9000 guidelines illustrate the five key objectives for quality in an organisation. These objectives are quality improvements of products, quality improvement of processes, personnel confidence, customer and stakeholder confidence, and fulfilment of the quality system requirements (Todorov 1996).

2.2.3 ISO 14000

It is very important for businesses to be environmentally friendly. The development of an environmental management system is necessary for this achievement. ISO 14000 is an environmental management system. This system is similar to the ISO 9000 but it is specifically for environmental management issues. An environmental management system, often referred to as an EMS, includes creating an environmental policy, setting objectives and targets, implementing a program to achieve those objectives, monitoring and measuring its effectiveness of the programme, correcting problems, and reviewing the system to improve environmental performance (Tibor and Feldman 1996).

An effective environmental management system can help a company manage, measure, and improve the environmental aspects of its operations. It can lead to more efficient compliance with mandatory and voluntary environmental requirements. By doing this, it can “help companies effect a culture change as environmental management practices are incorporated into its overall business operations” (Tibor and Feldman 1996).

There are many reasons why a company or organisation should implement an environmental management system. There is a worldwide trend to focus on better environmental management. Several nations have developed national standards for environmental management systems, such as the United Kingdom’s BS 7750. Then there are regional initiatives such as the European Union’s Eco-Management and Audit Scheme regulation (EMAS), and over two dozen

nations have developed environmental labelling programmes. This shows how environmental management has gone from an add-on function to an integral part of business operations. Also it can be very profitable to implement an efficient management system (Tibor and Feldman 1996).

2.3 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Organisations must evolve with changing times in order to remain successful. Well thought out and planned strategies are necessary for the implementation of new policies in an organisation. Strategic planning is “the disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organisation (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it” (Bryson 1995). Strategic planning is used by non-profit and public organisations to examine the environment, explore the factors that affect how business is done, identify strategic issues that must be addressed, and find ways to address these issues (Alston and Bryson 1996).

The process of strategic planning is used to plan out any potential changes to ensure they can be properly executed. Strategic planning should begin with an evaluation of the current situation to determine exactly what changes are necessary and what would be the best method to make these changes. According to Bryson, “[a]n effective external and internal environmental assessment is necessary for the organization[;] it will produce information that is vital to the organization’s survival and prosperity. It is difficult to imagine that an organization can be truly effective over the long haul unless it has an intimate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses in relation to the opportunities and threats it faces” (1995).

The process of strategic planning can be a lengthy one. “An organization typically has to go through more than one cycle of strategic planning before it can develop an effective vision for itself” (Bryson 1995). Once strategic planning is complete, the benefits reaped by the organisation will be well worth the effort expended on the process. These benefits include

“increased effectiveness, increased efficiency, improved understanding and better learning, better decision making, enhanced organizational capabilities, improved communication and public relations, and increased political support” (Alston and Bryson 1996).

Implementation of strategic planning is the most important step in the process. Implementation completes the step from strategic planning to strategic management. Whenever possible, changes that are going to be made should be easily and rapidly introduced. To ensure this transition, the changes should be administratively simple, requiring minimal reorganisation and retraining, and also relatively simple to grasp in practice. Newly introduced changes should be monitored and evaluated to ensure they are running as smoothly as anticipated. An organisation should make alterations to the strategic plans if they are not living up to expectations (Bryson 1995).

2.4 MANAGING RESOURCES

Resource management is crucial to ensure the efficient running of a business. Resources can include the premises, equipment, transportation, information technology, food, and the suppliers of the business. There are many ways an organisation can manage its resources in an effective manner. These include effective purchasing practices, stock control, and record keeping.

2.4.1 Purchasing of Supplies

There are many ways to manage purchasing within a business. Wise practices include estimation of annual needs, competitive bidding, and blanket orders. A business should estimate its needs annually and group these needs in terms of the suppliers of resources. In competitive bidding, a business gives lists of their supplies to different vendors and seeks the lowest bid. The

business will then negotiate with the vendors until it obtains the lowest price for each item.

Blanket orders can also help a business run more economically. Blanket orders include special terms regarding the prices, quantities, and stock amounts held by the vendor for delivery upon request. If a business wants to have certain quantities of items released against the blanket order, it must fill out a special request form (Aspley 1967).

When purchasing resources, it is important to consider the quality of the supplies. For example, when purchasing paper, businesses must consider the grade and weight. Using heavier paper for mailings can increase postage bills. Substantial savings are made when using a lighter paper for mailings. Paper grade and weight are also important in the consideration of the printing of business forms. According to the Dartnell Corporation (1967), rag paper is best for legal papers and standard grade is best for letterheads, forms, and reports. Also, businesses should always provide their employees with scrap paper to prevent the use of more expensive paper for notes.

Another important consideration in the purchasing of supplies is economy. Purchasing economy means buying inexpensive goods without sacrificing the quality of the products. This consideration can save both money and time. According to the Dartnell Corporation (1967), office supplies such as paper clips, staples, pencils, and pencil sharpeners should be of good quality. Better quality paper clips and staples means there will be less chance of burrs that can catch or tear paper. Pencils of better quality last longer and write more smoothly, and better quality pencil sharpeners will make pencils last longer.

Office supplies are not the only resources an organisation purchases. Purchasing procedures and practices should also extend to office equipment. In planning for a new piece of equipment, a business needs to justify the need for the purchase. Some justifications might be to

produce records, to reduce labour, or to provide information important to the organisation. According to Heyel (1972), some factors to consider in selecting equipment include function, employee requirements and preferences, quality of the equipment, and availability. Equipment should also be uniform throughout the organisation to reduce employee training and to simplify maintenance and repair.

2.4.2 *Stock Control*

To prevent waste, excessive use, and theft of office supplies, many organisations feel they must establish some sort of control. One way of controlling office supplies is by locking them in a cabinet in a central stockroom. Then, once a week, the office delivers the necessary supplies to each department. Another way is to evaluate the usage of office supplies in each department and determine if the usage is reasonable. Businesses do this by comparing current and previous usage. Lastly, it is vital for a company to protect the quality and life of the office stock by knowing how to store items. For example, store items containing ink in the upright position, and store elastics in a dark, cool place (Aspley 1967).

2.4.3 *Record Keeping*

Record keeping is an efficient way to manage an organisation's resources. According to Heyel (1972), the chronological sequence for effectively managing records is to control, evaluate, simplify, educate, implement, and then review. The first step includes "the control of content to insure responsiveness and avoid duplication, the control of self-evaluation (feedback) to regulate improvement, and the control of cost levels to sustain profitability." Evaluation requires organisations to review their current records, as well as storage facilities, to determine what changes are necessary. Then in the simplification process an organisation rewrites,

reconstructs, and redesigns the records and storage facilities. In this step, any unneeded duplicated records should be eliminated. Next, it is necessary for an organisation to educate personnel on the new records and organisation of them before implementing the records management system. Lastly, an organisation should review, or test and monitor the new system. This may include the introduction of fictitious data to identify weak points.

Efficient record keeping includes having maintenance records on office equipment. It is imperative to maintain records for each piece of office equipment within an organisation, and keep these records all in one place. Each record should reveal the location, purpose, and date of purchase of the equipment. Serial numbers, model numbers, manufacturer, and cost are also important pieces of information to include in an equipment maintenance record.

2.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure the efficiency of an organisation it is necessary to monitor and evaluate its practices to determine when changes are necessary. Evaluation is necessary to ensure that successful practices continue and that less adequate practices can be improved.

Evaluation of employees is also necessary for any business. An organisation should perform regular employee evaluations to monitor the work of the employees, and methods of improvement should be recommended whenever necessary. Employee evaluations are commonly known as performance appraisals. The immediate supervisor of the employee usually completes these appraisals. However, other people including higher-level supervisors, peers, or even subordinates can complete performance appraisals. Often peer appraisals are completed when management is looking for information on an employee's "contributions to work on group projects, interpersonal effectiveness, the ability to communicate, reliability and initiative" (Leap 1989). Performance appraisals should be performed several times a year. Feedback should

always be provided to the employee, along with suggestions for improvement. Criticism should be kept to a minimum in performance appraisals.

The Performance Appraisal Process, according to Leap, has five major steps. One must review equal opportunity legal requirements, determine the uses for the appraisal information, establish, design and implement the evaluation system, examine the appraisal data and fair employment requirements, and use the appraisal data for appropriate purposes (1989).

According to H. John Bernardin, an organisation should conduct performance appraisals once or twice a year. These appraisals should be kept short, so they do not interfere with the duties of the employee and the appraiser (Berk 1986). One reason for performance appraisals is that they justify managerial actions towards employees. A poor performance appraisal can be grounds for dismissal from a job, and written account of this appraisal protects the management from any accusations of unfair treatment of employees.

There are many available performance appraisal-rating formats. Each format has advantages and disadvantages. However, there are formats that are better suited for different purposes. Examples of appraisal rating formats include the essay appraisal, graphic rating scale, and critical incident method (Douglas 1985).

The essay appraisal is a judgement of an employee put into a narrative form. It usually describes the behaviours of the employee. This appraisal method is very subjective. An advantage of this method is that it provides detailed information about the employee (Douglas 1985).

Graphic rating scales are a very common appraisal method. These are composed of questions about the employee that can be answered with a numerical ranking. The ranking performance appraisal is a method of ranking employees in specific behavioural dimensions.

The disadvantage of this method is that people can not always be ranked. Furthermore, the difference between each ranking is falsely assumed to be equal (Douglas 1985).

The critical incident method describes the behavioural incidents of an employee and then decides which are the most critical. Behavioural Observations Scale (BOS) is an example of a rating scale. It ranks employees based on determined behaviour dimensions using rankings ranging from “almost always” to “almost never” (Douglas 1985).

2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

In current times, it is important for everyone to be environmentally conscious in all areas including energy and waste management. The energy consumed in residential and commercial buildings provides many services, including weather protection, thermal comfort, communications, facilities for daily living, aesthetics, and a healthy work environment. Since in modern society people spend the vast majority of their time inside buildings, the quality of the indoor (or built) environment is important to their comfort, and the thermal performance of buildings is important for energy efficiency as well as worker productivity in commercial buildings (Kreith and West 1997). There are many techniques for conserving and managing energy, including control of thermostat settings and lighting methods.

2.6.1 *Energy Conservation*

According to Kreith and West, poor indoor environments can be generally divided into three categories: inadequate thermal comfort, unhealthy environments, and poor lighting (1993). Manifestations of poor productivity can be characterised by worker illness, absenteeism, distractions and drowsiness, or lethargy at work as well as by defects and mistakes in

manufacturing and routine office work. Along with the benefits of energy conservation, these are legitimate reasons why efficient lighting and thermal control should be adopted.

One of the first control-related concerns is that of thermostat temperature setting. By raising the thermostat setting to 27°C in the summer and lowering it to 18°C in the winter, the energy consumption for both heating and cooling will be dramatically reduced compared with a setting of 24°C all the time (Turner 1993). This energy consumption decrease will lead to a decrease in energy bills.

Windows also affect the temperature of a building. Windows influence building energy consumption in three different ways: Heat is conducted through windows in the same manner as through walls. Windows absorb and transmit solar radiation, where it is absorbed by the inside air. Also, air leakage around windows increases infiltration loads (Kreith and West 1997). In order to maintain the temperature inside of a building, windows should be insulated to minimise air leakage around the windows. The use of blinds can reduce or increase the heat that is conducted through the windows. This technique can utilise solar heat in the cold months and reduce the heat received from the sun in the warmer months.

Another method of energy conservation is to evaluate lighting techniques in order to identify areas that can be improved and thus significantly reduce an agency's energy consumption. Building occupants require sufficient light levels to go about their normal activities. The desire to continue activities at any time and place necessitates the use of electric lighting (Kreith and West 1997). Kreith and West also comment that windows play a role in the use of electric lighting since they also let in visible light, reducing the need for electric lighting. Evaluating the installation and use of the present lighting systems is one of the first steps in conserving energy. The recommended procedure for analysing a lighting system is to conduct a

survey of the building to determine what is in place (Turner 1993). After analysing the current techniques, the next step is to start organising modifications of the existing systems. There are two alternatives in changing the system: a modification of the existing system or a replacement of one system with another. As Turner states, modifying is the simplest way of achieving energy savings.

A good approach to improving the current lighting in a building, is to modify the present lighting, rather than replacing the entire system (Turner 1993). Because the purpose of a lamp is to produce light, and not just radiated power, there is no direct measure of lamp efficiency. Instead, a lamp is rated in terms of its efficacy, which is the ratio of the amount of light emitted to the power drawn by the lamp (Kreith and West 1997). The families of lamps are incandescent, fluorescent, high-intensity discharge, and low-pressure sodium (Turner 1993). Depending on the purpose of the lamp, one should choose the option that is most efficacious.

2.6.2 *Recycling*

Recycling is a simple process that can help resolve many of the problems created by our modern way of life. Non-renewable resources are clearly saved when recyclable materials are employed in the manufacturing process. Renewable resources, like trees, are also saved in the short run. Producing recyclable materials reduces energy consumption because the materials can be reused. When this energy reduction is in the form of fossil fuels, there is less acid rain produced, and a decreased greenhouse effect (Powelson and Powelson 1992). In short recycling makes sense. It is important for every individual, business, government, and industry to make a commitment to recycling (Powelson and Powelson 1992).

One way to achieve the goals of a recycling programme is to reduce or eliminate solid waste. Businesses can most easily reduce solid waste generation in transport packaging. Offices

can save paper by increasing the use of double-sided copying and using electronic mail as an alternative to paper memos (Ackerman 1997).

An office recycling programme is appropriate for business and government and for small and large organisations. It is also a major feature in demonstrating the commitment of an organisation to environmental improvement. A maximum office effort will include collecting recyclable materials and using products made of recyclable and recycled materials (Powelson and Powelson 1992). Also in the list of things that should be recycled in an office, Powelson and Powelson include aluminium cans, office paper, files and records, glass, newspaper, magazines, telephone books, laser cartridges, and printer ribbons.

Small offices may not generate enough office paper for a scrap dealer/processor to pick up on an ongoing basis; instead they may pick up large quantities of stored material. Another option is that material can be collected and dropped off at a recycling centre personally (Powelson and Powelson 1992).

2.6.3 Planning and Implementing Environmental Programmes

Planning and implementing an environmental programme in the work place involves many considerations. Duston considers that in the area of recycling, careful planning, together with a well thought-out educational programme, is often all that is needed to generate strong support at the office (1993). “Surveys of the attitudes and perceptions of the people who need to support the program should be performed since recycling is a team activity, and, ideally, it is an activity that everyone will support” (Powelson and Powelson 1992). “Several planning meetings ought to devote time to studying what is being done with the various materials in the waste stream. Even where there is no recycling, it is likely that certain difficult materials are separated out for specialised disposal” (Duston 1993). This shows the importance of evaluating the current

practices and attitudes of the work place as a first step. Duston believes that an important educational tool is a well-designed recycling pamphlet (1993). This can be distributed before recycling officially begins in order to get people thinking about it. After the evaluation and planning steps are completed, the implementation of the programme can begin. To implement a new recycling programme, Powelson and Powelson suggest assigning responsibility for the operation of the programme and designating a leader. After the responsibility is delegated, an organisation can establish measurable goals for the programme that reflecting the specific objectives. Prior to this, execute the start-up phase, including publicity, education, and training; if equipment is involved, it should be put in place and made operational. To ensure that the programme is running smoothly, monitor and evaluate success and make adjustments to improve effectiveness. If high standards are maintained for the programme, opportunities for improvement will be discovered constantly.

2.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In order to offer equal opportunities, an organisation should keep within the law and ensure that recruitment, induction, and promotion within their organisation is based only on an individual's ability and merit (NCVO 1998). According to British law, it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, nationality, or ethnic origin. Beyond legal responsibilities, it is also good practice for organisations to prevent discrimination on grounds of age, religion, and HIV/AIDS status.

"Illegal discrimination exists when members of a protected group have a lower likelihood of being recruited, selected, given merit raises, or receiving other favorable treatment, although the probability of their performing successfully on a job is the same as it is for individuals not belonging to a minority group" (Leap 1989). There are two types of discrimination, indirect and

direct. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others are, or would be treated in similar circumstances. Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is applied equally to people of all genders, but fewer people of a particular group are able to comply with it (NCVO 1998).

2.7.1 Legislation

The Equal Pay Act 1970 prevents gender discrimination. The Equal Pay Act 1970 states that “it is unlawful for an employer to offer different terms and conditions of employment or rates of pay where male and female employees are engaged in like or similar work” (NCVO 1998). If an Industrial Tribunal finds that an employer fails to abide by the Equal Pay Act 1970, the employer may have to pay compensation.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 prevents gender and marital status discrimination. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 applies to both men and women. It states that “it is an offence for an employer to discriminate or fail to prevent discrimination against an employee because of his or her gender or marital status” (NCVO 1998).

According to studies done in Britain, “institutional discrimination is evident when the policies and activities of public and private organisations, social groups and all other types of organisations in terms of treatment and outcome result in inequality between disabled people and non-disabled people” (Barnes 1991). The Disabled Person’s (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958 prevent discrimination by stating “an employer must employ at least three per cent disabled people if their organisation has more than 20 staff” (NCVO 1998). The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 also states that “it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against job candidates with disabilities” (NCVO 1998). The act also requires employers to make

reasonable adjustments if the organisation's premises put disabled employees and potential employees at a disadvantage.

The Race Relations Act 1976 specifies a number of parameters that a business should follow to prevent discrimination in the work place. These parameters are against discrimination but not prejudice. Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably based on a characteristic, such as his or her appearance or skin colour. This differs from prejudice in the aspect that prejudice is pre-judging a person, because of this characteristic. The Race Relations Act 1976 also recommends that employers monitor the race and ethnic composition of their existing workforce and job applicants by department, section, shift, and job category to assess whether their organisation is providing equal opportunities (Coombes and Hubbuck 1994). If a person believes that he or she has been discriminated against, this person has the right to take the employer to an employment tribunal.

The Race Relations Act includes all areas of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), and there is a different Race Relations Order, which applies to Northern Ireland (NCVO 1998). The coverage of the Race Relations Act 1976 includes all areas of employers, regardless of size, all employees, and all aspects of employment.

The Race Relations Act 1976 also includes policies about positive discrimination. Positive discrimination occurs when an employer attempts to vary the balance of the ethnic composition of the workforce by selecting someone mainly because she or he belongs to a particular ethnic group. This is also considered discrimination on racial grounds and it is unlawful. According to the Race Relations Act 1976, the purpose of positive action is to ensure that people from previously excluded minority groups can compete on equal terms with other

applicants. It is intended to compensate for the accumulated effects of past discrimination. Selection itself must be based on merit and treat all applicants equally (NCVO 1998).

A key indicator of racial discrimination is under- or over-representation of an ethnic or racial minority by an employer. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) recommends that employers classify employees and job applicants by racial and ethnic origin according to the following groups: black (Caribbean or African), Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese or other), or other. This classification should be completed separately for each job group: professional and managerial, intermediate and clerical, skilled manual, semi-skilled manual, and unskilled. Assessment of the representation of minority groups is done by the classification of these groups (Coombes 1992).

2.7.2 Best Practices

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) recommends practices for voluntary organisations to follow in the area of equal opportunities. These practices include a policy statement, recruitment, and monitoring procedure.

NCVO recommends an organisation have a policy statement for equal opportunities, although not required by law. A policy statement should be “relatively short, general, and be visible to all employees in an organisation and to job applicants” (NCVO 1998). The statement should have the support of management and the responsibility of the senior manager. The organisation should include the written statement in agreements and monitor it regularly (NCVO 1998). NCVO also suggests the equal opportunities policy be part of awareness training.

In terms of recruitment, NCVO has suggestions concerning advertisements, employment applications, and interviews. Job descriptions should not refer to non-essential experience or qualifications that can lead to direct or indirect discrimination against some candidates.

Employers should also display and promote job advertisements both internally and externally. Job advertisements should be visible to all employees and in diverse press. Employers should utilise the services of agencies such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind Education and Employment Network or the Employment Service Disability Service Team. Employers should also consider radio and talking newspapers. All applications should include a copy of an organisation's equal opportunities policy, job description, and specifications. Applications should also be available in large print and Braille. The interview should be in an easily accessible location for disabled candidates, and the timing of the interviews should be flexible for those candidates with family commitments. Interviewers should treat candidates equally and select individuals on the basis of relative merits and abilities (NCVO 1998).

To monitor equal opportunities in the area of recruitment, NCVO suggests including a questionnaire with application forms. This form will help monitor age, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, colour, race, religion, nationality, and ethnic or national background of candidates. The questionnaire will also "enable the organisation, after selection, to determine the types of people who applied for a particular post and those who were short-listed so that future advertising can be adjusted to avoid discrimination" (NCVO 1998).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Weeks 1-2:

In the first two weeks we focused on identifying the current policies and practices of Prisoners Abroad. It was important for us to understand the current policies and practices to determine where improvements are necessary to achieve the standards set by PQASSO. To achieve this, we distributed a questionnaire to all Prisoners Abroad employees and conducted interviews with two employees. Once we received the information from the employee questionnaires and the two interviews, we knew what to focus on when developing new policies for Prisoners Abroad.

We gave each employee a questionnaire (see Appendix D) based on the self-assessment included in the PQASSO packet on 19 January 2000. Attached to this questionnaire was a memo explaining its purpose and requesting its return at the employees' earliest convenience. This questionnaire asked the employees about resources, premises, working environment, equal opportunities, and monitoring and evaluation at Prisoners Abroad. The questionnaire helped us to understand the agency's current practices and identify areas that needed to be included in our policies.

We interviewed Sarah Piggott and Steve Szumski during week two of our project. We chose to interview these employees because of the positions they hold at Prisoners Abroad. We interviewed Sarah Piggott, Administrative Assistant, on 20 January 2000 (see Appendix F). This interview provided us with information about the current policies and practices for resource management. Steve Szumski, Casework Manager, was interviewed as well, on 24 January 2000, to inform us of the agency's policies regarding monitoring and evaluation (see Appendix F). Both of these interviews were informational and semi-standardised. A semi-standardised

interview is an interview with a set of predetermined questions; however the interviewer has the freedom to deviate from the set questions in order to help clarify the responses to the questions.

We contacted several equal opportunities and environmental groups to further educate us in policy writing for these areas. On 20 January 2000, we spoke with Joy Dyson, Human Resource Advisor of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). Following the telephone conversation, Ms. Dyson forwarded us information including sample policies of small organisations, methods for writing policies, and recommendations for best practice (see Appendix I). We also received information from the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Royal National Institute for the Blind offering advice on writing equal opportunities policies. In addition, the Equal Opportunities Commission supplied us with sample policies. We obtained information on environmental issues from Friends of the Earth (see Appendix I). Through this information, we learned more about recycling and energy conservation. This organisation helped to inform us of ways that Prisoners Abroad could become more environmentally conscious.

One recommendation of PQASSO is to recycle paper, bottles, and cans in the office. We gathered information from Bywaters Ltd. and Paper Round Ltd., two local recycling companies in order to research Prisoners Abroad's recycling options. From the information acquired, we recommended a recycling programme in the Environmental Plan (see 5.0 Recommendations) that is feasible for Prisoners Abroad.

The London Advice Service Alliance and Children's Friend supplied us with documentation of their current policies in the areas that relate to our project (see Appendix I). The London Advice Service Alliance is a non-profit organisation that provides services to advice and information providers. Children's Friend, a charity organisation in Worcester, Massachusetts, provides support to children and their families. From the documents we received

from the organisations, we derived preliminary policies and guidelines to best fit Prisoners Abroad.

Weeks 3-4:

Based on our acquired knowledge, we developed a set of preliminary policies in the areas of managing resources, environmental issues, and equal opportunities for Prisoners Abroad that enable the agency to comply with the PQASSO standards (see Appendix K). These preliminary plans focus primarily on the areas in need of improvement identified in the assessment of the practices and policies currently in place at Prisoners Abroad. The preliminary plans satisfy the requirements of the PQASSO standards and are designed to best fit Prisoners Abroad.

Since the success of a quality assurance program depends on employee involvement, we held discussion groups with the employees of Prisoners Abroad to understand their feelings about the preliminary set of plans (see Appendix G). It is our goal that the employees of Prisoners Abroad would approve the preliminary plans. However, employees made suggestions on our first draft of plans. Through discussion groups, we acquired feedback from employees to see if our plans matched their vision for change. Discussion groups allowed employees to interact with each other, express their opinions about our proposed plans of change for the organisation, and brainstorm for possible improvements. This was especially useful for the purposes of our project because suggestions from the employees were helpful for improvement of the policies.

We conducted two discussion groups in order to obtain a range of opinions from the employees. To form the groups, we inquired about convenient times for each employee. We then formed discussion groups based on employee availability. Prior to the discussion groups, we distributed a copy of the preliminary plans to each employee. This allowed the employees to

familiarise themselves with the plans and thus maximise our discussion time. Each discussion group lasted approximately one hour. One group member acted as the moderator of the discussion group to ensure maximum interaction amongst respondents. The other two group members were present to take detailed notes of the discussion group. The discussion group interview was also tape recorded.

We held a separate discussion group for the area of monitoring and evaluation because there are only several employees at Prisoners Abroad whose work involves monitoring and evaluation (see Appendix H). Presently, Prisoners Abroad is unsure of what they should monitor and evaluate to comply with PQASSO. The purpose of this discussion group was to identify areas that are currently being monitored and evaluated and identify areas that are in need of policies.

We also met with the Anti-Discriminatory Group at Prisoners Abroad. The Anti-Discriminatory Group is a group that previously existed within the organisation to deal with equal opportunities. We arranged weekly meetings with this group, starting in week three, to discuss the progress of the equal opportunities policy. The group gave us useful insight in each meeting on what needed changing and adjusting in the policy.

Following each discussion group, we spent approximately four hours transcribing the session. We read through each transcription in order to determine the suggestions of the employees. We organised the employee suggestions according to its relevant area. We then made revisions to the preliminary policies based on the employee suggestions.

Weeks 5-6:

During the fifth and sixth weeks at Prisoners Abroad, we conducted interviews with Carlo Laurenzi, Executive Director, and Steve Szumski to acquire feedback on the revised

policies and guidelines. We presented the preliminary plans to Mr. Laurenzi and Mr. Szumski because they hold positions at Prisoners Abroad that enable them to give us insight into any problems, such as feasibility, which helped us make improvements on our preliminary procedures and guidelines. These interviews were informational because the information we sought was factual. Before the interview, we informed the respondents that their honesty was necessary for the improvement of the proposed policies. It was important to involve the management of Prisoners Abroad, so that we developed policies and guidelines that would work for the organisation.

Based on employee and management feedback, we developed a final set of guidelines that allow Prisoners Abroad to reach the PQASSO standards (see 5.0 Recommendations). These guidelines cover the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. The guidelines will aid Prisoners Abroad to reach level three of the PQASSO standards.

After developing the final set of policies we finalised the report and prepared for the final presentation.

4.0 INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 GATHERED INFORMATION

The first step in completing our project involved gathering information from other organisations on the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. We received information from organisations that deal with specific areas of focus and from other charity organisations.

4.1.1 Children's Friend

We contacted Children's Friend, a charity organisation based in Worcester, Massachusetts. This organisation's services reflect the complex needs of a contemporary family. These services include professional mental health care, family-centred educational workshops, services for school-age mothers and their children, open adoptions, and promotion of child welfare services. It was a good organisation to contact because similar to Prisoners Abroad, they offer support services

Children's Friend provided us with information on their monitoring and evaluation policies (see Appendix I). From these policies, we learned that Children's Friend utilises a monthly monitoring system, which is the responsibility of the Client Service Specialist. Also, they issue an annual report to the Board of Directors as a summary of their activities and their progress. Children's Friend also suggested that organisations conduct satisfaction surveys with clients in order to understand the client's feelings about the services received and to obtain ideas about how to improve these services.

4.1.2 Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth is a world-wide non-profit organisation committed to reversing the harmful impact that mankind has on the environment. This environmental organisation provided us with information on “greening your work space” (see Appendix I). Friends of the Earth suggests that an organisation should first form an environmental committee responsible for making decisions that affect the environment. After this, an environmental audit should be carried out in order to determine the current status of the organisation. Friends of the Earth provided us with information on consultants that will perform an audit. Organisations should also reuse and recycle as much as possible and use recycled products whenever feasible.

According to Friends of the Earth, energy efficiency and conservation are also areas where organisations can take significant action. Friends of the Earth suggests turning down the heating to the necessary level, draft-proofing windows and doorways, and switching off appliances that are not in use in order to conserve energy. In addition, it is very important to improve staff awareness in order for the organisation to achieve its environmental goals.

4.1.3 Recycling Companies

We contacted local recycling companies to enable us to recommend a reasonable way for Prisoners Abroad to recycle paper, bottles, and cans. We received information packets from Bywaters, Ltd. and Paper Round, Ltd.

Bywaters, Ltd., located at Auckland Road, London, provides two types of services: contracted collection and next working day call off service. Contracted collection services allow for the collection day to be decided in advance. Next working day call off services allow for waste to be collected the next working day. Bywaters, Ltd. recycles paper, plastics, and glass. It

also provides security shredding. The documents we received, however, failed to mention the cost of recycling.

Paper Round, Ltd. is a non-profit company. It provides recycling pick up, but requires a minimum of 6 sacks of 50x50x100 cm for collection. These sacks must be placed in cardboard bins, which can be purchased for nine to ten pounds. The company recommends at least one bin for every ten employees. Paper Round, Ltd. also provides organisations with posters and memos to advertise recycling and a certificate detailing annual recycling achievements. The annual fee for weekly collection is £137.50, but there is a fifty-percent discount for charities and non-profit organisations. Paper Round, Ltd. recycles white paper, letterhead, and flip chart paper. The company also recycles printer inkjet and toner cartridges and aluminium cans. It does not recycle envelopes with windows, newspapers, magazines, and post-its.

From the information we collected on these two recycling companies, we decided to recommend a weekly collection from Paper Round, Ltd. We outlined this recommendation in the Environmental Plan in Chapter 5.4. If for any reason, this programme is not feasible for Prisoners Abroad, we suggested that the Environmental and Safety Committee find a more reasonable solution.

4.1.4 National Council for Voluntary Organisations

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) provides support services to voluntary organisations. NCVO provided us with recommended best practices, anti-discrimination legislation, sample policies, and a model for developing equal opportunities policies. The Literature Review section on equal opportunities (see Chapter 2.7) discusses the information regarding legislation and best practices. The sample policies for equal opportunities appear in Appendix I.

The model for developing an equal opportunities policy is a six-step process. First, an organisation should set its commitment and value base in order to draw up the main clauses of a policy. The organisation should then mention who will be affected by the policy and in what ways. This might include staff, trustees, and users. Thirdly, an organisation should think of the reasons for discrimination, such as race, colour, or sex. Organisations should also ensure their commitment to diversity. Next, the policy should state how the organisation will apply the policy in practice, such as recruitment, training, and access. Lastly, the policy should state how and when the organisation will monitor and review the policy.

4.1.5 Equal Opportunities Commission

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is made of more than 500 organisations including private and public companies, government bodies, local authorities, and voluntary organisations. The members of this organisation are committed to achieving equal opportunities for women and men in employment. We contacted this organisation since their work involves aiding voluntary organisations in achieving equal opportunities. We found this to be very helpful for Prisoners Abroad.

This organisation provided us with a publication that lists the criteria used to determine if an organisation is an equal opportunities employer. This includes the steps to becoming an equal opportunities employer and advice on monitoring.

According to EOC, there are ten essential steps to becoming an equal opportunities employer. The first step is to formulate an equal opportunities policy. Most policies will include a statement of commitment, the person who is responsible for the policy, and details on implementation. The second step is to assign the overall responsibility of the policy to management at the highest level and daily responsibility to line managers. However, EOC notes

that the commitment of all employees is important. Next, an organisation should ensure that all stakeholders and job applicants are aware of the equal opportunities policy. An Equal Opportunities Committee should be responsible for implementing the policy. EOC recommends that a person in a management position be put in charge of the group. EOC also recommends that the group should meet no less than four times a year and report to management annually. The responsibility of the Equal Opportunities Committee is to analyse information from the monitoring process, assess the information against the objectives of the policy, make suggestions for improvement, and determine the success of the changes based on these suggestions. The organisation needs to train their employees in equal opportunities. An organisation should also evaluate existing practices, policies, and procedures. Organisations should then gather information on employment to determine if the organisation provides equal opportunities. Monitoring equal opportunities is important, as well. This allows an organisation to determine where changes are needed and the progress of these changes. Lastly, organisations should remedy the effects of past discrimination by taking action.

Included in the publication from the EOC is advice for monitoring equal opportunities. The document states that an organisation should monitor personal information in order to ensure the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy. However, an organisation should not use this information in the selection process. There are three stages in the monitoring process: gathering information, analysing collected data, and developing a plan of action. Gathered information should include the numbers and positions of minorities in or applying for employment. The organisation should then analyse this information in order to determine where there is inequality and why. This will help the organisation develop a plan of action to overcome inequalities. Job application forms should refrain from asking discriminatory questions and make it clear to the

applicant that personal information will not be used in the selection process. The personal information should be used only to determine if the organisation is appropriately directing its programmes for recruitment. An organisation should perform an analysis of this information annually to ensure the organisation is offering equal opportunities.

4.1.6 Royal National Institute for the Blind

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) is a charity organisation that supports and assists those with visual impairments in finding employment. The organisation provided us with information on the Access to Work scheme and guidelines for recruiting blind and partially sighted persons.

The Access to Work (ATW) scheme is a Government scheme that provides help to disabled persons in overcoming the barriers experienced in the workplace. ATW allows many blind and partially sighted persons find or stay in employment by providing them with the support they need. The support provided by ATW includes adaptations to premises and equipment, special aids and equipment, support workers, travel to work, and communication support.

RNIB developed guidelines for recruiting visually impaired persons, so that organisations know what factors to consider and how to overcome apparent issues. For one, organisations should ensure that job descriptions do not have requirements that discourage those with visual impairments from applying. For this reason it is sometimes necessary for an organisation to restructure jobs. This involves replacing tasks that are impossible for blind or partially sighted persons with more reasonable duties. When trying to reach potential employees, organisations should make a specific person in charge of getting to know the community and contacting disabled people who want to apply for a job. Also, applications need to be easy to read. One

idea is to make the application form, job description, and specifications available in large print, tape, disk, or Braille.

4.1.7 London Advice Service Alliance

We obtained useful information from the London Advice Service Alliance (LASA) in the area of equal opportunities. LASA is a non-profit organisation that provides services and advice to information providers. This information included the organisation's equal opportunities policy (see Appendix I), which was very helpful for developing guidelines that would best fit Prisoners Abroad.

Included in the London Advice Service Alliance's policy were sections on recruitment and selection procedures, training support and development at LASA, communication and awareness, monitoring, and targeting. From these sections we learned different practices that LASA follows in order to comply with the equal opportunities laws and their quality standards.

In the London Advice Service Alliance's policy, we found several guidelines that would be useful for Prisoners Abroad. These guidelines include best practices for advertising an open position in the organisation to show the diversity of the organisation. An example is to use positive images in all advertisements. In addition, we found that the appointment of an equal opportunities group responsible for overseeing the compliance of the Equal Opportunities Policy by the staff is very important. We also obtained suggestions for the frequency of reviewing and updating an Equal Opportunities Policy and the frequency of training sessions for the staff and potential employees.

4.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

According to PQASSO, “a quality organisation manages its resources effectively, efficiently, and economically. Resources include premises, equipment, transport, information technology, food, and suppliers.” For the purposes of Prisoners Abroad, the Resource Management Policy only needs to include premises, equipment, and suppliers. The organisation’s information technology is included in equipment because there is not a large amount of it. The organisation does not serve food or provide transport, so this does not need to be mentioned in the policy.

We obtained information for developing the Resource Management Policy from the employee questionnaires and the interview with Sarah Piggott. We obtained feedback on the preliminary policy from discussion groups with Prisoners Abroad’s employees, management interviews, and a second interview with Ms. Piggott.

Questionnaires distributed to Prisoners Abroad employees provided us with insight as to the existing practices and policies at the organisation, as well as the concerns of the employees. We received back eighty-eight percent of the seventeen questionnaires as of 27 January 2000. For the area of Resource Management, the questionnaire asked the employees to comment on the availability of office resources (see Appendix E). Level one of PQASSO recommends that an organisation should provide the sufficient resources for the current level of service. From the questionnaire, we were particularly interested in knowing whether or not there are sufficient resources for the daily tasks the employees undertake. Eighty percent of the respondents feel that additional resources would enable them to complete their tasks. Employees most frequently commented on the condition of office equipment. About half of the respondents complained about the condition of the office furniture. These complaints addressed the fact that most of the

desks and chairs in the office are not the correct size and do not provide reasonable levels of comfort. A quarter of the respondents would like the Internet to be more accessible, and twenty percent of the respondents would like the ability to fax from their personal computers.

To obtain more information on the current practices for resource management at Prisoners Abroad, we interviewed Sarah Piggott, Administrative Assistant. Ms. Piggott is the person responsible for managing office resources at Prisoners Abroad. Level two of PQASSO recommends that an organisation maintain a stock control system and safe and secure storage of equipment and supplies. From our interview with Ms. Piggott, we learned that Prisoners Abroad does not have any specific policies in the area of resource management. When it comes to the storage of resources, each employee is responsible for his or her own supplies. Also, most of the office equipment is old and out-dated. The equipment is not regularly maintained; instead it is repaired when problems arise. Also, Prisoners Abroad does not have uniform equipment and software throughout the office. These inconsistencies can lead to complications in employee training and equipment maintenance and repair.

PQASSO recommends that basic records be kept on supplies and delivery and that purchasing policy and procedures are available, understood and used. Prisoners Abroad uses a regular supplier, Viking, for purchasing supplies. This supplier provides them with reasonable prices and the services they need, such as overnight delivery. Prisoners Abroad is a preferred customer with Viking, so they often receive discounts from this supplier. The organisation is happy with the services that this company provides; they do not wish to change suppliers.

In order to develop a preliminary policy for Prisoners Abroad for the area of resource management, we analysed the information that we received from background research, employee questionnaires, and the interview with Sarah Piggott.

From this analysis, we concluded that Prisoners Abroad does not have a written stock control policy. Therefore, we should specify guidelines for the implementation of a stock control system. One guideline is to designate a person who will make supplies accessible to the entire staff on a weekly basis. We learned that Ms. Piggott was already in charge of this task, but we considered that a guideline should be written in case someone else takes on this responsibility. Another guideline we considered appropriate is the utilisation of complaints and suggestions forms. Since we obtained many comments from both Ms. Piggott and the questionnaires about old and defective equipment, we thought that it would be a good idea for employees to be able to report any problems with the equipment. The responsible person could then take the necessary measures to solve these problems.

Another major theme in the questionnaire responses was the non-uniformity of equipment and software in the organisation. Many employees complained about having different word processors or computer programmes making it difficult to read documents from different computers. Based on these comments, we thought it would be a good idea to purchase equipment of the same brand. It would also help if the computer software was uniform and up to date. However, we did not suggest this on our preliminary policy because we understand that Prisoners Abroad has limited resources and it is not feasible for them to make a purchase of this magnitude.

From the employee questionnaires we also realised that the staff is very concerned with the security of the office. PQASSO recommends that the premises are safe and secure. A large percentage of the respondents to the questionnaire feel that the installation of a security camera would improve this situation. This is why we included in the guidelines that a surveillance

system should be installed to monitor the persons at the door and increase the security of the workplace.

Finally, we suggested that Prisoners Abroad should uphold smart purchasing practices. We considered this would be useful for the organisation since they are trying to save money in their purchases. We recommended that when purchasing supplies, Prisoners Abroad should consider buying in large amounts because this can lead to savings. They should try to achieve this without sacrificing the quality of the supplies or the relationship that they already have with their supplier, Viking.

From the suggestions made during the discussion groups, we realised that our preliminary policy needed only minor revisions. One of the revisions that we needed to make was linking the suggestion and complaints guideline in the Stock Control section of our policy to the Complaints and Suggestion Procedure already in place in the Employee Handbook.

We learned from the discussion groups that some employees do not feel that having a locked storage area was a practical idea. They thought it would not be possible to plan what supplies would be needed for the week. However, there were employees who thought this was a good idea because it would encourage employees to plan for the week ahead. Employees mentioned that the accessible storage should be completely filled once a week with frequently needed supplies. Since most employees opted for an unlocked storage area restocked weekly, we changed our preliminary policy to this. Some employees thought that requiring all staff members to notify the responsible person when the last of a supply was taken would be a sufficient measure for managing resources. Also, an employee mentioned that the person in charge of receiving deliveries should be made aware of any special or urgent deliveries expected. This is the reason why we included a guideline specifying this in the stock control section.

Also, our preliminary policy required that a list of emergency numbers be displayed in the office. An employee recommended that this list include the phone numbers of management in Prisoners Abroad, in case any problems arise.

Finally, an employee made a suggestion regarding the part about forms in the stock control section (see Appendix K). One employee felt that there were too many forms already, and more forms are not necessary. In our preliminary policy, we required forms for the request of an unusual item. To address this concern, we decided that we would include the unusual requests in the regular request forms in order to keep the number of forms to the minimum.

After making revisions to our policies, we met with Steve Szumski and Carlo Laurenzi to discuss our policies. Mr. Szumski suggested change the wording in our policy to read “will” rather than “should”. He felt that this would emphasise the importance of the policy. Mr. Szumski also recommended that we schedule a meeting with Ms. Piggott to receive feedback from her on the policy. We scheduled a meeting with Ms. Piggott for 22 February 2000. During the meeting with Mr. Laurenzi he noted that because Prisoners Abroad is a non-profit organisation they do not have a large budget for purchasing supplies. Often, the organisation chooses less expensive items rather than purchasing items that are of highest quality. Mr. Laurenzi suggested that we include in the policy that Prisoners Abroad researches using a non-profit supplier. However he was unsure if this would be feasible for the organisation. Other ideas that Mr. Laurenzi had were to include that Prisoners Abroad reviews the quality of suppliers, and that an audit trail be utilised for various products. To address the comments of Mr. Laurenzi, we included an item in our policy that provided for the annual evaluation of the service that is provided to Prisoners Abroad. As a result of this evaluation, Prisoners Abroad can research their options and changed suppliers when necessary.

Ms. Piggott made the final suggestions to the Resource Management Policy. Regarding the Premises section, Ms. Piggott suggested we state that Prisoners Abroad will post emergency telephone numbers in the office but not the management numbers. Because of confidentiality issues, only employees will have access to the management telephone numbers, which are in Prisoners Abroad's Employee Handbook. Another suggestion was to state that an employee needed approval by the line manager to order an unusual item. Lastly, Ms. Piggott wanted us to change the statement about forms for complaints and suggestions. Instead, the statement should refer to the Complaint and Suggestions Procedure at Prisoners Abroad. We decided that all of Ms. Piggott's suggestions were important to consider since she is responsible for managing the office resources at Prisoners Abroad.

4.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

According to PQASSO, "a quality organisation collects, collates, and analyses relevant information appropriately and systematically to assist review and evaluation by the staff, management, purchasers, funders, and users." Monitoring refers to collecting and collating information. Information needs, who collates and reviews the information, and what the organisation will do with the results must be specified. PQASSO recommends that an organisation maintain a simple monitoring system. This monitoring system should be built into working practice. The system should include an annual review of performance against targets and identify performance indicators for objectives.

For the area of monitoring and evaluation, we gathered information from other organisations, the monitoring and evaluation discussion group and an interview with Steve Szumski, to develop the policy. The discussion group provided us with an idea of what exactly

the employees of Prisoners Abroad were looking for in a policy and how that policy would comply with the PQASSO standards.

The discussion group for this area consisted of the employees who are responsible for collecting information for monitoring and evaluation in Prisoners Abroad. The purpose of this discussion group was to learn more about the current practices at Prisoners Abroad regarding monitoring and evaluation. There are currently no set policies for this area, however there is monitoring and evaluation within the organisation.

During the meeting, the employees tried to determine how exactly the PQASSO standards would apply to Prisoners Abroad for this area. They concluded that the organisation needs to determine the areas and methods for monitoring and evaluation. Also, Prisoners Abroad has to determine the information that is necessary in order to monitor and evaluate, how they will collect this information, and finally, what is going to be done with the acquired results.

Because monitoring and evaluation applies to many areas within Prisoners Abroad, the development of the policy needs to be done gradually. For this reason, the first draft of the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy is only an outline (see Appendix K). This outline includes areas within Prisoners Abroad that are in need of monitoring and evaluation and how this will take place. The organisation will need to incorporate performance indicators into the policy later. From the group, we were able to determine what areas needed to be included in the policy. The policy should include three major areas: services provision, personnel, and service users.

For the area of service provision, Prisoners Abroad needs to monitor and evaluate in order to provide quality services to its users. Each area of service within Prisoners Abroad needs a system of monitoring and evaluation. There are eight key objectives presently within the organisation that represent the key service aims for the organisation. These objectives are:

reduce hardship for clients returning to the UK; protect the health of their clients; ensure that all clients have access to information in English; monitor service provision aims and improve their service; improve the efficiency, style, and management of the organisation; influence government and other agencies to bring about structural change to improve conditions for prisoners, families, and returning clients; raise the public profile of Prisoners Abroad; reduce the isolation of clients and their families. Prisoners Abroad needs to determine methods for monitoring each of these aims. Currently, there are performance indicators that exist to measure the compliance of the organisation with the aims. The organisation needs to establish indicators for the areas in which they do not already exist and incorporate them into the policy. An employee also suggested that we should include research in the area of service provision of this policy. Research is done by Prisoners Abroad to improve the services that it offers. It produces valuable information for the organisation as a method of monitoring and evaluation.

The area of personnel includes monitoring the demographics of staff, volunteers, and trustees. This area will also include the demographics of all job applicants. Prisoners Abroad currently collects this information, however, the organisation does not use the information for evaluation. For this area, we consider that Prisoners Abroad should maintain a database of the demographic statistics of all staff, trustees, and volunteers. This database will enable the organisation to evaluate the current composition of the personnel.

The area of service users consists of clients and other users. Other users include families of clients, supporters, and pen pals. For this area, Prisoners Abroad currently collects and collates statistics regarding the organisation's clients through a distributed questionnaire. These statistics include gender, age, nationality, alleged offence, and ethnic origin, among others. A database is maintained on this information. However, PQASSO specifies that an organisation

needs to “analyse relevant information appropriately and systematically to assist review and evaluation by the staff, management, purchasers, funders, and users.” Prisoners Abroad must implement a system by which they can do this. Establishment of a method of evaluating this information is necessary. We will make this suggestion in our recommendations to Prisoners Abroad.

Also, during the discussion group an employee suggested presenting quarterly reports to management and staff. Review of quarterly reports to evaluate services would be a method of analysing the information that is collected. An additional staff meeting, held biannually to evaluate the current services provided and make the necessary modifications, would allow Prisoners Abroad to monitor and evaluate the organisation effectively.

Currently, Prisoners Abroad utilises several systems for monitoring and evaluation. These systems include: health promotion, client satisfaction survey, family research, casework audit, business and strategic plan review, evaluation of events by staff and attendees, client statistics, annual report, and quarterly review of business and management accounts. Employees requested that we include these current systems in the Monitoring and Evaluation policy.

Following the discussion group, we met with Steve Szumski and Carlo Laurenzi to discuss our policies. Mr. Szumski was pleased with the Monitoring and Evaluation policy. He felt that it gave a good framework for the organisation. The policy needs to be developed further, however that will need to be done by someone within the organisation. Mr. Laurenzi thought that the links between the policy and management responsibility should be defined in the policy. To address this concern, we included that staff would report monitoring and evaluation to the management group, and the management group would include this in their reports to the Management Committee.

From the data collected on monitoring and evaluation it is evident that Prisoners Abroad is in need of an organised system of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation is currently practised within Prisoners Abroad. However, it is necessary for the practices to become standardised in order for them to be beneficial to Prisoners Abroad.

4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

According to PQASSO, “a quality organisation adopts policies and practices which reflect its concern for the environment and the need to conserve the finite resources of the planet. It encourages all its staff, volunteers, and users to respect the environment.” This may include recycling where possible, waste reduction, energy conservation, and maximum use of environmentally friendly products.

We obtained information on environmental issues from environmental organisations, the employee questionnaires, and discussion groups. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 gave an outline of the responsibilities of an employer regarding workplace environment (see Appendix J). We analysed this information in order to develop a preliminary policy for Environmental Issues. The information obtained from Friends of the Earth was helpful because it included many suggestions on ways that an organisation can become environmentally friendly. Also, from the employee questionnaires, we learned the current environmental practices and the health and safety procedures in Prisoners Abroad.

In the employee questionnaires, we asked the staff about the organisation’s premises and working environment. A PQASSO standard is that “the working environment is safe, secure, and welcoming.” From the analysis of the data obtained we learned that the major concern regarding the environment is the temperature at which the office is maintained. About half of the respondents feel that the temperature in the office is not maintained at a comfortable level (see

Appendix E). Many employees feel that the office is too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer. From our research, we learned that office temperature should be kept at 18°C in the winter and 27°C in the summer. We included this suggestion in our Environmental Policy because it will help conserve energy and provide a comfortable working environment.

Another major theme that we found in the responses to the questionnaires was the current status of the office furniture. There were many complaints and suggestions about the comfort of the desks and chairs. Employees feel that the organisation should provide furniture that is ergonomically correct, since they feel that this is a safety issue. Employees would like the desks and chairs to be fit to the person that uses them. For this, we included a guideline about the comfort levels of office furniture. Since we realise that Prisoners Abroad works with a restricted budget, we specified that this should be addressed when it is feasible to the organisation.

Many comments were made in the employee questionnaires about the health and safety of the organisation. PQASSO requires that health and safety issues be addressed in an environmental policy. According to the Health and Safety at Work Act it is the responsibility of an employer to provide adequate first aid facilities and take precautions against fire including providing adequate means of escape and means for fighting fire. Employees noted that the organisation does not follow any fire safety and first aid procedures. We included in our preliminary policy that Prisoners Abroad should regularly conduct fire drills and at least one person should be certified in first aid.

Friends of the Earth sent recommendations about the formation of an environmental group with the responsibility of overseeing these guidelines and the compliance by the employees. We included a section in our preliminary policy about the establishment of an environmental and safety committee whose responsibility is to conduct workshops and reviews

of environmental issues with the staff to ensure that everyone is knowledgeable about the current issues and legislation.

One of the PQASSO standards for the area of environmental issues is to recycle paper, bottles, and cans in the office. Currently, Prisoners Abroad does not recycle. We contacted several local recycling companies to receive information on the recycling programmes that are available. We included in our preliminary policy that Prisoners Abroad will implement a recycling programme. The Environmental Plan includes further information on this programme (See 5.0 Recommendations).

After conducting the discussion groups, we made several revisions to the preliminary policies. One of the major concerns expressed in the discussion groups was individual responsibility. An employee suggested that we should specify that it is the responsibility of the individual employees as well as of the organisation to be conscious about the environment. As a result of this suggestion we included in the policy statement that it is the responsibility of all individuals to abide by the guidelines.

The preliminary policy also stated that employees should turn off all office equipment when it is not in use. We were made aware that the computers in the office are left on because of temperature fluctuations in the office. We suggested that the processing units could be left on, but the monitors should be turned off when not in use. From this conversation, the employees decided that we should specify what equipment should be turned off at the end of the day. This is why we included a list of the appliances that apply to this guideline and included the phrase, “when appropriate.”

Employees also made recommendations on the safety procedures. One recommendation in our preliminary policy was to conduct fire drills biannually. We were informed in one of the

discussion groups of the existence of a dangerous offenders drill as well. This drill is used to deal with an emergency involving a client in the Aftercare area. The employees felt that the organisation should conduct each of these drills biannually, so that one drill is held per quarter. We considered that conducting both drills was a good idea, and we included this in the policy.

In the area of first aid, some employees felt that having only one person certified in first aid was not enough. They suggested we should consider changing the guideline to at least two persons, in case one is not available. Also, an employee recommended that the policy explicitly state that these persons are officially certified. We considered this a good suggestion and included it in the policy.

Regarding recycling, we were informed that Prisoners Abroad has previously attempted to implement an office recycling programme. In the past, problems they have encountered are cost and the inability to have the waste collected. The recycling companies require a minimum amount of waste in order for them to collect. It would be necessary for someone from Prisoners Abroad to drop off the waste at the recycling centre because they do not have the facilities to store waste while accumulating enough for the recycling company to pick up. We recommended that Prisoners Abroad contact one of the other charity organisations that will be located in their new office building once they move. Co-operating with one of these other organisations would reduce the cost of a recycling programme and would also increase the amount of waste and the frequency of collection. During the discussion groups, the employees mentioned the issue of reusing scrap paper and envelopes. Currently, employees at Prisoners Abroad frequently print internal documents on the backside of previously used paper.

There was discussion of developing an environmental plan. This plan would outline the way by which the Environmental Issues Policy can be implemented. The employees felt that it

was very important for us to develop a plan to help the organisation and its staff achieve the goals set by our policy.

We met with Steve Szumski and Carlo Laurenzi to discuss the policy following the revisions we made based on employee feedback. Mr. Szumski was pleased with the policy; he did not have any suggestions for changes. Mr. Laurenzi was also pleased with the policy. In addition to a recycling programme for paper, bottles, and cans, Mr. Laurenzi asked if we had researched recycling office equipment that was no longer useful to Prisoners Abroad. To address this inquiry, we included the contact information of several organisations that recycle office equipment in Appendix L. Also, we learned that Mr. Laurenzi is interested in the development of guidelines for the health of the staff of Prisoners Abroad. Some ideas for these guidelines are to hold organisation outings and to promote the riding of bicycles to work rather than using public transportation. Mr. Laurenzi thought that ideas such as these would improve the physical condition of the employees, which will lead to better health. Mr. Laurenzi also mentioned acquiring a secure storage area for the bicycles, so employees do not have to worry about them while they are at work. Another suggestion was to contact a local gymnasium about obtaining a corporate discount for Prisoners Abroad. Also, he thought that it would be a good idea to have lockers and shower facilities available for the staff. We agree that these suggestions would benefit the health of the employees of the organisation, however they are beyond the scope of this project. These are issues that could be later addressed by the environmental and safety committee.

4.5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

According to PQASSO, “a quality organisation is committed to equal opportunities for all, leading to positive attitudes, policies, planning, action, and review across all aspects of its

work.” This includes encouraging respect for all people of different cultures, providing facilities for all abilities, using positive images in publications and publicity, and ensuring no unlawful discrimination in employment and service provision. An organisation should continually review equal opportunities issues with all personnel, provide training on equal opportunities, and implement changes when necessary.

We obtained information from various equal opportunities groups and sample policies from other organisations in order to develop a preliminary Equal Opportunities Policy. We met with the Anti-Discriminatory Policy (ADP) group at Prisoners Abroad weekly to discuss our progress with the Equal Opportunities Policy. Group members gave us feedback on our policy that allowed us to make revisions prior to the employee discussion groups. We analysed the information and revised our preliminary policies based on the feedback we obtained from the discussion groups and from ADP group meetings. One major concern emphasised by the groups was to keep in mind throughout the development of the Equal Opportunities Policy that Prisoners Abroad has limited resources. This should be made clear in the policy.

Among the equal opportunities groups that we contacted were the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Equal Opportunities Committee. These organisations provided us with information about legislation relevant to this area. We also contacted LASA and Royal National Institute for the Blind, two non-profit organisations, to obtain a copy of their equal opportunities policy so we then could derive a policy for Prisoners Abroad.

From the information gathered we learned that first, an organisation should set a goal for the policy and specify their commitment to abide by the Equal Opportunities Policy. This is why we included in the Policy Statement that Prisoners Abroad is committed to being an organisation that treats everyone equally. During a discussion group, one group member thought that the

wording of the Policy Statement of our preliminary policy should be more personalised to fit Prisoners Abroad.

Based on the information that we acquired, we decided to separate the Equal Opportunities policy into five major sections. These sections are Recruitment and Induction, Communication and Training, Monitoring, Implementation, and Service Provision.

Recruitment and Induction pertains to filling personnel vacancies within the organisation. Prisoners Abroad is currently in the process of developing a Recruitment Policy for the organisation, so the Equal Opportunities Policy only needs to refer to this Recruitment Policy and give some general guidelines for this area. The recommendations to advertise in diverse media outlets and include a copy of the Equal Opportunities Statement on application forms were made in NCVO Best Practices. An ADP group member suggested that we clarify the guideline about including the Equal Opportunities Statement in all publications because it is too long. Developing a shorter version of the statement would make it easier to include in all the organisation's literature.

The Communication and Training section outlines the methods by which Prisoners Abroad can convey that it is an equal opportunity organisation. This section also includes training of all personnel in equal opportunities. We found a large number of guidelines about advertisement in the sample policies. Also, PQASSO recommends that organisations publicise all events, jobs, and volunteering appropriately. For this reason, the policy we developed notes that all advertisements should include the Equal Opportunities Statement of the organisation and all advertisements should show a positive image that reflects the make-up of the organisation. We believe that this is a good way to demonstrate that the organisation is an equal opportunities

employer. During an employee discussion group, a participant suggested we mention the images reflect the diversity of the organisation rather than the composition of the organisation.

PQASSO recommends providing training on equal opportunities to all staff, volunteers, and trustees. In our preliminary policy we stated that Prisoners Abroad will “educate all current employees about equal opportunities...”. During a discussion group an employee suggested changing the word “educate” to “train.” In the policy, we included that this training should be completed within three months of induction. At Prisoners Abroad, employees go through a probationary period during the first three months of appointment to their position. After this period, the organisation decides whether to permanently appoint the person. We thought it would be appropriate to include the equal opportunities training as part of this probationary period.

Communication and Training also includes a guideline to create a working atmosphere that supports the needs of all staff members. During a discussion group, employees mentioned that presently the organisation is very aware of equal opportunities. The only thing that the organisation could improve is its accessibility to disabled persons. Presently, the current premises are not accessible. Prisoners Abroad will be moving to a different location by the end of April 2000. This location will be accessible to persons with disabilities.

The Monitoring section of the policy describes how Prisoners Abroad will monitor to ensure equal opportunities. Monitoring will enable Prisoners Abroad to evaluate the services of the organisation and make changes when necessary. During a discussion group, an employee suggested replacing the word “statistics” with the phrase “information obtained from the monitoring process” in this policy. From the ADP meeting on 4 February, we learned that Prisoners Abroad currently collects information on clients such as their ethnic origin; however,

they do not evaluate this information. We developed the policy to include statements on evaluating this information and included it as a responsibility of the Equal Opportunities Group. The ADP group also informed us that the Data Protection Act 1998 requires organisations to first obtain permission from clients in order to keep certain types of information about them.

The Implementation section describes the forming of an Equal Opportunities Group with Prisoners Abroad employees. The responsibilities of this group include enforcing the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy. A main theme in all the information that we gathered was the forming of a specific group with the responsibility of monitoring the equal opportunities practices in the organisation. We agreed with this recommendation, since the constant monitoring of the current practices can help ensure that the policy is being followed in all aspects. Also, a staff member suggested to include that the Equal Opportunities Group should meet with management and write a report annually and should monitor and evaluate the information quarterly. This was specified in our guidelines.

We added the area of Service Provision to our first preliminary policy after meeting with the Anti-Discriminatory Group on 4 February 2000. During this meeting, employees expressed concern that the original policy did not refer enough to services. They felt that in order to protect the organisation, the policy should state under what circumstances services will be denied. Group members suggested that this section of the policy refer to the Code of Conduct Policy of Prisoners Abroad. We should also connect the policy with the Complaints and Suggestion Policy of Prisoners Abroad so that a formal procedure for issuing complaints regarding service provision is defined. After presentation of the policy to employees through discussion groups, we received suggestions for several changes to this policy. Several employees suggested that we include a clause in this section for refusing services to a client or potential clients for breach of

conduct. The employees felt that some things were left unsaid such as the mentioning of the Abusive Clients and the Recruitment Procedure already set in the organisation. A staff member suggested that we change “British subjects” to “Briton.” Briton is the term that is commonly used by the organisation. We changed our preliminary policy based on these suggestions.

We met with Steve Szumski and Carlo Laurenzi to discuss the policy following the discussion group. Mr. Szumski recommended we change the guideline that specifies that the database will be updated annually, to “the database will be updated as information is received” in the Implementation section of the Equal Opportunities Policy. He also suggested including that the Management Committee review this policy annually. Mr. Laurenzi recommended that we include the organisation’s value statement in the Service Provision section of the policy. We acquired a copy of the value statement and added it to our policy. He agreed that it was a very good idea to train staff and potential employees on equal opportunities. However, he recommended that we develop a way to ensure that this information is well understood and practised by everyone. Our policy includes annual training for all staff in equal opportunities. Mr. Laurenzi believes that these equal opportunities seminars for the staff are very important, and it was a good idea to hold these for potential employees within the three-month probationary period.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that Prisoners Abroad use the following developed policies as part of their three-year plan for adopting PQASSO. The policies cover the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. Each policy is written with guidelines to aid Prisoners Abroad in achieving level three of PQASSO in the future.

5.1 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad will utilise a strategic plan for resource management to record the organisation's resources effectively. Resources include office supplies, equipment, and premises. This policy includes guidelines on stock control, purchasing, and premises.

Stock Control

To manage resources effectively, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Supplies should be kept in a central storage area. This area should be fully stocked on a weekly basis.
2. There will be a designated person who is responsible for making weekly supplies accessible to the entire staff and placing supply orders.
3. When an item is taken from the designated locked storage area it shall be indicated on an available stock sheet.
4. The person who places all orders for supplies should keep records of the items ordered, the date of ordering, and the quantity ordered. When the items are delivered, record of their receipt should be kept in the appropriate file.
5. All delivery details will be kept in an accessible location. When a delivery is received, the delivery details should be confirmed before signing for the order.
6. An employee must receive approval from their line manager in order to order an unusual stock item.
7. To place an unusually large stock order, a request should be made two weeks in advance.
8. Complaints regarding supplies should be issued in compliance with the Complaint and Suggestions Procedure.
9. In the event of equipment (i.e. computers, telephones, fax machines, etc) failure, an employee should immediately notify the designated person. The responsible person should then make arrangements for repair.

Purchasing Procedure

The supplies needed for the year ahead should be identified and planned for in the budget. In order to identify supplies needed for the year ahead, an annual record of supplies should be kept. A reserve fund should be designated within the budget for unexpected crises regarding resources (i.e. equipment repair).

Prisoners Abroad will use economic purchasing practices. This involves purchasing supplies needed to complete a task at the most reasonable price without sacrificing quality. Also, when storage space permits, supplies will be purchased in large quantities.

Prisoners Abroad will annually evaluate the services provided to them by their supplier. The organisation will research other options for supplies, and make changes to ensure higher quality service when necessary and feasible.

Premises

Prisoners Abroad will keep the premises safe and secure by:

1. Abiding by the Health and Safety guidelines included in the Environmental Issues Policy.
2. Maintaining a surveillance system in order to identify persons prior to admittance to the office.
3. Keeping emergency telephone visible in the office in the event of problems in the office. For emergency purposes, telephone numbers of management within Prisoners Abroad will be available in the staff handbook and on computers.
4. Keeping records of all keyholders.

5.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION POLICY

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad is committed to utilising a monitoring and evaluation system to ensure continuous improvement. This system enables the organisation to collect and collate detailed information on users, personnel, and services. Prisoners Abroad will evaluate the information obtained to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. The conclusions from the gathered information will be used to make the necessary changes for improvement.

Areas of Monitoring and Evaluation

The following areas will be monitored and evaluated:

Services provided

- Prisoners Abroad will regularly monitor and evaluate all services provided by the organisation. These services will be monitored to ensure quality service provision.
- Prisoners Abroad will use research to monitor and evaluate the services provided by the organisation.

Personnel (including job applicants)

- Prisoners Abroad will monitor the demographic statistics of all personnel. This includes staff, volunteers, and trustees. This information will be monitored to evaluate the makeup of the organisation.
- A database will be maintained that compiles demographic information of all personnel.

Service users

- Prisoners Abroad will monitor the users of the organisation's services. Databases will be kept on the demographic statistics of all clients. Records will also be kept on the services provided by employees. This includes contact between Prisoners Abroad and the clients and anything received from Prisoners Abroad.
- Prisoners Abroad will also monitor all other users of the organisation's services. These users may include but are not limited to families, supporters, pen pals.
- The service users of Prisoners Abroad will be evaluated so that the organisation may modify the services to fit its users best.

Other areas

- Other areas that Prisoners Abroad will monitor and evaluate are fundraising, administration, and projects.

Criteria for Monitoring and Evaluation

For each of the above areas, Prisoners Abroad must determine the following:

1. What is going to be monitored and evaluated?
2. How are we going to monitor and evaluate?

3. What information needs to be collected in order to monitor and evaluate?
4. How is that information going to be collected (including by whom)?
5. What is going to be done with the results?
6. How will the results be acted upon?

Key objectives

The following objectives have been set by Prisoners Abroad to represent the key service aims of the organisation.

1. To reduce hardship for clients returning to the UK
2. To protect the health of our clients
3. To ensure that all clients have access to information in English
4. To monitor service provision aims and improve our service
5. To improve the efficiency, style and management of the organisation
6. To influence government and other agencies to bring about structural change to improve conditions for prisoners, families and returning clients
7. To raise the public profile of Prisoners Abroad
8. To reduce the isolation of clients and their families

Each of the above objectives must be closely monitored and evaluated by the organisation. Performance indicators for each objective will be set by Prisoners Abroad.

Systems for Monitoring and Evaluation

The following are several systems Prisoners Abroad utilises for monitoring and evaluation.

1. Health Promotion
2. Client satisfaction survey
3. Family research
4. Casework audit
5. Business and strategic plan review
6. Evaluation of events by staff and attendees
7. Client statistics
8. Annual report
9. Quarterly review of business and management accounts

Reports on Monitoring and Evaluation

Quarterly reports must be made on all areas included in the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. These reports will be presented to the management group and all staff for discussion and review. The management group will incorporate monitoring and evaluation reports into their report to the Management Committee. The organisation will evaluate its services based on the quarterly reports.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES POLICY

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad recognises that the activities of the organisation and its individuals have an impact on the environment. We aim to reduce the impact of our own organisation on the environment through a programme of continuous improvement. The staff members of Prisoners Abroad have the responsibility to adhere to the following policy.

Implementing the policy

An environmental and safety committee will be formed. The responsibilities of this committee include:

1. Conducting an annual environmental awareness workshop in areas including fire safety, health and safety, and environmental issues.
2. Arranging an environmental training session for all new employees, trustees, and volunteers as part of their induction.
3. Conducting an annual review of all environmental policies and proposing changes when necessary to ensure continuous improvement.
4. Arranging an annual environmental audit.

Prisoners Abroad is committed to reduce waste by implementing a recycling programme to include paper, bottles, and cans, eliminating unnecessary purchases, and reusing as much as possible, where resources allow. This programme is outlined in the Environmental Plan.

The organisation and its staff aim to conserve energy by:

1. Draft-proofing the windows and doorways as outlined in the Environmental Plan.
2. Maintaining office temperature above 18°C in the winter and below 27°C in the summer.
3. Keeping workplace well lit with energy efficient lighting.
4. Turning off appropriate equipment such as photocopiers, printers, heating, lighting, and kitchen appliances when not in use.
5. Utilising screensavers for the computer monitors.

In order to maintain a safe working environment, Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Ensure that at least two employees are trained and officially certified in first aid.
2. Store a first aid kit in an easily accessible location.
3. Have fire department representatives inspect the premises regularly (including electrical wiring, fire extinguishers, and alarms).
4. Conduct fire drills biannually.
5. Conduct dangerous offenders drill biannually.
6. Post evacuation routes in necessary locations.
7. Immediately report work related injuries to the appropriate person.

8. Maintain neat and secure storage areas (e.g. shelves, file cabinets, bookcases, etc.). Individuals are responsible for maintaining neat and secure storage areas in their own work areas.
9. Provide office furniture that is ergonomically correct for the employees, as outlined in the Health and Safety Policy.
10. Provide materials to keep toilet and kitchen facilities clean. The staff members are responsible for keeping these areas clean.
11. Report any breaches of the Health and Safety Policy immediately to a line manager.

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to the preceding policy and guidelines, and it is the duty of the management to ensure that all employees abide by the policy.

5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN

In order to reduce the impact that Prisoners Abroad has on the environment, the organisation and its individuals will follow the plan of action outlined and the schedule specified in this document.

By June 2000:

1. Volunteers from the staff will form an environmental and safety committee. At least one member of the Management Committee will be part of this committee and the group will be made up of at least four people. The Environmental Issues Policy outlines the responsibilities of this committee.
2. Prisoners Abroad needs to inform all staff members and volunteers of who is certified in first aid and the location of the first aid kit.
3. Prisoners Abroad needs to inform all stakeholders of the fire escape routes and the locations of the fire extinguishers. The organisation also needs to post evacuation routes.
4. A committee member needs to hold fire and dangerous offenders drills biannually. It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to encourage everyone to participate.
5. The Environmental and Safety Committee chairperson needs to check that the office temperature is being maintained at the levels indicated in the Environmental Issues Policy.

By December 2000:

6. Stakeholders will need to decide upon a recycling scheme. This may be either the appointment of different staff members to take recyclable waste to a centre or the adoption of a recycling programme. The suggested recycling programme is a weekly collection from Paper Round, Ltd. This recycling company gives a fifty percent discount to non-profit and charity organisations. If this is not feasible for Prisoners Abroad, then it is the responsibility of the Environmental and Safety Committee to find a more reasonable solution.
7. The Environmental and Safety Committee should determine how to draftproof the windows and doorways. The committee should have this done, if feasible.
8. One member of the Environmental and Safety Committee should contact someone to inspect the premises for fire hazards regularly. A fire department representative may be able to inspect electrical wiring, fire extinguishers, and alarms.

By March 2001:

9. The Environmental and Safety Committee needs to ensure that Prisoners Abroad is using energy efficient lighting, by purchasing energy efficient light bulbs when current bulbs need replacing.

10. Prisoners Abroad will arrange to have an environmental audit done annually. ENDS
Environmental Data Services (Tel: 0171 278 4745) can provide a list of consultants who carry out these audits. Prisoners Abroad could also contact the Institute of Environmental Assessment (Tel: 0152 254 0069).

5.4 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad is committed to equal opportunities for all. Through this commitment, the organisation promotes positive attitudes, policies, planning, action, and review across all aspects of its work.

Prisoners Abroad will not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS status, or disability. The organisation will always comply with equal opportunities legislation. The equal opportunity policy of Prisoners Abroad covers the areas of recruitment and induction, communication, training, monitoring, and service provision.

It is the responsibility of the Management Committee to oversee and enforce the Equal Opportunities Policy. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of every individual in Prisoners Abroad.

Recruitment and Induction

Prisoners Abroad will always abide by the current equal opportunities legislation that applies to the organisation's work. Prisoners Abroad will always recruit using the guidelines stated by the Recruitment Procedure. These guidelines ensure that potential employees are selected on the basis of their skills and merits. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Advertise for open positions in such a way that the wording is not discriminatory or discouraging for applicants in a particular group. These particular groups include those of colour, race, religion, age, gender, disability, nationality, and ethnic or national origins.
2. Advertise vacancies in line with the Recruitment Procedure. Prisoners Abroad will advertise in diverse media outlets when feasible.
3. Include a copy of the equal opportunities statement on all application forms. Indicate that a copy of the entire equal opportunities policy will be available to applicants upon request.

Communication and Training

Prisoners Abroad will communicate to the general public, potential employees, clients and staff that the organisation is an equal opportunity employer. Prisoners Abroad takes responsibility for educating its employees about the Equal Opportunity Policy. All employees will be informed of their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the organisation regarding equal opportunities. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Include the Equal Opportunities Statement in all publications and literature.

2. Use positive images in all publications when appropriate to reflect the diversity of all stakeholders of the organisation.
3. Train all current employees about equal opportunities upon adoption of this policy and conduct an equal opportunities training session biannually.
4. Hold equal opportunities training sessions for all employees, trustees, and volunteers to attend within three months of induction. The purpose of this training session is to communicate the current equal opportunities policies of Prisoners Abroad.
5. Create a working atmosphere that supports the needs of all staff members.

Monitoring

Prisoners Abroad will ascertain that it is fulfilling its commitment laid out in the Equal Opportunities Statement through a monitoring process. Prisoners Abroad will use the information obtained from the monitoring process to evaluate the current procedures of the organisation and make the necessary improvements to these procedures. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Include a detachable questionnaire with job application forms inquiring age, gender, disability status, colour, race, religion, nationality, and ethnic background. This questionnaire will enable the organisation to monitor the types of people who applied for a position, and the people who were short-listed, so future practices can be adjusted to avoid discrimination. The personal information requested is not a factor in any stage of the selection process. The organisation will make this clear to all applicants.
2. Keep detailed profiles on each client, in provision with the Data Protection Act 1998.
3. Analyse the information produced by the monitoring process annually. This analysis will determine if the recruitment procedures and client services are directed appropriately.

Implementation

Prisoners Abroad will form and maintain an Equal Opportunities group. The purpose of this group is to monitor the activities of the organisation as they apply to equal opportunity policy. The group will be made up of a cross section of employees from the organisation. There should be a chairperson for this group whose responsibilities include calling meetings when necessary, making sure that the policies are being enforced, and analysing the information obtained through equal opportunities monitoring. The responsibilities of the group are:

1. To propose any changes or additions to the Equal Opportunities Policy when necessary. Problems with the equal opportunities policy should be addressed whenever they are evident.
2. To review the equal opportunities policy regularly. The group should meet quarterly to make sure that the policies are being followed and enforced. In addition, the group should meet annually to review the entire policy and make any necessary revisions.

3. To educate the staff about equal opportunities. This includes informing the staff of any changes in the current legislation and holding an annual seminar for employees to discuss equal opportunities issues.
4. To administer an annual questionnaire to the staff. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the current status of the equal opportunities policy and the organisation's attitude towards minority groups. The results of this questionnaire should be presented to the entire organisation.
5. To maintain a database collating information about employees, clients, volunteers, and trustees. The data collected should be used to evaluate the current advertisement and recruitment practices and the availability of services to all potential clients. This database should be updated annually.

Service Provision

Prisoners Abroad makes no moral judgement about its clients: we help convicted and unconvicted, guilty or innocent, solely on the basis of need. We work positively against discrimination and are committed to the principle of user involvement.

Due to the scope of the organisation's work, clients of Prisoners Abroad include only Britons who have right of abode in this country, or those who Prisoners Abroad determines to have close links to this country who are detained overseas, and their families or dependants. Prisoners Abroad will not refuse service provision to anyone who falls within these parameters.

All Aftercare clients are expected to abide by the Guidelines and Conduct in the Drop-in. Breach of these guidelines will be discussed with the client and may lead to temporary or permanent ban from Prisoners Abroad. We reserve the right to deny services to those who fail to follow these guidelines. All stakeholders in the organisation are expected to abide by the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Any complaints should be issued following the Complaints Procedure included in the Employee Handbook.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The goal of this project was to develop policies and guidelines to help Prisoners Abroad to meet the standards set by PQASSO for the areas of resource management, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. In each of these four areas, we evaluated the current policies and practices in place at Prisoners Abroad through employee questionnaires and interviews. We then studied the policies of other non-profit organisations, best practices, and current legislation regarding these areas. The information we gathered served as reference for developing the preliminary sets of policies and guidelines for resource management, environmental issues, and equal opportunities. The monitoring and evaluation policy was developed after conducting a discussion group with those responsible for monitoring and evaluation at Prisoners Abroad. All of the policies then went through numerous revisions based on employee feedback in discussion groups and management interviews. The completion of our project was achieved when the policies and guidelines were ready for implementation and were approved by Prisoners Abroad.

The developed policies will serve as guideline for Prisoners Abroad. The policies will aid the organisation in complying with the standards set by PQASSO and eventually reaching its highest level. We recommend that Prisoners Abroad review these policies regularly ensuring that the organisation will continue strive for improvement.

APPENDIX A (GLOSSARY OF TERMS)

Assessment: A judgement about the organisation's performance against the detail of a set standard by a nominated individual or group usually from within the organisation (PQASSO 1997).

Blanket orders: Special terms regarding prices, quantities and stock amounts held by the vendor for delivery upon request (Aspley 1967).

Content analysis: A systematic analysis of results from interviews, focus groups, and other qualitative methods. Its purpose is to elaborate what the person or group feels about a topic in a quantitative method so that your results can be repeated through the same analytical methods (Berg 1998).

Disability: “The loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers” (Barnes 1991, 2).

Efficacy: The ratio of the amount of light emitted by a source to the power drawn by the source (Kreith and West 1997).

Focus group: An interview style designed for small groups. Focus groups are either guided or unguided discussions addressing a particular topic of interest or relevance to the group and the researcher (Berg 1998).

Impairment: “The functional limitation within the individual caused by physical, mental, or sensory impairment” (Barnes 1991, 2).

Interview: A conversation with a purpose.

Management: The people responsible for the organisation and the techniques that they use to run the organisation to achieve its stated purpose (PQASSO 1997).

Monitoring: Collecting information and recording it regularly (PQASSO 1997).

PQASSO: (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) a quality assurance programme intended for voluntary, or service organisations, but self-help organisations, campaigning, and research organisations can find it useful. The PQASSO work pack is a system designed to help organisations “improve the quality of their service and to meet the growing expectations of their users.” Organisations use the work pack to develop their own quality assurance system.

Performance Appraisal: employee evaluation

Policy: Clearly expressed (and ideally short) statement of intent about how an organisation will conduct itself with respect to certain issues (PQASSO 1997).

Quality assurance programme: a systematic approach to identifying and responding to the needs of your users by providing an appropriate service consistently and to agreed standards.

Stakeholders: Persons or groups who have an interest in the activities and achievements of an organisation. Includes users and their carers, Management Committee or Trustees, funders, volunteers and members (PQASSO 1997).

Standard: An agreed mark on which to base assessment (PQASSO 1997).

Strategic planning: “the disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organisation (or other entity) is, what it does. And why it does it” (Bryson 1995, 5)

Strategy: A planned way of achieving long-term aims. Strategic plans usually cover a three-year period (PQASSO 1997).

APPENDIX B (PQASSO)

The following text is taken from the PQASSO workpack. This workpack is meant to serve as a guide for small voluntary organisations to implement a quality assurance system. The introductory section (pages 6-14) and the sections for the areas of managing resources, monitoring and evaluation, environmental issues, and equal opportunities follow. The sections for the individual areas include the PQASSO standard, levels of achievement, evidence of meeting these levels, and a self assessment.

Introduction

There is a strong desire among voluntary organisations to improve the quality of their service and to meet the growing expectations of their users.

Charities Evaluation Services has helped many voluntary organisations to develop their own quality assurance systems - systems which ensure that the organisation is providing an appropriate service consistently, and which enable them to demonstrate this to funders, purchasers and users. It is important that any quality assurance system is a flexible one that supports service delivery and allows for an approach based on the continuous improvement of services in order to meet changing needs.

What is a quality assurance system?

A quality assurance system is a systematic approach to identifying and responding to the needs of your users by providing an appropriate service consistently and to agreed standards. You should also be able to provide evidence that you are doing so.

Questions often asked are:

- Can one quality assurance system meet the needs of many different organisations?
- Can small voluntary organisations afford a quality assurance system?
- How do purchasers of services know whether the quality assurance system is being used appropriately or at all?

The PQASSO workpack will enable a variety of individual voluntary organisations to design their own quality assurance system which:

- covers all the essential elements of a quality system
- is practical and flexible enough to be used by a wide variety of organisations
- promotes continuous improvement
- enhances quality of service
- can be useful in negotiating with purchasers and funders

- can be afforded by any small organisation
- is based on self assessment, but the resulting portfolio can be externally recognised.

Who can use PQASSO?

The PQASSO workpack has been designed for use by small voluntary organisations - those with up to 20 workers - or by projects of larger organisations.

PQASSO can be used by organisations working in all areas, for example, health, social care, the environment or animal welfare. However, if your organisation provides primary childcare such as kids' clubs, nurseries or adventure playgrounds, we recommend that you use the *Aiming High* quality assurance scheme developed by Kids' Clubs Network (see page 3).

PQASSO can be used not only by organisations which provide services to the public, but also by self-help organisations, campaigning and research organisations.

You can decide which of the 16 quality areas in the PQASSO workpack are relevant to your organisation and then adapt them, thus allowing you to set clear standards of quality in all relevant aspects of your work, from management and administration to monitoring and evaluation.

The need for a quality assurance system for the voluntary sector

The voluntary sector has been under growing pressure to implement quality assurance systems. This pressure has become particularly important for organisations entering into contracts and service level agreements. Even organisations which are not entering into a contract or service level agreement are examining ways of devising procedures and systems to improve the management and running of their organisations.

Other quality assurance systems have proved of limited value to managers in small voluntary organisations. As a result, considerable management time has been spent attempting to define standards, producing procedures, and devising tailor-made systems

The major drawback for practitioners has been the absence of a commonly accepted quality assurance system for small voluntary organisations. There has been a need for a simple, practical, flexible and easy to understand guide to quality which can be adapted to meet the needs of a wide range of small voluntary organisations.

PQASSO has been designed to address these problems and to provide a quality assurance system that will be recognisable and transferable across the variety of services offered by the voluntary sector.

How PQASSO will benefit your organisation

The PQASSO quality assurance system:

- establishes a recognised set of quality criteria that can be used as a management tool by staff, the Management Committee, users and other stakeholders
- provides a framework to help your organisation assess its own performance against agreed standards, grounded in its experience and its own professional sector guidelines
- enables your organisation to demonstrate that it has reached agreed standards in all aspects of service provision and that it has done so in a cost-effective and ethical manner
- is structured to support your organisation in aspiring to higher standards and to help it generate action plans to reach them
- enables your organisation to focus on improving the quality of its services
- helps users to know what service they can expect and to judge if standards are met in practice
- supports the establishment of a user-centred culture
- combines quality, monitoring and evaluation systems in a way that meets contract requirements while retaining staff control over necessary administrative work
- provides a common language and frame of reference for grant and contract officers of local authorities, health and probation services and funders' representatives

- supports the development of a preventative approach rather than a corrective one.

The advantage of the PQASSO approach is that organisations can work to a generally accepted quality assurance system. If necessary, the self assessment process can be externally recognised by outside agencies, although this is not an essential part of the system.

PQASSO is an important management tool that will help you to:

- keep your values at the forefront of your work
- induct new staff and volunteers
- support front-line staff
- provide agreed levels of service consistently
- provide a path for continual development.

The quality areas

The PQASSO workpack is divided into 16 **quality areas** that are important for voluntary organisations:

Quality area 1	Commitment to Quality
Quality area 2	Service Provision
Quality area 3	User-centred Service
Quality area 4	The Management Committee
Quality area 5	Management
Quality area 6	Financial Management
Quality area 7	Managing Resources
Quality area 8	Administration
Quality area 9	Staffing
Quality area 10	Volunteers
Quality area 11	Training and Development
Quality area 12	Networking and Partnerships
Quality area 13	Monitoring and Evaluation
Quality area 14	Complaints and Suggestions
Quality area 15	Environmental Issues
Quality area 16	Equal Opportunities

Each of the 16 quality areas has a **standard** against which to measure progress. These are defined at the beginning of each quality area section on pages 17-77.

A glossary on page 81 explains certain terms which may be unfamiliar, or which are used in a specific technical sense in the PQASSO workpack

The quality standards

Quality area 1 Commitment to Quality

Agreeing a quality policy and plan is the first step in developing a quality management system and creating a culture of continuous improvement. A quality policy will define management responsibilities and the structure of the organisation, and highlight any key guidelines. It will state the core values or principles that the organisation feels are important. It will also state how the organisation will ensure that stated quality standards are met. The quality plan will lay out how this is to be done over the next year.

Quality area 2 Service Provision

The standard for this quality area will help the organisation work towards its ultimate purpose, through formal planning and regular reviews, and by taking into account users' needs and expectations. It will assist the provision of clear information and encourage a forward-looking, practical approach.

Quality area 3 User-centred Service

This quality area covers how to keep the needs of users central to the organisation's entire work. It will help staff and volunteers understand how to involve users in realistic and practical ways in the planning and review of services.

Quality area 4 The Management Committee

The standard for this quality area is designed to help Management Committee members assess their performance and identify ways to improve their management of the organisation. It helps the organisation to establish and retain a reliable, forward-looking and properly representative controlling body that is proactive in supporting staff and sensitive to user feedback. It also helps the Management Committee to provide the vision and enthusiasm needed to support the provision of high quality services consistently.

**Quality area 5
Management**

The standard for this quality area will help Management Committee members and managers clarify their roles and responsibilities, and will foster good working relationships. The intent is to help the organisation recognise the need for careful management of day-to-day organisational activities, and help staff and the Management Committee to keep abreast of the demands and expectations placed on the organisation by legislation and by ethical and professional guidelines.

**Quality area 6
Financial Management**

The standard for this quality area is designed to help organisations assess their financial practices from a quality perspective and to ensure 'value for money'. It sets out the different areas of financial management that managers will need to consider as part of their responsibilities. It highlights the issues which will be raised, either by the Management Committee or by its financial advisors, as the organisation develops.

**Quality area 7
Managing Resources**

This standard is designed to help managers ensure that physical resources support the delivery of a high quality service. Along with staff and financial resources, physical resources cover all the inputs necessary before any service can be delivered. Problems in any of these areas could affect service delivery and user satisfaction.

**Quality area 8
Administration**

The intent of this standard is to demonstrate the key role of administration. Effective record-keeping and retrieval systems need to be thought through to enable growth and development. Administrative systems need to be continuously reviewed to ensure that they still meet the organisation's requirements. Efficient systems are simple and clear. The assessment of performance relies largely on written records. At some point, outside auditors and evaluators may need to examine these records.

**Quality area 9
Staffing**

The standard for this quality area covers issues relating to staff: their experience; how they are supported; and their selection, management and supervision. The intent of this standard is to ensure that staff are not unduly pressured by lack of resources or support; and that their skills are appropriate to their work and appreciated. Contributions to service improvement through teamwork should be recognised.

**Quality area 10
Volunteers**

This standard covers issues relating to volunteers, their experience and how they are supported. People become volunteers for a variety of reasons. The intent of this standard is to ensure that the organisation helps volunteers to realise their personal potential, to be able to play a full part in the organisation, and to have a clear understanding of the management and organisational structure and their roles and responsibilities within it.

NOTE

Most of the legal requirements discussed under *Quality area 9 Staffing* also apply to volunteers. *Quality area 10 Volunteers* identifies the special responsibilities and opportunities involved in working with volunteers.

**Quality area 11
Training and Development**

Continuous training and development of staff are seen as an investment in the future of the organisation. Training and development needs should be based on appropriate national and sector-specific standards. A quality organisation will assess new training needs and the use of external qualifications, as well as developing the personal skills of its members through less formal training. Direct relevance to the special needs of the service provided is important but not vital, as personal growth should bring benefits to the organisation as a whole.

Quality area 12

Networking and Partnerships

The standard for this quality area concentrates on the need for the organisation to be a dynamic part of the community to which it belongs. Organisations have an opportunity for improvement through sharing learning experiences and ideas with other organisations in similar areas. There is an encircling community of voluntary, public and private agencies which can provide ideas and support, raising the potential for partnerships, joint ventures, or informal information exchange.

Quality areas 13-16 are requirements in most contracts or service level agreements.

Quality area 13

Monitoring and Evaluation

This quality area deals with the measurement of the organisation's performance and the conclusions which can be drawn from the data gathered. Without evidence of what is being achieved, it is difficult to take appropriate decisions about what needs to be changed or improved. This evidence can also be used to demonstrate success and improve accountability to funders. This standard should help the organisation assess whether it is operating a suitable system for monitoring and evaluation.

Quality area 14

Complaints and Suggestions

This quality area is about feedback. The intent of this standard is to help the organisation to actively obtain information from its users, to become open to all feedback, both positive and negative, and to use the information gained to improve service delivery.

Quality area 15

Environmental Issues

Increasingly, local authorities include a clause in their contracts and service level agreements stating that voluntary organisations must comply with local authority environmental standards. This standard should help the organisation assess its approach to meeting such contract requirements, and enhance its reputation as a 'good citizen' and neighbour. It is based on the principle that a quality organisation should proactively care for the environment and

should link environmental issues with the health and well-being of its users and staff.

Quality area 16

Equal Opportunities

This area addresses the legal requirements of anti-discrimination legislation. It also goes beyond legal requirements to address broader issues of equal opportunities, both within the organisation and as part of service delivery. It is designed to help the organisation to think through the issues that are important to them and their users, to take action and to demonstrate that they are doing so.

The levels

Each quality standard can be assessed at three levels. All organisations should aim to achieve Level 1 status in all the quality areas that are relevant to them. Levels 2 and 3 give clear guidelines for improvements in all areas. These can be worked on over a period of time to ensure continuous improvement in key areas.

Level 1

Level 1 sets the minimum requirements that any organisation should be seeking to meet. If you do not meet Level 1, you may be putting your Management Committee members, staff, volunteers or users at risk in some way. Level 1 provides a safety net that can be used to support the longer term survival and development of the organisation, especially for those with very limited resources, uncertain funding and a limited amount of staff and management time. For these organisations, Level 1 should be considered as adequate, although the option of moving to Level 2 is always open should resources and funding allow. **Depending on resources and time available, it could take a year to 18 months for an organisation to meet Level 1 in all areas.**

Level 2

Level 2 is a progression from Level 1. A greater number of more sophisticated systems need to be put in place. This assumes an organisation with greater resources than at Level 1. We recommend that you attempt Level 2 when your organisation has secure funding (for about two to three years), an established management structure, and plans for applying for grants.

A project of a larger organisation with a professional management structure, or a project affiliated to a national umbrella body, should be aiming at Level 2. Such projects may also meet Level 3 in certain areas.

Level 2 assumes that all the criteria of Level 1 have already been met.

Level 3

Level 3 is a progression from Level 2. At this level there is greater emphasis on establishing systems to review and evaluate your work. **In order to achieve Level 3, you should be able to show that you have**

met the criteria for Levels 1 and 2 consistently for at least one year. Organisations which have secure funding for a three-year period and a professional management structure, and which offer a consistently high level of service to users, should be able to achieve Level 3.

Which level should your organisation be working towards?

When you first look at the PQASSO workpack, you may be surprised at the number of quality areas in which you can already demonstrate success. However, no organisation would be expected to meet Level 3 in each quality area without considerable work.

The three levels are an important part of PQASSO's flexible approach to different organisational needs and one that does not appear in any other generic quality assurance system.

The majority of small voluntary organisations will be doing well if they can meet Level 1 consistently in all areas.

Level 2 will be attained by a much smaller number of organisations, but those at Level 1 can begin to work towards it as resources can be found.

Level 3 may be met by a fairly sophisticated organisation that not only has the resources necessary to meet the demands of its users but is also capable of acting as a quality leader for other organisations in its field.

Do not expect your organisation to be at a consistent level across all the quality areas. For example, if you are a strong volunteer-based organisation, you may be at Level 3 for Volunteers (Quality area 10) but only be at Level 1 for Administration (Quality area 8). Similarly, in a particular quality area you may meet some of the criteria for Level 3, but fail to meet one criterion at Level 1. This will allow you to prioritise where you concentrate your work on quality.

The important point is to be aware of where your organisation is now, and in which areas you think you can make improvements with the resources available to you.

Getting started with the PQASSO workpack

The PQASSO workpack has been written to be as user-friendly as possible. It provides a structured approach to implementing a quality assurance system and is designed to be worked through over a period of time - anything from 12 months to several years - allowing organisations to build on their strengths and overcome weaknesses.

As you work with PQASSO, you will build up an organisational portfolio containing 'evidence' for each of the quality areas. This may include relevant policies, plans and other evidence. The portfolio will help you to assess how well you are doing in each quality area.

A large ring-binder and some coloured dividers is a useful way to manage your portfolio. Keep the portfolio simple. You do not have to put every supporting document in it, but make it clear where they can be found.

STEP 1

A good way to get started is to read through the PQASSO workpack fairly quickly to get a feel for the 16 quality areas and decide which ones are relevant to your organisation. Each quality area has four pages:

The standard

This defines the standard for the quality area and explains the terms used.

Levels of achievement

This defines the three levels for each quality area.

What evidence can you find?

This gives some ideas on the evidence which will demonstrate that you have reached a particular level. This may be documented or may emerge through discussions with Committee members, staff, volunteers and users. You may also make judgements based on your observations. You may wish to add your own items of evidence to the lists given in this workpack.

Self assessment

The *Self assessment sheet* can be photocopied each time you assess a quality area. The completed sheet can be kept in your portfolio.

STEP 2

The next step is to work out which level you are at in each of the quality areas, and to decide which quality areas you wish to concentrate on. You can do this in two ways.

EITHER

Photocopy the *Overall self assessment* sheet on page 15, and blank out any quality areas which are not relevant to your organisation.

For each of the remaining quality areas, assess how you meet the requirements listed on the *Levels of achievement* pages, and decide whether you have reached Level 1, 2 or 3 in each area. The completed *Overall self assessment* sheet will give you a picture of where you are now and allow you to prioritise areas for improvement.

This task can be shared out, with individuals or Management Committee members taking one quality area each.

OR

Discuss within your organisation which quality areas you want to concentrate on.

STEP 3

Choose one or two key quality areas to address. A good place to start is *Quality area 1 Commitment to Quality* (see box opposite). Perhaps you also need to examine how user-centred your service is (Quality area 3). Or perhaps your administration systems need to be reassessed (Quality area 8). Don't try to tackle all quality areas at once. Start with one or two areas which are most appropriate to your needs.

For each chosen quality area, photocopy the green *Self assessment* sheet. Complete the self

assessment, collecting any evidence that you can provide for each level. Keep all the evidence, and the completed assessment sheet, in your portfolio.

Keeping your portfolio

Keep the portfolio in a safe place and review it regularly, fitting this work in with your existing work practices as far as possible. The portfolio can be used as evidence to support funding applications and to meet purchaser reviews. Staff and users will be interested in it. Your Management Committee will be able to use it to help them to make decisions. It can also serve as a useful induction tool for new staff and volunteers.

Above all, it is a tool to help you manage your quality assurance system and to keep an on-going check on all the essential quality areas.

A good place to start ...

A good place to start is with *Quality area 1 Commitment to Quality*. This involves writing a quality policy statement which should cover the following:

- your commitment to being a quality-led organisation
- what standards the services will be assessed against
- any specific or national professional guidelines that your organisation works by
- a clear declaration that your organisation sees quality as part of its image and reputation
- the objectives for the quality assurance system and who will be involved.

The quality policy should be no longer than two or three sides of A4 paper.

The next stage could be to write a quality plan for the year ahead to ensure that practical steps are planned to take the statement forward.

When the wording of the quality policy statement is agreed by staff and the Management Committee, publicise it. How you publicise it will depend on which level you are working at. Initially it will mean making sure that the Management Committee, staff, and volunteers have all had a chance to read the quality policy statement. To begin with, the statement can simply be displayed on a noticeboard. Later on, all your publicity material and stationery could include a phrase to show your commitment to being a quality-led organisation.

Self assessment

The real test of a quality assurance system is whether it enables the staff themselves to assess the quality of the organisation's management and administration, and of the services it provides. Such assessment should result in a process of continuous improvement in all areas over a period of time.

PQASSO is designed so that all those concerned with providing a quality service can be involved in assessing how the organisation is doing. It is important that assessment is seen as an ongoing process and not a one-off exercise. Ideally, progress in all areas should be assessed in the course of a year. It will be helpful to prepare in advance a self assessment schedule designed to meet the way your organisation works. (You may find it helpful to photocopy the *Self assessment schedule* on page 16 and keep it in your portfolio.)

You will be carrying out the assessments yourselves. You may wish to train some staff, Management Committee members and possibly users and volunteers to be able to assess performance in this way.

One method of assessment is through a workshop or participative process involving managers, staff, volunteers, Management Committee members and users. This is best done as a team process. After completing the *Self assessment* sheet for each quality area, there should be discussion and agreement on action points. In order to do this, you will need to review documentation. You will probably find that not everyone agrees on whether there is adequate evidence or on the level of achievement. This will lead to debate and discussion on the appropriate level of quality in each area for your organisation. This is an essential part of the process and to be encouraged. As you do this, you will naturally find common areas of concern or for improvement.

When you have agreed the level which currently applies for each quality area, and produced the supporting evidence, you will need to decide whether this is an appropriate level, or whether you wish to improve in certain areas. At this point you will need to prioritise on action.

There should be a formal review of all 16 quality areas at least once a year, and a written report should be presented to the Management Committee. Your assessment workshop may serve as a management review. The review should ensure that the portfolio is up-to-date, and that agreed areas for improvement are fed into your organisation's planning cycle.

Whenever you meet to discuss your work on quality, write down the agreed action points, with a named person responsible for each action, and set a review date. It is important that any assessment is recorded, and that it leads to action and real improvement. Then everyone will see the benefits of using the PQASSO quality assurance system.

Managing Resources

The Standard A quality organisation manages its resources effectively, efficiently and economically. Resources include premises, equipment, transport, information technology, food and suppliers.

Premises means:

Any land or buildings owned, hired or loaned in order to carry out activities

Equipment covers:

Furniture, books, sports, electrical and training equipment and any specialist aids and equipment

Transport covers:

Cars, buses, vans etc, run or provided by the organisation

Information technology means:

Equipment concerned with the processing and transmission of information including: computers, modems, telephones, faxes, mobile phones, pagers, television, video, radio

Food covers:

The preparation and provision of food and drink and any equipment used in their preparation

Suppliers means:

Any person or organisation providing goods or services to the organisation

Managing Resources

Levels of achievement

The Standard

A quality organisation manages its resources effectively, efficiently and economically. Resources include premises, equipment, transport, information technology, food and suppliers.

1

The organisation has adequate resources for service delivery requirements. The importance of resource management is recognised.

- There are sufficient resources for the current level of service.
- Premises are accessible, meet all legal requirements, and are safe and secure.
- Vehicles and equipment are well maintained and serviced regularly.
- Food storage, preparation and delivery meet relevant legislation and follow in-house procedures.
- Basic records are kept on supplies and delivery.

Level 2

The organisation makes good use of resources. The strategic plan addresses resource implications and anticipates future resource needs.

- Resources for the next year are identified, assessed and planned for.
- Purchasing policy and procedures are available, understood and used.
- Standards set for equipment and supplies are communicated to suppliers.
- There is a stock control system and safe and secure storage of equipment and supplies.

Level 3

All resources are well used. The business plan includes a three-year development plan for resources.

- The use of resources is monitored by the Management Committee.
- The business and strategic plans anticipate financial and other resource constraints.
- There are contingency measures for crises, eg, vehicle breakdown, premises repair.
- Resources are reviewed in the light of changing service delivery.

Managing Resources

What evidence can you find?

Level 1

- Quarterly financial accounts and service records
- Records regarding fire safety, maintenance, first aid and security
- Contract for premises, current lists of keyholders and emergency numbers
- Vehicle and equipment service records
- Food hygiene records, and registration documents
- Purchasing records

Level 2

- A strategic plan which addresses future needs for premises and key resources
- Up-to-date purchasing policy and procedures
- Copies of agreements and correspondence with suppliers
- Maintenance and obsolescence schedules for all vehicles and equipment
- Records of stock control
- Observation of storage facilities

Level 3

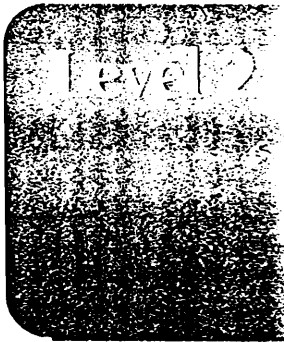
- Reports to Management Committee, minutes of meetings
- Business and strategic plans
- Guidelines for and reviews of contingency measures
- Reviews of services

Managing Resources

Self assessment

not met
nearly met
fully met

There are sufficient resources for the current level of service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Premises are accessible, meet all legal requirements, and are safe and secure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vehicles and equipment are well maintained and serviced regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food storage, preparation and delivery meet relevant legislation and follow in-house procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basic records are kept on supplies and delivery.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



<input type="checkbox"/> Resources for the next year are identified, assessed and planned for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing policy and procedures are available, understood and used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards set for equipment and supplies are communicated to suppliers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There is a stock control system and safe and secure storage of equipment and supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The use of resources is monitored by the Management Committee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The business and strategic plans anticipate financial and other resource constraints.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are contingency measures for crises, eg, vehicle breakdown, premises repair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resources are reviewed in the light of changing service delivery.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action points

Completed by (name)	Date
to be reviewed by (name)	Date for review

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Standard A quality organisation collects, collates and analyses relevant information appropriately and systematically to assist review and evaluation by the staff, management, purchasers, funders and users.

Monitoring involves:

The systematic, regular collection and collation of relevant information

Being clear about:

- your information needs
- who collates and reviews the information
- what you will do with the results

Appropriately means:

Suitable to the size, resources and service offered

Having a single system that supports service delivery

Meeting the requirements of funders, purchasers, users and staff

Simple to operate and cost-effective

Review involves:

Analysing and comparing collated information on a regular basis

Using the results to check progress

Using the results as a management tool to improve services and communication

Evaluation means:

Analysing data and making judgements about the efficiency and effectiveness of your service and organisation in meeting its aims, objectives and values

Using information gathered to improve services

Assessment of outcomes for the user group

Judgement of the impact on the community/society

Monitoring and Evaluation

Levels of achievement

The Standard

A quality organisation collects, collates and analyses relevant information appropriately and systematically to assist review and evaluation by the staff, management, purchasers, funders and users.

Level 1

The organisation meets the information needs of funders and purchasers, and provides basic information for management. This is fed back into decision-making.

- There is a simple monitoring system.
- Basic information covering inputs and outputs is collected.
- Collection and collation of information are built into working practice.
- Monitoring information informs service delivery.

Level 2

Information needs are analysed. Information is systematically collected and used as a management tool.

- Evaluation needs are known at the start of any project.
- Some performance indicators for objectives and outputs are identified.
- Information relating to performance indicators is systematically collected.
- There is an annual review of performance against targets.
- The effectiveness of the monitoring system is reviewed annually.
- Reviews lead to improvements.

Level 3

Monitoring and evaluation are carried out systematically. Data are used for further research and planned actions. Findings are made more widely available.

- Performance indicators are identified for outcomes for users.
- Information has been systematically collected over more than one year.
- Improvements following review are monitored for effectiveness.
- Evaluation findings are shared internally and with partners and funders.
- Service delivery is improved as a result of evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

What evidence can you find?

- Monitoring forms, and collated monitoring information
- Monitoring covering services delivered and resources used
- Applications and reports to funders and the Committee
- Minutes of management meetings

Level 2

- Project plans which include an assessment of information to be collected
- Performance indicators for objectives and outputs
- Quarterly reports commenting on collated data and its relevance
- End of year reports
- Strategic and year plans which show that the information collected is used
- Records of reviews and changes to the monitoring system
- Reports that show improvements as a result of earlier changes

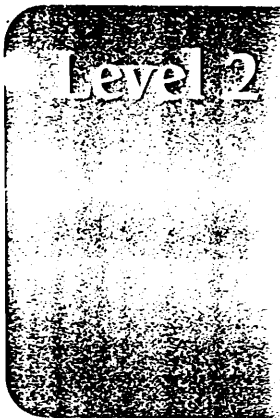
Level 3

- A range of performance indicators covering outputs and outcomes for users
- Records of monitoring information and the use made of it
- Feedback that shows changes have been effective
- Production of newsletters and articles; participation in or running of conferences, seminars etc
- Specific service delivery improvements which can be demonstrated

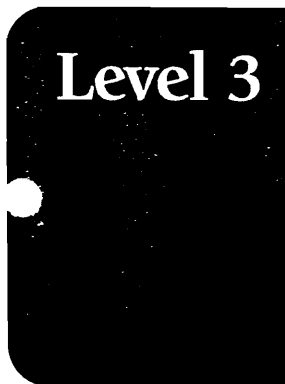
Monitoring and Evaluation Self assessment

not met
nearly met
fully met

There is a simple monitoring system.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basic information covering inputs and outputs is collected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collection and collation of information are built into working practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring information informs service delivery.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



■ Evaluation needs are known at the start of any project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Some performance indicators for objectives and outputs are identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Information relating to performance indicators is systematically collected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ There is an annual review of performance against targets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ The effectiveness of the monitoring system is reviewed annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Reviews lead to improvements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



■ Performance indicators are identified for outcomes for users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Information has been systematically collected over more than one year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Improvements following review are monitored for effectiveness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Evaluation findings are shared internally and with partners and funders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Service delivery is improved as a result of evaluation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action points

Completed by (name)	Date
To be reviewed by (name)	Date for review

Environmental Issues

The Standard A quality organisation adopts policies and practices which reflect its concern for the environment and the need to conserve the finite resources of the planet. It encourages all its staff, volunteers and users to respect the environment.

Adopts policies and practices which reflect its concern for the environment means that:

The organisation actively cares for and conserves the areas within its control.
It supports local and national environmental initiatives.
It links environmental issues with the health and well-being of its users.
Its services do not increase pollution or damage the environment.

Conserve the finite resources of the planet means:

Recycling where possible
Waste reduction
Energy conservation
Supporting the development of sustainable resources
Maximum use of environmentally-friendly products

Encourages all its staff, volunteers and users to respect the environment means:

Increasing staff, volunteer and user awareness of environmental issues
Increasing awareness of noise and other pollution levels, health risks and hazards

Environmental Issues

Levels of achievement

The Standard

A quality organisation adopts policies and practices which reflect its concern for the environment and the need to conserve the finite resources of the planet. It encourages all its staff, volunteers and users to respect the environment.

Level 1

The organisation meets the legal requirements, keeps waste to a minimum, and introduces recycling.

- The health and safety policy addresses relevant environmental issues.
- Staff understand their legal responsibilities.
- Environmentally-friendly products are used.
- Staff, volunteers and users are encouraged to recycle waste paper.
- The working environment is safe, secure and welcoming.

Level 2

The organisation takes a proactive approach to environmental care, and plans to improve its own environment.

- The organisation fosters a positive attitude to the environment among staff, volunteers and users.
- Recycling includes bottles and cans.
- Effective use of resources is promoted.
- Energy use is audited.

Level 3

The organisation has an energy conservation and waste reduction programme, and supports local and national environmental initiatives.

- The environmental policy covers purchasing practices and transport issues.
- The link between health and environmental issues is made explicit in service provision.
- Networking and partnerships are used to raise awareness of environmental issues affecting users.
- Reductions in energy consumption result in cost savings.

Environmental Issues

What evidence can you find?

- An up-to-date health and safety policy which includes environmental issues
- Awareness of environmental issues among staff, volunteers and users
- Purchasing records for paper and other consumables, eg, cleaning materials
- Paper recycling scheme
- Premises and surroundings safe, clean and tidy

Level 2

- Strategic and year plans which address environmental issues
- Premises consistently clean and noise controlled
- Information on environmental issues available
- Recycling bins for bottles and cans
- Purchasing records for all resources
- Energy audits recorded and action taken for improvements

Level 3

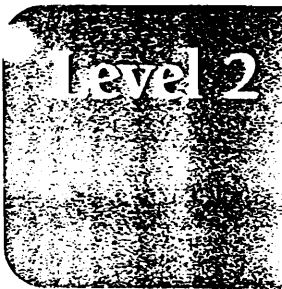
- Environmental policy covering all relevant areas
- Purchasing records which show that environmental issues are addressed
- Environmental concerns integrated into service delivery
- Records of conservation initiatives/audits
- Networking and other reports recording involvement in local environmental initiatives
- Reductions in gas, electricity and water use

Environmental Issues

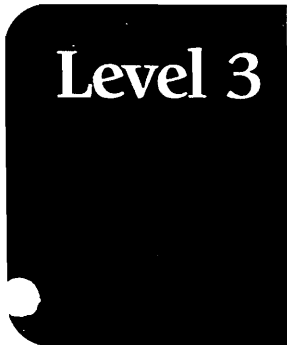
Self assessment

not met
nearly met
fully met

The health and safety policy addresses relevant environmental issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff understand their legal responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmentally-friendly products are used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff, volunteers and users are encouraged to recycle waste paper.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The working environment is safe, secure and welcoming.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The organisation fosters a positive attitude to the environment among staff, volunteers and users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recycling includes bottles and cans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Effective use of resources is promoted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy use is audited.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The environmental policy covers purchasing practices and transport issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The link between health and environmental issues is made explicit in service provision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Networking and partnerships are used to raise awareness of environmental issues affecting users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reductions in energy consumption result in cost savings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action points

Completed by (name)	Date
Reviewed by (name)	Date for review

Equal Opportunities

The Standard

A quality organisation is committed to equal opportunities for all, leading to positive attitudes, policies, planning, action and review across all aspects of its work.

Equal opportunities for all involves:

- Encouraging respect for other people and different cultures
- Providing facilities for all abilities
- Using positive images in publications and publicity
- Talking and listening to stakeholders

Equal opportunities for users involves:

- Having accessible premises, location and opening times
- Operating a flexible fee structure
- Consulting with user and community groups to provide appropriate services

Equal opportunities for staff/volunteers means:

- Ensuring no unlawful discrimination in recruitment and employment procedures and practice
- Offering development opportunities for all
- Valuing different experiences and skills
- Being an organisation where staff can speak their mind

Committed means:

- Making public statements in policies, posters and information packs
- Having clear procedures for dealing with discrimination
- Promoting the case for equal opportunities

Action on equal opportunities means:

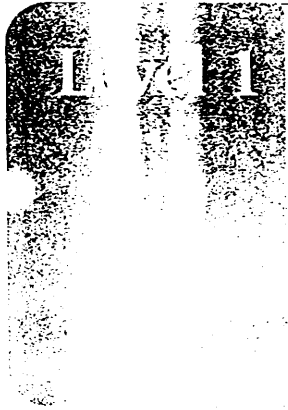
- Continually reviewing the main issues for users, staff and volunteers
- Providing training on equal opportunities
- Implementing change where necessary as a result of monitoring information

Equal Opportunities

Levels of achievement

The Standard

A quality organisation is committed to equal opportunities for all, leading to positive attitudes, policies, planning, action and review across all aspects of its work.



The organisation meets the legal requirements, and makes a public commitment to equal opportunities.

- There is an equal opportunities policy and plan.
- Recruitment conforms with anti-discrimination legislation and equal opportunities policy.
- Relevant areas are monitored, eg, ethnicity, gender, disability.
- Services are reviewed for their accessibility and appropriateness for all groups.

Level 2

The organisation proactively promotes equal opportunities policy. Some procedures are in place.

- Provision for resourcing equal opportunities has been built into the budget.
- Training and promotional materials support equal opportunities for all groups.
- Facilities are available for people with disabilities.
- Any food provided meets appropriate range of requirements, eg, vegetarian.
- Events, jobs and volunteering opportunities are publicised appropriately.
- Staff and volunteers receive training in equal opportunities.

Level 3

There is a full cycle of planning, action, monitoring, feedback and review. Users' views are taken into account.

- Equal opportunities are considered at the development stage of new work.
- Strategic and business plans include resources to promote equal opportunities.
- There is an annual review of equal opportunities policy and practice.
- There is an analysis of community needs in relation to staffing and service provision.

Equal Opportunities

What evidence can you find?

- Equal opportunities policy and plan
- Recruitment procedure
- Monitoring forms and collation of information
- Year plan addresses equal opportunity issues
- Disability access organised for services and activities
- Committee reviews equal opportunities programme annually.

Level 2

- Budget which includes provision for resourcing equal opportunities plan
- Review of training and promotional material looking at positive images for minority groups, use of language and other languages, and meeting needs of disabled groups
- Catering records, user feedback
- Records of where events and jobs have been publicised
- Training records
- Minutes of staff meetings which address equal opportunities

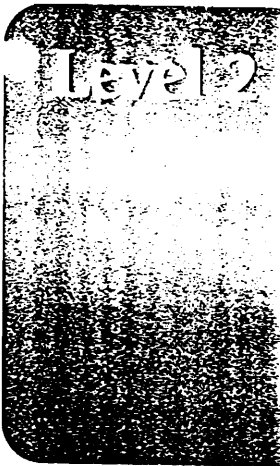
Level 3

- Minutes of planning meetings
- Strategic and business plans
- Current equal opportunities report
- Results of analysis and action taken
- Reports on any user feedback concerning equal opportunities issues

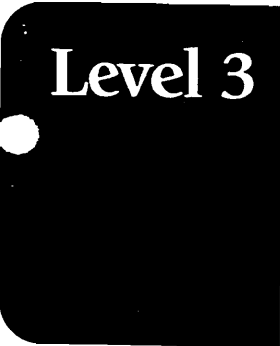
Equal Opportunities Self assessment

not met
nearly met
fully met

There is an equal opportunities policy and plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment conforms with anti-discrimination legislation and equal opportunities policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant areas are monitored, eg, ethnicity, gender, disability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services are reviewed for their accessibility and appropriateness for all groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



<input type="checkbox"/> Provision for resourcing equal opportunities has been built into the budget.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Training and promotional materials support equal opportunities for all groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities are available for people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Any food provided meets appropriate range of requirements, eg, vegetarian.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Events, jobs and volunteering opportunities are publicised appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff and volunteers receive training in equal opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equal opportunities are considered at the development stage of new work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic and business plans include resources to promote equal opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There is an annual review of equal opportunities policy and practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There is an analysis of community needs in relation to staffing and service provision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action points

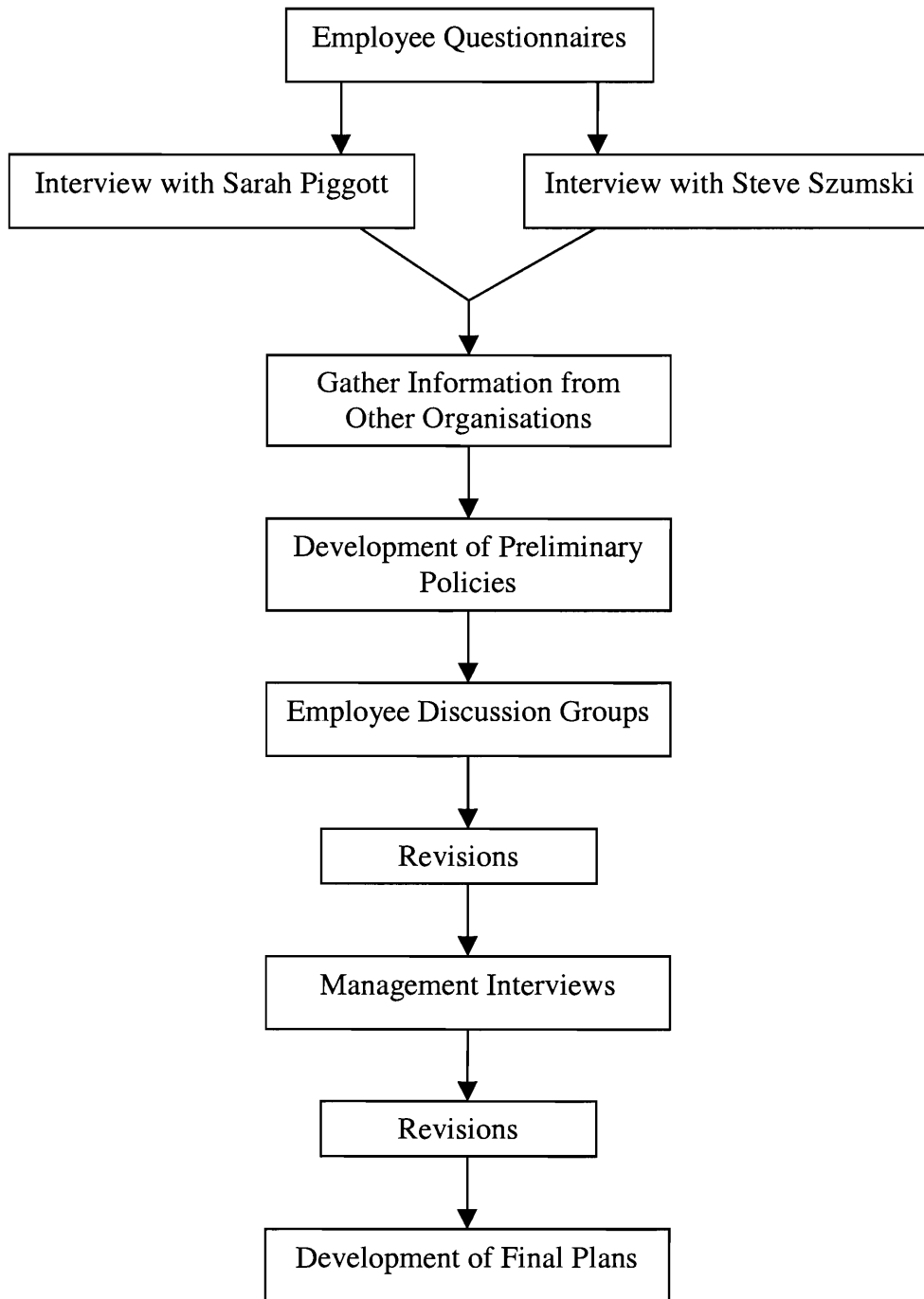
Completed by (name)	Date
To be reviewed by (name)	Date for review

APPENDIX C (WORK PLAN)

TASK CHART

Task	16 January 2000	23 January 2000	30 January 2000	6 February 2000	13 February 2000	20 February 2000	27 February 2000
1	Employee questionnaire						
2	Interviews- Mr. Szumski, Ms. Piggott						
3	Gathering of information from organisations						
5	Development of prelim. Plans for RM, EI, and EO						
6	Employee Discussion Groups, ADP, and M&E						
7	Development of prelim. Plans for M&E						
8	Revisions						
9	Management Interviews						
10	Revisions						
11	Final plan development						

FLOW CHART



APPENDIX D (EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE)

SELF ASSESSMENT

This survey is designed to assess the current practices and policies in place at Prisoners Abroad. Completion of this survey by employees will help to determine which areas require changes in current policies. Please complete this assessment, giving comments to help further explain your opinions.

- Do you find that there are sufficient resources for the daily tasks that you undertake? Please explain your answer.

- Do you feel that the premises are safe and secure? Please explain your answer.

- Do you feel that the working environment is safe, secure, and welcoming to you and your co-workers? Please explain your answer.

- Do you feel that equal opportunities are offered regardless of ethnicity, gender, or physical capabilities? Please explain your answer.

- Do you feel that the reviewing of the agency's performance leads to further improvement of services? Please explain your answer.

APPENDIX E (EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA)

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS (88% Response Rate)

	No. of Employees:	Percentage:
1. Do you find that there are sufficient resources for the daily tasks that you undertake?		
Yes:	9	60%
No:	6	40%
Additional resources would be helpful	12	80%
2. Do you feel that the premises are safe and secure?		
Yes:	13	87%
No:	2	13%
3. Do you feel that the working environment is safe, secure, and welcoming?		
Yes:	8	53%
No:	7	47%

Comments issued regarding the previous three questions

Office temperature is not properly maintained	8	53%
Condition of office furniture is poor	7	47%
Torn carpet	6	40%
Surveillance system is necessary	6	40%
Dangerous wiring	5	33%
Internet accessibility is inadequate	4	27%
Want ability to fax from computer	3	20%
Roof leaks	3	20%
Photocopier is unreliable	3	20%
Inadequate toilet facilities	3	20%
Obstacles such as left open file drawers	3	20%
Lighting needs improvement	2	13%
Storage is inadequate (shelves, file cabinets)	2	13%
Stationary stock is not adequate	2	13%
Inadequate printer availability	1	7%
More money is needed in postage budget	1	7%
Dictionaries	1	7%
Lack of qualified first aiders	1	7%
Inadequate fire safety	1	7%
Expected to carry heavy items up and down stairs	1	7%

No anti-glare screens	1	7%
Office is too noisy	1	7%
Ventilation is poor	1	7%
Office is dusty	1	7%
Mice problems	1	7%
Need screen protectors	1	7%

4. Do you feel that equal opportunities are offered regardless of ethnicity, gender, or physical capabilities?

Yes:	7	47%
Yes, except access for disabled persons:	8	53%
No:	0	0%

Comments:

PA would be limited by current premises to employ a disabled person
 Access for disabled visitors is almost impossible
 Equal Opportunities practice needs to be on an organisation's agenda
 We do not target our services for any particular needs
 PA will be able to offer the disabled access to the new premises
 Staff are very aware of equal opportunities issues

5. Do you feel that the reviewing of the agency's performance leads to further improvement of services?

Yes:	14	93%
No:	0	0%
Do not understand the question:	1	7%

Comments:

Happy, warm, safe, and secure staff are more likely to give a better performance
 Important to continually review all the above in order to address external factors and change
 The review should take into account what is necessary to provide good services
 Many of the policies exist on an unofficial basis
 Reviewing is important because it allows an organisation to highlight recurring problems
 Agencies should review performance and improve services regularly; otherwise it stands still

APPENDIX F (EMPLOYEE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS)

SARAH PIGGOTT

1. Is there safe and secure storage of equipment and supplies? Can you describe how Prisoners Abroad stores equipment and supplies? Where are supplies and equipment kept? Who oversees the storage?
2. Is equipment well maintained and serviced regularly? This includes computer equipment, copy machines, telephones, heat/air conditioning, lighting, kitchen area, etc.
3. Are there records of service and maintenance? Where are these records kept?
4. Are resources for the next year identified, assessed, and planned for? By who? If not, are resources identified in advance? How much?
5. Are purchasing policies and procedures available and used? How much is ordered? Is there a set price range for products? If not, do you think it would be helpful?
6. Are basic records kept on supplies and delivery? Are deliveries consistent (amount received)?
7. Are standards set for equipment and supplies communicated to the suppliers? Do your suppliers know what you expect from them in regards to delivery, quality, time?

STEVE SZUMSKI

1. Do business and strategic plans anticipate financial and other resource constraints? If yes, how do these plans work? If no, do you think that anticipation of financial and other resource constraints would allow Prisoners Abroad to run more efficiently?
2. Do contingency measures for crises exist, i.e., premise repair? If yes, what are they? If no, what is the procedure for dealing with repairs?
3. How are clients monitored?
4. Is the monitoring of clients successful? If no, what are some of the problems you face when monitoring?
5. What employees do you monitor and evaluate, i.e. potential or present?
6. What is done with the information from monitoring and evaluation?
7. What is the basic information collected on inputs and outputs?

8. How is monitoring information organised and collected?
9. Is a specific goal stated at the start of any project?
10. How is information relating to performance collected?
11. How often is there a review of performance?
12. How often is the effectiveness of the monitoring system reviewed?

APPENDIX G (EMPLOYEE DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTIONS)

INTRODUCTION

You have all received copies of the preliminary policies that we have developed for the areas of environmental issues, equal opportunities, and resource management. We would like to discuss these policies in order to identify possible problems with the policies and also to make improvements to the policies. Your participation in this discussion is valuable to our project in order to develop quality assurance policies that will be most beneficial to Prisoners Abroad. During this group please do not hesitate to share your feelings about the policies that we have presented to you. Your comments will be an essential part of the development of our final policies.

QUESTIONS

In regards to the Environmental Issues Policy,

1. Do you have any suggestions as to how the policy can be more clearly written?
2. Is there anything you see that is not feasible in the implementation section due to limited resources?
3. What would you like to see added to the implementation section?
4. What would you like to see taken out of the implementation section?
5. Is the responsibility of the Environmental Issues Policy directed to the correct people? If yes, is there anyone else who should be added? If no, who should be responsible for the policy?

In regards to the Equal Opportunities Policy,

8. Do you have any suggestions as to how the policy could be more clearly written?
9. Is there anything you see that is not feasible due to limited resources?
10. What areas, if any, did we fail to include in the policy?
11. What do you feel needs to be added to the policy in order to ensure that Prisoners Abroad offers equal opportunities to all persons involved with the agency?

12. Is the responsibility of the Equal Opportunities Policy directed to the correct people? If yes, is there anyone else who should be added? If no, who should be given the responsibility of the policy?

In regards to the Resource Management Policy,

13. Do you have any suggestions as to how the policy could be written more clearly?

14. Is there anything you see that is not feasible due to limited resources?

15. What areas need to be added to the policy?

16. What do you feel needs to be added to the policy in order to ensure that Prisoners Abroad effectively manages its resources?

17. Are all resources covered in the policy? If no, what other resources need to be accounted for?

18. Is the responsibility of the Resource Management Policy directed to the correct people? If no, who should be given the responsibility of the policy? If yes, is there anyone else who should be added?

APPENDIX H (MONITORING AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this discussion group is to identify the current monitoring and evaluation practices within Prisoners Abroad. From the current practices, we will develop a policy to outline the monitoring and evaluation process within the organisation that will comply with the PQASSO standards.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the major areas that are currently monitored within Prisoners Abroad?
2. Is the information collected through monitoring evaluated? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. How does the evaluation lead to improvements?
4. How effective are the current methods for monitoring and evaluation?
5. What changes would you like to see made to the monitoring and evaluation process?
6. What areas are in need of policies for monitoring and evaluation?

APPENDIX I (SAMPLE POLICIES)

CHILDREN'S FRIEND

Utilization Management Plan
Monitoring and Evaluation

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

Environmental Recommendations

LONDON ADVICE SERVICE ALLIANCE

Equal Opportunities Policy

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Equal Opportunities Recommended Good Practices

UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Goals and Philosophy: Children's Friend has the goal of effectively self-managing all care delivered to the agency's service recipients. A well-managed system of care will result in improved service quality, greater access of recipients to the service components of the agency and will result in a more timely response to the needs of the recipient. Delivery of service will be guided by the following principles: 1) Agency services will be designed and delivered in a manner that is responsive to the individualized needs of the recipient; 2) Recipients will actively participate in service planning from the outset of service delivery; 3) Agency services will be provided in a cost-effective manner and coordinated with recipient's insurance benefits or financial considerations; and 4) Agency services will be responsive to the changing needs present in the community.

Process: To meet the goal of independently and effectively managing its services, the Agency employs a Utilization Management plan to assist in evaluating and monitoring the service needs of recipients, the patterns of service delivery, timeliness of service delivery, cost-effectiveness of services and changing recipient/community needs. The Utilization Management Plan incorporates the following components:

- **UM Director:** Sheila Rosenblatt, Ph.D., the Director of Clinical Services at Children's Friend will serve as the UM Director. UM activities will be conducted by Dr. Rosenblatt, the MIS Director, Jon Baker, Colette Walsh, the Client Service Specialist, and Mary Jane Urban, the Billing Associate.
- **UM Program:** The agency's UM Program consists of ongoing monitoring of client records, ongoing Utilization Review, an annual UM report to the Board of Directors of the agency.
 - **Ongoing record monitoring:** The agency's Client Service Specialist maintains the record room and monitors case records for completeness and accuracy on a monthly basis. Deficient records are reported to the UM Director who ensures that individual clinicians comply with the agency's record-keeping requirements.
 - **Utilization Review process:** The agency has a documented Utilization Review Plan, which requires reviews of every case in treatment after the initial interview, following the fourth interview, every ninety days thereafter that the case remains in treatment, and at discharge. (See attached UR Plan)
 - **Annual UM Report:** The pattern of service delivery is reviewed on a quarterly basis as follows: 1) average length of treatment; 2) diagnoses of treated recipients; 3) service mix, treatment modalities employed; 4) practice patterns of individual clinicians. A summary of UM activities is prepared annually at the end

of the agency's fiscal year (September 30) for the Board of Directors of the agency.

Accountability: The UM Director is accountable to the President/CEO. Information gathered as a result of UM activities is formally presented to the Board of Directors of Children's Friend annually. Findings are used by the management and governing board of the agency to determine the cost-effectiveness of service delivery, where and how service delivery can be improved, where service gaps exist in the community, and how agency services can be modified, enhanced or increased to meet the needs of the community and the recipients.

Reviewed/revised 3/98

Many thanks for your enquiry. =20

I have pasted below, some information which I hope will prove useful.

Friends of the Earth depends on individual supporters for over 95% of its income. To join or give a donation see: https://www.foe.co.uk/join_index.html

Best wishes

John Craddock
Information Officer

Greening your work space

Concerned individuals can play a vital role in persuading decision makers to look at environmental issues. One way may be to set up an environmental committee, passing on appropriate suggestions and recommendations. Make sure you are armed with the facts to support your arguments. Friends of the Earth publishes a wide range of leaflets on topics such as recycling, energy efficiency, air pollution and waste.=20 Details of these and the other publications mentioned below can be found in the enclosed publications list.

Environmental audit

Ideally your company should carry out a full environmental audit. A list of consultants who will carry out such an audit is available from ENDS Environmental Data Services for =A339 - Tel: 0171 278 4745. Also contact the Institute of Environmental Assessment - Tel: 01522 540069.

Waste reduction and recycling

quot;Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" is a useful maxim to remember. Cut down on unnecessary purchases, packaging and waste and re-use and recycle as much as possible.=20

If your company is in London call Paper Round (0171 247 0470) who operate an office waste paper collection service. For other areas first call your local council to see if they can do anything for you.=20 If not contact Wastewatch Tel: 08702 430136 -who should be able to tell you of any collections in your area.

Collection is only half the answer though - use recycled products wherever possible, especially paper. Paper made using waste paper instead of virgin wood-pulp uses up to 70% less energy, leads to large reductions in air pollution and some reductions in water pollution.=20 Many stationers and suppliers now stock recycled paper products. (Eg. Paperback: Recycled Paper Office Stationery :0181 980 2233)

Energy

Energy efficiency and energy conservation are also areas where significant action can be taken. Using less energy helps to cut emissions from power stations which are major contributors to acid rain

and climate change - and will bring additional benefits to your company through savings on fuel bills.

Look at turning down the heating, draft proofing, switching off appliances when not in use, investing in energy-efficient lighting and improving staff awareness of energy wastage.

Transport

Transport is another major source of pollution, causing health and environmental problems. Try to walk, cycle or use public transport. If your company has a car fleet, try to encourage the use of unleaded petrol and the fitting of catalytic converters. You could also suggest that your company encourages the use of bicycles by providing safe lock up facilities and changing rooms.

Ozone-destroying chemicals

Buy ozone friendly products! Chemicals which deplete the ozone layer are widely used as solvents in electronics, metal cleaning, general and precision engineering, dry cleaning and a variety of other areas. Ozone depleting chemicals are also used in refrigeration and air conditioning systems and in halon fire extinguishers. The good news is that 100% ozone-friendly fridges are now available in UK shops. When replacing old equipment, make sure the CFCs are safely removed. Find out whether your council, fridge retailer or manufacturer operate a safe fridge disposal service.

Timber

Be careful buying new furniture, windows and doors which are often made of tropical hardwood. Only 0.2% of tropical forests are managed sustainably, so avoid buying tropical hardwoods, like mahogany, iroko or meranti. For more guidance, get hold of a copy of the newly revised Friends of the Earth's Good Wood Guide. (Most libraries should order you a copy if you put in a request.)

Peat

Closer to home, commercial peatcutting for the horticultural industry represents a severe threat to one of the UK's most important wildlife habitats - the lowland raised peatbog. Yet the use of peat is not necessary. If your office uses peat for indoor plants or in landscape gardening, ask your retailers to supply alternatives, which are readily available. See the Friends of the Earth publications on peat for further information or contact the Wildlife Trusts on 01522 544400.

Support Friends of the Earth

Finally, you and your colleagues can help the environment through supporting the vitally important work of Friends of the Earth through pay-roll giving, or Give As You Earn. The scheme is operated voluntarily by employers, so why not check whether your company is registered. The fundraising department at Friends of the Earth will be happy to answer any queries.

Recommended Reading:

The Green office Action Plan - Friends of the Earth Scotland, 72
Newhaven Road, Edinburgh, EH6 5QG Tel 0131 554 9977 ISBN 0950615765

Useful Numbers:

Business and the Environment programme. 0171 836 2626
Department of Trade and Industry - runs a number of business related
programmes on Environmental management, technology and energy efficiency.
Environment and Energy Helpline 0541 542 541.

Equal opportunities statement

LASA recognises that certain groups and individuals are disadvantaged and discriminated against because of the way that society is structured.

LASA is committed to equality of opportunity, taking positive steps to ensure that we do not perpetuate this discrimination through our employment practices and our use of resources.

LASA understands that a passive policy will not in itself provide equality of opportunity. LASA will therefore:

- eliminate any unnecessary criteria in our recruitment and selection procedures.
- take positive steps as part of developing and carrying out our work programme, to promote full and equal access to our skills and services and to combat any direct or indirect discrimination in our use of resources.
- seek to challenge and change attitudes and policies which reinforce oppression and question and review our own practices and attitudes, both with regard to our behaviour within the organisation and outwardly in our image and service delivery.

LASA will regularly monitor and review our recruitment and selection procedure, our work programme and our own practices and attitudes, to ensure that this policy is put into effect.

Equal opportunities policy

Introduction

This document is a statement of LASA's policy for achieving equality of opportunity in all of our employment practices and in the use and provision of our services. It provides a framework for LASA to

- introduce changes as necessary to promote equal access
- review existing policy and practice to ensure that they embody the spirit and intention of this policy.

In applying this policy, LASA recognises that certain groups are particularly disadvantaged. Such groups can be identified according to race, sex, class, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, HIV/AIDS status, sexual orientation, marital status or age.

Equal opportunities policy

1. Recruitment and selection

LASA accepts its responsibilities as an employer, as laid down by statute under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976. LASA will always recruit using the guidelines written down in our Equal Opportunities Recruitment and Selection Procedure. This document will be reviewed annually to ensure that people are selected and treated on the basis of their merits and abilities.

LASA particularly recognises that many people are disadvantaged and discriminated against in employment and that a passive policy will not reverse this. Therefore, LASA will actively encourage steps to redress this. LASA is particularly concerned at this time to attract black and ethnic minority staff and disabled people, recognising that they are under represented on our staff.

- 1.1 All staff or board members will have to have recruitment training before being allowed to sit on a recruitment panel.

2. Training support and development at LASA

2.1 Training

LASA recognises that changing the basis of its recruitment is no good unless support and training opportunities are provided to assist all staff in learning the job and developing their skills.

LASA's induction, training and staff development policies will make explicit provisions for staff from oppressed and disadvantaged groups, which encourage and promote equality of career opportunities and the full implementation of this policy.

- a. All staff will be made aware of the training and development opportunities available to them and be positively encouraged to take these up. In particular, staff who are disadvantaged should be offered and

- encouraged to take up training which will enhance their skills and career prospects. The needs of LASA should also be taken into account.
- b. To assist staff in understanding the implications of this policy and in the implementation of positive action, all staff must undertake recognised training in equal opportunities policies and procedures within a year of their appointment, if they have not done so before joining LASA. New workers will be made aware of this requirement at interview stage and existing staff must undertake to attend such training.
 - c. Members of the LASA Board of management will also be offered opportunities to take up training to enable them to carry out their role and fulfil their responsibilities.

2.2 Induction and Support

- a. All new staff will be provided with an induction programme to equip them to do their job and to provide them with an understanding of the organization.
- b. All new staff will be given particular support from their team in the first year following their appointment. If a worker feels isolated and would like support from outside the organization, such as from a women's group or black workers group, this will be positively encouraged.
- c. LASA will make every effort to support any staff with a disability by providing any necessary facilities or arrangements which will enable them to make full use of their experience and skills.
- d. New members of the Board will also be offered a clear programme of induction into the work of LASA. The workings of the Board will be reviewed to ensure that the structure and timing of meetings do not unnecessarily exclude Board members from access.

3. Carrying out our work

We want our services to be accessible to and appropriate for all advice and information agencies which fall within the remit of LASA's aims. LASA recognises that the vast majority of advice and information providers are under-resourced for the job they are expected to do and need access to support which assists them to provide the best service they can. LASA also recognises that it is often those advice agencies which work with groups in the community facing discrimination and disadvantage that are most lacking in resources and access to support. LASA therefore intends to take steps to ensure that our services are relevant and accessible to these agencies. In order to achieve this LASA will:

- 3.1 review and monitor groups making use of our services using procedures identified in the monitoring section of this policy.
- 3.2 seek out and consult with organizations and networks under-represented in our user groups to establish the best ways in which LASA can provide or adapt services to meet their needs and work with others in the advice field to meet them.
- 3.3 disseminate information about LASA as widely as possible and in particular take steps to target those advice agencies representing or serving the interests of specific disadvantaged groups.

- 3.4 take steps to encourage broader representation on LASA's Board of management.
- 3.5 Following the processes of review, monitoring and consultation, LASA will build in to our future work programmes and development strategy any changes or new activity needed to meet these objectives.

4. Communication and awareness

LASA recognises that it has a responsibility for influencing change. This applies externally in our service provision and recruitment practices and internally in office management, internal relations and communication. In the course of our work we will therefore seek to positively challenge and change attitudes and policies which reinforce oppression and will question and review our own practices, communication and attitudes. To foster ongoing awareness of equal opportunities issues we will:

- 4.1 display our equal opportunities statement widely, including it in all relevant publications and literature.
- 4.2 use positive images in all our publications and training materials so that they are relevant and accessible and better reflect the make-up of our users, staff and management committee.
- 4.3 organise meetings/seminars at least once a year for all staff to assist them in focusing on equal opportunities issues. These might arise through our current work, eg. meeting the information needs of disabled people; racism and social security; or be concerned with assisting LASA in reviewing or implementing this policy.
- 4.4 provide the opportunity for each individual staff member to produce written information on their needs, discuss in their teams how these can be met and if they wish, make this information more widely available within LASA.
- 4.5 annually review the equal opportunities dimension of each team's work and of LASA as a whole and report on this with any recommendations for change. This will involve: assessing and monitoring the team's effectiveness in meeting previous targets and making proposals on future work;
- 4.6 staff should be committed to creating a working atmosphere which supports those staff and Board members who face discrimination - such as black staff, those with a disability, women, lesbian or gay staff - to fully participate in LASA.

Teams are encouraged to be aware of good and bad practice, to ensure that all staff work in a non-discriminatory environment and promote a working atmosphere which supports and empowers all staff.

Examples of how to achieve this include putting these issues on each team's agenda at least twice a year for discussion to be formally minuted.

- 4.7 develop written policy and guidance for staff on good practice and methods of working which promote better awareness, both internally with staff and management committee and externally with clients and colleagues.
- 4.8 ensure that all policies operated or developed by LASA, eg. Health and Safety policy, address equal opportunities issues and include procedures for their implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

5. Monitoring

LASA will check that it is fulfilling its commitment to the aims laid out in the Equal Opportunities Statement through rigorous monitoring procedures. LASA will monitor by:

- 5.1 Questioning each agency that uses our services on their target group
- 5.2 Do a detailed user profile on each participant using our training services.
- 5.3 Do a user profile of client we represent through our appeals service.
- 5.4 Once a year doing an agency user profile on every caller who uses the advice line or CDUs and CIPs consultancy service for at least a four week period.
- 5.5 Monitor the effect of new legislation on our user group to identify its impact on different user groups in order to feed into social policy work.
- 5.6 Analyze our recruitment procedure and monitor all applicants.
- 5.7 All data collected on our client group should be compared to as diverse and reliable figures as possible. Examples could include the census figures, the networks statistics.

6. Targeting

In order to ensure that any gaps in our service provision are addressed and the aims of our Equal Opportunities Statement are met LASA undertakes to target specific user groups. LASA will therefore:

- 6.1 Analyze the information collected above and spot gaps in our service provision. See point 5.7 above.
- 6.2 Devise a strategy to fill these gaps.

The following actions provide examples of how this may be done:

- meeting with agencies/groups that represent the user groups we are missing.
- obtaining/buying specialist mailing lists to do group specific mailshots
- devising courses/ publications/ IT for specialised groups e.g. women, refugees etc
- having our publications translated into other languages
- employing trainers to run our courses in other languages
- having our written materials translated into braille
- using signers and making our services e.g. conferences, training, representation, IT] truly accessible

This list is not exhaustive.

- 6.3 Advertising all our services widely and also selectively.

Equal Opportunities Recommended Good Practice

Policy statements

A statement of the organisation's policy on equal opportunities although not a legal requirement is recommended. It should be relatively short, general and be visible to all employees in an organisation and to job applicants. It should also:

- give overall responsibility for the policy to a senior manager;
- be in writing;
- include collective agreements where appropriate;
- be seen to have the support of management and trade unions at the highest level;
- be monitored regularly;
- perhaps include a programme of positive action such as awareness training.

Here are two examples of policy statements on equal opportunities:

Policy Statement On Equal Opportunities

This organisation aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, age gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability. Selection criteria and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All employees will be given equal opportunity and access to training to enable them to progress both within and outside the organisation. This organisation is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and will bring it to the attention of all employees.

Policy Statement On Equal Opportunities

We are striving to be an equal opportunity employer. Therefore we will aim to treat all employees and job applicants equally. There will be no discrimination in respect of race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

There will be no discrimination on these grounds in the terms and conditions offered to employees or job applicants. The policy also covers recruitment, induction, conduct at work and the disciplinary and grievance procedure. The only basis for promotion or selection is the management's considered opinion of the applicants suitability for the job.

All employees have a legal and moral obligation not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individuals. Any employee found to be practising discrimination will face disciplinary proceedings.

The policy statement should be supported with written procedures of how it will be implemented and backed up with awareness training where possible.

Application of equal opportunities to recruitment and promotion procedures

The ethos of the policy statement on equal opportunities when applied to all aspects of employment procedure should prevent and combat discrimination in the workplace. It is therefore important to consider the reasoning behind basic procedures and to take

care over how written procedures are worded. For example in the process of recruitment and promotion the following points should be observed.

Job descriptions and person specifications for each vacant post should be drawn up or reviewed to eliminate references to non-essential experience or qualifications which might directly or indirectly discriminate against some candidates.

Job advertisements should mention that the organisation is an equal opportunities employer and where appropriate through positive action encourage applications from ethnic minorities or other under-represented groups.

Job advertisements should be displayed and promoted internally and externally, and be visible to all employees. They could also be placed in diverse press, for example, *Asian Times* and *The Voice*.

Application forms when sent to job candidates should include a copy of the equal opportunities policy, job description and person specification. These papers could also be made available in large print and in braille.

The premises used for interview should be easily accessible for disabled candidates.

The timing of the interviews should be flexible to facilitate candidates with family commitments.

Interviewers should treat each candidate equally and interview them on the basis of the person specification.

Selection should be conducted solely on the basis of the candidate's relative merits and abilities.

The excellence of an employee in their present position should not be a reason for preventing their promotion.

The age, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, colour, race, religion, nationality, ethnic or national background of the candidates should be monitored by including a detachable questionnaire with the application form. This will enable the organisation, after selection, to determine the types of people who applied for a particular post and those who were short-listed so that future advertising can be adjusted to avoid discrimination.

Joy Dyson

Human Resources adviser, NCVO January 1998

This text is taken from *The Good Employment Guide* issued by NCVO, for more details contact the Publications Department. Other briefings in this area are available.

The human resource advice service at NCVO also offers:

- telephone advice for quick information enquiries on employment;
- advice sessions where voluntary organisations can meet the adviser for one and a half hours to talk through their human resource needs;
- seminars on employment issues;
- access to quality assured human resource consultants.

The service operates from 9.30 am to 5.00 p.m. every weekday.

Model Equal Opportunities Policy

Commitment to Equal Opportunities can be fostered by adopting an Equal Opportunities policy, which is regularly monitored and reviewed. The following are some suggestions for consideration when drawing up the main clauses.

1 Start by setting out the organisation's commitment and value base.

- Toleration - respect differences between societies/groups.
- Humanism - assigns rights to the individual.
- Marxist - views relations between groups in terms of a power struggle.

2 Mention who the policy applies to, and in what way.

- Staff - Selection, promotion, training.
- Trustees - Selection and retention.
- Users - Representation and access to services.

3 Think about giving examples of groups who may be underrepresented or discriminated against or list in terms of the grounds for discrimination.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Race | • Colour | • Nationality |
| • Religion | • Ethnicity | • National Origins |
| • Age | • Sex | • Marital Status |
| • Sexual Preference | • Disability | • Health (past or present) |
| • Political Affiliation | • Trades Union Membership | • Class |
| • Criminal Convictions | • Education | • Appearance |
| • Wealth/poverty | • Family Connections | • Clan/ tribe |

4 Is your policy committed to diversity and representativeness, meritocratic principles or redressing perceived past discrimination. Or perhaps a combination of all three.

- Diversity - Recruit to reflect the diversity of the environment in which the organisation operates and be representative of that community.
- Meritocratic - Recruit according to merit and ability, regardless of race, gender etc.
- Redress - Recruit to compensate for discrimination in the past.

5 List how the policy will be applied in practice.

- Selection - How the process and procedures will be applied
- Training - Policies and selection criteria for staff training.
- Access - How will universal access to your services be insured? Can wheel chair users reach you? How do deaf people phone you?

6 Conclude by stating how you will monitor the policy and when it will be reviewed.

APPENDIX J (HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974)

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 outlines the duties an employer has to maintain a safe work environment. The act lists the responsibilities of employers. Many of these responsibilities apply to organisations such as Prisoners Abroad. In writing our environmental policy, we included the responsibilities of the organisation as stated in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. According to this act, an employer is responsible for:

- Making the workplace safe and without risks;
- Keeping dust, fume, and noise under control;
- Ensuring plant and machinery are safe and secure;
- Ensuring articles and substances are moved, stored, and used safely;
- Providing adequate welfare facilities;
- Giving you the information, instruction, training, and supervision necessary for your health and safety;
- Drawing up a health and safety policy statement, if have more than 5 employees;
- Reporting certain injuries, diseases, and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority;
- Providing adequate first aid facilities;
- Consulting a safety representative about matters affecting your health and safety;
- Setting up a safety committee if asked in writing by 2 or more safety representatives;
- Taking precautions against fire and provide adequate means of escape and means for fighting fire;
- Maintaining workroom temperature of at least 16°C after the first hour of work where employees do most their work sitting down;
- Keeping workplace clean;

- Keeping clean washing facilities and toilet facilities and provide accommodations for clothing and drinking water;
- Seeing that workrooms are not overcrowded and that they are well ventilated and lit;
- Having well constructed floors, steps, stairs, ladders, passages, and gangways that are maintained and not obstructed;
- Ensuring that employees do not have to lift, carry, or move any load so heavy that it is likely to injure them;
- Taking proper precautions to prevent employees from being exposed to substances which may damage their health;
- Taking precautions against electrical equipment and radiation.

The act also outlines the legal responsibilities of employees. They are:

- Taking care of your own health and safety and what others may be affected by what you do or do not do;
- Co-operating with your employer on health and safety;
- Not interfering with or misusing anything provided for your health, safety, and welfare.

According to this act, any problems in the workplace should first be discussed with the employer. If the problem is not resolved, an employee should then contact health and safety inspectors. These inspectors can give advice on how to comply with the law.

APPENDIX K (PRELIMINARY POLICIES)

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Draft #1 06/02/00

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad will utilise a strategic plan for resource management to effectively record the organisation's resources. Resources include office supplies, equipment, and premises. This policy includes guidelines on stock control, purchasing and premises.

Stock Control

To efficiently manage their resources, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. All supplies should be kept in a locked storage area. On a weekly basis, the supplies needed by the employees will be made accessible.
2. There will be a designated person who is responsible for making weekly supplies accessible to the entire staff and placing supply orders.
3. When an item is taken from the designated locked storage area it shall be indicated on an available stock sheet.
4. The person who places all orders for supplies should keep records of the items ordered, the date of ordering, and the quantity ordered. When the items are delivered, record of their receipt should be kept in the appropriate file.

If an employee requires an unusual stock order (large amount of an item or an item that is not usually available in the office), he or she should place a request one week in advance.

Specific forms will be available for the following purposes:

1. To issue complaints or suggestions regarding the available resources or facilities.
2. To notify the designated person in the case of equipment (i.e. computers, telephones, fax machines, etc) failure. The responsible person should make arrangements for repair.
3. To request the placement of an unusual stock order.

Purchasing Procedure

The supplies needed for the year ahead should be identified and planned for in the budget. In order to identify supplies needed for the year ahead, an annual record of supplies should be kept. A reserve fund should be designated within the budget for unexpected crises regarding resources (i.e. equipment repair).

Prisoners Abroad will use economic purchasing practices. This involves purchasing supplies needed to complete a task at the most reasonable price without sacrificing quality. Also, when storage space permits, supplies will be purchased in large quantities.

Premises

Prisoners Abroad will keep the premises safe and secure by:

1. Abiding by the Health and Safety guidelines included in the Environmental Issues Policy.
2. Maintaining a surveillance system in order to identify persons prior to admittance to the office.
3. Keeping emergency telephone numbers visible in the office.
4. Keeping records of all key holders.

Draft #2 11/02/00

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad will utilise a strategic plan for resource management to effectively record the organisation's resources. Resources include office supplies, equipment, and premises. This policy includes guidelines on stock control, purchasing and premises.

Stock Control

To efficiently manage their resources, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Supplies should be kept in a central storage area. This area should be fully stocked on a weekly basis.
2. There will be a designated person who is responsible for making weekly supplies accessible to the entire staff and placing supply orders.
3. When an item is taken from the designated locked storage area it shall be indicated on an available stock sheet.
4. The person who places all orders for supplies should keep records of the items ordered, the date of ordering, and the quantity ordered. When the items are delivered, record of their receipt should be kept in the appropriate file.
5. In the event of the expectancy of an urgent delivery, the person at the door should be notified in order to ensure efficiency in the procedure.

If an employee requires an unusual stock order (large amount of an item or an item that is not usually available in the office), he or she should place a request one week in advance.

Specific forms will be available for the following purposes:

1. To issue complaints or suggestions regarding the available resources or facilities according to the Complaint and Suggestion Procedure.
2. To notify the designated person in the case of equipment (i.e. computers, telephones, fax machines, etc) failure. The responsible person should make arrangements for repair.

Purchasing Procedure

The supplies needed for the year ahead should be identified and planned for in the budget. In order to identify supplies needed for the year ahead, an annual record of supplies should be kept.

A reserve fund should be designated within the budget for unexpected crises regarding resources (i.e. equipment repair).

Prisoners Abroad will use economic purchasing practices. This involves purchasing supplies needed to complete a task at the most reasonable price without sacrificing quality. Also, when storage space permits, supplies will be purchased in large quantities.

Premises

Prisoners Abroad will keep the premises safe and secure by:

1. Abiding by the Health and Safety guidelines included in the Environmental Issues Policy.
2. Maintaining a surveillance system in order to identify persons prior to admittance to the office.
3. Keeping emergency telephone numbers visible in the office including management telephone numbers in the event of problems in the office.
4. Keeping records of all keyholders.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION POLICY

Draft #1 (Outline) 11/02/00

Monitoring and Evaluation

- I. Monitoring and evaluation needs to include:
 - A. Services provided
 1. Quality
 - a. Aftercare
 - b. Casework
 - c. Other services
 2. Research
 - B. Personnel (including job applicants)
 1. Staff
 2. Volunteers
 3. Trustees
 - C. Service users
 1. Clients
 - a. Demographics
 - b. Record of service, when they have heard from Prisoners Abroad last, what they have received
 2. Other users
 - a. Families
 - b. Supporters
 - c. Pen pals
 - D. Fundraising
 - E. Administration
 - F. Projects
- II. For each of the above areas, the following is needed:
 - A. What are we going to monitor and evaluate?
 - B. How are we going to monitor and evaluate?
 - C. What information needs to be collected?
 - D. How is that information going to be collected (including by whom)?
 - E. What is going to be done with the results?
- III. The following objectives have been set by Prisoners Abroad to represent the key service aims of the organisation.
 - A. To reduce hardship for clients returning to the UK
 - B. To protect the health of our clients
 - C. To ensure that all clients have access to information in English
 - D. To monitor service provision aims and improve our service
 - E. To improve the efficiency, style and management of the organisation

- F. To influence government and other agencies to bring about structural change to improve conditions for prisoners, families and returning clients
 - G. To raise the public profile of Prisoners Abroad
 - H. To reduce the isolation of clients and their families
- IV. Each of the above objectives should be closely monitored and evaluated. Performance indicators for each objective will be set by Prisoners Abroad.
- ❖ Quarterly reports should be presented to the management group and all staff. Services should be evaluated based on the quarterly reports

Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad is committed to utilising a monitoring and evaluation system to ensure continuous improvement. This system enables the organisation to collect and collate detailed information on users, personnel, and services. Prisoners Abroad will evaluate the information obtained to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. The conclusions from the gathered information will be used to make the necessary changes for improvement.

Areas of Monitoring and Evaluation

The following areas will be monitored and evaluated:

1. Services provided
 - Prisoners Abroad will regularly monitor and evaluate the services provided by the organisation. These services will be monitored to ensure quality service provision. Services that will be monitored and evaluated include, but are not limited to aftercare and casework.
 - Prisoners Abroad will monitor and evaluate all research that is completed by the organisation.
2. Personnel (including job applicants)
 - Prisoners Abroad will monitor the demographic statistics of all personnel. This includes staff, volunteers, and trustees. This information will be monitored to evaluate the make up of the organisation.
 - A database will be maintained that compiles demographic information of all personnel.
3. Service users
 - Prisoners Abroad will monitor the users of the organisation's services. Databases will be kept on the demographic statistics of all clients. Records will also be kept on the services provided to employees, this includes contact between Prisoners Abroad and the clients and anything received from Prisoners Abroad.
 - Prisoners Abroad will also monitor all other users of the organisation's services, these users may include, but are not limited to families, supporters, pen pals.
 - The service users of Prisoners Abroad will be evaluated so that the organisation may modify the services to best fit its users.
4. Other areas
 - Other areas that Prisoners Abroad will monitor and evaluate are fundraising, administration, and projects.

Criteria for Monitoring and Evaluation

For each of the above areas, Prisoners Abroad must determine the following:

1. What is going to be monitored and evaluated?
2. How are we going to monitor and evaluate?
3. What information needs to be collected in order to monitor and evaluate?
4. How is that information going to be collected (including by whom)?
5. What is going to be done with the results?

Key objectives

The following objectives have been set by Prisoners Abroad to represent the key service aims of the organisation.

1. To reduce hardship for clients returning to the UK
2. To protect the health of our clients
3. To ensure that all clients have access to information in English
4. To monitor service provision aims and improve our service
5. To improve the efficiency, style and management of the organisation
6. To influence government and other agencies to bring about structural change to improve conditions for prisoners, families and returning clients
7. To raise the public profile of Prisoners Abroad
8. To reduce the isolation of clients and their families

Each of the above objectives must be closely monitored and evaluated by the organisation. Performance indicators for each objective will be set by Prisoners Abroad.

Reports on Monitoring and Evaluation

Quarterly reports must be made on all areas included in the Monitoring and Evaluation policy. These reports will be presented to the management group and all staff for discussion and review. Services will be evaluated based on the quarterly reports

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES POLICY

Draft #1 06/02/00

Environmental Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad recognises that the activities of the organisation and its individuals have an impact on the environment. We aim to reduce the impact of our own organisation through a programme of continuous improvement.

Implementing the policy

Prisoners Abroad will reduce waste by implementing a recycling programme to include paper, bottles and cans, eliminating unnecessary purchases, and reusing as much as possible.

The organisation aims to conserve energy by:

1. Draft proofing the windows and doorways.
2. Maintaining office temperature above 18°C in the winter and below 27°C in the summer.
3. Keeping workplace well lit with energy efficient lighting.
4. Switching off appliances and lights when not in use.
5. Utilising screensavers for the computer monitors.

In order to maintain a safe working environment, Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Ensure that at least one employee is trained and certified in first aid.
2. Store a first aid kit in an easily accessible location.
3. Have fire department representatives inspect the premises regularly (including electrical wiring, fire extinguishers and alarms).
4. Conduct fire drills biannually.
5. Post evacuation routes in necessary locations.
6. Immediately report work related injuries to the appropriate person.
7. Maintain neat and secure storage areas (e.g. shelves, file cabinets, bookcases, etc.).
8. Provide office furniture that is reasonably comfortable to the employees, when economically feasible.
9. Keep toilet and kitchen facilities clean.

An environmental and safety committee will be formed. The responsibilities of this committee include:

1. Conducting an annual environmental awareness workshop in areas including fire safety, health and safety, and environmental issues.
2. Conducting an annual review of all environmental policies and proposing changes when necessary to ensure continuous improvement.

3. Arranging an annual environmental audit.

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to the preceding policy and guidelines, and it is the duty of the management to ensure that all employees abide by the policy.

Draft #2 09/02/00

Environmental Issues Policy Statement

Prisoners Abroad recognises that the activities of the organisation and its individuals have an impact on the environment. We aim to reduce the impact of our own organisation on the environment through a programme of continuous improvement. The staff members of Prisoners Abroad have the responsibility to adhere to the following policy.

Implementing the policy

An environmental and safety committee will be formed. The responsibilities of this committee include:

1. Conducting an annual environmental awareness workshop in areas including fire safety, health and safety, and environmental issues.
2. Arranging an environmental training session for all new employees, trustees, and volunteers as part of their induction.
3. Conducting an annual review of all environmental policies and proposing changes when necessary to ensure continuous improvement.
4. Arranging an annual environmental audit.

Prisoners Abroad is committed to reduce waste by implementing a recycling programme to include paper, bottles and cans, eliminating unnecessary purchases, and reusing as much as possible, where resources allow. This programme is outlined in the Environmental Plan.

The organisation and its staff aim to conserve energy by:

1. Draft proofing the windows and doorways as outlined in the Environmental Plan.
2. Maintaining office temperature above 18oC in the winter and below 27oC in the summer.
3. Keeping workplace well lit with energy efficient lighting.
4. Turning off appropriate equipment such as photocopiers, printers, heating, lighting, and kitchen appliances when not in use.
5. Utilising screensavers for the computer monitors.

In order to maintain a safe working environment, Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Ensure that at least two employees are trained and officially certified in first aid.
2. Store a first aid kit in an easily accessible location.
3. Have fire department representatives inspect the premises regularly (including electrical wiring, fire extinguishers and alarms).
4. Conduct fire drills biannually.
5. Conduct dangerous offenders drill biannually.
6. Post evacuation routes in necessary locations.
7. Immediately report work related injuries to the appropriate person.

8. Maintain neat and secure storage areas (e.g. shelves, file cabinets, bookcases, etc.). Individuals are responsible for maintaining neat and secure storage areas in their own work areas.
9. Provide office furniture that is ergonomically correct for the employees, as outlined in the Health and Safety Policy.
10. Provide materials to keep toilet and kitchen facilities clean. The staff members are responsible for keeping these areas clean.
11. Report any breaches of the Health and Safety Policy immediately to a line manager.

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to the preceding policy and guidelines, and it is the duty of the management to ensure that all employees abide by the policy.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Draft #1 06/02/00

Equal Opportunities Statement

Prisoners Abroad aims to treat all employees, clients, trustees, and job applicants equally. We will not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS status, or disability. The organisation will always comply with equal opportunities legislation including the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and the Equal Pay Act 1970. The equal opportunity policy of Prisoners Abroad covers the areas of recruitment and induction, communication, training, monitoring, and service provision.

It is the responsibility of the Management Committee to oversee and enforce the Equal Opportunities Policy. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of every individual in Prisoners Abroad.

Recruitment and Induction

Prisoners Abroad will always abide by the current equal opportunities legislation that applies to the organisation's work. Prisoners Abroad will always recruit using the guidelines stated by the Equal Opportunities Recruitment Procedure. These guidelines ensure that potential employees are selected on the basis of their skills and merits. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Advertise for open positions in such a way that the wording is not discriminatory or discouraging for applicants in a particular group. These particular groups include those of colour, race, religion, age, gender, disability, nationality, and ethnic or national origins.
2. Display job openings both internally and externally and visible to all employees. When feasible, advertisements will be placed in diverse press
3. Include a copy of the equal opportunities statement on all application forms. Indicate that a copy of the entire equal opportunities policy will be available to applicants upon request.

Communication and Training

Prisoners Abroad will communicate to the community, potential employees, clients and staff that the organisation is an equal opportunity employer. Prisoners Abroad takes responsibility for educating its employees about the Equal Opportunity Policy. All employees will be informed of their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the organisation regarding equal opportunities. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Include the Equal Opportunities Statement in all publications and literature.

2. Use positive images in all publications to reflect the make-up of the organisation and clients.
3. Hold an equal opportunities training session for all employees, trustees, and volunteers to attend within three months of induction. The purpose of this training session is to communicate the current equal opportunities policies of Prisoners Abroad.
4. Educate all current employees about equal opportunities upon adoption of this policy.
5. Create a working atmosphere that supports the needs of all staff members

Monitoring

Prisoners Abroad will ascertain that it is fulfilling its commitment laid out in the Equal Opportunities Statement through a monitoring process. The information obtained from the monitoring process will be used to evaluate the current procedures of the organisation and make the necessary improvements to these procedures. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Include a detachable questionnaire with job application forms inquiring age, gender, disability status, colour, race, religion, nationality, and ethnic background. This questionnaire will enable the organisation to monitor the types of people that applied for a position, and the people that were short-listed so that future practices can be adjusted to avoid discrimination. The personal information requested will not be used in any stage of the selection process and should be made clear to all applicants.
2. Keep detailed profiles on each client.
3. Analyse the information produced by the monitoring process every 12 months. This analysis should check if recruitment procedures and client services are equally directed.

Implementation

Prisoners Abroad will form and maintain an Equal Opportunities Group. The purpose of this group is to monitor the activities of the organisation as they apply to equal opportunity policy. The group will be made up of a cross section of employees from the organisation. There should be a chairperson for this group whose responsibilities include calling meetings when necessary, making sure that the policies are being enforced, and analysing statistics. The responsibilities of the group are:

1. To propose any changes or additions to the equal opportunities policy when necessary. Any problems with the equal opportunities policy should be addressed whenever they are made evident.
2. To regularly review the equal opportunities policy. The group should meet quarterly to make sure that the policies are being followed and enforced. In addition, the group should meet annually to review the entire policy and make the necessary revisions.

3. To educate the staff about equal opportunities. This includes informing the staff of any changes in the current legislation and holding an annual seminar for employees to discuss equal opportunities issues.
4. To administer an annual questionnaire to the staff. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the current status of the equal opportunities policy and the organisation's attitude towards minority groups. The results of this questionnaire should be presented to the entire organisation.
5. To maintain a database collating information about employees, clients, volunteers, and trustees. The data collected should be used to evaluate the current advertisement and recruitment practices and the availability of services to all potential clients.

Service Provision

Prisoners Abroad will assist all persons in need of services regardless of alleged or proven offence. All clients will have equal access to all areas of service.

Due to the scope of our work, clients of Prisoners Abroad include only British subjects who have right of abode in this country, or for those who have close links to this country who are detained overseas, and their families or dependants. Prisoners Abroad will not refuse service provision to anyone who falls within these parameters.

All aftercare clients are expected to abide by the Guidelines and Conduct in the Drop-in. Breach of these guidelines will be discussed with the client and may lead to temporary or permanent ban from Prisoners Abroad. We reserve the right to deny services to those who fail to follow these guidelines.

Any complaints should be issued following the Complaints Procedure included in the Employee Handbook.

Prisoners Abroad will abide by the previous guidelines to the extent that their resources allow.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Prisoners Abroad is committed to equal opportunities for all, leading to positive attitudes, policies, planning, action, and review across all aspects of its work.

Prisoners Abroad will not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS status, or disability. The organisation will always comply with equal opportunities legislation including the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and the Equal Pay Act 1970. The equal opportunity policy of Prisoners Abroad covers the areas of recruitment and induction, communication, training, monitoring, and service provision.

It is the responsibility of the Management Committee to oversee and enforce the Equal Opportunities Policy. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of every individual in Prisoners Abroad.

Recruitment and Induction

Prisoners Abroad will always abide by the current equal opportunities legislation that applies to the organisation's work. Prisoners Abroad will always recruit using the guidelines stated by the Recruitment Procedure. These guidelines ensure that potential employees are selected on the basis of their skills and merits. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Advertise for open positions in such a way that the wording is not discriminatory or discouraging for applicants in a particular group. These particular groups include those of colour, race, religion, age, gender, disability, nationality, and ethnic or national origins.
2. Advertise vacancies in line with the Recruitment Procedure. Prisoners Abroad will advertise in diverse media outlets when feasible.
3. Include a copy of the equal opportunities statement on all application forms. Indicate that a copy of the entire equal opportunities policy will be available to applicants upon request.

Communication and Training

Prisoners Abroad will communicate to the community, potential employees, clients and staff that the organisation is an equal opportunity employer. Prisoners Abroad takes responsibility for educating its employees about the Equal Opportunity Policy. All employees will be informed of their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the organisation regarding equal opportunities. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Include the Equal Opportunities Statement in all publications and literature.

2. Use positive images in all publications when appropriate to reflect the diversity of all stakeholders of the organisation.
3. Train all current employees about equal opportunities upon adoption of this policy and conduct an equal opportunities training session biannually.
4. Hold equal opportunities training sessions for all employees, trustees, and volunteers to attend within three months of induction. The purpose of this training session is to communicate the current equal opportunities policies of Prisoners Abroad.
5. Create a working atmosphere that supports the needs of all staff members

Monitoring

Prisoners Abroad will ascertain that it is fulfilling its commitment laid out in the Equal Opportunities Statement through a monitoring process. Prisoners Abroad will use the information obtained from the monitoring process to evaluate the current procedures of the organisation and make the necessary improvements to these procedures. Prisoners Abroad will:

1. Include a detachable questionnaire with job application forms inquiring age, gender, disability status, colour, race, religion, nationality, and ethnic background. This questionnaire will enable the organisation to monitor the types of people who applied for a position, and the people who were short-listed, so future practices can be adjusted to avoid discrimination. The personal information requested is not a factor in any stage of the selection process. The organisation will make this clear to all applicants.
2. Keep detailed profiles on each client, in provision with the Data Protection Act.
3. Analyse the information produced by the monitoring process annually. This analysis will determine if the recruitment procedures and client services are equally directed.

Implementation

Prisoners Abroad will form and maintain an Equal Opportunities Group. The purpose of this group is to monitor the activities of the organisation as they apply to equal opportunity policy. The group will be made up of a cross section of employees from the organisation. There should be a chairperson for this group whose responsibilities include calling meetings when necessary, making sure that the policies are being enforced, and analysing the information obtained through equal opportunities monitoring. The responsibilities of the group are:

1. To propose any changes or additions to the equal opportunities policy when necessary. Any problems with the equal opportunities policy should be addressed whenever they are made evident.
2. To regularly review the equal opportunities policy. The group should meet quarterly to make sure that the policies are being followed and enforced. In addition, the group should meet annually to review the entire policy and make the necessary revisions.

3. To educate the staff about equal opportunities. This includes informing the staff of any changes in the current legislation and holding an annual seminar for employees to discuss equal opportunities issues.
4. To administer an annual questionnaire to the staff. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the current status of the equal opportunities policy and the organisation's attitude towards minority groups. The results of this questionnaire should be presented to the entire organisation.
5. To maintain a database collating information about employees, clients, volunteers, and trustees. The data collected should be used to evaluate the current advertisement and recruitment practices and the availability of services to all potential clients. This database should be updated annually.

Service Provision

Prisoners Abroad will assist all persons in need of services regardless of alleged or proven offence. All clients will have equal access to all areas of service.

Due to the scope of our work, clients of Prisoners Abroad include only Britons who have right of abode in this country, or for those who Prisoners Abroad determines to have close links to this country who are detained overseas, and their families or dependants. Prisoners Abroad will not refuse service provision to anyone who falls within these parameters.

All aftercare clients are expected to abide by the Guidelines and Conduct in the Drop-in. Breach of these guidelines will be discussed with the client and may lead to temporary or permanent ban from Prisoners Abroad. We reserve the right to deny services to those who fail to follow these guidelines. All stakeholders in the organisation are expected to abide to the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Any complaints should be issued following the Complaints Procedure included in the Employee Handbook.

APPENDIX L (CONTACT INFORMATION)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTACTS

Organisations that conduct environmental audits

Environment and Energy Helpline	0541 542 541
Environmental Data Service	0171 278 4745
Institute of Environmental Assessment	0152 254 0069

Environmental Organisations

Energy Efficiency Hotline	0800 096 9966
Energy Savings Trust	0171 222 0101
Envirosave Middlesex University Enfield Campus	0181 362 5644 (David Almond) 0181 805 0895 (fax)
Friends of the Earth	0171 490 1555 info@foe.co.uk
Green Peace	0171 865 8100 www.greenpeace.co.uk

Recycling Organisations

Bywaters	0181 558 1141
London Recycling Limited	0171 511 8000
Paper Round Limited	0171 247 0470

Organisations that buy used computer equipment

Microfix	0181 579 7474
Key Technical U.K. Ltd.	081 686 8851
Forrester Group	0181 530 6967

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES CONTACTS

Commission on Racial Equality	0171 828 7022 www.cre.gov.uk
Disability Infoline	0345 622 688 (automated line); 0345 622 633 (operator)
Equal Opportunities Commission	0161 833 9244
Royal National Institute for the Blind	0171 388 1266
Skill (National Bureau for Disabled University Students)	0800 328 5050; Monday to Friday 1.30-4.30

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Charities Evaluation Services	0171 713 5722 0171 713 5692 (fax)
NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations)	0171 713 6161
LASA (London Advice Services Alliance)	0171 377 2748 0171 247 4725 (fax)
FIAC (Federation of Independent Advice Centers)	0171 489 1800

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