

Re-engineering Project - Release 1 Details

The Bank will today begin cascading details of the first phase of the Registrars Re-engineering Project (RRP).

The project aims to utilise new technology and automate a number of work processes in order to enable Registrars to offer a wider range of products and services and so, it hopes, steal a march on its competitors.

RRP plans to deliver a three-year programme of change in five phases commencing early next year with what the Bank has termed Release 1 - Document Image Processing and Workflow. The Bank acknowledges that this will radically transform the business and that virtually all staff will be affected as a result as the skills requirement of many jobs will change.

The Bank has told us that these changes are likely to involve greater reliance upon permanent staff but that it is too early to say what the balance between permanent and agency staff will ultimately be.

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The Bank has also been keen to stress that the main aim of the project is to develop the business and not simply to cut costs. However, despite the Bank attempting to reassure staff on the job security implications of RRP I have to tell members that no guarantees have been made. Therefore, whilst RRP is ostensibly good news there is much that still needs to be addressed.

RRP and some of the implications are explained inside this Newsletter.

RRP Explained

RRP according to the Bank is the biggest change project ever carried out in Registrars and will “revolutionise” the way it works. The project will involve:

- **The introduction of document imaging technology. This is already in limited use in Registrars but commonplace in other parts of the Bank most notably Scottish Widows in Chatham.**
- **Centralising standard letter printing and Mail-In functions.**

RRP will be implemented in 5 phases, or releases, over the next 3 years. Release1 will provide

document imaging and workflow. The aim is to streamline and automate the Mail-In Process which it hopes will lead to the virtual elimination of paper movement across most of the business.

Release 2 involves the development of new IT and releases 3-5 will add Core Actions, etc. and functionality. Completion is due by 2006.

Release1 will begin in January and will be introduced on a team-by-team basis. Including training it is expected to take 6 months to complete.

Release 1 - Imaging & Workflow

This will involve:

- **preparation, imaging and archiving of almost all documents (98%) coming into the business**
- **automatic data capture from standard forms**
- **creation, distribution and processing of work around the business in the form of screen images**
- **centralised printing and mailing of standard correspondence**
- **work will be forwarded around the business electronically using ‘skills based routing’.**

Workflow

Imaged documents are categorised and added to ‘work queues’.

‘Skills based routing’ is then used to send work to operators according to the priority of the item and the skill of the operator.

The new technology supporting the workflow system holds information on which types of transaction each operator is trained to process and allocates work to them on the basis of their skills. Each item of work is also given a priority level and the system will use this to prioritise work.

Once an item has been processed on DEC it is re-categorised in the Workflow system as ‘processed’.

Images of documents are then electronically archived for future retrieval, if necessary.

The Implications

The Bank has described this project as “exciting stuff” but significant issues remain to be addressed.

The Bank has said that much of the detail we requested is not yet available and is still being worked on.

Whilst the Bank has told us, and will be briefing staff, that Release 1 of the Re-engineering plan has no job security implications this does not go far enough.

Whilst investment and technological advantages will hopefully allow the Bank to develop the business it would beggar belief if there were not also attempts to capture the cost savings that will undoubtedly be delivered.

- **The Bank has already accepted that the closure of Brooklands House was envisaged within the RRP plan as the requirement for staff fell, though other factors necessitated its early closure.**
- **Integral to the Workflow system elsewhere in the Bank is a remuneration system that rewards staff according to their individual performance.**

Management information on the levels of processed and outstanding work can be viewed by the team leader or manager at any time.

The Bank has acknowledged that measures of individual performance will be central to Workflow but it says that it has yet to determine whether a new remuneration system will be introduced as well.

- **And of course once work is scanned the image can be sent anywhere - not just between Worthing and Birmingham.**

Whilst Registrars has been up front and said there are no plans to outsource work as a result of RRP to India - last year the Bank told us it had no plans to send any work to India.

What is required is an unequivocal guarantee that there will be no compulsory redundancies from RRP, and a guarantee that no work will be exported in the future.

The Union’s Registrars Committee will be meeting shortly to consider the Bank’s plans. In the meantime we want your views and questions. Members can send their comments to me using the Faxback sheet enclosed with this newsletter or by email to Nick.Holt@ltu.co.uk

I will keep members informed of developments.

NICK HOLT
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