

Agenda Item 5

Executive Board Meeting  
4 June 2014

Memo No 9/14

## HR UPDATE

### Purpose

1. To provide the Board with an update on the strategic HR issues relevant to the business.

### Pay 2014-15

2. Treasury Pay Guidance has been received and we are engaging with the unions on the preparation of the remit. Remit options will be presented to the EB ahead of submission for Ministerial approval.

### Pension changes 2015

3. Work is underway to prepare for the 2015 pension arrangements including the development of pension workshops to be delivered to staff during Autumn/Winter 2014.

### Payroll System Review

4. The current Payroll system is not compliant with the 2015 pension interface. A Working Group has been established to review and recommend actions to introduce a new payroll system by April 2015. The Working Group will ensure that the new system will support any future changes to the Forestry Commission structure.

### Facility Time

5. The new Facility Time arrangements were introduced in April 2014 which takes into account the principles of the Cabinet Office Central Framework.

### Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave

6. In April 2014, the HRMB agreed that Public/Privilege/Additional (PPA)s should accrue during maternity, paternity and adoption leave to ensure compliance with statutory legislation.

7. This decision was taken in response to a 2008 HR Directors' Bulletin only recently brought to the FC's attention. The Bulletin highlighted amendments to the Sex Discrimination Act in April 2008 stating that employees on maternity/paternity and adoption leave should benefit from all their contractual terms (excluding remuneration) throughout the whole of their leave. Benchmarking against seven other Government Departments showed that they all allowed accrual of PPAs in this situation.

8. The HRMB agreed that from now on staff will be required to use any accrued PPAs prior to their return from leave as this would be less disruptive for the business.

9. Given that these changes should have been implemented in 2008, the HRMB agreed that payment for those affected should be backdated to 2008 and that those currently on leave should be given the option of taking the PPAs or being paid for them. The estimated cost of paying the backdated accrued leave is £120,689 with the highest cost centre affected being in FC England (£10,566) and the lowest in Central Services at £78.81. Estimated costs by country are £6,377 for Central Services, £11,034 for FR, £44,858 for FC Scotland and £58,420 for FC England.

### Competency Framework

10. The Civil Service Competency Framework was launched at the beginning of April and we have completed a programme of training on PMS across the organisation. Further work is being done on how we can improve the way we use the framework to draw up person specifications for recruitment.

### FC Values

11. The refreshed FC Values will be launched shortly, posters will be sent to all cost centres and a personal leaflet issued to all members of staff.

### Recruitment

12. A set of e-learning modules on recruitment will be launched in the next few weeks which will provide refresher training for experienced interviewers as well as guidance and support for staff applying for jobs.

### Health and Safety - Accident Statistics

13. The 2013/14 accident statistics have been published on the intranet. The main points of note are:

- FC employee accidents reported to HSE under RIDDOR have fallen from 21 (707 per 100,000 employees) to 11 (439 per 100,000 employees);

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- We have also logged and investigated 145 non-RIDDOR accidents;
- FC reported 6 dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR;
- The number of non-injury incidents logged was 593.

## Health and Safety - Pre-commencement meetings and Contract Management

14. The FC has produced additional guidance on pre-commencement meetings and contract management and will be running training seminars for staff, customers and contractors. The objective of the training is to improve our management of health and safety in contracts.

15. In the pre-commencement meeting process gateways are now in place to get information before work starts and to remove pressure at the site meeting.

16. In contract management a Red / Amber / Green system has been introduced. As part of this, the FC will manage all of its contracts to make sure that we challenge and deal effectively and consistently with any unsafe actions and situations. Contract managers, if need be, will put work 'on hold' until the root causes of an unsafe action or condition can be discussed and reconciled.

17. This work is in support of our Safety Strategy and our commitment to learn from the Skye fatal accident. The guidance has been produced and the training events will start in June 2014 running through to October 2014.

## Impact on Resources

18. The costs of backdated PPAs are detailed in paragraph 9 above.

## Risk Assessment

19. Not replacing the payroll system will mean the FC is unable to interface with, and therefore process correctly, the 2015 pension changes i.e. the payroll system will not be fit for purpose.

20. Failure to process PPAs as outlined above will mean that the FC is not compliant with legislation and therefore vulnerable to discrimination claims.

## Communications

21. Low key communications are planned for the launch of the refreshed FC Values and pensions workshops are being developed for all staff as outlined above.

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## Recommendations

22. The Board is asked to note the contents of this paper.

**Jean Lindsay**  
**Director, Central Services**  
**May 2014**

### Baseline Reporting as at 30 April 2014

Country/Area		Original Baseline	2014/15 Bus Plan Baseline	April	Difference +/-
England	FC	263.66	221.24	216.10	-5.14
	FE	954.73	823.62	788.26	-35.36
Scotland	FC	157.03	142.43	142.72	+0.29
	FE	845.82	836.99	817.48	-19.51
FR		250.00	167.00	181.10	+14.10
Silvan House		329.01	237.90	220.23	-17.67
<b>Total</b>		<b>2800.25</b>	<b>2429.18</b>	<b>2365.89</b>	<b>-63.29</b>