

December 2009



BUSINESS SERVICES – RESTRUCTURE OF OPERATIONS, STRATEGY, ARCHITECTURE & CHANGE (OSAC)

JOB LOSS ANNOUNCEMENT

In April the Royal Bank of Scotland Group announced a global reduction of 9000 jobs across its Business Services Division (formerly Group Manufacturing), 4500 of which will be in the UK. Following consultations with Unite, the bank has recently announced the specific impact of the restructure within the OSAC area of Business Services which will result in circa 100 job losses across permanent roles in the UK.

IMPACT OF RESTRUCTURE AND RATIONALE

REDUCTION IN ROLES

The restructure will impact across all areas of the OSAC function including Incident Management, Strategy, Architecture & Change Support roles as well as Global Transaction Services Operations (OSAC) & Retail Operations (OSAC). The proposals centre around the bank's objective to achieve efficiencies by implementing consistent spans of control and workload, spending less time on what they see as non core activity, avoiding duplication of work and centralising team locations to create centres of excellence.

The impact of the announcement on specific roles is wide ranging and is spread over a large number of Business Services sites, with in excess of 200 individuals being impacted by the proposed changes within the OSAC area.

In addition many staff in the OSAC area whose jobs remain post restructure will be impacted by a change in reporting line, however there will be no impact to terms and conditions or working hours as a result of these changes.

MANAGING REDUCTIONS

The bank has confirmed that a Voluntary Redundancy (VR) register will be opened for all at risk staff to provide the opportunity to apply for VR from the outset. In addition the bank is committed through ongoing engagement with Unite, to minimise the impact of Compulsory Redundancy (CR) by seeking redeployment opportunities for any member of staff who wishes to remain with the Group. A number of redeployment opportunities have already been identified for some of the "at risk" population.

Unite have agreed a number of redundancy mitigation measures to further reduce the potential for CRs, full detail of these measures will 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. In certain circumstances the bank will give consideration to voluntary role reduction where an opportunity may exist for a member of staff who is at risk to consider taking a downgrade subject to availability of roles. A voluntary reduction in working hours may also be considered. For those who do leave the bank's employment, full outplacement support will be provided.

During consultations Unite challenged the rationale for the proposed pooling arrangements. The bank responded that many of the roles within OSAC are deemed to be specialist in nature and therefore individuals will be pooled in the first instance according to their role specialism and grade. The bank have given a commitment to engage further with Unite after the outcome of the initial VR and pooling selection exercise at which time consideration will be given to looking across the at risk pools in an endeavour to minimise the number of CRs.

NEXT STEPS

Most members will now have attended 1:1 meetings to discuss how this restructure impacts upon them, all those at risk will have the opportunity to opt for VR or redeployment, however the bank reserve the right to decline VR, e.g. if they are oversubscribed by volunteers or if there is a requirement to retain skilled staff. Unite however do not support a position where VR is declined when other members of staff in the same pool or who have the same skills set/role may be at risk of CR.

In general terms, if the number of jobs specific to the role that you undertake are being reduced and you do not wish to opt for VR and there are insufficient volunteers for redundancy, you will be placed into a selection pool, with matrix selection for the role being undertaken. The bank will provide further detail on what selection pool applies to your role and questions on pooling should be addressed via line management in the first instance. A small number of roles will be displaced outright, i.e. the role ceases to exist in the new OSAC structure, if you do not wish to apply for VR, the bank and Unite will support you through the redeployment process.

Unite has already held workplace surgeries at a number of sites with the highest impact. Given the number of locations affected by this announcement, unfortunately it has not been possible to visit all sites, however if you would like a visit to your site please contact our member helpline and we will make the necessary arrangements.

UNITE COMMENT

This announcement confirms the worst fears for impacted staff across the OSAC area of Business Services during a period of continued anxiety for our members within the Group. Whilst Unite welcomes the bank being "up front" with their staff on the anticipated impact of job losses across Business Services, the reality of this announcement is a bitter blow to all staff across OSAC who are working tirelessly through the ongoing difficulties that the Group faces. Unite retains a position of complete opposition to CRs and urges RBS to undertake every conceivable measure to avoid CRs. Your trade union welcomes the commitment from the bank to work with Unite to avoid any such redundancies.

Whilst our immediate concerns are focused on those staff impacted, Unite also have concerns for those staff that will remain post restructure. During consultations, your trade union explored further the business rationale for the proposed headcount reductions in some detail and expressed concern for those staff that will remain and face the inevitably difficult and challenging task of driving the bank's recovery. The bank advised however that whilst they recognise the challenges that lie ahead, they are confident that the new structure will not adversely impact upon workloads and that staff will be fully supported and trained in learning new skills and developing in their roles. The bank has also committed to ongoing dialogue with Unite, where we will have an opportunity to raise any such concerns.

Unite do however have remaining concerns given the proposed headcount reductions that there is a real prospect of CRs. Therefore any members at risk of redundancy who wish to remain with the Group and feel they may have been unfairly selected for redundancy, feel that insufficient efforts are being made to support redeployment or have concerns regarding the selection pooling exercise should contact Unite for support, advice and where appropriate representation. If members have any queries that management are unable to respond to regarding the announcement and the impact upon them they should contact the RBS Helpline or speak to their local workplace representative. Unite will do everything possible to ensure that any members impacted who wish to remain with the Group, ultimately continue their employment with RBS.

NOT A MEMBER?

Join Unite's two million members and have a voice in the workplace, as well as receiving support and representation for £10.96 per month for full time staff and £4.98 per month for part time staff working less than 20 hours a week. Membership forms can be obtained by phoning 0845 850 4242 or you can join on line at www.unitetheunion.org



ALISON MACLEAN AND STUART DAVIES – JOINT LEAD OFFICERS

UNITE RBS HELPLINE: 0870 241 4425