

Working for you in RBS



NEWSLETTER • July 2011

JOB LOSS ANNOUNCEMENT TELEPHONE BANKING & INTERMEDIARY SERVICES (TBIS)

Following the announcement by the Group on 2nd September 2010 of the loss of a further 3500 roles within the Business Services Division, today the Group has announced the specific impact of the loss of 78 permanent and 12 temporary TBIS Complaint Handling and Business Support roles in Borehamwood.

Background to Announcement & Rationale

Since the start of the bank's ongoing Strategic Review a staggering 22,500 UK jobs losses have been announced across the Group. Within Borehamwood today's announcement confirms the specific impact on members working within TBIS whose operations will withdraw from the site with the majority of the work migrating to the bank's retained sites in Leicester, Chatham and Bolton.

By migrating and consolidating work to retained sites that currently carry out complaint handling roles, the bank assert that they will be able to simplify management and business support infrastructure, invest in new technology and maximise work space. In addition, the ability to absorb some work due to Lean practices has been created in the receiving Leicester site.

Impact of Changes

The areas and roles that are in scope include the Interest Recalculation Unit, Telephony, Written and Complex Complaint handling roles, as well as a number of Management and Business Support roles, all of which will be displaced with members being placed at risk of redundancy. The work will migrate in phases between Quarter 4 2011 and Quarter 1 2012 and a transfer of skills and knowledge will be undertaken to the receiving sites. The earliest exits from Borehamwood are anticipated to take place from March 2012, however the bank has stressed that they are committed to retaining their remaining UK Retail, Corporate and Group Resourcing operations at Borehamwood.

Managing Reductions

All those at risk will have the opportunity to opt for VR/VER or redeployment. The nature of these announcements culminating in the migration of work to retained site means that all impacted staff will find themselves displaced outright, i.e. the role ceases to exist. If you do not wish to apply for VR/VER, then Unite will support you through the redeployment process. The bank will advise further of the specific impact on your role during one to one meetings.

The VR/VER window for all staff will be open for a period of 2 weeks post employee communications, following which the bank will engage further with Unite on the outcomes, including opportunities for redeployment and any Voluntary Job Matching (VJM) opportunities.

UNITE has also agreed a number of additional redundancy mitigation measures to further reduce the potential for CRs, full detail of these measures were previously provided to members in a separate Unite newsletter, can be viewed on the RBS web pages at www.unitetheunion.org and are also available on the bank's Strategic Review website. These improved measures will also be provided to all at risk employees in their Employee Communication pack and should be discussed in detail with line management in the first instance.

It is however recognised that redeployment opportunities are limited and that the Group's operations in the surrounding London & Eastern region has already been hit by the ongoing Strategic Review. Members who are redeployed and who transfer to another work location may be eligible for a £5000 lump sum payment and payment of additional travel costs.

If any members decide to relocate permanently they may be eligible for relocation assistance subject to meeting the necessary payment criteria for all support measures. For those who do leave the bank's employment, full outplacement support will be provided.

During consultations Unite also urged the bank to look at the remaining roles at the Borehamwood site with a view to identifying job matching opportunities for any members who find themselves in a CR position post closure of the VR/VER register.

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The bank gave a commitment to further dialogue with Unite throughout the consultation period, including reviewing the employee choices following the closure of the Voluntary Register to discuss the support that can be provided to employees who are at risk of CR.

Unite Comment & Next Steps

Since the announcement last September of a further 3500 job losses within Business Services, Unite has been involved in ongoing consultation with the bank and has supported our members as they continue to endure a significant period of change and uncertainty which will ultimately result in job losses as the bank continue to close operational centres and migrate work to key retained sites.

Unite also challenged the bank during consultations on the decision and timing of the withdrawal of TBIS Complaint roles from Borehamwood given the ongoing cross divisional complaint handling programme and the scrutiny and criticism the bank has come under from its customers and the FSA. Whilst recognising this, the bank pointed to the fact that they had taken this into account and had delayed the timing of the withdrawal from the site. They also asserted that the decision to move the work to retained sites would not impact on their ability to respond to and deal with complaints in line with the requirements of the FSA.

Unite also stressed that once again the majority of the roles being lost were at the lower Clerical grades, a trend that continues across the majority of the Business Services restructure announcements, as our members who bear no responsibility pay the ultimate price for the bank's failures. The impact of the job losses at Borehamwood do not just affect all staff and their families but will also be felt by the local community. The nature of these losses results in jobs and skills potentially being lost forever from an area where RBS had been a major employer.

Unite has also asked a number of searching questions about the bank's new operating model and the ability of remaining staff to absorb work from other sites and to meet the challenges of an ever changing and demanding workplace. The bank assert that the use of alternative customer channels, automation and the "Lean" programme have realised these efficiencies which will allow the bank to get back to stand alone strength.

Since the announcement of the 3500 job losses, Unite has been undertaking an extensive site visit programme across all of the impacted Business Services locations and has already met many members at Borehamwood. A further visit to support impacted members will be undertaken shortly, the date will be confirmed by local management in due course. Our Unite Workplace Representative Chloe Bullock who is based on site can also provide support, guidance and advice on an ongoing basis.

The bank has committed to ongoing dialogue with the trade union and has stressed that they are actively engaging with all staff. It is therefore vitally important that you make your views known both to the bank and to Unite; your views will help inform next steps and future dialogue with the bank.

If members have any questions or concerns regarding these latest announcements they should be directed in the first instance to your Line Manager; however in the event that this proves unsatisfactory or the query remains unresolved please contact your local Workplace Rep, the Unite RBS Helpline on 0870 241 4425 or email rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

Unite Representatives

Unite has recently signed a new and improved Unite Representative agreement with the Group and we are always seeking members to take on one of the four Unite Representative roles, i.e. Workplace, Union Learning, Safety and Equality. Any Unite members interested in finding out more about becoming a Unite Representative please contact the Unite RBS Helpline or email rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

Unite Updates & Update Your Details

If you would like to receive regular updates electronically from the union please email from your preferred email address to rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

It is also important that members ensure that your membership details are up to date and accurate, i.e. home address, workplace address, whether you are full time or part time etc. If you believe that your membership details are out of date, please also e-mail rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org with your updated details, alternatively you can contact your local District Office by phoning 0845 850 4242 or logging onto 'My UNITE' at the website www.unitetheunion.org where you can update your own details.

Not a Member?

Join Unite's one and a half million members and have a voice on this and other issues, as well as receiving support, advice and representation for £10.96 a month for full time staff and £4.98 per month for part time staff working less than 21 hours a week. Membership forms can be obtained by phoning 0845 850 4242 or emailing rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org plus you can join on line at www.unitetheunion.org

Alison Maclean & Stuart Davies – Joint Lead Officers

Unite RBS Helpline – 0870 241 4425

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