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The Coroners Service of Northern Ireland Proposals for Administrative Redesign

Response Form



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Response Form

Annex F

We would welcome your comments on all the proposals in this consultation paper. Please respond by using the table below:

Name:

Organisation:

Address:

Telephone Number:

(i) **Creating a single Northern Ireland coroners jurisdiction (page 8)**

It is proposed that the seven coroners' districts should be amalgamated into a single district covering the whole of Northern Ireland. Inquests will continue to be held across Northern Ireland, as required. The coroners service will have its administrative headquarters in Belfast.

Comments:

(ii) Revising the judicial structure (page 10)

It is proposed that, when the single Northern Ireland coroners jurisdiction has been created, it should be headed by a senior presiding judge at High Court level. There should also be a full-time coroner and two full-time deputy coroners.

Comments:

(iii) Providing an improved service to the public (page 12)

- *Improved Family Liaison*
- *Enhanced Administration and Information Technology*
- *Better Public Relations Facilities*
- *Court Hearings*
- *Training for Coroners*
- *Liaison between the coroners service and other agencies*

Comments:

(iv) Establishing protocols with other agencies (page 14)

It is proposed that the coroners service should establish a working group with the relevant agencies to develop protocols in relation to child deaths.

A protocol with the Police Ombudsman will be formalised.

The current informal arrangements with other agencies should be formalised by written protocols.

Comments:

(v) Death investigation (page 16)

We would like to hear the views of consultees on whether certain categories of death should be investigated by someone other than by the police or the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

We would welcome views on the adequacy of the current arrangements for investigating deaths reported to coroners, and whether improved liaison arrangements should be put in place between coroners and other agencies.

Comments:

(vi) Improving the availability and relevance of management information (page 18)

It is proposed that our management information systems are enhanced to enable the more effective management and interrogation of data.

Comments:

(vii) Introducing a Coroners Service Inspectorate (page 19)

The Magistrates' Courts Service Inspectorate will be responsible for inspecting the performance of the coroners service in Northern Ireland.

Following the devolution of justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly, this inspectorate function is likely to transfer to the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Inspectorate.

Comments:

(viii) Planning future policy on the reform of the coroners service (page 20)

It is proposed that nominated representatives from Northern Ireland should sit on the Coronial Council, when established.

Consideration will be given to the desirability of establishing a separate Coronial Council for Northern Ireland to advise on the operation of the coroners service.

Comments:

(ix) Are there any other comments you would like to make about the provision of coroners services in Northern Ireland?

Comments:

Please enclose additional pages if necessary

Reply Details

Please send your response to:

The Consultation Co-ordinator
The Northern Ireland Court Service
Windsor House
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Belfast BT2 7LT

Fax No: (028) 9041 2390

E-mail: informationcentre@courtsni.gov.uk

By 30 April 2004

Further Information

Should you require any further information about the Court Service please visit our website at **www.courtsni.gov.uk** or alternatively contact us at our information Centre.

The consultation document will be made available in a wide range of alternative formats. Requests for alternative formats should be made to the Information Centre.

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