Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB)
Equal Opportunities Report 2003
CONTENTS

Foreword by George Reid MSP, Presiding Officer.............................................. 5

Section 1: Mainstreaming equalities into all of our work .................................... 7

Section 2: Equal opportunities training .............................................................. 11

Section 3: Delivering services to the public ......................................................... 15

Section 4: Recruiting and employing staff ......................................................... 25

Section 5: Monitoring ......................................................................................... 29

Section 6: Our plans for 2004 ............................................................................ 31

Annex: Key findings from the SPCB’s 2003 Equal Opportunities Staff Audit ........ 33
Foreword by George Reid MSP,
Presiding Officer

The Scottish Parliament is widely known for its role as a body which makes laws and scrutinises the work of the Scottish Executive. Importantly, however, the Parliament is also an employer and a service provider in its own right.

As Presiding Officer, one of my responsibilities is to chair the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB). The SPCB is made up of five MSPs, including myself, elected by the Parliament. It is the SPCB that is responsible for providing the services that the Parliament needs in order to operate. It is therefore responsible for, amongst other things, managing the way in which the Parliament employs and treats its staff and for providing a range of services to the public.

Our aim to make sure that everyone in Scotland is able to get involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament, regardless of their age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation or any disability they might have. We are also committed to being an equal opportunities employer, which we believe must always mean much more than just having a set of equal opportunities policies in place.

This report covers the calendar year of 2003. During this period, we have been working hard to make sure that all of the information and services that the SPCB provides to the public are delivered in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way.

This report describes what we have achieved this year in relation to improving access to the Parliament and building equal opportunities issues into our work. It also sets out a series of action points, relating to this area of work, that we aim to achieve in 2004.

Presiding Officer and Chair of the
Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
Section 1: Mainstreaming equalities into all of our work

1.1 Introduction

We believe that it is essential we take proper account of equal opportunities and access issues in all our work. Equal opportunities issues are not just something you should ‘tag on’ to a project or an initiative. Instead, our aim is to make sure that equal opportunities issues are built (or ‘mainstreamed’) into the culture of our organisation.

Providing all of our staff with equal opportunities training, for example, is an essential part of our mainstreaming strategy. However, there is more to it than that, and many practical changes were made in 2003 to ensure that our work takes proper account of the needs of all of our staff and all of the members of the public who wish to interact with the Parliament.

In this section, we describe some examples of the practical steps we have taken in 2003 to mainstream equal opportunities issues into all of the work that is carried out across our organisation.

1.2 Senior Management Team meetings

In 2003, our Senior Management Team decided to change the structure of the papers it discusses. One of the more significant changes made was to incorporate an “Equal Opportunities” section into every paper that is discussed at its meetings.

This change means that, before any draft policies, projects or initiatives are discussed by the Senior Management Team, the relevant office in the Parliament now needs to think through what the equal opportunities implications of the proposals might be. For example, if a paper was being taken to the Senior Management Team about a forthcoming event, the paper would need to explain what practical steps would be taken to make sure that the event was fully accessible to disabled people and that any catering provided at the event takes full account of religious and cultural diversity.

We have already found that this change has made it more likely that we think about equality and access issues from the initial stages of planning an event or project, rather than trying to add these issues on at a later stage.

1.3 Producing annual equality reports for each directorate

In 2003, for the first time, each Director in the Parliament produced an equal opportunities report for their directorate. These reports describe the work relating to equalities and access issues that was carried out within each directorate during the year. They also contain a list of equality-related action points for each directorate for 2004.

The information contained within these individual directorate reports was then brought together to form the basis of this equal opportunities report for the whole organisation.
1.4 New performance management system

In 2003, the Parliament brought in a new system for appraising the performance of its staff. In the past, members of staff were appraised by measuring how successful they had been in achieving a list of targets. This system has now been improved so that, as well as being assessed according to targets, all staff are also assessed according to a range of behavioural competencies. Under the new system, one of the areas of competence which all staff are now being measured against is “Improving Access and Promoting Equality”.

This change has meant that equality issues are built into everyone’s appraisals – from those of our front-line staff to our Chief Executive. This has been vital in getting everyone to take these issues seriously and incorporate them into their day-to-day work.

1.5 Consultation with external organisations

As part of our mainstreaming strategy, it has been essential for us to consult external organisations to find out what they think of the services we offer. Many of the practical changes we have described in this report were made in consultation with relevant organisations.

Example of consultation

In 2003, we reviewed our policy for providing sign language interpreters for debates in the Chamber of the Parliament. As well as seeking views from all the relevant offices in the Parliament, we also consulted a range of organisations in Scotland which work with deaf people on the proposed changes.

As a result of this review, and of the comments that we received, we are now making significant improvements to the policy. For example, we will soon be providing, as a pilot, BSL interpreters for First Minister’s Question Times and for other Question Times in the Parliament.

During this pilot, we will again seek the views of relevant organisations to ensure that we get our policy on providing interpreters right for when we move to the new Parliament building at Holyrood.

1.6 Staff team meetings

Many offices in the Parliament have decided to build equal opportunities issues into their team meetings as a standing agenda item. From our experience, this has been very helpful in providing staff with an opportunity to raise any concerns that they wish to raise or to make suggestions about equality issues.
Example of building equalities issues into team meetings

In the Parliament’s Clerking and Reporting Directorate, equalities issues are now included as a separate standing item on the agendas for meetings of offices within the directorate. Minutes of meetings are circulated to staff in the relevant teams which helps to improve the level of awareness of equality issues.

1.7 Updating guidance documents

Like any organisation, the Parliament produces a range of different guidance documents for staff to advise and assist them on various issues. In order to mainstream equalities successfully throughout our work, we always strive to make sure that our staff guidance documents take full account of equalities issues.

Example of building equalities issues into staff guidance

The Parliament's Clerking and Reporting Directorate produces a guide for Committee Clerks which provides advice and assistance on a range of issues, such as how to clerk committee meetings and how to organise committee events.

In 2003, the Clerking and Reporting Directorate updated this guidance so that it now includes information on ensuring that proper facilities are available for people who require interpreting facilities or any other form of communication support. The guidance also includes information on physical access issues (for example, on seating arrangements for carers and the location of accessible toilet facilities, etc.)

1.8 An example of mainstreaming equalities into the work a particular office: The SPCB’s Equalities in Procurement Checklist

In many instances, building equalities issues into people’s day-to-day work does not require a great deal of additional resources; it might just mean that people have to dedicate a little extra time to making sure that they think through what the equalities implications of their work might be. A good example of this is the work carried out in our Procurement Office to develop a checklist which helps purchasers to build equal opportunities considerations into the specification and procurement schedules for every contract that is let by the Parliament.

This checklist asks a series of questions about the nature of the particular contract to be let. The answers to these questions then direct purchasers to a ‘cut and paste board’ which contains standard pieces of text which are to be incorporated into the specification, perhaps after being adapted slightly to suit the individual contract.

Potential suppliers must then demonstrate how they will comply with these equal opportunities requirements within their tender documentation and their responses are assessed as an integral part of the tender evaluation process.
Example of how the SPCB’s Equalities in Procurement Checklist would be used

If the Parliament’s Procurement Office was producing a specification for a contract for new uniforms for security staff at the Parliament, the checklist would be used to establish what might need to be built into the specification in relation to equalities issues.

One of the questions asked in the checklist, for example, is “For this contract, will the contractors be supplying uniforms for their own staff or SPCB staff to wear?” Because the answer to this question would be “yes”, this would direct the Procurement Officer to a section of text in the ‘cut and paste board’ which states that “All uniforms supplied by the contractor in connection with this contract must be culturally sensitive (for example, they must permit the wearing of headscarves and turbans).”

The checklist would therefore make sure that cultural and religious diversity issues would be included in the specification for this contract. The extent to which the different organisations that are tendering for this contract are able to meet these equal opportunities requirements would then became an integral part of the process for selecting who the contract should be awarded to.

While we have made considerable progress in relation to mainstreaming equal opportunities issues into our work, we accept that there is more that can be done. In particular, we look forward to devising more specific ways of mainstreaming these issues into the work of individual offices.
Section 2: Equal opportunities training

2.1 Introduction

After the Parliament appointed its own Equalities Manager in 2002, one of the priorities for the organisation was to develop and roll out a core training programme for all staff on equal opportunities issues. We are also pleased to report that our equal opportunities training now goes much further than this core programme. In this section of this report, we provide information about some of the most significant equal opportunities training initiatives that we delivered in 2003.

2.2 Core equal opportunities training programme

In consultation with a cross-section of staff from across the organisation, we have developed two half-day training courses called “Equality in the Scottish Parliament” and “Managing Diversity”. Attendance at the “Equality in the Scottish Parliament” course was compulsory for all staff, whilst initially the “Managing Diversity” course was only compulsory for members of staff with line management or a strategic role in the organisation. As a result of the positive feedback that we received, however, we decided to extend the “Managing Diversity” course to all staff.

Between March and June 2003, 94% of all staff attended the “Equality in the Scottish Parliament” course and 84% of staff with a line management or strategic role attended the “Managing Diversity” course.

Feedback from staff about the Scottish Parliament’s core equal opportunities training programme

- 95% of staff felt that the training was relevant to their current role in the organisation.
- 98% of staff rated the trainer’s delivery as either “good” or “excellent”.
- 100% of staff rated the trainer’s knowledge of the subject area as either “good” or “excellent”.

Both training courses cover a variety of different issues, including using non-discriminatory language, understanding equal opportunities legislation and implementing the SPCB’s equal opportunities policies. A training video, which contains fictional case studies was also produced specifically for use in these training sessions to stimulate discussion.

These two training courses remain compulsory for new staff starting work for the SPCB, and dates for these courses are now offered to all new entrants within three months of them starting work at the Parliament.
2.3 Disability Awareness Week

Whilst we remain committed to providing further general equal opportunities training, we also recognise that sometimes training has to be more specific if it is to bring about a significant change in the way that people and organisations work. It is with this in mind that we organised a series of events between 29 October and 3 October 2003 to promote awareness of disability access and disability equality issues across the Parliament. These events were timed to fit in with the fact that 2003 was designated as European Year for Disabled People.

During the week, over 120 people (including MSPs, MSP staff and Parliament staff) attended workshops which gave them an opportunity to plan how they would build disability access and equality issues into their work and the work of their offices. 97% of those taking part in these workshops stated that they understood how the workshop would assist them in their current role, whilst 100% of participants stated that they found the workshop “informative and interesting”.

A video, produced by the Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Project, called “Yes, My Brain Works - Does Yours?”, which clearly demonstrates the importance of taking physical access issues seriously, was also shown during the week on the Parliament’s internal television network.

Following the success of these disability awareness events, further training initiatives on other specific equal opportunities issues (e.g. race awareness) are being planned for the future.

2.4 Language training programme

As part of our training strategy, the Parliament invites staff to sign up for language training if they would benefit from an understanding of another language in their current post or if they wish to learn a language for their own personal development. In 2003, the languages studied by members of staff included French, Spanish, Gaelic and British Sign Language.

Training is typically delivered at four levels: beginner, elementary, intermediate and advanced (apart from Gaelic and British Sign Language which have different course structures). Almost all of the language courses can lead to a recognised qualification and to more advanced training courses.

Example of language training programme: BSL training

British Sign Language training has been organised for parliament staff and MSPs for the last two years.

In 2003, some staff in the Parliament were approaching their second year of the Stage 2 BSL course, whilst two other classes have recently completed the Stage 1 course.
2.5 Job-specific training on equal opportunities issues

Most of the equal opportunities training that we delivered in 2003 was aimed at all of our staff. However, as the level of awareness of equalities issues in our organisation has increased, we have also responded to the demand in many offices for equal opportunities training that is tailored specifically to meet their needs.

Examples of job-specific equal opportunities training

In 2003, staff in the Parliament’s Business Information Technology (BIT) Office attended the following training courses:

- An introductory course on ensuring that computer hardware and software is accessible to disabled people
- Accessibility and Assistive Technology for the Visually Impaired
- Computing for People with Dyslexia

We also encourage staff to attend conferences and other events which will help them to gain wider experience in their field. For example, in 2003, staff in the Non-Executive Bills Unit (the unit which deals with Bills that are introduced to the Parliament by individual MSPs, rather than by the Scottish Executive) attended a range of conferences relating to children’s rights issues. This was to assist them with the work that they were carrying out on the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill.

Our Equalities Manager also provides seminars and workshops for different offices within the Parliament. These provide a valuable opportunity for staff to plan how they will take full account of equalities and access issues in their work.

2.6 Factsheets on the Disability Discrimination Act

In October 2004, the law relating to disability discrimination will be strengthened. These changes will have particular implications for the work of individual MSPs and their staff. In order to provide MSPs and their staff with practical information on the implications of these changes, a series of factsheets about the Disability Discrimination Act have been published. These factsheets deal with issues such as access to MSP surgeries and the accessibility of MSP’s local offices. Copies will be sent out to each MSP in January 2004.
2.7 Other written training materials and guidance documents

Sometimes, classroom-style training might not be the most effective method of providing training; for some issues, providing written guidance can be more effective.

A new section of the Parliament’s intranet was therefore created in 2003, which contains a range of practical guidance documents on equality issues. These documents, which were put together by the Parliament’s Equalities Manager, now provide MSPs, MSP staff and SPCB staff with guidance on the following issues:

- Ensuring that the design and content of publications are accessible
- Making services accessible to people who are deaf, deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing
- The responsibilities of MSPs, as employers and service providers, under equal opportunities legislation
- How to use the RNID Typetalk service
- Working with a sign language interpreter.
Section 3: Delivering services to the public

3.1 Introduction

The SPCB has a crucial role to play in providing information to the public to enable everyone in Scotland to find out what is happening in the Parliament and discover how the Parliament works.

For example, we publish a range of publications which describe the different ways in which people can get involved in the work of the Parliament. We produce educational materials for young people about the Parliament and we are responsible for producing the Official Report – which is the official record of what was said in every parliamentary debate and committee meeting. We also manage the Parliament’s website – which not only provides a great deal of information about the Parliament but also enables people to watch live televised debates and committee meetings.

As well as providing information to the public, the SPCB also provides a range of different services to the public. For example, here is a list of just a few of the services that we provide:

• We have set up a public information telephone and textphone service, so that people can contact us to get information about the Parliament.
• We currently run two visitor centres in Edinburgh – one at George IV Bridge and the other near the site of the new building at Holyrood.
• We also welcome members of the public to the parliament to watch what is happening in the chamber or in committee meetings
• We deal with media enquiries about the Parliament.
• We organise school visits to the Parliament.
• We work with 80 libraries all over Scotland so that people can access up-to-date and detailed information about the Parliament in their local area.

This section of this report explains some of the practical measures which were taken in 2003 to ensure that our information and services were delivered in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way.

3.2 New Leaflet – “Making Your Voice Heard”

In June 2003, we published a new leaflet entitled “Making Your Voice Heard”. This leaflet, which is available free of charge, tells people about all of the different ways in which they can get involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament.

This leaflet has become one of the most popular publications that we have produced. We consulted a range of community groups when we were deciding what information to put into the leaflet and we also held a launch event, which was attended by a diverse group of people from across Scotland.
The publication is available in 8 different written languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Gaelic, Punjabi, Scots and Urdu), one visual language (British Sign Language) and other formats (including audio tape and Braille). The BSL version can be ordered in VHS video format or viewed on the Parliament’s website.

Copies have already been sent out to hundreds of local community groups throughout Scotland and we are continuing to distribute copies at conferences and other events. To order a free copy of this publication, please contact the Parliament’s Public Information Service (the contact details are on the back cover of this report).

3.3 Providing BSL interpreters

We are committed to providing people with a sign language interpreter (or another form of communication support, such as a lipspeaker or palantypist) if they require such a service in order to engage with the Parliament. For example, if someone wishes to come along and watch a debate in the Parliament or watch a committee meeting and they require a sign language interpreter, we will do our best to provide this (although this will be subject to the availability of these services, which is why we ask people to provide as much notice of their requirements as possible).

During 2003, we introduced a range of internal changes which have made it easier for us to provide sign language interpreters, and other communication support services, when these are requested by members of the public.

For example, we have established a central budget to cover the cost of hiring sign language interpreters and we have also streamlined the process for MSPs to arrange these services, so that they now have a single point of contact in the Parliament when wishing to make a booking. A range of guidance materials have also been produced which explain to MSPs and our staff the steps we need to take to ensure that our services are fully accessible to people who are deaf, deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing. All of these changes are intended to make it easier for us to meet the needs of people using our services.
Access for people who are deaf, deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing

Other services and initiatives have been put in place across the Parliament to ensure that our services are fully accessible to people who are deaf, deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing. For example:

- The Parliament has a local-rate textphone number (0845 278 1999)
- Induction loops have been installed in the chamber and in some of the committee rooms
- A BSL video about getting involved in the work of the Parliament has been produced
- Staff and MSPs have received training on how to use the RNID Typetalk service, and written guidance on using the service is published on the Parliament’s intranet. This work has been carried out to ensure that deaf people can contact any office in the Parliament using the Typetalk service.
- MSPs have been provided with information about setting up a textphone in their own local offices.

3.4 Ensuring that written information is fully accessible

Guidance has been produced for staff and MSPs on how to ensure that any written information that the Parliament produces is fully accessible. This highlights, for example, the need for us to make sure that we avoid using complicated jargon wherever possible in our letters and publications. It also explains the need to make sure that the design and layout of documents are as clear as possible and that any colour schemes used are high contrast.

Even simple changes, such as using a clear typeface in all publications, can make a significant difference to the accessibility of a document and different offices across the Parliament are now ensuring they take full account of these issues.

Making our written information more accessible

Here are some of the changes that were put in place in 2003 in relation to the way in which the Parliament produces and publishes written information:

- The Security Office has produced a “Code of Conduct” for members of the public visiting the Chamber to watch parliamentary proceedings. This has been produced in a range of languages and copies have also been ordered in Braille.
- Links to different pages of the Parliament’s website have been amended to ensure that people accessing the site using a screen reader have clearer information about the content of each page.
• The format of letters issued by committee clerks has been changed. For example, the standard font size used has been increased in line with the guidance issued by the Equalities Manager.

• The Presiding Officer requested that the front page of the Parliament’s website should be changed to make the information it contains more accessible to the public. The changes that were made as a result of the review now mean, for example, that there are direct links from the front page to the information which the Parliament has published in ethnic minority languages.

• Work has started on revising the guidance that is published on how to submit a petition to the Parliament. The new guidance will be published in early 2004 in a range of languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Gaelic, Punjabi and Urdu).

3.5 Organising accessible events

The Parliament organises a wide variety of events each year to which we invite members of the public or representatives of other organisations. Increasingly, we are seeking to make sure that the range of people attending these events is as diverse as possible. We also have a responsibility to make sure that the events themselves are fully accessible.

Making our events more accessible

Here are some of the steps taken to ensure that the way in which we organise events takes account of equality and diversity issues:

• Responding to the needs of those who cannot easily attend events in Edinburgh, the Holyrood Progress Group “Question and Answer Sessions” are now web-cast live and the newsletters are published via the web.

• The launch event for the “Making Your Voice Heard” leaflet was held in a fully accessible venue in Edinburgh. Invitations were sent out to a wide range of community organisations across Scotland and, as a result, many of the people who attended were visiting the Parliament for the first time. Kosher and Halal food was provided for the event and all invitees were asked whether they had any specific access requirements. We also provided two British Sign Language interpreters and a palantypist for the event.

• Some offices have ensured that arrangements are made to allow visitors to comply with their faith obligations during events which it organises. For example, a prayer space has often been provided.

• The guidance provided to committee clerks about organising away days for committees after the last election included information on relevant physical access issues.
• The clerking team for the Parliament’s Equal Opportunities Committee has developed a database of organisations and individuals with a specific interest in equalities issues. The database will be made available to other sections of the Parliament, which will help us to involve people who are traditionally hard to reach in our events. A form will be placed on the Equal Opportunities Committee’s web page to enable interested organisations to input their details into the database electronically.

### 3.6 Outreach work

Various offices within the Parliament are responsible for carrying out outreach work. In 2003, attempts were made to ensure that specific groups who have traditionally faced barriers when accessing goods and services were targeted specifically by some of the Parliament’s outreach work.

#### Examples of targeted outreach work

- The Parliament’s Corporate Policy Unit set up a stand at an event organised by the RNID to promote awareness of the Parliament’s new sign language video. Free copies of the video were given out at the event.
- In June 2003, the Parliament's Equalities Manager gave a presentation to a group of adults with physical and learning disabilities about the Parliament and the different ways of getting involved in its work.
- The Parliament's Broadcasting Office had an exhibition area presence at the "Equal Futures" conference in Glasgow SECC in December 2003. The theme of the conference, organised by Children in Scotland, was race equality and the event involved young people from diverse backgrounds and a range of organisations working in this area.

### 3.7 The work of committees

The Clerking and Reporting Directorate is responsible for supporting the work of the Parliament’s 16 committees. This directorate therefore has a great deal of contact with the public. For example, it makes arrangements for people to give evidence to committees. It is also responsible for guiding the process for collecting evidence when committees hold inquiries into specific issues.

Guidance produced for clerking staff has been updated to take account of various equalities and access issues. For example, revised guidance was issued relating to the provision of interpreters at committee meetings. Towards the end of 2003, work was also underway on producing an information pack for committees and committee clerks on different methods of engaging with people and encouraging people to participate in the work of committees.
Whilst such guidance is important, it is perhaps more important to note some of the practical steps that have been taken by committee clerks to build diversity and access issues into their work.

**Examples of the practical steps taken by clerking staff to build equality and access issues into their work**

- The Non-Executive Bills Unit worked with Children in Scotland to enable children and young people from across Scotland to visit the chamber to watch a debate about the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill.

- The Procedures Committee clerks were involved in supporting an inquiry on oral questioning in the Parliament. In order to seek the views of members of the public whose views would not otherwise have been represented in the inquiry, the Committee organised a civic participation event which involved 6 community groups from across Scotland including a group of disabled people.

- At an event organised by the European and External Relations Committee attended by a visiting Ambassador, the services of a BSL interpreter were secured to enable a guest to access the event.

- The Finance Committee has been investigating the way in which equalities issues are reflected in the Scottish Executive’s budget. As part of this review, the committee clerks have been discussing these issues with external equalities organisations, such as Engender.

- The call for evidence on the Vulnerable Witnesses (Scotland) Bill included a questionnaire which was designed, in discussion with the Parliament’s Participation Services office, to be easy to understand and complete. As a result, written evidence was received from a number of people who might not have responded to a more traditional call for evidence, including young people and victims of domestic violence.

- The Equal Opportunities Committee is involved in a major project to mainstream equalities issues into the work of all of the Parliament’s Committees. As part of this project, implementation notes (which explain how proper mainstreaming of these issues can be achieved) have been issued to all committee clerks.

- The standard letters of invitation which are sent out to witnesses by all committees have been adapted to include information about how people can contact the committee using the RNID Typetalk service and also to include standard questions on access requirements.

**3.8 The Parliament’s current accommodation**

We have made significant improvements over the past five years to the Parliament’s buildings to make sure that they are more accessible, focussing particularly on those areas which are open to the public.
We do, however, accept that, due to the age and structure of some of our current buildings and the fact that we will be moving to the new parliament site at Holyrood, we have not been able to make all of our current accommodation fully accessible to all disabled people. For example, some of our staff meeting rooms at Cannonball House on the Royal Mile are not accessible to wheelchair users.

We admit that this situation is not ideal. However, the limitations of our current accommodation have helped to focus our attention on making our new parliament buildings at Holyrood fully accessible. Also, despite the limitations of our current premises, we did continue, in 2003, to make further adjustments to improve access.

**Improving the accessibility of our current accommodation**

Here are details of some of the adjustments made in 2003 to our current accommodation to ensure compliance with disability discrimination legislation and to promote wider access to the information and services that we provide:

- The Facilities Management office arranged for a second handrail to be installed to the full length of the stairs at our offices at 375 High Street in Edinburgh. This work was carried out to provide support on both sides of the staircase for people with mobility impairments.

- We also made our landlords at our St Andrew Square office aware that their stair-lift to the entrance of their building was out of order. We worked with the landlords to arrange the necessary repairs and to ensure the stair-lift was properly maintained and operational.

- The Holyrood Visitor centre was completed in late 2002 and was designed with access issues very much in mind. The amount of text used in the displays was reduced in 2003 and the amount of visual material increased so that barriers of language are minimised.

- At present, site rules prevent us from allowing wheelchair users around the site of the new Holyrood building as it is being finished. However, for those who cannot go on site, we offer a ‘virtual’ tour of the building in the Visitor Centre using the available audio-visual material.

- Where it has not been possible to alter our current accommodation to improve access, staff in the relevant offices are aware of the accessibility difficulties. This enables staff to use more accessible venues elsewhere in the parliamentary campus, as and when these are required.

A major project which is still ongoing at the end of 2003 is a review of the services we provide to MSPs’ local offices. Identifying and managing these local offices is the responsibility of individual MSPs. However, this project, part of which involved visiting a sample of twenty-four offices, was set up to review those support services which we provide to assist these local offices, such as IT support. Access issues formed a significant part of this review and, during the project, guidance was provided to the staff and MSPs in those offices that were not fully accessible to wheelchair users on how to improve access.
3.9 The New Parliament Building at Holyrood

The New Parliament Building at Holyrood has been designed with access issues fully in mind from the start and access consultants were involved in the project from the earliest stages. An independent company of access audit consultants was appointed as an integral part of the design team, working closely with the architects to create the fully accessible facility required by the building user brief.

A Parliament Building Consultation Group was also set up to inform and support the access consultants on all aspects of accessibility. Membership of the group included people from a range of voluntary sector organisations covering physical, sensory and learning disabilities, as well as organisations representing the needs of older people. Speaking in October 2003, the Parliament’s Presiding Officer, George Reid MSP, stated that:

“Physical accessibility has been integral to the Holyrood design from the very outset. Every effort has been made to ensure that disabled people will be able to access and use Scotland’s Parliament building with ease and independence.”

“Disability issues are a matter of human rights and barriers to the democratic process are inexcusable. Our access consultants, who have worked closely with our design team, are confident that Holyrood will be one of the most physically accessible Parliaments in the world.”

The accessibility of the new Parliament building at Holyrood

Every element within the building has been considered from an access perspective, including the specifications for furniture, the height of surfaces in catering areas and the design of security screening equipment. Some of the features of the new Parliament building, which is expected to be completed by July 2004, will include the following:

- The carpets will have a short, dense pile to assist wheelchair users
- A number of “mega-loos” will be provided, each with space for an assistant and a changing bench
- Infra-red and induction loop sound enhancement systems will be installed in all the working areas of the Parliament to assist hearing aid users
- Six accessible parking spaces for disabled people will be provided in the Parliament’s secure car parking area for staff and MSPs and six similar parking bays will be provided for use by visitors to the Parliament
- Fire-proof lifts from the visitors’ gallery will ensure that disabled visitors can be evacuated safely and quickly should the need arise.
The Holyrood building has been designed to be fully accessible. These images show what the main public entrance and chamber will look like.
Section 4: Recruiting and employing staff

4.1 Introduction

We employ almost 500 members of staff in a wide variety of posts, from security officers and legal advisers to procurement staff and committee clerks.

As an employer, we take our responsibilities under equal opportunities legislation very seriously, and ensuring that we had a source of up-to-date advice on these responsibilities was one of reasons for us appointing our own Equalities Manager at the Parliament, which we did in 2002.

Two major areas of improvement in relation to our employment practices which were put in place in 2003 have already been discussed in this report. These are:

- the introduction of the Parliament’s new performance management system, which ensures that every member of staff is assessed against the competency of “Improving Access and Promoting Equality”, and

- the range of measures which have been put in place to train staff on equal opportunities issues.

This section outlines some of the other changes made during this year which relate to our role as an employer.

4.2 Our recruitment procedures

Many measures were already put in place before 2003 to ensure that our recruitment procedures were fair to all applicants. For example, we already removed the names and addresses of job applicants from the application forms before passing them onto selection panels in order to reduce the risk of irrelevant information (e.g. a candidate’s race or gender) being taken into account during the short listing process. We also make sure that a member of staff from the Personnel Office takes part in each selection panel, which helps us to monitor that these processes are always fair and unbiased.

In 2003, we conducted an initial review of our recruitment procedures, and, as a result of this, a series of further changes were made. The equal opportunities monitoring form which is completed by job applicants was reviewed and this will be changed in early 2004.

We have also taken steps to advertise our job vacancies more widely, by distributing job advertisements to a range of local organisations, including racial equality councils and the local disability service team. We will also be making further changes to our recruitment and selection procedures in 2004.
4.3 Disability Symbol

The SPCB was awarded the Disability Symbol in October 2003. This award is recognition given by Jobcentre Plus to employers who are meeting five key commitments regarding the recruitment, employment, retention and career development of disabled people. The disability symbol (sometimes referred to as the “two ticks” symbol) is now used in all of our job advertisements.

One of the main changes that we have made to our recruitment procedures in order to demonstrate good practice in relation to the employment of disabled people is to guarantee that we will interview disabled job applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.

4.4 Public appointments

As well as being responsible for appointing our own members of staff, we have also supported the process for appointing a number of public appointments. The Parliament was responsible for advertising and managing the selection processes for three public appointments; namely the Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner, the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland and the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland.

Copies of the job advertisements for these positions were sent to local racial equality councils, relevant disability service teams and other local community organisations as part of our effort for ensuring that the vacancies attracted a diverse range of applicants. All of the selection processes also took full account of equalities issues (for example, applications were invited only in standardised application forms and the completed forms were anonymised before being passed onto the selection panels).

In the case of the Commissioner for Children post, plans have also been devised to involve a cross section of children and young people at the interview stage of the selection process for the Commissioner for Children and Young People in January 2004.

4.5 Flexible working

We carried out a great deal of work to develop a range of policies aimed at enabling staff to have a healthy work-life balance.

Under the Employment Act 2002, some employees (for example, parents of young children) have the right to request a flexible working pattern. In terms of our own
employment policies and procedures, we have extended this right to request a flexible working pattern to all of our employees.

We want to ensure that, as an employer, we are able to respond to the changing needs and circumstances of our members of staff and we have outlined our commitment to help our staff achieve a realistic work-life balance in our Human Resources Strategy, which was developed in 2003. This year, we also consulted staff, via focus groups, to get their views on our employment policies and practices. As a result of this consultation and the policy development work which we have carried out, a range of new flexible working policies will be launched in 2004.

Examples of promoting flexible working patterns

It is one thing to put in place policies promoting flexible working patterns; it is another to ensure that, in practice across our organisation, we are genuinely responding to the changing circumstances of our employees and enabling them to achieve a successful work-life balance.

Here are some examples of some of the practical steps taken by different parts of our organisation to achieve this:

- The Access and Information Directorate has supported staff requests to alter their working hours. In practice, for example, this has meant enabling some staff to work shorter hours, switch to part-time working or be released from duty to participate in religious festivals and events.

- In the Chief Executive’s Group, flexible working patterns have been introduced to allow three members of staff to take on caring responsibilities.

- Within the office which produces the Official Report, six members of staff work part-time, whilst, in our Committee Office, one senior level job-share post exists and other senior posts have both been filled on a part-time basis.

- Within our Chamber Office, two clerk team leaders undertake an element of home-working, involving a roughly 50:50 split with office attendance. This flexibility has enabled staff to achieve a better work/life balance.

4.6 Making adjustments for staff

Often equalities issues are about making fairly straightforward changes to the way in which we work or to the equipment that we provide to staff. Whilst straightforward, such changes can obviously make a significant difference for the individual members of staff concerned. Taking into account our responsibilities under equal opportunities legislation, we always try to respond to the needs of our staff whenever possible.
## Examples of making adjustments for staff

Here are some examples of some of the steps taken by different parts of our organisation to make adjustments for members of staff:

- The Security Office has adapted their radio system to ensure that it can be used by staff who have hearing difficulties.

- Our new corporate workwear contract has been developed with diversity issues fully in mind. We have therefore recognised the clothing requirements of expectant mothers and ethnic groups in selecting and designing new uniforms for our front-line staff.

- The Parliament’s pass studio (which creates the identification passes for people who work at the Parliament) has designed a system whereby staff, MSPs and contractors with mobility impairments do not have to negotiate the four flights of stairs to the studio. Instead, pass studio staff can now meet the individual concerned and create the pass at a more accessible location.

- The Personnel Office has added a note in monthly systems e-mails to Members, their staff, and parliamentary staff, to contact them if they require their pay advice notices in alternative formats e.g. Braille or large text.

- We have participated in a ‘back to work’ programme, organised by a Scottish disability charity, to provide a short-term, part-time placement in the Parliament.
Section 5: Monitoring

5.1 Introduction

We have put in place a range of mechanisms to monitor whether our equal opportunities policies are being properly implemented in practice.

5.2 Equal Opportunities Staff Audit

In 2003, for example, we carried out our first major equal opportunities audit of staff. This involved providing every member of staff with a detailed questionnaire about themselves and their experiences in the Parliament over the last twelve months.

The purpose of this audit was to collect monitoring data about the composition of the workforce and also to examine whether there are any potential patterns of under-representation or disadvantage emerging from our employment practices. We were particularly pleased with this high response rate, with over 87% of staff completing and returning their audit forms.

A summary of some of the results of this audit is attached as Annex A to this report. The results of this audit will be used to inform our future work on equalities issues. For example, some of the issues highlighted by the report relate to bullying and harassment issues and also to the slight under-representation of some groups within the workforce. These issues will now be taken forward by the equalities manager and by the personnel office, and we will be able to measure our progress when we carry out the next equal opportunities staff audit.

5.3 Equal pay audit

We are committed to carrying out an equal pay audit to ensure that, as an employer, we are complying fully with all aspects of the Equal Pay Act 1970. In order to ensure that we have an independent perspective on our performance in relation to equal pay, the audit will be carried out by an external consultancy. Work will begin on this audit in January 2004.

5.4 Seeking feedback from members of the public

As well as monitoring our employment practices, we also ensure that members of the public who have contact with the Parliament have opportunities to provide feedback on the qualities of our services. Where appropriate, equal opportunities monitoring questions are incorporated into the questionnaires and feedback forms, so that we can build a picture of whether particular groups of people are less satisfied with the services that we offer than others.
Examples: Monitoring Service Provision

Here are some examples of the monitoring which we carried out in relation to our delivery of services:

- A survey was carried out to find out the views of people who use our website, and monitoring questions were used to measure the satisfaction rates of different groups.

- When copies of our new sign language video were sent out to relevant organisations across Scotland, recipients were asked to provide feedback on the quality of the video.

- The Procurement Office organised a “Meet the Buyer” event for companies wishing to find out more about tendering for Scottish Parliament contracts. Feedback forms were used to assess the views of attendees about the event, including specific questions on the venue that was used to enable us to gauge whether the venue was accessible enough.

- The Equal Opportunities Committee held an informal meeting in Glasgow in December 2003 to hear views on the European Year of Disabled People and on the issues affecting disabled people in Scotland. The meeting was well-attended and feedback from participants on the format of the event was very positive.

- When we commissioned a research project into public attitudes towards the Parliament in 2003, monitoring questions were incorporated into the survey (for example, on the age and sex of respondents). The results of this survey will be known in early 2004.
Section 6: Our plans for 2004

Each directorate in our organisation has already prepared a list of action points for 2004 relating to equality and access issues. These action points will be built into the management and budget planning process and also into individual job-plans, where appropriate.

Here are details of the key action points relating to this area of work which we aim to achieve in 2004 (along with the name of the lead directorate in each case).

In relation to the new building at Holyrood:

- We will provide tours, including audio tours, of the new building in languages other than English. (Access and Information Directorate)

- A crèche facility will be provided at the new building, and we will publicise this facility to encourage people with young children to visit the Parliament and make use of the facility. (Technology and Facilities Management Directorate and Access and Information Directorate)

- We will actively promote the accessibility of the new building. (Access and Information Directorate)

- As a pilot, before moving to the new building at Holyrood, we will provide a British Sign Language interpreter for Question Times on four occasions and seek feedback from members of the public. Following this pilot, we will then develop a new policy for the provision of BSL interpreters for Question Times at Holyrood. (Chief Executive Group)

- We will establish a space within the new building for people to use for prayer or quiet contemplation whilst visiting the Parliament. (Chief Executive Group)

In relation to our written materials:

- The range of publication materials that we produce will be revised to take account of the features of the new building and to further improve the accessibility of these publications. (Access and Information Directorate)

- The success of our new leaflet, “Making Your Voice Heard”, will be assessed. This assessment will include a review of the take-up of those versions of the leaflet produced in ethnic minority languages. (Access and Information Directorate)

- We will build accessibility issues into the review of our website. (Technology and Facilities Management Directorate)
• We will publish clear guidance on how to submit a petition to the Parliament in a range of languages, including Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Gaelic, Punjabi and Urdu. (Clerking and Reporting Directorate)

• Further guidance will be issued to MSPs about their responsibilities as employers and service providers under equal opportunities legislation. (Chief Executive Group)

In relation to employment and training:

• We will conduct a detailed equal pay audit to examine whether there are any unjustifiable pay gaps within our organisation. An action plan will be produced to implement any recommendations arising from the audit. (Chief Executive Group)

• Children and young people will be involved in the selection process for the post of Commission for Children and Young People. (Chief Executive Group)

• Detailed training will be rolled out across our organisation relating to preventing and tackling bullying and harassment. A network of “Dignity at Work” contacts will also be established so that our staff will have someone they can talk to, in confidence, about these issues. (Chief Executive Group)

• Our work-life balance policy, and a range of working arrangements to support this policy, will be launched. (Chief Executive Group)

• We will continue to deliver the core equal opportunities training programme for all new members of staff, with dates for this training being offered to staff within the first three months after they have taken up their post. (Chief Executive Group)

• The training provided to front-line staff will be reviewed following the move to the new building to ensure that everyone knows what facilities exist within the building relating to accessibility (e.g. induction loops, wheelchair loan, etc.). This will ensure that members of the public are given accurate information about accessing the new building. (Access and Information Directorate)

In relation to the development of our internal policies:

• We will review the impact and effectiveness of having an “equal opportunities” section in all Senior Management Team papers. (Chief Executive Group)

• Our equal opportunities policies will be reviewed to ensure that these are relevant to the needs of the organisation and our staff and also to ensure that these remain up-to-date in light of changes to equal opportunities legislation. (Chief Executive Group).

• Our policy in relation to the use of languages in the Parliament will be reviewed in the light of experience. (Access and Information Directorate)
Annex: Key findings from the SPCB’s 2003 Equal Opportunities Staff Audit

1. Introduction

This annex contains some of the key findings from the SPCB’s 2003 equal opportunities staff audit.

The equal opportunities staff audit provides our organisation with reliable data about the impact of some of our equal opportunities policies. In particular, the audit helps us to examine whether the way in which we treat our staff is fair and non-discriminatory. This information will, therefore, be very useful in informing the future work that we do to develop our employment policies and practices.

This annex only contains some of the high-level data from the audit about the composition of the SPCB’s workforce. The full report from the audit, which contains more detail about the composition of our workforce and experience of our staff, is currently being considered and an action plan will be developed in 2004 to respond to the report’s findings. This will enable us to address any problems which might exist (for example, the under-representation of certain groups within our workforce).

It is worth noting that this audit was carried out in the summer of 2003 and it therefore reflects the views of staff and the composition of the workforce at that time. Many initiatives, including the core equal opportunities training programme and our disability awareness week were delivered after the audit was carried out.

2. Methodology of the audit

A questionnaire was provided to every member of staff including temporary agency staff and staff who were seconded to the SPCB from other organisations. 431 completed questionnaires were returned. The response rate was therefore very high (87% of all staff).

The audit questionnaire was developed internally by parliamentary staff; however, the analysis of the results was carried out by an external consultancy (Challenge Consultancy Limited). The questionnaires were strictly anonymous and confidential to encourage people to respond honestly and openly. Furthermore, procedures were put in place to ensure that no member of staff within the Parliament, including the Parliament’s Personnel Office and the Equalities Manager, had access to any of the completed questionnaires.

3. The accuracy and use of data from the audit

The response rate to this audit, although very high (87% of all staff), was not 100%. Therefore, whilst the sample was certainly large enough to provide reliable information about the SPCB’s workforce, the non-response rate of 13% should still be taken into account when considering the report’s findings.
Furthermore, a degree of uncertainty or margin of error is also unavoidably built into these sorts of audits because of the way in which people are asked to classify themselves in response to monitoring questions. For example, when answering the question on disability, respondents were asked to decide themselves whether or not they considered that they were disabled.

Despite these limitations, the results of this audit do enable some useful comparisons to be made with the data collected in the 2001 Census - comparisons which can provide a broad indication of the extent to which the SPCB’s workforce is representative of the Scottish population. Where possible, these comparisons have been included within this annex.

4. **Key findings about workforce composition**

4.1 **Contract status**

Over 92% of staff who responded to this question said they were employed on a full-time basis and 6% said that they were employed on a part-time basis. The remaining 2% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

When asked about their contract status, of those respondents who answered this question\(^1\), more than four-fifths (81.4%) stated that they were employed on a permanent contract. Around 8% of respondents were employed on a fixed-term contract and 2% were employed through an agency. A further 8% of respondents categorised themselves as “other” (e.g., they may have been on secondement to the SPCB).

4.2 **Sex**

Just under 45% of those who responded to this question were female. In the 2001 Census in Scotland, 46.5% of the economically active population\(^2\) in Scotland is made up of women. Therefore, these audit results tend to suggest that, across the organisation as a whole, the proportion of women employed by the SPCB is broadly representative of the economically active population of Scotland.

Clearly, these results only provide a very general picture of the composition of the SPCB’s workforce. The detailed equal pay audit, which will be carried out in early 2004, will provide a more detailed picture of the gender composition of the SPCB’s workforce. In particular, the equal pay audit will analyse whether or not the gender composition of the workforce is representative of the population at all levels of the organisation and across all directorates.

4.3 **Caring responsibilities**

Two thirds of respondents stated that they did not have caring responsibilities whereas 24.1% look after children. A further 4.2% have caring responsibilities for someone other than a child/children and 0.7% care for both a child/children and

---

\(^1\) 3% of all respondents chose not to answer this question.

\(^2\) The economically active population of Scotland includes people who are in employment, self-employed, unemployed or economically active full-time students.
someone else/others. The ages of the children cared for by SPCB staff were evenly spread across the age range 0-16.

According to 2001 Census data, 26.4% of Scottish Households have dependent children. This figure is close to the percentage of respondents in this audit with caring responsibilities for a child/children. In addition, in the 2001 Census, 12.1% of the Scottish working population stated that they provided unpaid care. Therefore, the percentage of respondents in this audit who care for someone other than a child/children (4.9%) appears to be significantly lower than in the general population in Scotland.

4.4 Relationship status

Two-thirds of respondents (66%) said that they had a partner (whether married or not) and just over a quarter (27%) said they were single. The remaining 7% chose not to answer this question.

4.5 Sexual orientation

Of those respondents who answered the question on sexual orientation\(^3\), 95.4% described their sexuality as heterosexual with the remaining 4.6% describing their sexual orientation as gay, lesbian or bisexual. Of the gay, lesbian and bisexual respondents, the majority (3.2% of all respondents in the audit) were gay men. We were unable to compare these results with data about the Scottish population as a whole since the Census does not have an equivalent question about sexual orientation.

Given that this was the first SPCB equal opportunities staff audit and that people may not be as used to sexual orientation monitoring as they are to racial or gender monitoring, we might have expected a higher non-response rate to this question. However, respondents were, if anything, less likely to answer “prefer not to answer” for this question than for other questions in section 1 (the number of “PNTA” responses received for this question was 21 compared within an average, for this section of the audit, of 25.7).

Of the respondents who stated that they were gay, lesbian or bisexual (4.4% of all respondents), the vast majority (four-fifths) stated that they did feel able to be ‘out’ to others working at the Parliament. However, a fifth of the gay, lesbian or bisexual respondents in this audit said that they did not feel able to be ‘out’ at work.

4.6 Ethnic group

Of the people who chose to answer the question on ethnic group\(^4\), 76.9% were “White – Scottish”, 17.0% were “White - Other British”, 1.7% were “White – Irish”, 3.4% were of an “Other White Background”, and 1.0% were from a mixed or other ethnic background.

\(^3\) 5.1% of all respondents chose not to answer this question

\(^4\) In producing these data, to enable a comparison to be made with the findings of the 2001 Census, we have factored out the 4.39% of respondents who chose not to answer this question.
In the table below, we have compared these results with the data collected in the 2001 Census on ethnicity\(^5\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Results of SPCB staff audit (% of people who answered this question)</th>
<th>2001 Census data for economically active population in Scotland (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Scottish</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>87.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Other British</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Irish</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other White</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Black or other ethnic group</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In presenting these data, we have factored out the people who chose not to answer this question in the SPCB staff audit, since it was compulsory for people to respond to the question on ethnicity in the Census.

4.7 Religion

This table summarises the results of the question asked in this audit about religion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question asked in SPCB staff audit: Which of the following religions, religious denominations or bodies do you currently belong to?</th>
<th>Results of SPCB staff audit(^6) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of Scotland</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Religion</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst questions on religion were included in the 2001 Census, a detailed analysis of the composition of the economically active population of Scotland by religion has not been made readily available. Therefore, at this stage, it is unfortunately not possible to make a meaningful comparison between these audit results and the corresponding Census data on religion.

\(^5\) The data provided in this annex only relates to the SPCB’s workforce as a whole. Further work is also ongoing to consider whether the SPCB’s workforce is representative of the Scottish population at all levels and in all directorates. However, more detailed information is not provided here, since providing this information would identify individual members of staff.

\(^6\) In the tables provided in this annex, figures are rounded to one decimal place.
4.8 Age

This next table summarises the responses to the audit question on age and also provides an estimated age profile of the SPCB’s workforce, which is based on these responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question asked in SPCB staff audit: What is your age?</th>
<th>Results of SPCB staff audit (%)</th>
<th>Estimated age profile of the SPCB workforce (%) i.e. proportion of people who chose to answer this question in the audit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.9 Disability

The table below shows the results of the SPCB audit question on disability. When this question was asked in the audit, respondents were also made aware of the definition of “disability” that is used in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question asked in SPCB staff audit: Do consider that you have a disability?</th>
<th>Results of SPCB staff audit (%)</th>
<th>Expressed as a percentage of those answering this question (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the 2001 Census data, 6.7% of the economically active population of Scotland stated that they had a “limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability”.8 These results from the Census will not be directly comparable with the results of the SPCB audit question on disability because of the different terminology and definitions that were used in each case. However, a general comparison would seem to indicate a slight under-representation of disabled people within the SPCB workforce when compared with the Census data (since 6.0% of respondents stated in the SPCB staff that they have a disability, compared to the 6.7% of the economically active population of Scotland who stated that they had a “long term illness, health problem or disability”).

---

7 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines disability as: “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

8 The relevant question in the 2001 Census was: “Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your daily activities or the work you can do?”
4.10 Trade union membership

55% of respondents in this audit stated that they were “a member of a trade union”, 8% said that there were an active trade union member (i.e. “both a trade union member and engaged in union activities”) and 31% said that they were not a trade union member. The remaining 7% chose not to answer this question.

5. The SPCB’s performance on equal opportunities issues

5.1 Implementation of the SPCB’s equal opportunities policies

The audit also asked staff whether or not they felt that the SPCB was doing everything it reasonably could to implement its equal opportunities policies. Of those respondents who chose to answer this question\(^9\), 78.9% stated that the SPCB was doing everything it reasonably could to implement these policies, compared to 21.1% who stated that it was not.

5.2 Progress over the past twelve months

In the SPCB staff audit, employees were also asked whether or not they thought that significant progress had been made by the SPCB in the last twelve months in relation to equal opportunities issues.

Of those who chose to answer this question\(^10\), 82.1% said that they thought that significant progress had been made, compared with 17.9% who thought that it had not. A small number of respondents further stated that, whilst progress had been made recently, this did not amount to significant progress. Some respondents also questioned the value of the organisation carrying out the work that it had carried out on equal opportunities issues.

Many of the positive comments that were received welcomed the appointment of an Equalities Manager within the organisation and pointed to the core equal opportunities training programme as clear evidence of significant progress.

---

\(^9\) 7.4% of all those who completed the audit questionnaires chose not to answer this question.

\(^10\) 16.2% of all those who completed the audit questionnaires chose not to answer this question.
If you would like more information about anything contained within this report, please contact the Scottish Parliament’s Equalities Manager:

Levi Pay  
Equalities Manager  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Telephone: 0131 348 6852  
(Calls via RNID Typetalk are welcome)  
Email: levi.pay@scottish.parliament.uk  
Fax: 0131 348 6834
Contacting the Scottish Parliament

Address  
Public Information Service,  
The Scottish Parliament,  
Edinburgh  EH99 1SP

Telephone  0845 278 1999

Textphone  0845 270 0152  Calls to any other telephone numbers in the Parliament are also welcome via the RNID Typetalk service.

Email  sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk

Website  www.scottish.parliament.uk

Fax  0131 348 5601

For information in languages other than English or in alternative formats (for example, in Braille, large print, audio tape or various computer formats), please contact us at the above address or send your enquiry by fax or email. We welcome written correspondence in any language.

Airson fiosrachaidh ann an cànanan eile seach Beurla no ann an cruth eile (m.e. ann am Braille, ann an còm móin, air teip fhuaim no ann an cruth eadar-dhealaichte coimpiutair), sgriobhailbh thugainn dhan seòladh os cionn no cuiribh fios thugainn le facs no post-D. Tha sinn a’ cur fàilte air sgriobhaidhean ann an cànan sam bith.

For information in languages other than English or in alternative formats (for example, in Braille, large print, audio tape or various computer formats), please contact us at the above address or send your enquiry by fax or email. We welcome written correspondence in any language.