

11th October 2004

C&G - IT

Unholy Alliance Thwarts Revised Appeals Process

IT staff had until the 13th September to formally advise Group IT of their decision to instigate the appeals process. Staff were required to complete the S11 pro-forma setting out the reasons why they believed their role should have been graded differently. As at 9.00 am on the 13th September, 183 members of staff in Group IT including 27 from the C&G had submitted appeals against their grade alignment.

The number of staff wishing to use the appeals procedure is more than anyone expected, particularly given the enhanced protection periods secured by the Union. If every appellant exhausted all three stages of the appeals process that would require some 549 meetings in Group IT to take place and, especially when it comes to agreeing meeting dates, the likelihood is that the whole appeals process could go on well into next year. That is unacceptable for Group IT, the Union and its members.

In order to reduce the bureaucracy and speed up the appeals decision making process, LTU and Group IT have agreed to set up a joint Appeals Panel consisting of 2 LTU and 2 Group IT representatives to review all of the appeals which require LTU representation. It will be the responsibility of that Appeals Panel, which will operate on the basis of unanimity, to decide whether appeals are successful or not. Appellants will not be required to make a submission to the Appeals Panel. However, if an appellant disagrees with the decision of the Appeals Panel then they can make a further appeal in person and with LTU representation.

We had hoped that the agreed process could be used for all staff in Group IT but yet again the C&G Staff Association, who have been semi-detached from the whole pay and grading negotiations together with their even less influential bedfellows in the engineering and electricians union, Amicus/Unifi, have sought to insist that C&G IT appeals should be heard by an Appeals Panel consisting of just the Staff Association and Senior Management. For C&G IT staff, the overwhelming majority of whom are LTU members, such an approach is totally unacceptable. To be blunt, grading is too important to be left to an organisation funded by management, that doesn't even represent the people concerned: it has to be handled by independent professionals.

LTU and the Bank have agreed that C&G IT staff will use the original three-stage Appeals Process which provides for LTU representation at every stage. For those members who require advice and representation an Official will be appointed by the Union's Bedford Office to work with you individually and will arrange to visit you prior to the appeal hearing wherever this is necessary. Group IT will be writing to appellants shortly to explain the process and members should contact the Union's Bedford Office when they have their Stage 1 hearing date. Members with any questions on the process should contact the Union's Bedford Office on 01234 262868 or they can email me at Mark.Brown@ltu.co.uk.

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