

ODEI – the equality tribunal

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Equal Status Act 2000

Equality Officer's Decision Number:
DEC-S2002-136

Ms Mary O'Reilly
(Represented by John M. Spencer Solicitors, Nenagh)

V

Mr Noel Ryan, Chemist
Nenagh

File No. ES/2001/148
Date of Issue: 12/12/2002

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Summary of Decision

Headnotes

Equal Status Act, 2000 – Direct Discrimination, section 3(1)(a) – Membership of the Traveller community, section 3(2)(i) – disposal of goods and services, section 5(1) – refusal of service in a shop – requests for information – drawing of inferences.

Background

This dispute concerns a claim by Ms O'Reilly that she was discriminated against by the respondent, contrary to the Equal Status Act 2000, on the grounds that she is a member of the Traveller community in that on 4/1/2001, 15/1/2001 and on 25/1/2001 she was denied service in the respondent's premises. The respondent does not deny that service was not provided, but submits that it was on grounds other than the complainant's membership of the Traveller community.

Conclusions of the Equality Officer

The Equality Officer concluded that a presumption of discrimination arose based on the evidence presented and that this was not rebutted by the Respondent.

Decision

The Equality Officer found that the complainant was discriminated against on the Traveller community ground contrary to section 3(1) and section 3(2)(i) of the Equal Status Act, 2000, and in terms of section 5(1) of that Act. The respondent was ordered to pay €4000 to the complainant for the effects of the discrimination.

Complaint under the equal Status Act 2000

1. DEC-S2002-136

Ms Mary O'Reilly V Mr Noel Ryan

The complainant referred a claim to the Director of Equality Investigations under the Equal Status Act 2000. In accordance with her powers under section 75 of the Employment Equality Act, the Director then delegated the case to me, Bernadette Treanor, an Equality Officer, for investigation, hearing and decision and for the exercise of other relevant functions of the Director under Part III of the Equal Status Act.

2. Dispute

This dispute concerns a claim by Ms O'Reilly that she was discriminated against by the respondent, contrary to the Equal Status Act 2000, on the grounds that she is a member of the Traveller community in that on 4/1/2001, 15/1/2001 and on 25/1/2001 she was denied service in the respondent's premises. The respondent does not deny that service was not provided, but submits that it was on grounds other than the complainant's membership of the Traveller community.

3. Summary of the Complainant's case

Ms O'Reilly attended the respondent's chemist shop with prescriptions on the three dates mentioned above. On the first two occasions, she was asked to go to another pharmacy as the respondent's shop did not have the items she required. On the third occasion, when told the same, she realised that she was being refused service since the items she required were standard, generally available medicines. Despite talking to Mr Ryan, it was again necessary for her to attend a different pharmacy. Ms O'Reilly's representative, Mr O'Malley, requested that the Equality Officer draw inferences in accordance with section 26 of the Equal Status Act, 2000 with respect to Mr Ryan's response to contacts from Ms O'Reilly's representative.

4. Summary of the Respondent's Case

Mr. Ryan did not serve Ms O'Reilly even though he had the stock required, because he associated her with a group who intermittently entered his premises and were intimidatory, abusive and who damaged stock. He does not believe there is a statutory basis for this complaint.

5. Evidence of the Parties

5.1. Complainants Evidence

- Ms O'Reilly considers herself to be a member of the Traveller community.
- She has been settled for 9 years
- She submitted a letter from her GP listing prescriptions issued on 4th, 15th and 21st of January 2001.
- These prescriptions related to herself, her daughter and her parents, who are also settled Travellers.
- She had been in the respondent's shop previously, and had not been involved in any incidents.
- On 4/1/01 Ms O'Reilly handed in her prescription(s) to a female member of staff in the respondent's premises.
- The prescriptions were taken behind the counter, out of sight.
- On returning to the counter the member of staff told her to "...go up the street further. We haven't got these items here."
- Ms O'Reilly went to another chemist and had no problems getting the medicines.
- On 15/1/2001, Ms O'Reilly again went into the respondent's premises with prescriptions.
- She handed in her prescription(s) which were taken behind the counter out of sight.
- Ms O'Reilly was again told to go up the street as they did not have the required items.
- On both occasions, 4/1/2001 and 15/1/2001, Ms O'Reilly had no suspicion that anything might be amiss, and thought that they did not in fact have the medicines. She was, however, embarrassed at having to take back the prescriptions again in front of others at the counter.
- When the same happened a third time on 25/1/2001, Ms O'Reilly asked to see the manager.
- A man whom Ms O'Reilly identified as Mr Ryan came to speak to her.

- She told Mr Ryan that as a chemist he should have the medicines which were standard, generally available medicines, ie Distaclor, Lomotil, Exputex and Solpadeine. She explained that this had happened on two previous occasions.
- Ms O'Reilly said that at that stage she was very embarrassed and 'fit to cry'.
- She told Mr Ryan that she would go to a solicitor and that she was going to the Garda Station.
- Mr Ryan made no response other than "Okay".
- Ms O'Reilly said she then went to the Gardaí and was crying as she explained what had happened. She was advised to go to a solicitor.
- On all three occasions on which Ms O'Reilly was refused service there were others waiting in the Respondent's premises to have prescriptions filled.
- Ms O'Reilly is employed by the Revenue Commissioners. This is a position which requires security clearance. This clearance was obtained without any difficulty.
- Ms O'Reilly denied ever being in Mr Ryan's shop as part of a group as he described in his evidence.
- She is not acquainted with such a group.
- She had only been in the shop previously with prescriptions.
- Ms O'Reilly's solicitor requested that an inference be drawn in relation to the information provided by Mr Ryan in accordance with Section 26 of Equal Status Act, 2000.

5.2.Respondent's Evidence

- Mr Ryan stated that he does not have an anti-Traveller policy. He has been serving Travellers for 30 years.
- Prescriptions are normally taken behind the counter to the dispensary, out of sight of the public.
- He agreed that he refused to fill the prescriptions for Ms O'Reilly. He stated that he did not "want to serve this woman, don't want her on my premises".

- Asked how staff dealt with the incidents where the complainant was denied service, he replied that I would have to ask the person themselves. Mr Ryan did not bring any staff as witnesses to the hearing. When asked how staff would be made aware that a person was not to be served, he replied that when the prescription came in to the dispensary he would indicate that they were not to serve that person.
- He spoke about numerous occasions when Ms O'Reilly was in the company of others. She was not always there when the group entered. He stated that the group was intimidatory, abusive, and that they damaged stock.
- Mr Ryan could not identify any of the people in the group or specify the dates on which they entered his premises. He stated that on one occasion a member of staff bolted out through the rear entrance on the arrival of this group (having allegedly been threatened by the group in a previous employment) Mr Ryan has no record of these incidents. He does not keep an incident log.
- When asked what the complainant had been doing on the occasions when she entered with the group, Mr Ryan described one incident when the complainant had been looking at lipstick. He stated that she had refused to put it down on request. She had apparently had been putting the lipstick on her finger. Mr Ryan did not know when this happened.
- Mr Ryan mentioned an incident, occurring in recent months, when this group had arrived again in his store. He could not identify them. Ms O'Reilly was not with the group on this occasion.
- When asked why he had raised the issue of identification of the complainant in correspondence prior to the hearing, Mr Ryan stated that he wished to be sure who she was.
- Mr Ryan stated that he had had the stock, and said that normally in this situation (where he did not want to serve someone), they would say that they did not have the stock. This was to avoid stirring up trouble.
- Mr Ryan gave a description of the last incident leading to the decision not to serve Ms O'Reilly. Four to six people entered with Ms O'Reilly in the group. A person behind her said "We f.....g sorted Finnerty and we'll f.....g sort you". He stated

that he knew the complainant very well. When this comment was made by the person behind her she nodded her head in agreement. Although she had previously been a customer, since she nodded her assent she is no longer welcome. She was too clever to say anything herself.

- Mr Ryan stated that everyone coming into his shop and behaving in the same manner would be treated in the same way.
- Mr Ryan had no idea when this incident took place. When pressed, he said that it was a matter of months before the complaint incidents, but could not be sure.
- Mr Ryan stated that the group were given no indication that they were barred.
- His shop has no written policies for dealing with these situations. Staff would be reluctant to take decisions themselves not to serve someone.
- The staff would not be “tuned into” names of individual customers as he is after 30 years. When asked to explain this, he stated “I know the names.”
- When asked why he had not responded to the Equality Officer’s requests for information, Mr Ryan replied “Well I’m very busy”. When asked why he had not provided information in relation to the stock on the relevant dates he stated “You didn’t ask the right questions. I don’t think there is a statutory obligation on me.” He said that had I told him that there was an obligation on him he would have acted differently.
- When my letter of 12/7/2002 mentioning section 37 of ESA¹ was read to him, he replied “Okay, so you told me..... If I’ve committed an offence then charge me”.
- In correspondence prior to the hearing, Mr Ryan had requested me to obtain information from all relevant health boards in order to determine if the complainant or others associated with her are customers.
- He stated that he would compare the information received with the names and numbers on his system, which he praised. When asked if he could do this at present by name, he said that he could but that he was not willing to do so unless the information is provided. He is too busy.
- Mr Ryan stated that the Gardaí were never called to any of the incidents he described.

¹ Section 37 relates to obstruction of the Director or an Equality Officer in the exercise of their powers.

- Mr Ryan concluded by saying that they have a policy of being even-handed, fair to everyone. They do not refuse or deny service without good reason. They are well known for that.

6. *Matters for consideration*

6.1. The matter referred for investigation turns upon whether or not the complainant was discriminated against contrary to Section 3 (1)(a) and 3 (2)(i) of the Equal Status Act 2000 in terms of Section 5 (1) of that Act.

Section 3 (1)(a) provides that discrimination shall be taken to occur where: "*On any of the grounds specified.....a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated*"

Section 3 (2) provides that: "*As between any two persons, the discriminatory grounds ... are ...*

- (i) *that one is a member of the Traveller community and the other is not.*"

Section 5 (1) states that "*a person shall not discriminate in disposing of goods to the public generally or a section of the public or in providing a service, whether the disposal or provision is for consideration or otherwise and whether the service provided can be availed of only by a section of the public*".

6.2. At the outset, I must first consider whether the existence of a prima facie case has been established by the complainant. There are three key elements which need to be established to show that a prima facie case exists. These are:

- (a) Membership of a discriminatory ground (e.g. the Traveller community ground)
- (b) Evidence of specific treatment of the complainant by the respondent
- (c) Evidence that the treatment received by the complainant was less favourable than the treatment someone, not covered by that ground, received or would have received in similar circumstances.

If and when those elements are established, the burden of proof shifts, meaning that the difference in treatment is assumed to be discriminatory on the relevant ground. In such cases the claimant does not need to prove that there is a link between the difference and the membership of the ground, instead the respondent has to prove that there is not. If they succeed in establishing prima facie evidence,

the burden of proof then shifts to the respondent to rebut the inference of discrimination.

7. Conclusions of the Equality Officer

7.1. Prima Facie case of discrimination

In this particular case the complainant claims that she was discriminated against on the basis of her membership of the Traveller community when she sought and was denied service on 4/1/2001, 15/1/2001 and 27/1/2001.

With regard to 6(1)(a) above I am satisfied that the complainant is a member of the Traveller community, and this was not contested by the respondent. With regard to 6(1)(b) above both parties agree that there was denial of service as submitted by the complainant

With regard to 6(1)(c) above, Mr Ryan has produced no evidence to support his contention that the complainant was refused service because of unacceptable conduct on her part in his premises. He gave false reasons to the complainant for the refusal and did not find it necessary to, or attempt to, identify her on each occasion.

In the absence of any credible contradictory evidence a presumption of discrimination arises. I find that the complainant has established a prima facie case that she was treated less favourably than other customers in similar circumstances. The onus of proof that discrimination did not take place now shifts to the respondent.

7.2. Respondent's Rebuttal

Mr Ryan's evidence and responses at the hearing contained many inconsistencies. He did not produce any documentary or other support for his contention that threatening incidents took place, nor that Ms O'Reilly took part in these incidents. Mr Ryan also did not produce any witnesses to support his allegations.

During the first two incidents Ms O'Reilly, while embarrassed at having the prescriptions returned, left the premises without incident. On the third occasion, she raised the issue with the appropriate person on realising that something was amiss. On all three occasions she behaved in an entirely appropriate manner despite an adverse environment. This is irreconcilable with the behaviour alleged by Mr Ryan. In addition, the fact that Ms O'Reilly's employment requires security clearance suggests that on the balance of probabilities it is unlikely that she would engage in the sort of behaviour as alleged by Mr Ryan.

Mr Ryan clearly stated at the hearing that he knew the complainant very well. When asked why he had raised an identification issue with me in correspondence before the hearing, he replied that he wanted to be sure. This had not appeared to be necessary when he had been shown the prescriptions by staff and had directed that the complainant be referred elsewhere. It should also be noted that some of these prescriptions were in different names, as they referred to different members of the complainant's family. However, he had not found it necessary to go to the counter to identify the complainant on any of the three incident dates. I find that the respondent knew the complainant and that he recognised the names on the prescriptions as being connected to her.

Mr Ryan's contention that he tells customers he does not want to serve that he does not have what they want, is in direct conflict with his contention that he has a policy of being even-handed and fair to everyone. In a situation such as this it is difficult to see how it is fair to deliberately mislead someone as to the reason why you will not provide them with a service.

When Mr Ryan was asked how prescriptions are handled he explained that they are accepted at the counter, and taken out of sight to the dispensary. When asked why the staff would have refused the complainant, or any one else, he stated that it would be necessary to ask the staff themselves. Since Mr Ryan had not brought any staff members or supporting witnesses to the hearing this was not possible. When later asked how Mr

Ryan informed staff that he had taken a decision not to serve someone, that is, how would staff know that the person presenting at the counter was someone he did not want to serve, he said that when a prescription came in, he would indicate to the staff that they would not serve that person. It appears that his suggestion that the staff be asked for reasons for refusal on their part was at least misleading, since a member of staff would refuse service explicitly because of his direction to do so. This is underpinned by Mr Ryan's statement that staff would be reluctant to refuse on their own initiative and that they would not have the 30 years knowledge of local names that he has.

In a letter dated 22/6/2002 which I received on 26/9/2002 Mr Ryan asked that the complainant be presented for identification at his premises. It is not clear how Ms O'Reilly would have been required to present herself, (that is, would she have been required to stand in view while the respondent and his staff looked at her and discussed her), and how she would have been dismissed when the identification procedure was completed to his satisfaction. This request, given that Mr Ryan had no need to physically identify the complainant on the tendering of prescriptions is both bizarre and of concern.

Section 15(1) of the Equal Status Act 2000 provides that *"nothing in the Act prohibiting discrimination, shall be construed as requiring a person to provide services to another person in circumstances which would lead a reasonable individual, having the responsibility, knowledge and experience of the person, to the belief, on grounds other than discriminatory grounds, that the provision of services to the customer would produce a substantial risk of criminal or disorderly conduct or behaviour or damage to property at or in the vicinity of the place in which the services are sought"*.

Mr Ryan's defence was based on the fact that if anyone went into his shop and behaved as Ms O'Reilly allegedly did, they would also be denied service. I find this difficult to accept when the incidents he described (unsupported) were that

- she tested a lipstick from stock and that
- she nodded in assent to a comment made by another member of the group she was allegedly with on occasion.

Mr Ryan placed substantial reliance on the nodding incident, when he said that once she did that, that was enough for him and he decided not to serve her again. He also stated that Ms O'Reilly was not always with the group when they entered. It is therefore strange that he could identify the complainant and not any of the other members of the group whom he had seen more often.

If indeed the incidents allegedly involving the complainant did occur, which I do not accept was the case, I do not accept that the nodding of assent could “*lead a reasonable individual having the responsibility, knowledge and experience of the person to the belief, on grounds other than discriminatory grounds, that the disposal of the goods*” to Ms O'Reilly would have produced “*a substantial risk of criminal or disorderly conduct or behaviour*”; or that the testing of a lipstick from stock, while irritating, could “*lead a reasonable individual having the responsibility, knowledge and experience of the person to the belief, on grounds other than discriminatory grounds, that the disposal of the goods...*” to Ms O'Reilly would produce a substantial risk of “*....damage to property...*”. However this is not to assert that it is always necessary to serve members of a group, regardless of their background, which calls in to intimidate. It may be appropriate to refuse to serve someone who is shown to be part of or support a group seeking to intimidate a service provider. However, I do not accept that the complainant in this case was involved in such behaviour.

I am not satisfied on the basis of the evidence before me in this case that it would be reasonable to assume that to fulfill the prescriptions presented by Ms O'Reilly could have led to a substantial risk of criminal or disorderly conduct or to a substantial risk of damage to property. I am satisfied that a non-Traveller would not have been treated in this manner and would not have been consistently refused so arbitrarily.

Respondent's Rebuttal – Conclusion

Given the seriousness of Mr Ryan's allegations, it is hardly credible that he does not know the identity of anyone involved except the complainant, has made no obvious effort to find out, has not reported the incidents to the Gardaí, has not recorded the incidents in

an incident book and does not remember the month when he was allegedly threatened. It is not possible to rely on entirely uncorroborated allegations of this seriousness. In the absence of any plausible, non-discriminatory reason for the denial of service to the complainant, I find that the respondent has not rebutted the presumption of discrimination by him against the complainant. I find that the respondent treated the complainant less-favourably than a non-Traveller would have been treated in similar circumstances.

8. Respondent's treatment of issues raised.

At this point I would like to record Mr Ryan's disdain for this entire process and consequentially for the Equal Status Act, 2000. During the hearing Mr Ryan's attitude was gravely condescending. At no stage prior to the hearing did he respond to requests for information. Indeed his only substantive response was a request for information to be procured from Health Boards. This request was made in spite of the fact that he had access to the relevant information on his own computer system which he praised, but was too busy to access.

Mr Ryan did not initially show up for the hearing, arriving only after a phone call requesting confirmation of his attendance or otherwise. While this reflects Mr Ryan's non-cooperation with the process, it should be considered in the light of the increased administrative burden, including costs to this Office, of holding a hearing in the parties' geographical area. At the opening of the hearing Mr Ryan was offered an adjournment to allow him to obtain legal representation. He declined, stating that he did not think it necessary.

When asked Mr Ryan why he had not indicated that he had the relevant stock on hands on the dates in question, he stated that the Equality Officer had not asked the right questions. This is incorrect since he had been asked him to provide details of stock on hands on the relevant dates. Had he done so the true situation would have been apparent. He also stated that this Office had not informed him of his duties under the Equal Status Act, 2000. This is also incorrect since my letter dated 12/7/2002 lists section 37 of the Equal Status Act, 2000. In fact, the first letter to the respondent from this Office included a copy of the Office's Guide to Procedures clearly indicating the nature of the

proceedings and how the matter would be progressed. Mr Ryan was first asked for details of his stock records on 20/6/2001. No response was given to this, or the subsequent request dated 16/5/2002, until Mr Ryan indicated during the hearing that he had had the relevant stock.

It is my opinion that Mr Ryan's responses throughout the process are indicative of his disdain for equality issues and for the tribunal in particular. I am satisfied that it is indicative of his attitude in general to the Equal Status Act, 2000.

I have found at 7 above that Ms O'Reilly was discriminated against on the basis of her membership of the Traveller community, and I have considered the respondent's liability at 10 below. Mr Ryan stated at the hearing "..... If I've committed an offence then charge me." The consideration of the offence-related provisions contained in the Equal Status Act, 2000 such as obstruction of an Equality Officer, (Section 37), is a matter for the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform or the Equality Authority, (Section 44).

9. Drawing of Inferences

9.1. Request for inferences to be drawn

Ms O'Reilly's notification, required under the Equal Status Act, 2000, was sent on 16/3/01. Mr Ryan responded on 24/4/01, asking Ms O'Reilly's representative for his co-operation in identifying his client. Ms O'Reilly's representative, Mr O'Malley, asked at the hearing that appropriate inferences be drawn from Mr Ryan's response.

9.2. Section 26 of the Equal Status Act, 2000

Section 26 of the Equal Status Act, 2000 is as follows:

26.—If, in the course of an investigation under *section* 25, it appears to the Director—

(a) that the respondent did not reply to a notification under *section 21(2)(a)* or to any question asked by the complainant under *section 21(2)(b)*,

(b) that the information supplied by the respondent in response to the notification or any such question was false or misleading, or

(c) that the information supplied in response to any such question was not such as would assist the complainant in deciding whether to refer the case to the Director,

the Director may draw such inferences, if any, as seem appropriate from the failure to reply or, as the case may be, the supply of information as mentioned in *paragraph (b) or (c)*.

9.3. Consideration of the Respondent's response

In relation to section 26 (a), Mr Ryan's response, which was sent over a month after receipt of the notification, did not include any answers to the questions raised in the notification, notably the request for a reason why the complainant was treated as she was, for details of how other people are treated in similar circumstances, and for details of stock records at the time of the incidents.

In relation to 26 (b), it appears to me that Mr Ryan's response was misleading. The evidence clearly shows that he knew the complainant and her relatives by name, and indeed he stated categorically at the hearing that he knew her very well.

In relation to 26 (c), Mr Ryan's response, inferring that he could not identify the complainant, was not in my view in any way of assistance to Ms O'Reilly and her representative in deciding whether or not to refer a case.

Therefore, it appears to me that Mr Ryan's response falls for consideration in respect of all subsections of section 26 of the Equal Status Act, 2000 and that it is therefore open to me to draw appropriate inferences in this case.

I have already found that a prima facie case of discrimination exists and that the respondent has failed to rebut this. Had I been unable to reach a decision on these matters, I am content that I could have relied upon Section 26, in combination with the evidence presented, to infer that Mr Ryan's unfavourable treatment of the complainant was based on her membership of the traveller community. This approach was taken in Michael Connors and Bridget Connors V Molly Heffernan's Public House². This would have been supported by the respondent's approach discussed at 8 above. I do not believe it necessary to consider what further inferences may be appropriate in this case.

10.Liability

While it was the staff who informed the complainant on each of the three occasions that she should try elsewhere, I am satisfied that this was on the direct instructions of the respondent, as stated by him in the course of the hearing. Therefore I am satisfied that the respondent is directly liable for the refusal of service and that the consideration of vicarious liability in accordance with section 42 is not necessary.

11.Requests for Information

This case related to the denial of service in relation to the filling of prescriptions. As the respondent withheld his confirmation that service was indeed denied it became necessary to request evidence from the complainant's representative supporting the existence of prescriptions on the said dates. This would have been acceptable in the form of confirmation from the fulfilling chemist or the prescribing doctor. While, in fact, this evidence was in support of the complainant's case, it was also a protection for the respondent from the progression of an unsubstantiated case.

I requested this evidence from the complainant's representative on the basis that I considered the content of the information to be private in nature. I was reluctant to obtain this private information without the complainant's knowledge and agreement. Unfortunately, my request for this information increased the costs to the complainant in relation to the preparation of her case, since she was charged for the provision of the

² DEC-S2001-003

information. However, I would like to clarify that I am content I could have requested any information I considered relevant from both the doctor and chemist in accordance with Section 34(1)(a). Any such third persons requested to provide information by an Equality Officer would then be subject to the confidentiality mentioned in Section 36 of the Equal Status Act, 2000. I believe that it is important that parties to a case are aware of this power that has been delegated to Equality Officers, complainants and respondents alike.

12.Decision

I find that the complainant was discriminated against on the Traveller community ground contrary to section 3(1), and section 3(2)(i) of the Equal Status Act, 2000, and in terms of section 5(1) of that Act.

13.Redress

Under section 25(4) of the Equal Status Act, 2000 redress shall be ordered where a finding is in favour of the complainant in accordance with section 27.

Section 27(1) provides that:

“the types of redress for which a decision of the Director under section 25 may provide are either or both of the following as may be appropriate in the circumstances:

(a) an order for compensation for the effects of the discrimination;

or

(b) an order that a person or persons specified in the order take a course of action which is so specified.”

13.1. Order

I hereby order:

13.1.1. that €4000 be paid to the complainant by the respondent for the effects of the discrimination. In making this award I have taken into consideration:

13.1.1.1. That there were three incidents.

- 13.1.1.2. The needless repetition of incidents caused by the lack of clarity from the respondent in relation to his intention not to serve the complainant.
 - 13.1.1.3. The embarrassment and distress caused when the prescriptions were returned in front of others.
 - 13.1.1.4. The loss of amenity and inconvenience to her when she was ill.
 - 13.1.1.5. The fact that the non-provision of medicines to a person tendering a valid prescription is a serious matter, and may have had potentially serious consequences for the complainant.
- 13.1.2. That Mr Ryan revise his policies in relation to refusals of service with a view to ensuring the compliance of these policies with the Equal Status Act, 2000.
- 13.1.3. That he display a notice, in a prominent position in easy view of the public, stating his commitment to treating people in accordance with the provisions of the Equal Status Act, 2000.

Bernadette Treanor
Equality Officer
12th December 2002