



VR OUTCOMES – NO COMPULSORY REDUNDANCIES

Following the announcements on the 2nd November of a reduction of 3,700 fte roles within the Group Retail Branch Network, staff had been provided the opportunity to express an interest in voluntary redundancy. The selection outcomes following this exercise have been announced and the bank have confirmed that no members of staff will be leaving the Group via compulsory redundancy.

Selection Outcomes

Unsurprisingly and as predicted the bank received a significant number of applications for both voluntary redundancy (VR) and voluntary early retirement (VER). Whilst there are no compulsory redundancies (CRs), there are a large number of members who will be advised that their applications for VR have been declined.

The number of VRs do vary, and in some cases considerably, between Regional Managing Director territories and the bank have confirmed that this relates to a number of factors including current headcount, the impact of recruitment freezes and the levels of staff turnover.

Many members contacted UNITE stating that management had advised them that there would be no VRs in their patch raising concerns that local decisions had been taken to withhold VRs and manage reductions through other means.

The bank confirmed that no such instructions were communicated to management and that VRs have been accepted across all Regional Manager territories. The bank remains confident of achieving all the additional headcount reductions through natural turnover; redeployment etc and the numbers provided by the bank appear to support this contention.

RBS Retail Telephony

Part of the original Retail Transformation announcement included plans to remove in-bound telephony from RBS Retail Branches and move this function into Business Services (formerly Manufacturing).

The bank has made the decision to suspend this part of the Retail Transformation Programme (RTP) until at least 2012.

As a result of this decision circa 450 fte job reductions will not be made during 2010/2011 and RBS will consult with UNITE on this aspect of the RTP when appropriate. The bank has also confirmed that RBS branches will continue to be staffed at a headcount level to include resourcing for the telephony function.

Next Steps

Members will be advised via one to ones whether they have been successful in their application for VR. Members who have been declined for VR have the right of appeal; however the grounds for such an appeal would be limited.

Appeals of this nature normally centre around the fairness of declining such a request when, elsewhere in the selection pool, others are at risk of CR. In terms of the RTP announcements as there are no CRs, then these grounds for appeal cannot be relied upon.

If members wish to challenge their non-selection for redundancy, they should raise this in the first instance with their line manager and if the issue remains unresolved should contact their local Workplace Rep or the helpline; however it is highly unlikely that appeals of this nature will prove successful, unless it can be demonstrated that the bank have failed to follow their selection process or have ignored compelling personal circumstances that would have dictated that the bank should have deviated from that process.

UNITE COMMENT

UNITE welcomes the position of no CRs, although maintains that a guarantee could have and should have been given at the point of the announcements to minimise any anxiety among those members of staff not intending to volunteer.

RBS must take notice of the significant over-subscription in VR applications received and the message that this sends regarding the morale among staff working the Retail Branch Network, who along with staff across the Group have endured a torrid 18 months.

RBS have recognised a need to re-engage with and motivate staff working within Retail, not just those staff who were in scope during this announcement, but across the division.

UNITE welcomes this position, along with the repeated commitment to engage with UNITE on an on-going basis to seek ways of improving the Retail Branch Network as a place to work and these discussions will commence in the new year and if members wish to contribute to those discussions with ideas or feedback, please contact rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org.

Clearly large numbers of staff will be disappointed to be declined VR, which is a situation that has been replicated through a number of other re-organisations witnessed in RBS in the last 12 months, although not on such a geographical and numerical scale.

This position is always an unwanted consequence of

calling for VRs in this manner; however it is a much preferable position than the bank simply applying a selection process to all staff in scope, which could result in some members of staff being selected for redundancy, who wished to remain with the organisation.

UNITE remain sceptical regarding the viability of the RTP and whether those members of staff who will remain working within Retail will have the capacity and support to maintain their current levels of performance and operate with a manageable workload.

UNITE will continue to monitor the impacts of the RTP upon staff and members are urged to channel feedback resulting from these changes to the union via rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org.

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ALISON MACLEAN AND STUART DAVIES – JOINT LEAD OFFICERS

UNITE RBS HELPLINE: 0870 241 4425