

BACKGROUND TO THE APPOINTMENT

1. The post of the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors relates to those who have suffered as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland, sometimes referred to as 'The Troubles'. In the expectation of a restoration on 26 March the appointment will be made by the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister acting jointly (or the Secretary of State under direct rule) in accordance with the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 – (the 'Order').
2. During the last forty years or so of the conflict it is estimated that over 3,500 people have been killed and many thousands have suffered injury or bereavement. The Order provides that the term 'victims and survivors' relates to someone who has been physically or psychologically injured, someone who cares for them, or someone bereaved, as a result of a 'conflict-related' incident. Those who have witnessed a conflict-related incident and those who provided emergency assistance are also included in the interpretation if they have been psychologically injured.
3. On 1 March 2005, the then Secretary of State, Paul Murphy, announced proposals for the appointment of a Commissioner for Victims and Survivors and opened a period of consultation on the detailed remit of the post, and on the wider future of services for victims and survivors of the Troubles. Following consideration as to the way forward the Secretary of State announced the appointment of Mrs Bertha McDougall as Interim Commissioner for Victims and Survivors on 24 October 2005, pending longer-term arrangements.
4. Mrs McDougall took up her post as Interim Commissioner on 5 December 2005. Her terms of reference were to review current arrangements for service delivery and coordination of services for victims and survivors

across Departments and agencies, identifying any gaps in service provision. She was also tasked with reviewing how well the current funding arrangements in relation to services and grants paid to victims and survivors groups and individual victims and survivors are addressing need and with considering the modalities of establishing the Victims and Survivors Forum envisaged in the Joint Declaration.

5. In the meantime legislation has been enacted to establish the post of the Commissioner on a longer term basis. This legislation – the Order - sets the framework for the post.

6. The principal aim of the Commissioner appointed under the Order will be to promote the interests of victims and survivors. The Government believes that victims and survivors should have a strong independent voice, and also that the Commissioner can contribute to the development of policies which address the longer-term needs of those who have suffered as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Commissioner for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland

Job Description

Introduction

1. The Commissioner's role which is outlined below is based on the provisions of the Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, a copy of which is attached.
2. This is a new appointment. The post will be full-time and the period of appointment will be 4 years. There is a possibility for a renewal of the appointment for one further period of 4 years. In the expectation of a restoration on 26 March the appointment will be made by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, acting jointly, or in the event of direct rule by the Secretary of State. The post will attract an annual salary of £65,000. The post is pensionable. The postholder will be entitled to 30 days annual leave in addition to public and privilege holidays. Travel and subsistence payments will be in accordance with those applicable in the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Key areas of responsibility

3. The overall aim of the Commissioner will be to promote the interests of victims and survivors of the conflict in Northern Ireland. The duties of the Commissioner will be to:
 - (a) promote an awareness of matters relating to the interests of victims and survivors and of the need to safeguard those interests;
 - (b) keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice affecting the interests of victims and survivors;

- (c) keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for victims and survivors (this will include services provided by statutory and voluntary organisations);
 - (d) provide advice on matters concerning the interests of victims and survivors to the Secretary of State, the Executive Committee of the Assembly and any organisation or person providing services for victims and survivors;
 - (e) take reasonable steps to ensure that the views of victims and survivors are sought concerning the exercise by the Commissioner of his or her functions; and
 - (f) to make arrangements for a forum for consultation and discussion with victims and survivors.
4. The Commissioner's powers will include undertaking, commissioning or providing assistance for research or educational activities, issuing guidance on best practice and providing advice or information on any matter concerning the interests of victims and survivors. The Commissioner will also be able to make representations and recommendations to any body or person, whether public or private, on matters concerning the interests of victims and survivors. He or she will be expected to work, where appropriate, with other bodies to ensure access to services for victims and survivors. The Commissioner may also work in co-operation with other bodies within the UK or elsewhere where necessary in carrying out his or her functions.

Work Programmes

5. The work of the Commissioner will be carried out in accordance with a work programme which he or she will submit for the approval of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister acting jointly (the Secretary of State in the event of direct rule). The work programme submitted by the Commissioner will set out his or her proposed activities and the associated costs. It will be the duty of

the Commissioner to carry out any work programme which has been approved.

Annual Report

6. The Commissioner will be required to provide to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) an annual report on his or her activities during the year. OFMDFM will lay a copy of the report before the Assembly and a copy will also be sent to the Secretary of State.

Accounts

7. The Commissioner will be required to keep proper accounts relating to the operation of his or her office and will be responsible for the management of human and financial resources. The Commissioner will be required to provide statements of accounts relating to the office to OFMDFM and to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

**COMMISSIONER FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS FOR NORTHERN
IRELAND**

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

The person we are looking for will display the following:

- A commitment to promoting the interests of victims and survivors of the conflict in Northern Ireland.
- An awareness of the consequences of the conflict in Northern Ireland or similar situations elsewhere.
- An ability to work with people from different sections of the community who have been affected by the conflict in Northern Ireland.
- An ability to empathise with and to communicate with individuals who have suffered bereavement, psychological or physical injury and those who care for them.
- A high standard of oral, written and presentational skills.
- An ability to work effectively with the media in representing an organisation in the press, television and radio.
- Experience in office management, including effective management of financial and human resources (this will include an understanding of the principles of good governance and accountability).

**COMMISSIONER FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS FOR NORTHERN
IRELAND**

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENT

Whilst not essential, it will be an advantage if candidates can also demonstrate the following:

- Experience of establishing an office and of initiating, carrying out or evaluating research.

GUIDANCE NOTES ON COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FORM, POLITICAL ACTIVITY MONITORING FORM AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING FORM

Introduction

The following notes give guidance on completing the Application Form for the post of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors, together with the Political Activity monitoring form and the Equal Opportunities monitoring form.

Please **write clearly in black ink, black biro, or type (Arial font, size 12 and 1½ spacing)**. One page has been allowed for your answers in sections 2-3. Answers should be written in the spaces provided and no other additional pages should be included in your completed application.

The information will be treated as confidential. If you are offered and accept the appointment, your name and some biographical details may be published after the information has been checked with you for accuracy.

Section 1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Please give full details of your home address and contact details.

Section 2. Information in support of your application – Essential Criteria

Please read carefully all the information provided, paying particular attention to the job description which gives details of the key areas of responsibility and the person specification which describes the selection criteria which will be used to assess your application.

Under Section 2 you will find listed under the headings (a) – (g) the areas covered in the ‘**Essential Criteria**’ of the person specification. Under each of the headings please state your how your experience, skills, knowledge and achievements make you a suitable candidate. Failure to address all of the areas covered in Section 2 may result in rejection of your application. Curriculum Vitae or other documents are not acceptable, in support of your application.

Section 3. Information in support of your application – Desirable Criterion

Section 3 sets out further criteria for the post. The ability to meet the **desirable criterion**, whilst not essential, would be particularly welcomed. However, the fact that you do not meet this criterion should not discourage you from applying.

Section 4. Previous employment and voluntary experience

Please give details of the main jobs you have undertaken (including your current job) and/or any voluntary experience you have gained during the last 10 years. Please provide the dates that you started and ended the job, the title of your post, the name of your employer (if appropriate), and a brief description of your main responsibilities. We are particularly interested in any experience which would have special relevance to the 'Essential Criteria' this appointment.

Section 5. Previous and current public appointments

Please enter any current or previous appointments to which you were appointed by any Government Minister or Department, giving the dates you held the appointment, the position and the name of the relevant public body.

Section 6. Probity and Conflicts of interest

An appointee to a public body could find that matters or incidents which previously attracted no attention could become matters of legitimate public interest once the person concerned holds a public appointment. Information which might be relevant could include prominent activities, for example, in voluntary or political organisations. All information given in this Section will be treated in confidence. The OCPANI publications 'Probity and Conflict of Interest :A Guide for Candidates' and 'Complaints Leaflet' are attached for your convenience.

Please state also whether there are any companies or partnerships of which you are or have been during the previous 10 years a director or partner. Please give details if this is the case. You should also declare if there are any companies or partnerships of which you own more than 50%, whether or not you are a director or partner.

Section 7. Notice period

Please state the period (in months) you are required to give notice to your current employer, before being able to take up the position, if offered.

Section 8. Details of convictions etc.

Please state under this Section if you have:

- ever been convicted of any offence (other than minor motoring offences) which are not spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 or the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 or if any charges are outstanding;
- been adjudged bankrupt or made a composition or arrangement with your creditors over the past 10 years;
- been dismissed from any office or employment over the past 10 years;
- ever been disqualified from acting as a company director or in the conduct of a Company;
- ever been a director, partner or manager of a company which has gone into liquidation, receivership or administration;
- any other facts to declare which you feel might be raised in public in future in relation to your suitability to hold the appointment for which you are being considered.

Declaration

Please ensure that you sign and date the form.

Political Activity monitoring form

The information which you provide on this form will not form part of the selection process but is included in the application pack for two reasons:

- it enables the monitoring of political activity of candidates for a public appointment in so far as it is already in the public domain; and
- involvement in political activities enables individuals to gain and to demonstrate skills and experiences they may not have otherwise obtained and which may support the criteria for appointment.

This form **will not be available to the Panel. Neither political activity nor affiliation are criteria for appointment.** If you wish political activity to be taken into account, you must include it under the relevant criteria in Sections 2 and 3 of the application form.

Please indicate any political activity that you have undertaken during the past five years by ticking the appropriate box and by providing details of your involvement. Name the political party or body for which you have been active. If you have been, or are an Independent, or have sought or obtained office as a representative of a particular interest group, you should state this. You should tick all relevant categories.

Equal Opportunities monitoring form.

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister monitors applications for employment in terms of Community Background, Sex, Disability and Race. **This information does not form part of your application and will be used for monitoring purposes only. It will not be disclosed to the selection panel.** The use and confidentiality of Community Background information is protected by the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

Application Form for the post of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland

**Closing Date for receipt of application:
5.00pm 16 February 2007**

Important

- Please read the guidance notes before completing this form.
- The form should be completed in **black ink** using **legible handwriting**. Answers should be written in the spaces provided. No other additional pages should be included.
- If typed, please use Arial font, size 12 point and 1.5 spacing.
- You should ensure that the form is signed and dated.

1. Personal details

Surname

Forenames

Title

Home Address

Post Code

Business Address *(if applicable)*

Post Code

Telephone

Telephone

Fax

Fax

E-mail

E-mail

Mobile Phone

Mobile Phone

Section 2. Information in support of your application – Essential Criteria

In this section you should set out how your experience, skills, achievements, knowledge and awareness make you a suitable candidate for the position of Commissioner with regard to the criteria below. Failure to do so may result in the rejection of your application.

(a) Commitment to promoting the interests of victims and survivors of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

(b) An awareness of the consequences of the conflict in Northern Ireland or similar situations elsewhere.

(c) Ability to work with people from different sections of the community who have been affected by the conflict in Northern Ireland.

(d) An ability to empathise with and to communicate with individuals who have suffered bereavement, psychological or physical injury and those who care for them.

(e) High standard of oral, written and presentational skills.

(f) Ability to work effectively with the media in representing an organisation in the press, television and radio.

(g) Experience in office management, including effective management of financial and human resources.

Section 3. Information in support of your application – Desirable Criterion

Experience of establishing an office and of initiating, carrying out or evaluating research.

Section 4. Previous Employment & Voluntary Experience (Please put your present or most recent employment first).

Employer's Name & Address	From	To	Position held	Brief description of duties

Voluntary Experience

Organisation's name and address	From	To	Position held	Brief description of work

Section 6. Probity and conflicts of interest.

Before completing this section, it is important that you read the booklet *'Probity and Conflict: A Guide for Candidates'*.

Have you, or any of your immediate family, any interests which might be construed as being in conflict with your being appointed as Commissioner for Victims and Survivors?

Yes No

If you have answered 'Yes' please provide details in the box below. You should also provide details if, in light of *'Probity and Conflict: A Guide for Candidates'* there are any other matters which might cause embarrassment if in the future they are raised in public.

REFERENCES

Please give details below of two people who may be asked to act as referees for you. They will be expected to have authoritative and personal knowledge of your achievements and may be asked to comment in a professional capacity. The referees may be approached only if you are to be invited for interview.

Referee 1

Name:

Address:

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Postcode:

Telephone:

e-mail:

Referee 2

Name:

Address:

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Postcode:

Telephone:

e-mail:

Section 7. Notice period. In the event of your being offered the post of Commissioner please state in the box below how many months notice you are required to give your current employer.

Section 8. Details of any convictions etc.

Please indicate if you have ever been convicted of any offence (other than minor motoring offences) which are not spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 or the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, or if there are any charges outstanding against you, together with any information on the matters listed under the guidance notes in relation to this Section.

Declaration

DECLARATION

A candidate found to have given false information or wilfully to have suppressed any material fact will be liable to either disqualification or, if appointed, to dismissal.

I have read the booklet entitled "Probity & Conflicts of Interest – A Guide for Candidates" and have completed that Section accordingly. I understand that, if appointed, I must raise with the Secretary of State any probity or conflict of interest issues that might arise during my term of appointment and that my failure to do so could lead to my appointment being terminated.

I have read the statutory disqualifications relating to this appointment and I am satisfied that my candidacy is legitimate. I declare that the information I have given in support of my application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that, if I am appointed and the information I have provided is incorrect, or any of the statements made in this declaration are untrue, or subsequently circumstances arise at any time before the end of my term of office which would render any such statements untrue, then my tenure of office may be terminated.

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, I agree that the information given in this application form may be processed to provide management information for recruitment and equal opportunities monitoring purposes.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Political Activity monitoring form.

Please indicate which of the following activities you have undertaken during the past 5 years by ticking the appropriate box(es) and by providing brief details of your involvement and the name of the relevant political party. If you are or have been an independent or have obtained or sought office as a representative of a particular interest group, you should state this.

Type of activity

Obtained office as District Councillor, MP, MEP, MLA

Stood as a candidate for one of the above offices

Spoken on behalf of a political party or candidate

Acted as a political agent

Held office such as Chair, Treasurer or Secretary of a political party or of a local branch of a political party

Canvassed on behalf of a political party or helped at elections

Undertaken any other political activity which you consider relevant

Made a recordable donation to a political party

None of the above apply

Details of involvement and name of political party

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The information provided on this form will be used only for monitoring of the public appointments process

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Equal Opportunities monitoring form.

The overriding consideration when making public appointments is the selection of the most suitable person for any particular vacancy. Ministers and Departments are anxious to ensure that the pool of candidates from which appointments are made contains a fair and equitable representation of the Northern Ireland community and to allow this to be monitored, it is important to obtain appropriate data on applicants.

Gender **Male / Female**

Ethnic Background

To which of these ethnic groups do you belong?

White	<input type="text"/>	Indian	<input type="text"/>
Bangladeshi	<input type="text"/>	Black-Caribbean	<input type="text"/>
Chinese	<input type="text"/>	Pakistani	<input type="text"/>
Black-African	<input type="text"/>	Irish Traveller	<input type="text"/>

Other (please specify)

Community Background

To help in the monitoring of community background within the public appointments process, please give details by providing the following information.

My background is that of the Protestant community

My background is that of the Roman Catholic community

I do not have a Protestant or Roman Catholic community background

Disability

Disability is defined in the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 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.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled? **Yes/No**

This information will be used only for statistical monitoring of the public appointments process



Office of the

First Minister and Deputy First Minister

www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk

PUBLIC APPOINTMENT

Commissioner for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland

Salary £65,000 pa

The Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 provides for the establishment of the post of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland. The main aim of the Commissioner will be to promote the interests of victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland 'Troubles'.

The person appointed will need to have an awareness of the consequences of the conflict in Northern Ireland or similar situations elsewhere. He or she will also need to have a high degree of commitment to working with people from all sections of the community in this difficult and demanding area of work.

The person appointed will have a wide range of duties and will be responsible for advising the Secretary of State, the Executive Committee of the Assembly and those individuals and organisations involved in the provision of services to victims and survivors. In the expectation of a restoration of the Executive on 26 March, the appointment will be made by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, acting jointly. Should restoration not occur the appointment will be made by the Secretary of State.

The successful applicant will sometimes be required to work outside normal office hours and may be required to travel within Northern Ireland regularly, and occasionally within the rest of the UK, Europe and further afield.

To request an application pack for this post please contact:

The Victims Unit, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Room B.3.17, Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SR

Telephone 0280 9052 28560

E-mail: info@victimsni.gov.uk

An information pack may also be downloaded from www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/victims-unit

Applications must be received by 5.00pm on Friday 16 February 2007.

OFMDFM is committed to the principles of public appointments, based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. OFMDFM is committed to providing equality of opportunity and welcomes application forms from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants.



www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk