



in the Financial Services Sector

Issue 24 – 30th November 2004

Amicus finance sector challenges the gender pay gap

The finance sector has held the third meeting with senior employer representatives. The finance sector continues to work with major financial services companies and the Equal Opportunities Commission to tackle the gender pay gap in the sector.

This initiative aims to tackle the 44% gender pay gap in the financial services industry. At this meeting Amicus discussed with employers the current barriers to female progression in their workplace. The aim is to urge employers to conduct equal pay reviews and ensure they address the anomalies that the audits identify.

Dave Fleming, Amicus National Officer for finance said: *“Amicus are leading on trying to change this despicable situation. Working with the Equal Opportunities Commission we are urging employers to address the causes of the pay gap. Amicus will continue to take a practical approach with employers to facilitate the advancement of women. It is crucial that there is more awareness of these issues; employers must take action to address these problems. Clearly it is essential that equal pay reviews be conducted. Additionally there is a range of measures that employers can implement to address the barriers to female advancement.”*

Information on this project is available from Saba Mozakka or at:

<http://www.amicustheunion.org/pdf/womenintheworkplace.pdf>

Equal pay experts panel

The DTI has awarded £80,000 of funding for an Equal Pay Experts Panel, run by the TUC. The project will:

- Advise hundreds of companies on equal pay reviews;
- Carry out in-depth reviews in a small number of companies; and
- Build on the TUC Equal Pay project, which has already trained over 400 union equal pay representatives based in companies.

At the launch of the project Patricia Hewitt, Trade and Industry Secretary and Women's Minister, said: *“Getting rid of career sexism is also vital to British industry and our wider economy. In a time of fierce global competition we need to plug our skills gap and cannot afford to neglect anyone's talent. Employers who are committed to equal pay are employers of choice for women these days. This TUC project will spread the message to more of our firms that equal pay for women ought to be a vital part of their HR plans.”*

Glasgow gets 355 financial services jobs

The Financial Times has reported that 355 jobs are being created by Huntswood Outsourcing at Strathclyde Business Park at Bellshill, near Glasgow. The company based Reading, advises financial services groups on compliance and administrative issues such as pensions reviews and mortgage endowment mis-selling.

A company spokesperson said that the decision was based on the fact that Glasgow has the biggest pool of suitably qualified staff. Announcing a £1.5m grant to Huntswood under regional selective assistance, Jim Wallace, Scotland's deputy first minister, said: *"This shows that, although global competition is tough, Scotland remains an attractive option."*

Zurich pilots a call centre in South Africa

Zurich has conducted an outbound calling pilot to UK from South Africa. Insurance Times magazine has reported that the pilot was conducted in the spring.

12% of IT jobs 'could go overseas by 2010'

The British Computer Society has predicted that at least 12 per cent of British IT jobs could be offshored by 2010. Their report estimates that offshoring will continue to grow by 20 per cent a year. The study calculated that about 108,000 British IT posts would move abroad out of a total of 900,000 currently employed by the sector, using industry analysis of offshoring.

www.bcs.org.uk

HHG – UK Life Services

UKLS has announced 37 redundancies in Customer Management, Group Pensions Department.

IPSL pay survey

Amicus - UNIFI is conducting a major survey of staff views on pay in Intelligent Processing Solutions Ltd (IPSL). The survey, which is aimed at getting members' views on what the 2005 pay claim should be, is being circulated in all IPSL sites and to all members at their home addresses.

Abbey National life arm survives takeover

It has emerged that the new owners of Abbey National will not sell off its troubled life-insurance arm, despite speculation that they were keen to get rid of the costly operation. In a restructuring of the high street bank Banco Santander Central Hispano said that it was forming a new division that would include the life-insurance arm.

Headhunters have been appointed to hire an executive from outside the bank to run the division, which will include Abbey's two closed with-profits funds, Scottish Mutual and Scottish Provident. About 3,000 Abbey employees who face redundancy as a result of the takeover have yet to be identified.

Race inequality continues

The Ethnic Minority Task Force have reported that people of working age are twice as likely to be unemployed as the working population. The task force found also concluded that ethnic minority employees earn less than their white colleagues.

Commenting on the report the TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber said:

“Despite many positive changes in the world of work, the harsh reality is that even now Black and Asian people, regardless of their age or background, qualifications or experience are more likely to be unemployed, lower paid and more junior than white people. Not only is this wrong, but it is also poor business sense. Companies that only recruit from a narrow base are missing out on the wide range of experiences on offer in our many different communities.”

The Ethnic Minority Task Force report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.emetaskforce.gov.uk/pdf/EMETF.pdf>

Regulator warns banks to clean up their act

The Financial Services Authority has expressed concern about the treatment of high street banks of consumers, Clive Briault, managing director of retail markets, has said that some banks had been *“developing products without assessing which consumers these products are likely to be suitable for, which consumers they are not likely to be suitable for, and how the products are likely to be sold and advised upon in practice”*.

106 Co-op regional offices to close

The Co-op have announced that it will close 106 regional offices with the loss of 900 jobs. T&G union officials expressed that they felt “angry and betrayed”. These job losses are part of the wider restructuring program announced earlier in the year.

The company said up to 350 of the roles could be transferred to its central functions in Manchester. Unlike most rivals, the CIS is keeping its direct sales force, which sells insurance door-to-door.

Amicus finance sector – European News

- European Solidarity

Amicus is participating in a joint project with trade unions representing workers in the insurance sector from Germany, Italy and France. Funded by the European Commission, the project aims to improve understanding among the partner unions over issues of importance in collective bargaining in all four countries, and in the major international companies that dominate the sector. It is hoped to create a database that will allow representatives to examine translations of the most important aspects of collective agreements in all four countries, in order to ensure a better understanding of the terms and conditions of insurance workers in Germany, France, Italy and the UK.

- **Performance related Pay**

Representatives from Amicus will attend a conference on the issue of performance related pay and its impact on the well being of workers in the finance sector across Europe. This conference looks to significantly further understanding of this important issue among unions from across Europe. The conference will provide an overview of the situations in the different countries as well as bringing together experts to discuss the impacts on employees in terms of precarious pay, stress, long-hours working and work-life balance.

Capita Group has acquired Brownsword, the provider of claims investigation services, for £5m.

Norwich Union has announced plans to relocate more than 1,000 staff from a number of sites in Norwich to two new office blocks on the Broadland Business Park in 2006.

Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, the US investment bank, is setting up a £11m office in London to offer research on European financial stocks.

Marketsafe is to create 92 jobs at a new office in Bridgend over the next three years, in order to provide a pan-European service of credit information and other business services.

Standard Life is to shed a further 100 insurance sales jobs across the country.

Norwich Union is to create 200 jobs at its call centre in Perth, in order to service customers who have bought insurance policies through Asda.

Bridgewell, the stockbroker with 70 staff, is to raise £4m in a share placing to fund the expansion of its research and corporate broking teams.

Euronext is to shed 80 of the 500 jobs at its London-based derivatives exchange.

Insurety Insurance is to open an office for 12 staff in Londonderry, in order to co-ordinate the work of 30 representatives across Northern Ireland.

Your Move is planning to expand its chain of 240 estate agency branches with a further 50 in 2005, and is also expanding its financial advice, conveyancing and insurance operations.

ING Group is selling Baring Asset Management's fund management business to MassMutual Financial for undisclosed terms, while BAM's custody and fund administration business is being sold to Northern Trust for £260m.

Bradford & Bingley is planning to sell its Charcol mortgage broking business to a management buy-out backed by Advantage Capital for under £10m.

Prudential is to acquire Life Assurance Company of Georgia from ING for £137m, in order to expand its Jackson National Life business in the US.

This bulletin has been produced by **Saba Mozakka**, Finance
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