EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS, ETC., (WORKERS' COMPENSATION) (PAYMENT OF CLAIMS) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2015

S.R. 2015 No. 64

1. Introduction

1.1 This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Social Development to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.

1.2 The Statutory Rule is made under Articles 3(3), 4(3) and 11(1) and (4) of the Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 ("the Order") and is subject to the affirmative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

2.1 These Regulations, one of a series of statutory rules relating to the annual up-rating of social security benefits and pensions, amend the Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Payment of Claims) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1988 to increase the amounts payable under the Order by 1.2 per cent. in line with the increase in Industrial Injuries Benefit.

3. Consultation

3.1 There is no requirement to consult with the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council in relation to these Regulations.

4. Equality Impact

4.1 In accordance with its duty under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department has conducted a screening exercise on these legislative proposals and has concluded that the proposals do not have significant implications for equality of opportunity. In light of this, the Department considers that an equality impact assessment is not necessary.

5. Regulatory Impact

5.1 These Regulations do not require a Regulatory Impact Assessment as they do not impose a cost on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The impact on the public sector is to add to programme expenditure but no additional administration costs will be incurred. The total cost of the 2015 up-rating is expected to increase the Department's annually managed expenditure by approximately £94 million.

7. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland act 1998

7.1 The Department has considered section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and is satisfied the Rule—

(a) is not incompatible with any of the Convention rights,

(b) is not incompatible with Community law,

(c) does not discriminate against a person or class of person on the ground of religious belief or political opinion, and

(d) does not modify an enactment in breach of section 7 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

8. EU Implications

8.1 Not applicable.

9. Parity or Replicatory Measure

9.1 The corresponding Great Britain Regulations, a draft of which was laid before Parliament on 14 January 2015, are the Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Payment of Claims) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

9.2 In line with the long-standing policy of parity in social security, the Regulations will, subject to affirmation by resolution of the Assembly, come into operation on the same date as the Great Britain Regulations. Parity of timing and substance is an integral part of the maintenance of single systems of social security, pensions and child support provided for in section 87 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.