

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Internal Comms

Sent: 16 June 2010 14:23

To: SEEDA - Guildford; SEEDA - Chatham; SEEDA - Hastings; SEEDA - Brussels; SEEDA - FSE

Subject: Update on admin reductions and the future

Reductions in admin costs

In the staff communication on 4 June we told you that SEEDA, along with all other Government agencies, has been asked to make 10% efficiencies in administration costs within this financial year: for SEEDA this means a saving of £2.1 million. These efficiencies are in addition to the reductions in programme spend which we are making, as are other RDAs.

The efficiency measures will mean belt-tightening for everyone, but we have looked to implement them in a way that preserves our ability as an organisation to continue with our important work of supporting economic growth in the South East, and to minimise the direct impact on the roles and work of our staff. Following discussions with the Joint Staff Council and consultation with SEEDA's main Board, the key actions we will be taking to deliver the savings will be:

A review of all non-permanent roles within SEEDA. Extended workforce colleagues whose contracts will not be renewed, or who will have their end dates brought forward, are being informed of these decisions at meetings with their Directors and HR representative.

A freeze on recruitment with no existing vacancies being filled from this point forward.

A freeze on our pay remit: we will not now be seeking Government approval for any Cost of Living salary increases or for any pay progression from 1 July, the start of the pay progression year. There would in any event have been no guarantee of success were we to have sought a pay increase for staff.

We will not be making bonus payments for 2009/10 for any staff; this freeze includes Pam and EDs who are the only staff with a bonus entitlement.

We will be making efficiencies in our management of the office buildings, and bearing down hard on our travel, IT, events, and other non-staff administrative costs.

We will be reducing the sum put aside from our programme budget for evaluation and communications work: this spend for the purposes of the 10% efficiency exercise is allowed to count as admin spend.

A number of valued Extended workforce colleagues will shortly be leaving SEEDA, I know you will thank them for the contributions they have made and wish them every success as they embark on new ventures.

Replacing RDAs with LEPs

You will have seen continuing media speculation regarding the future of RDAs and proposals for new delivery mechanisms, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Some of the stories have suggested that the Government will make some kind of formal announcement this week, we understand that this is unlikely to be the case.

Despite the lack of any formal Government announcement or detailed policy proposals, we do know that the Government remains committed to "replacing" RDAs with LEPs. This was discussed in detail at the Board meeting this week and we have a clear steer on transitioning functions. The staff event next week provides us with an excellent opportunity to plan for transition for ourselves and SEEDA as well as working together to produce an action plan for the Agency. We will ensure there is plenty of time to ask questions at the event in addition to the Friday surgery and Pam's briefing tomorrow.

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Internal Comms
Sent: 23 July 2010 10:14
To: SEEDA - Chatham; SEEDA - Guildford; SEEDA - Hastings; SEEDA - Brussels
Subject: Chief Executive Message - Launch of VERS Scheme – 23 July 2010

Colleagues,

Launch of VERS Scheme – 23 July 2010

Today we are launching a Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS).

As we progress with our transition to closure and move ahead with our in-year budget cuts of £28.2m, we have identified that some roles within SEEDA will cease as some of our programmes tail off. We are progressing with our plans to re-deploy staff within the agency, but we believe that there will be approximately 30 fewer staff needed and so we wish to take the opportunity of running a scheme now. We are launching this voluntary scheme, subject to HM Treasury approval, in parallel with redeployment. Such approval has already been given for similar schemes.

We have put this information and relevant forms on the intranet under "My Employment" to provide as much information as we can to help you to make a decision about whether or not to apply for the scheme. You will find links to all supporting information below.

If you are interested in applying, please talk to your line manager and Executive Director as soon as possible. The timescales are tight: you need to get your application in by **Friday 20th August 2010**.

Successful applicants will leave **SEEDA by 22nd October 2010** at the latest, and, given the framework of this scheme, **notice will not be paid**. This date has been driven by the reforms to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, announced on 5th July 2010.

All contracted members of staff are eligible to apply for the scheme, but not everyone who applies will be accepted. The key criteria are:

- Their role has reduced so that it is no longer required;
- Their skills or expertise are unlikely to be redeployable, given SEEDA's new tasks;
- Their voluntary redundancy or retirement is both value for money and affordable.

There will be many people who cannot be released in the required timescale because we need to make sure we retain the right talent, skills and experience in the Agency. We also need to demonstrate value for money and affordability in every case. The selection criteria and process are available on the intranet.

I understand that this is an unsettling time and all of us will be affected by the exit scheme in some way, whether we stay or go. So, to support our staff an outplacement support programme will be launched alongside the VERS.

This includes 'The Edge Programme' with Guildford College, 2 - day workshops covering Job search, CV writing, applications and interviewing skills, Pension Force Workshops run by National Association of Pension Funds, Pre-Retirement Seminars run by The Recruitment Site, CESS support, Business Start-up Support via Business Link. We also want to remind you of Employee Assistance Programme.

The Executive Board and Directors are working on the priorities to deliver our £80 million programme of work for the rest of this financial year, and through 2011/12. As part of that we are looking at the structure and numbers needed throughout the transition period to closure in March 2012; the key staff needed to achieve an effective and orderly transition; and the timing and scale of future redundancy schemes which will, after 22nd October, be subject to the caps on compensation proposed in the recently introduced Superannuation Bill.

With my thanks for your continuing commitment and cooperation in difficult times.

Pam Alexander

Further Information & Links

All documents listed below are stored in the My Employment section of the Intranet – click the link to access: **My Employment**

Application form for early release

VERS timeline chart

Instructions for using calculators

Approved Early Retirement / Flexible Early Severance calculator

Flexible Early Retirement / Early Severance calculator

SEEDA VERS scheme – July 2010 -

VERS scheme FAQ