

The Information ARC

August 2016



August tends to be a quiet month for all of us with lots of people on leave and a natural lull in business, it's a slightly shorter edition of **The Information ARC** this month but there has still been a lot going on with Pay, PMR and BOF among other things.

I hope you enjoy this edition and as ever feedback is welcomed to paula@fda.org.uk

No rest for the President!

Pay & PMR

We have begun a series of meetings about separate issues we have with the current pay system. We are looking at how we are placed in the pay ranges, what percentage of people are on or near to the maximum for the grade and what impact the increase in the level at which pension payments of 7.35% kick in. I have asked HMRC to consider preparing a joint paper for Treasury asking for more money in view of our current performance and I hope that the lack of an immediate refusal is a good sign.

Pay is obviously an emotive subject but actually PMR is equally as so. We are meeting with the VOA on 10 August to discuss how their pilot is going and after that meeting we are proposing to put together a paper that pulls the information together in such a way as to make the introduction of something similar, with some equality rough edges toned down, possible sooner rather than later.

Paula, Zohra and I work on the pay issues and Paula will lead the small team who take the PMR piece forward so all work in progress.

BOFL

We continue to work with the Employer Relations Team on the protocols that exist for exits and redeployment. These discussions have been made harder by the delays to the changes to the CSCS caused by our political lords and masters throwing their toys out of the pram after the Brexit vote.

We are unfortunately moving towards Voluntary Redundancy offers for those who have refused the Voluntary Exits. I am working very hard to ensure the department offers the correct terms to any ARC Members in this position. Perhaps that work will also mean PCS members are helped too. PCS are currently being PCS and so risk costing their members real money if they are unable to go on current terms when and if the offers are made. They seem to have missed the point about changes to CSCS which are coming, but nobody knows when yet.

The Information ARC

August 2016



Considering how many people were originally offered VE we have very few people left but for those that are it is really important we do our best for them - and this is what I have been trying to do with the help of Loz (on the process) and Paula and Zohra on the location and redeployment issues.

Vicky Johnson

Universal Credit

As many of you will know there is an ongoing programme of moving people from B&C into the DWP to do the Universal Credit work.

The programme involves many different sites and the main work of the Union(s) has been over the terms and conditions of those transferring (& discussion about those not moving). There are a number of tranches of transfers and we have been working together to ensure that the many issues are addressed. The issues range from salary to dress code and include matters such as hours of working, travel rules and various other things which are different between HMRC and DWP.

There have been many iterations of the measures and some matters were not finalised before the first tranche of moves but we are still working on these.

I am interested to hear from members affected by any of these transfers and whether there are any specific issues which are causing difficulties.

Personal Casework

The 28 June event for new caseworkers was well received and I am now ready to do it all again on 5 October - I can squeeze a few more in if there are any willing volunteers please.

Contact is Graham@fda.org.uk

In other news I am also working on a specific training event to create a team to look at the issues arising over the BoF moves. I shall report more on this later in the year and expect we will have a "BoF Special" similar to the PMR work we did previously.

Graham Flew

Stocktaking and PMR Pilot

Things go a bit quiet in August and holiday season starts even earlier in Scotland.

So the main highlights of the last month have been a stocktake of our work on Public Understanding and setting up the next meeting, on transparency, especially in light of the recent APPG report on BEPS (<http://www.appgresponsibletax.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Sticking-Plaster-APPG-Responsible-Tax-Report.pdf>), as well as ideas on publishing more details on HMRC tax settlements. I'd be grateful for members'

The Information ARC

August 2016



views on the pros and cons of more information being available, either to Parliament or to the public.

Open Knowledge for Tax Justice also approached us to discuss their work and how we could help them understand some of the “big numbers” on tax in their attempt to improve the quality of the data used in public discussions on tax. (For background on Open Knowledge International on creating standards/tools to collect and assess data, see Frictionless Data project <http://frictionlessdata.io> or OpenTrials <http://opentrials.net>).

Vicky and I also had a very interesting fact finding visit to the VOA to see how their trial/pilot/experiment on Performance Management was working. It has the support of the unions in VOA. They see a lot of gains in things like breaking the link between the PMR end of year marking and the award of a bonus from the non-consolidated pot, ending the categories and no guided distribution. Instead, there are more immediate conversations on performance based on coaching and supporting staff. If the trial is a success then there is a good chance HMRC will want to take up the main ideas and adapt them to meet its own needs. ARC is very keen to work with the Department to achieve a successful move away from the current system which we always thought was flawed and divisive.

Iain Campbell

SCS PMR appeals

Cabinet Office revised the performance management guidance for the SCS in February 2015. There were a number of revisions when compared with the previous PM guidance, and this version excluded an appeal process. This is why an appeals process didn't feature within the timetable for 15/16. After a lot of toing and froing Cabinet Office has recently amended their guidance so that it now says:

Q: How does an SCS job holder appeal the decision on their end-year performance group rating?

A: If a job holder wishes to appeal their performance grouping at the end-year then they will need to follow their departmental grievance procedures or any other measures in place in a Department to allow for the review of a management decision regarding performance markings.

As HMRC didn't have any other measures in place to allow for the review of a management decision regarding performance markings any SCS colleagues who wished to appeal were required to go down the grievance road. Given the conditions that have to apply before grievance procedures can kick in this effectively meant that there was no practical way of appealing by SCS colleagues in HMRC!

The current situation is that after further engagement with HMRC there will be an appeals process for the 15/16 performance year. Although we have not seen it yet we are advised that it will be the same process as existed for 14/15. The deadline for submitting an

The Information ARC

August 2016



appeal is 2 September. Sue McAdam or Carole Martin from HR Operations will be able to provide the necessary forms for completion.

The amended Cabinet Office guidance on SCS performance management can be found [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/senior-civil-service-performance-management) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/senior-civil-service-performance-management>

Eugene Mitchell

arc

the union of choice for
senior managers and
professionals in HMRC