



Independent Reviewing Officers Draft Guidance

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is 31 December 2003

department for

education and skills

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The Department may, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, make available, on public request, individual consultation responses. This will extend to your comments unless you inform us that you wish them to remain confidential.

Please insert 'X' if you want us to keep your response confidential

Name

Title

Organisation (if applicable)

Address

Return completed forms to:

Emma de Zoete
Room 141
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UG

Emailed comments should be sent to

Telephone: **020 7972 3913**
Fax: **020 7972 4257**
E-mail: **emma.de-zoete@doh.gsi.gov.uk**

Question 1 (page 3)

Is the draft Guidance clear? If not, where does it need to be clarified?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Question 2 (page 19)

Should Guidance set down a recommended timescale within which all the review recording should be completed and circulated to review members?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Question 3 (page 22)

- A. Might IROs be employed to be independent chairs of child protection conferences as well as to chair looked after children reviews?
- B. Would there be a problem if the IRO was involved in chairing child protection conferences and looked after reviews for the same child?

A **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

B **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

A – Comments:

B – Comments:

Question 4 (page 22)

- A. Might IROs participate in Secure Accommodation Panels, given their responsibility to chair Looked After review meetings, in which the decisions of the Panel may be discussed?
- B. Is it practicable for IROs to review looked after children in Young Offender Institutions?

A **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

B **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

A – Comments:

B – Comments:

Question 5 (page 23)

Should IROs continue to chair Pathway Plan Reviews for 'relevant' and 'former relevant' children?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Question 6 (page 24)

A. Which of the identified skills and competencies are essential and which are desirable?
(please comment)

B. Have other essential or desirable competencies been omitted?

C. Is this list too prescriptive?

B Yes

No

Not Sure

C Yes

No

Not Sure

A – Comments:

B – Comments:

C – Comments:

Question 7 (page 27)

Are there other advantages or disadvantages of the outlined models of independence? Are there any other organisational models that would enable the effective functioning of the IRO role?

- A** **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**
- B** **Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

A – Comments:

B – Comments:

Question 8 (page 38)

Do you have any examples of good practice in relation to problem solving by IROs? Can you offer any anonymised case studies about different methods of problem solving by IROs?

- Yes** **No** **Not Sure**

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We are happy to receive further feedback on the draft guidance aside from these specific questions; please send any comments to the same address.

We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you tick the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

(Respondents should be thanked for their views and we should say whether individual responses will be acknowledged. Acknowledging responses can help foster good relations with new partners, however, most of the Department's stakeholders are regular contributors to consultations and would probably consider acknowledgements to be an unnecessary expense. Current practice is to acknowledge on request only, actioned by a tick on the questionnaire using letter, postcards or e-mails)

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No

The following seven standards from the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on written consultation should be reproduced in all consultation documents. This is binding on Departments. Ministers' reasons for any departures should be explained.

Code of Practice on written consultation

All UK national public consultations are required to conform to the following standards:

1. Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left at each stage.
2. It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.
3. A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.
4. Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.
5. Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.
6. Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and the reasons for decisions finally taken.
7. Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation co-ordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation.

