



ETB/SOLAS Project Management Office



ETB/SOLAS PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE (PMO) Update

Welcome to the third issue of the ETB/SOLAS PMO newsletter which provides an update to all staff on the progress being made on the identified strategic priorities of the ETB/SOLAS Reform Programme. Since the issue of the December newsletter, 7 training centres and their staff transferred to ETBs on 1 January 2014. A number of complex HR and logistical matters were addressed in supporting these moves.

Given the myriad elements in this programme of reform, the need for a sector-wide strategic approach has never been greater. The Reform Programme, supported by this office, is leading this change agenda and the PMO, through consultation with the sector, is developing the next phase of its programme plan. This edition of the newsletter provides an update on the programme's work and what can be expected in 2014.

Communications

Given the importance of communications to the success of the Reform Programme, and having regard to the feedback received from the sector on the draft Communications Management Plan, the PMO is putting in place a number of measures:

- ◆ Each ETB has nominated a contact person to whom all communication for general distribution will be sent.
- ◆ A standardised approach to issuing communication to ETBs, including a PMO logo, has also been agreed (see above) and will be used from February onwards.
- ◆ A final approved Communications Management Plan will be issued later this month.
- ◆ A dedicated ETB/SOLAS PMO area has been established on the DES website where general information can be accessed by all staff. Follow <http://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Bodies-and-Committees/ETB-SOLAS-Project-Management-Office/ETB-SOLAS-PMO.html>



PROJECTS

Payroll Shared Services: A Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) for a payroll shared service for ETBs is being prepared. Following a tender process, Deloitte was selected to support this work. Payroll baseline re-validation templates were recently issued to the sector and workshops were held in early February to assist ETBs with this task.

A Payroll Project Team has been appointed composed of Deirdre McDonnell, DES (Project Manager); Norma Skehan, Kildare and Wicklow ETB (Process Lead); Kieran O'Sullivan, Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB (Technology Lead); and Karl Duff, Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB (Communications Lead). It is hoped that this stage of the work will be completed by May 2014. Once the CBA is completed and approved, the focus will switch to implementation which is expected to begin in the second half of 2014.

Core: Following the approval by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (D/PER) of a business case put forward by the PMO, the 5 ETBs that use Corepay are moving to a managed service. This will address their existing operating system and hardware issues which have become critical. Cork ETB has agreed to be the pilot for the first move to a managed service. Core has submitted a detailed plan to the PMO for approval under which the managed service would be implemented in Cork by July this year and for all 5 participating ETBs by October.

Manser: The majority of payrolls in the ETB sector run on the Manser system. The PMO sanctioned the merging of Manser payroll systems for those ETBs who chose to do this. 4 ETBs participated in this project and successfully merged their payrolls. As part of the payroll merger, each participating ETB mapped its expenditure codes. This will facilitate the merging of their Financial (creditors/receipts) systems, a proposal which has been approved by the PMO. A project plan for this work is being developed. Kildare and Wicklow ETB has agreed to be the pilot ETB for the project.



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ICT

The importance of ICT as an integral part of any organisation's activity is clear and the issue of connectivity for ETBs has been a recurring theme and concern in the Reform Programme so far. In responding to that identified need the PMO, with the assistance of Cork and Donegal ETBs, has compiled a detailed connectivity FAQ document which is intended to identify the connectivity needs of ETBs. That document has been circulated to ETBs for observations. The PMO will then engage with Government Networks (GN) to verify that its services can meet those needs. It is also hoped that GN will host a briefing session for ETBs to clarify any outstanding areas of concern. The PMO expects to make a decision on connectivity in March and this decision will form part of an ICT Strategy for the sector on certain matters.

For the 5 ETBs moving to the managed service for payroll, it is a condition of the sanction from D/PER that the connection is made via Government Networks. 2 of those ETBs already had a GN connection while the remaining 3 are in the process of securing one.

ETB/SOLAS ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

The PMO is continuing its work on the future complementary organisational designs for ETBs and SOLAS in order to reflect their new roles. The Project incorporates a migration plan which will have regard to the agreed high level structure for SOLAS and public service resource constraints in setting out the mechanisms through which the organisational designs will be achieved. The PMO has sought sectoral nominees to form a consultative team. It is hoped that this work will be completed by the summer.



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Transfer of SOLAS Training Centres

Following lengthy and detailed discussions involving the PMO, the sector and the Revenue Commissioners, a successful migration of former VEC and FAS/SOLAS employees from the employer numbers of the former VECs to the relevant employer number of their new ETB took place. Revenue also facilitated the successful migration of employees from the former FÁS employer number to the new SOLAS employer number. Both migrations are effective from 1 January 2014.

1 July 2014 has been fixed as the date for the transfer of the remaining training centres to ETBs. The PMO has met with ETBs receiving training centre staff in phase 2 and will continue to work closely with them over the course of this transition. In particular, we will focus on building on, and communicating, the lessons learnt from the first phase move.

For 2014, those ETBs with or receiving a training centre will retain primary responsibility for training and will continue to support areas covered by ETBs who are not receiving a centre. The position of ETBs not receiving a training centre for 2015 and beyond will be considered as part of a separate process.

The successful transfer of the first phase of training centres to ETBs on 1 January 2014 could not have been achieved without the capability, capacity and willingness of the people involved to make it happen. Over the course of a very tight timeframe from October to December last, the PMO led a series of meetings composed of ETB and SOLAS management and staff representatives. A considerable number of issues were placed on the agenda and were the subject of detailed discussions. Between those meetings a large volume of work was undertaken to ensure adequate information flows and that there was a shared understanding of the matters being discussed. The engagement, while very intensive, was always constructive and allowed a position paper to be prepared setting out the various issues discussed and proposals to address them. That engagement with the unions representing the SOLAS staff who have transferred, or who will later this year, is continuing and separate pieces of work will need to be undertaken this year in this regard.

Got a question?

Do you have a question for the PMO, or do you want to give us feedback? If you do please drop us a line at ETBSOLAS_PMO@education.gov.ie and we will be happy to respond.