

31 BRANCHES TO BE CLOSED - CHOICE OF TERMS ON OFFER

C&G management presented their proposals on 31 branches that are scheduled to close on the 30th November. This is as a result of strategic decisions on branches that in the company's opinion, do not give the growth opportunities that C&G need going forward.

In addition to this there will be a refocus on the roles of Group and Branch managers around Branch Management and Sales Performance. Furthermore, 14 branches that currently operate Saturday working will no longer do so from 1st December 2007.

Members will be aware of 5 key areas for strategy and growth identified by C&G. These are – Acceleration, sales momentum within the Lloyds TSB channels. Growth through Mortgage Direct. Refocus the rationalisation of C&G branches. Manage, intermediary channel for value, and drive cost, pricing, processing and service inefficiencies.

Your union Unite have informed the company that the anticipated job losses that could be as high as 340 roles across the company will be a real body-blow to staff. Particularly at a time when Lloyds TSB post interim profits of around 2 billion pounds. Your union will be taking soundings from members on their views on this announcement.

Voluntary Register set up

Unite have agreed with C&G for the introduction of a voluntary severance register, for staff in risks areas which will allow staff the opportunity to put their name forward for selection within the affected branches. Preference letters will be sent to all staff who are at risk of redundancy. This may allow staff who want to continue their role in C&G to continue if a suitable voluntary candidate for redundancy is found

Best of both

In anticipation of this announcement, Unite have been in negotiations with C&G on achieving the reduction by voluntary means, and as a consequence C&G have agreed to offer the following severance terms.

To 31st December 2008, a choice between existing C&G terms and those in place prior to October 2006. Broadly speaking these were as follows –

- Severance terms prior to 2006 (old arrangements). Age 17-35, 2 weeks. Age 36-45, 3 weeks. Age 46-55, 5 weeks. Age 56-60, 6 weeks.
- Severance terms (new arrangements). Age - under 22, 2 weeks. Age 22-40, 4 weeks. Age 41+, 6 weeks (per year of service)

The choice of terms, particularly for those staff aged over 50 and seeking an immediate unreduced pension is crucial. Members will recall that this was removed from the organisation as a result of the

new terms that were introduced in October 2006 because of age legislation.

Your rights

C&G management have confirmed that no staff will be placed in unsuitable roles. In addition they confirm that their aim is to give all staff the opportunity for redeployment within the group and no one will be forced to transfer onto a Lloyds TSB contract. Unite will be sitting down with management shortly to negotiate financial incentives for those staff who wish to pursue this option. Remember, your employer has a legal obligation to find ways of offering you suitable alternative employment. As each individual case is different, we suggest you call the **Unite/C&G helpline on 01452 375420**

New branch structure

It is clear from the revised branch structure that there will be some re-grading issues. This will be dealt with in the accordance with the C&G policy manual in relation to the protection of pay and allowances. Remember, as a Unite member, you have the right to challenge any impact that this restructure has on your own personal circumstances, with full union representation.

Changes to Saturday working

As stated previously, C&G wish to change the opening arrangements for 14 branches across the UK. Unite have informed management that this is an issue of a contractual nature and will require some compensation in order for this to be agreed.

Next steps

We have made it clear to C&G management that we will oppose any forms of compulsory redundancies. We will be meeting weekly with management to ascertain how the voluntary process is going in those areas affected. We would now urge those staff who are not members of Unite to join the only union that is recognised in C&G for collective bargaining. Do not be fooled by organisations purporting to be able to be able to negotiate on staffs' behalf. There is only one union in C&G, and that is Unite.

Not a member?

Being part of a TUC affiliated independent trade union that has over **two million members** allows us the opportunity to offer you an unbeatable discounted rate on your membership. Membership subscriptions are £5.77 per month for full time staff and £3.17 for part time staff. In addition, you will receive the first three months of your membership completely free. To join visit our website on www.unitetheunion.org.uk

Email Updates - If you would you like to get Unite updates via email, please contact us on LTSB@unitetheunion.com