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We are pleased to welcome you to issue 5 of the ETB/SOLAS Project Management Office (PMO) update. Significant progress has been made in a number of areas since our last issue in April. Information across a range of developments is included in this issue.

We hope that you find this a useful information source and we will endeavour to keep you up to date on developments of the work of the PMO. As with all our newsletters we remind you to give feedback on this bulletin or suggest areas or topics that you feel should be included to help us keep the content relevant. Please email [ETBSOLAS\\_PMO@education.gov.ie](mailto:ETBSOLAS_PMO@education.gov.ie)

**ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN**

We confirmed the establishment of a consultative team in our last issue, which consists of representatives of SOLAS and ETBs, to participate in the review of the organisational design for SOLAS and ETBs. A number of meetings have taken place and it is expected that a proposal document will be circulated to the consultative team in July.

**Next steps.....**

Once the proposal reaches internal sign off it will be forwarded to DPER for consideration and approval. The focus of the proposal has been on reflecting the new roles of SOLAS and ETBs having regard to the reform agenda and the expectations placed on SOLAS and ETBs enshrined in legislation. The proposal must also be mindful of public service resource constraints when setting out the mechanisms through which the organisational designs will be achieved.



## Delivery of training functions by ETBs not receiving training centres

As published in the last newsletter, 5 ETBs will not have a training centre transferred to them. The 5 ETBs concerned are Kildare and Wicklow, Cavan and Monaghan, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Carlow, and Laois and Offaly. There is an overriding objective in managing the reform agenda to ensure that provision of training to learners is not disrupted in any way by the reforms

A discussion document has been prepared and circulated within the sector for consideration. The PMO has requested engagement between non-training centre ETBs, those ETBs currently providing training services in their areas and SOLAS, followed by submission of a proposal in respect of each of the 5 non-training centre ETBs for consideration by the PMO.



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## Logistics in transfer of SOLAS training centres

Phase 2 transfer of training centres and staff is due to take place on 1 July 2014. The necessary Ministerial Orders were made on 13 June 2014. On foot of those legal instruments, SOLAS staff who are transferring will move from the employment of SOLAS to the employment of one of 7 ETBs to which they have been designated. This project is on track and the most recent meeting of the Transfer Implementation Group was held on 16 June 2014.

## People

By 1 July 2014, over 800 staff and responsibility for SOLAS training centres will have transferred from SOLAS to ETBs. We outlined in our last newsletter that a position paper was close to agreement. This paper was agreed in April.

Four separate processes were agreed to commence following sign off of the position paper. These processes are as follows:

1. Application of PCW
2. Access to promotional posts
3. Review of HR Policies
4. Review of Collective Agreements specifically the 97 Agreement

The parties to the position paper agreed to an LRC-facilitated process to refer any issues that are not agreed by the parties by the 30th of June for the

1. Application of PCW

and

2. Access to Promotional Posts

The first meeting on these two topics took place on the 5th of June 2014. Following discussion on the application of the PCW agreement it was agreed that a proposal would be put to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) for consideration. This proposal would take into consideration the current situation and a mechanism to deal with this going forward.

The access to promotional posts meeting explored the existing posts in the ETB sector and the requirements of these posts. A note clarifying the current situation was prepared by the PMO and is currently with the staff side for consideration.

# PMO PROJECTS UPDATE

## ETB CORE STABILISATION PROJECT

As stated in the last issue approval was granted to upgrade the Core payroll application, which has been hosted locally in each of 5 the ETBs, and move to a managed service. Significant development and progress has taken place on this project. Cork ETB took on the pilot for planning and implementation. The work was overseen at every stage by the Sector-led Project Steering Group.

The 5 ETBs (Cork, Donegal, Dublin Dun Laoghaire, Limerick Clare and Waterford Wexford) have had to invest significant time and resources to ensure a standardised approach to the model design agreement, and development, reference data. User acceptance testing will be carried out by Cork ETB in July.



*'Payroll Shared Services ....the first shared services centre approach for ETBs'*

As you are aware, in February of this year a dedicated project team of existing ETB staff along with a Project Manager were put in place to conduct a business case analysis on the current ETB payroll function, potential alternative payroll options and to present a recommendation for the sector. 4 options for payroll, including a no-change option, have been evaluated and a recommendation for an ETB Shared Services Centre has been proposed. The other options considered included utilising the DES Athlone payroll centre and Outsourcing payroll to a third party provider. The Business Case Report was recently approved by its Project Steering Group and the ETB/SOLAS Programme Board. If approved by the Minister it will be submitted for approval to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

CURRENT ACTIVITY IN PAYROLL IN ETBS	
ETB payees	26,706
Payroll centres	26
Payments in 2013	451,505
ETB FTE payroll	93
Average cost per payment	€12.67
Current cost per year	€6.6m

## ICT CONNECTIVITY



Reaching the right decision on the 'best fit' approach to ICT connectivity for the sector has proven to be a challenging piece of work. A number of factors had to be taken into consideration in advance of reaching a decision on the approach to take.

In May it was decided that a pilot project would be undertaken with Government Networks (GN) being the sole connectivity provider for ETB administrative offices. GN had discussions with individual providers which has resulted in Vodafone commencing connections for those ETBs participating in the Core Stabilisation Project who are not already connected through GN (Donegal, Cork, Waterford/Wexford and Limerick/Clare) as well as 2 ETBs (Kerry and Cavan/Monaghan) who are piloting this approach for the remaining ETBs.

## FUTURE PROJECTS PLANNED

The PMO are currently giving consideration to an ETB Finance Shared Service CBA and Implementation Roadmap as the next Shared Services priority. The DES I issued a Request For Tender document for expert assistance in relation to the development of a Baseline Report, Business Case - Cost Benefit Analysis and Implementation Roadmap for a Financial Shared Service within the Education and Training Boards Sector. The deadline for submission was 10 June 2014 and the tenders received are now being examined.

The role of Project Manager for this project has also been advertised with a closing date of the 11 June 2014.

Both of these items will be progressed further in the coming weeks with a project manager identified and a preferred bidder selected service provider in place by autumn.



## MANSER PROJECTS

Merged ETBs have been progressive in moving forward a number of Manser projects, with Manser Payroll merges and creditors/payments merges now fully complete.

ETBs engaged with the PMO on the introduction of a Manser out centre portal. This portal would allow local transactional processing of purchase orders, invoicing etc, from within ETB out centres. That project has now been approved and work has commenced.

The work in these ETBs continues to support the streamlining of processes in the delivery of future plans to move to a shared services model.

The option to merge payroll, financial and merge the out centre portal is still available to those ETBs who have not yet implemented these manser merges.