

**Annual Progress Report 2009/2010 on  
Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and  
Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO)  
2006  
to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland**

**By the**



**Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS)**

**July 2010**

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## **S75 Executive Summary**

*What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations and what outcomes were achieved?*

In 2009 the Agency introduced the “Making Reasonable Adjustments for Staff with Disabilities Guidelines” and circulated it to all managers. NIBTS re-launched its “Disability Information Packs for all Front-line Staff”.

With the assistance from the Occupational Health Services, Belfast Trust, NIBTS introduced a maximum six week “phased return to work” on full pay system for staff returning to work from long term sick leave.

The Agency reviewed its equality monitoring arrangements on the recruitment and selection application forms to cover all Section 75 categories, in addition, using the same form, a review of its current workforce was also conducted.

The service has continued to increase the number of bloodmobile sessions located at so-called neutral venues in relation to perceived solely Protestant/Catholic communities.

In 2009, 57 presentations were made in a number of schools across the province, this resulted in an increase of 7 (14%) of the 50 given in the previous year.

NIBTS continues to play an active role in the equality partnership with other HSC Agencies and Special Bodies, supported by the Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation (BSO).

In preparing the audit of inequalities and the development of a new equality scheme and action plan, the NIBTS and its partners engaged closely with representative groups. An advisory group was convened, which currently includes membership from Disability Action, Mencap, An Munia Tober, Carers NI, Cara-Friend and the Equality Coalition. While the group was not successful in securing direct representation from NICCY’s Youth Panel, engagement with young people will be possible through the Equality Coalition.

By the end of March, a project plan for completing the audit and developing the scheme and action plan was agreed and a first draft of an audit tool was developed with input from the group. In addition, a

data repository with relevant secondary sources (including research reports) on the needs and experiences of Section 75 groups was created to support managers in undertaking the audit. The repository has been made available on the internet for ease of access.

Throughout the year, the Equality Unit of the Business Services Organisation – on behalf of the NIBTS and its partners – worked closely with a range of groups representing the interests of lesbian, gay and bisexual people (LGB). The respective working group is convened by the DHSSPS with representation from a range of Health and Social Care organisations with the aim to produce an action plan to better meet the needs of LGB people.

*What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?*

In order to support staff returning to work from sick leave and address any potential implications under DDA, NIBTS plans to provide refresher absence management training for Managers and Supervisors. In addition NIBTS expects to introduce an incapability/incompetence policy and develop corporate guidelines for managers when completing a “return to work interview” with staff.

During 2010/11 NIBTS plans to review a number of its flexible working policies and continue to monitor the uptake of all flexible working requests.

NIBTS plans to raise awareness for manager on the changes to the current default retirement age of 65years which is to be phased out from April 2011.

NIBTS plans to translate its “Cord Blood” recruitment leaflets for public Cord Blood Bank into several languages and to make interpreters available for directed Cord Blood banking if required.

As part of the 2010/11 Marketing plan, NIBTS plans to further increase the number of new younger donors.

Finally NIBTS plans to re-launch and increase staff awareness of all flexible working policies and practises in the organisation.

*Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3:*

	<b>Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes</b>	<b>Tick if result of EQIA</b>
Persons of different religious belief	No change to policy or practice	
Persons of different political opinion	No change to policy or practice	
Persons of different racial groups	No change to policy or practice	
Persons of different age	No change to policy or practice	
Persons with different marital status	No change to policy or practice	
Persons of different sexual orientation	No change to policy or practice	
Men and women generally	No change to policy or practice	
Persons with and without a disability	Introduced guidelines for managers on Making Reasonable Adjustments for Staff with Disabilities.  Introduced a “phased return to work” in order to facilitate employees return to work after long term sickness.	
Persons with and without dependants	No change to policy or practice	

## Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties

*Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2009-10.*

The Agency has continued to work in close partnership with other HSC Agencies and special bodies on equality, facilitated by the Equality Unit, BSO.

In order to widen ownership of the equality and good relations agenda, the service has continued to conduct an "Internal Equality Working Group" which includes membership from across the service areas. The group is convened on a quarterly basis to discuss strategic Section 75 objectives for the Agency and implementation of good practice.

## Section 2: Screening

*Please provide an update of new/proposed/revised policies screened during the year.*

A range of policies were screened during the year. Consultation on the outcome of these screening exercises is scheduled for 2010/11.

<b>Title of policy subject to screening</b>	<b>Was the <u>F</u>ull Screening Report or the <u>R</u>esult of initial screening issued for consultation?  <i>Please enter <u>F</u> or <u>R</u></i></b>	<b>Was initial screening decision changed following consultation? <u>Y</u>es/<u>N</u>o</b>	<b>Is policy being subject to EQIA? <u>Y</u>es/<u>N</u>o? If yes indicate year for assessment.</b>
Computer Security Policy	R	N	N
Controls Against Malicious Software	R	N	N
Email and Internet Policy	R	N	N

HR Strategy	R	N	N
Management of User Accounts and Passwords	R	N	N
Risk Management Strategy	R	N	N
Validation Policy and Master Plan	R	N	N
Children Attending Blood Donation Sessions	R	N	N

### **Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)**

*Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2009-10, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2010-11.*

#### ***EQIA Timetable – April 2009 - March 2010***

n/a

#### ***Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities – April 2009-March 2010***

<b>Title of EQIA subject to Stage 7 monitoring</b>	<b>Indicate if differential impacts previously identified have reduced or increased</b>	<b>Indicate if adverse impacts previously identified have reduced or increased</b>
Access to Blood Donor Services	The Agency has continued to work to increase the number of “neutral” blood collection sessions. In 2009, of the total 231 collection sites across the province, 120 sessions were held at venues with no perceived affiliation. This was an increase in 6 compared to	

	<p>previous years.</p> <p>From 2006 NIBTS has reduced the number venues with poor/no disabled access by two thirds. Of the 231 venues only 3 have poor or no access, however portable ramps are carried on our mobile units and staff are willing to assist if required.</p> <p>In 2009 NIBTS increased its number of “family friendly” sessions by 10%.</p>	
Work-Life Balance Policies	<p>The Agency will continue to work with other HSC organisations in developing a combined approach to progress this area. The Agency has implemented a system in 2009/10 and will continue to monitor the uptake of Flexible working policies in 2010/11.</p>	

**2010-11 EQIA Time-table**

n/a

**Section 4: Training**

*Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.*

As in previous years, NIBTS participated in the joint training programme of the HSC small agencies consortium, facilitated by the Equality Unit of the Business Services Organisation (BSO). A total of

31 members of staff attended equality related training: 13 in equality awareness, 12 in disability awareness and six in screening.

All training sessions are evaluated on an ongoing basis and any suggestions taken on board in the regular review of the training (its content and delivery).

In 2009 a total of 48 members of staff who are involved in the Recruitment and Selection process, received either a half day refresher training session or a full two day programme. Both sessions provided an employment law update covering all aspects of Section 75.

## **Section 5: Communication**

*Please outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the Section 75 Duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.*

As in previous years, NIBTS's annual report included a dedicated section on progress in relation to the promotion of equality and good relations.

As part of the Corporate Induction Process, which all new starts receive, a dedicated section on equality is included, in addition the Agency advertises and encourages staff to participate in the HSC "Discovering Diversity" e-learning tool.

## **Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis**

*Please outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research or any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75, including the needs and experiences of people with multiple identities.*

*Please outline any use of the Commission's Section 75 Monitoring Guide.*

In the autumn of 2009, a standardised staff survey was conducted across the HSC. The survey sought to capture views across a range of employment matters. The collection of Section 75 background data from participants allowed the examination of perceptions and experiences by different equality groupings. It showed that...

In relation to dependant status, 64% of NIBTS employees have some form of caring responsibility. Of this 64%, 42% have caring responsibilities for a child or children, 16% have caring responsibilities for an older person and 6% have caring responsibilities for a person(s) with a disability.

In addition, 41% of staff surveyed were Catholic, 46% were Protestant, 4% other religions and 6% none.

As the survey indicates, a high percentage of the workforce have caring responsibilities, and to date NIBTS has a 100% record for approving all flexible working requests.

## **Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services**

*Please provide details of any initiatives/steps taken during the year, including take up, to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.*

In order to meet the communication needs of people not fluent in English, the NIBTS put in place arrangements for accessing telephone interpreting services under the regional Health and Social care contract.

During 2009 a significant amount of work has been completed on the development of the new NIBTS website, further amendments are planned, all of which will improve the accessibility on a number of fronts.

Likewise, NIBTS continued to be represented by the Equality Unit on regional initiatives. Regional work on accessible formats was progressed by the formation of a Steering Group with nominations from across the sector, including the DHSSPS, Public Safety and Health & Social Care organisations. The initiative has drawn support from Chief Executives throughout.

The overall purpose of the group is to support individuals in making informed choices about their health and social care through the provision of accessible information.

Five specific target groups have been defined to date:

- people not fluent in the English language
- children & young people
- people with a learning disability
- people with sensory impairments
- older people.

The initiative attempts to progress the mainstreaming of equality of access to information by linking the work closely to delivery on key sectoral standards and policy initiatives, including the *Quality Standards for Health and Social Care, Improving the Patient & Client Experience, and Personal and Public Involvement*.

By the end of March 2010, preliminary Terms of Reference had been agreed, Chief Executives had been briefed and preparations for a stakeholder event were underway. It was agreed that this event will focus on representative groups in the first place. It will aim to facilitate a first discussion of how stakeholders wish to be involved on the one hand and potential priorities and deliverables for individual target groups on the other.

## **Section 8: Complaints**

As in previous years, the NIBTS did not receive any complaints under the terms of Section 75. If any complaints are received, they are directed to NIBTS's Complaints Manager, who reports and monitors the level of complaints on an annual basis.

## **Section 9: Consultation and Engagement**

*Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.*

*Please outline any use of the Commission's guidance on consulting with and involving children and young people.*

In preparing the audit of inequalities and the development of a new equality scheme and action plan, NIBTS and its partners engaged closely with representative groups. An advisory group was convened, which currently includes membership from Disability Action, Mencap, An Munia Tober, Carers NI, Cara-Friend and the Equality Coalition. While the group was not successful in securing direct representation from NICCY's Youth Panel, engagement with young people will be possible through the Equality Coalition.

Throughout the year, the BSO Equality Unit – on behalf of NIBTS and its partners – worked closely with a range of groups representing the interests of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. The respective working group is convened by the DHSSPS with representation from a range of Health and Social Care organisations.

As in previous years, the Equality Unit conducted a joint consultation on the outcome of screening exercises conducted by NIBTS and its partner organisations during 2008/2009.

NIBTS continues to build partnerships with communities across the province. In 2009 the NIBTS Community Partnership met approximately seven times. The thrust of the partnership is to address topics such as Donor Recruitment, Session Organisation and Public Consultation. NIBTS has also joined the regional Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Forum, which soon will produce the first report on user engagement for the province.

## **Section 10: The Good Relations Duty**

*Please provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.*

*Please outline any use of the Commission's Good Relations Guide.*

Work commenced to develop a disability module, which is to be added to the 'Discovering Diversity' e-learning package, a resource targeted specifically at staff working across the HSC in Northern Ireland. Funds were secured and a contract signed with AurionLearning. A 'storyboard' workshop took place in March. The module is developed in close collaboration with a range of disability organisations. It is hoped to have final product delivery by end of summer 2010.

## **Section 11: Additional Comments**

As in previous years, the NIBTS and its partners, supported by the Equality Unit, engaged in several initiatives to promote good practice.

This included completion of a resource for line managers on making reasonable adjustments for staff members with a disability. The resource was developed with input from Human Resource and Occupational Health professionals on the one hand and voluntary sector organisations and trade unions on the other.

In order to progress the mainstreaming of equality in the procurement of goods and services, the Equality Unit, on behalf of NIBTS and its partners, developed a new contract clause on equality and human rights, which has been added to all new contracts with suppliers of HSC organisations.

The clause requires suppliers to use his/her best endeavours to ensure that in employment policies & practices and in the delivery of services he/she has due regard to the need to promote equality of treatment & opportunity and to ensure compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998. It also includes provisions to protect employees of HSC organisations against harassment by third parties.

In order to promote good practice in the screening of policies/decisions NIBTS and its partners shared learning from completed exercises. The Equality Unit reviewed a sample of completed templates, focusing on policies/decisions with relevance for all partner organisations, and summarised feedback in a briefing paper for senior staff. Special leave policies and IT policies were reviewed in the first place.

Communication from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) in the summer of 2009 indicated that public authorities will be requested to carry out an audit of inequalities on the back of which an action plan and a new equality scheme will need to be developed during 2010/11.

Accordingly, the NIBTS and its partners took important early steps to prepare for the development of new equality schemes. Firstly, the BSO Equality Unit was tasked with convening an advisory group to support and quality-assure the process (see also Section 9). The group brings together individuals from a range of Section 75 groups with knowledge and an interest in the field. By the end of March, a

project plan for completing the audit and developing the scheme and action plan was agreed and a first draft of an audit tool had been developed with input from the group. In addition, a data repository with relevant secondary sources (including research reports) on the needs and experiences of Section 75 groups was created to support managers in undertaking the audit. The repository has been made available on the internet.

**Annual Report 1 April 2009 / 31 March 2010**  
**'Disability Duties' Questions**

**1. How many action measures for this reporting period have been?**

Fully  
Achieved

Partially  
Achieved

Not  
Achieved

2. Please outline the following detail on **all actions that have been fully achieved** in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>2</sup>
National <sup>3</sup>			

<sup>1</sup> **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

<sup>2</sup> **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

<sup>3</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

Regional <sup>4</sup>	Additional Measure	<p>An advisory group was established by the NIBTS along with the HSC agencies and special bodies, to inform the approach to the Section 75 Audit of Inequalities. This group comprises of a range of Section 75 representative groups, including a range of disability groups. This group will also inform decision making on priority actions emanating from the audit. See Section 9 of the S75 Review of Progress for further information.</p>	
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<sup>4</sup> **Regional:** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

Local <sup>5</sup>	Continue to maximise benefits of partnership working.	The NIBTS along with a range of HSC agencies and special bodies, carried out a joint consultation on the screening outcomes of all policies screened from April 08 – March 09. Consultees included a wide range of disability groups.	The joint approach to consultation maximises resources for HSC agencies and special bodies, but more importantly it aims to maximise time and resources for disability organisations.  1 consultation response was received. (See Section 9 of S75 Annual Review of Progress for further discussion on the consultation.)
	Continue to maximise partnership with Disability Action by offering a mentoring/placement scheme for disabled people.	In partnership with Disability Action, NIBTS continues to offer a part time porter post. This is reviewed twice yearly.	

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<sup>5</sup> **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Review ongoing Disability Awareness Training programme to ensure Disability Duties are incorporated. (Year1 and ongoing)	Equality Awareness Training (delivered by the Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation) and Disability Awareness Training (delivered by KM Associates) continue to include new duties.	Staff trained in Equality Awareness and Disability Awareness are aware of the new Disability Duties.  For related training figures see S75 Review of Progress.
2	Include question regarding the needs of trainees with a disability in all training evaluation forms.	Evaluation forms continue to include disability needs question.	No disability related issues were highlighted in the review of all training evaluations for 2009/10.
3	Carry out review to ensure training methods and materials meet the needs of people with disabilities (Year 1 action) – the review led to the design in Year 2 of an	The NIBTS continues to implement the Training Checklist.  Training materials in alternate formats are made available on	Training sessions and events organised during reporting period presented no barriers for disabled people.

	<p>additional action measure, namely development of a Disability Training Checklist to be used when co-ordinating any training session or event.</p>	<p>request.</p>	
4	<p>Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people through inclusion and positive portrayal of disabled people in various sections of the HSC 'Discovering Diversity' e-learning package.</p> <p>Development of a further module of the Discovering Diversity package, specifically in relation to disability, with the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To challenge</li> </ul>	<p>E-learning programme continues to be made available to staff.</p> <p>The NIBTS, represented by the Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation, has</p>	<p>For related training figures see S75 Review of Progress.</p> <p>Training figures will be reported in Annual Review of Progress for</p>

	<p>assumptions that are commonly held about disabled people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote more positive attitudes to people with disability.</li> <li>• To increase staff confidence when providing services to people with disability.</li> <li>• To increase staff confidence managing/working with people with disabilities.</li> <li>• Encourage staff and users to challenge traditional practices and make change.</li> </ul>	<p>participated in a regional working group, along with representatives from a range of disability organisations, including Mencap, Action Mental Health and RNID. The group is tasked with taking forward the development of this disability e-learning module along with AurionLearning. It is hoped that the final product will be delivered by AurionLearning in Sept 2010.</p>	<p>2010/11.</p>
5	<p>Provide specific training for targeted staff, e.g. Deaf Awareness Training for frontline staff</p>	<p>The consortium of HSC small agencies considered training in relation to a number of different types of disabilities, and reached a consensus to initially</p>	<p>Training figures will be reported in Annual Review of Progress for 2010/11.</p>

		proceed with the area of Mental Health. A session in Mental Health Awareness was scheduled to be held in Q1 20010/11, to be delivered by a member of the Promoting Wellbeing Team in the Southern HSC Trust.	
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2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Action plan to be monitored, reviewed and reported on annually to Equality Commission in Section 75 Annual Review of Progress	The disability duties are brought to the attention of the Board on a regular basis, not least through the approval of the Annual Review of Progress.	Board level awareness of and reflection on the Duties.
2	Add disability to agenda for all equality quarterly meetings and internal Equality Working Group	The duties continue to be an agenda item at the quarterly equality meetings of the consortium of agencies and	The duties are given due priority in the advancement of the equality agenda as a whole.

	meetings (Year 1 and ongoing)	special bodies.	
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2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Progress in this area will be addressed in the context of the S75 Audit of Inequalities.		
2			
3			
4			

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Develop a guide for managers on reasonable adjustments for staff with a range of disabilities.	Guide developed in Year 2 of plan, made available to managers on intranet/network	Introduced a “phased return to work” in order to facilitate employees return to work after long term sickness.
2	Add emphasis to disability in equality screening process, by adding specific question(s) relating to disability duties to screening proforma. (Year 1 action)	<p>The screening template used on an ongoing basis by the NIBTS includes questions relating to the new Disability Duties.</p> <p>Screening Training, delivered by the Equality Unit at the Business Services Organisation, includes the new duties.</p>	<p>For Screening Training figures, see S75 Review of Progress.</p>

3	Investigate scope for creating opportunities for involving disabled people in public life positions, e.g. formation of a disability working group to involve disabled people in policy decision making, or to include disabled people in existing user groups, and remove barriers to participation in such public life positions.	The organisations internal equality group continues to meet and specifies disability matters as a discrete item.	Disability related issues taken forward in line with Disability action plan targets
4	Provision of communication materials in alternative formats e.g. Braille, audio, large font etc.	Staff, service users and the public are made aware of the option to request materials in alternative formats. Arrangements are in place to facilitate any requests.	To date we have received no requests for material in alternative formats.

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>6</sup> / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Ensure the NIBTS Website is further improved.	During 10/11 further enhanced usability of website for disabled people.	Plan to have further modifications to website.	I.T compatibility issues.
2				
3				
4				

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<sup>6</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

4. Please outline what **action measures** have not been achieved and the reasons why?

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Audit of Access to Information	Resources to be dedicated to this piece of work were redirected to undertake work on the Section 75 Audit of Inequalities; the Audit of Access to Information will be addressed in the context of the Audit of Inequalities.
2	Include disability in all service user surveys (consider building disability into User Involvement Policy) and staff surveys (element of HR Controls assurance)	No service user surveys took place during the reporting period.
3		

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Quarterly report from Complaints Department to identify and review disability related complaints. Disability accessibility question added to evaluation forms for all types of training. Review of training evaluations to identify and where possible rectify any areas for improvement.

Quarterly equality meetings with consortium of agencies presents arena for monitoring progress against Disability Action Plan.

(b) Quantitative

Quarterly training reports provide information on number of staff trained per quarter.

DHSSPS staff survey collects monitoring information on disability status of staff, and information on numbers of staff who feel they have been discriminated against because they have a disability.

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6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions, has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes.

Please delete: No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisations annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

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