

WORK CONTINUES AS RE-ORGANIZATION MOVES CLOSER AT NWC

Work continues throughout the NWC as the process of re-organizing for greater efficiency moves closer. This requires the best efforts of management and staff to effect the challenging but necessary process of re-structuring and modernization in the smoothest, most efficient and most considerate way possible.

While the National Water Commission will not conduct the detailed and sensitive process via the mass media, as this would be both insensitive to affected employees and unhelpful to the smooth implementation of this necessary process, the following outlines broadly the status of the re-structuring process and the essential elements in which we are now engaged:

1. The process of consultations with major stakeholders, including the Unions, has been completed after numerous meetings and two days of retreat (amounting to much more than 50 hours of meetings). This has resulted in broad areas of agreement including:

- o The NWC has to be re-organized and re-structured in order to improve efficiency and financial viability.
- o The re-structured operation and management of the NWC will be organized into two Divisions (Eastern and Western), each consisting of 4 Areas each.
- o Details of the structures of the Corporate Offices, the Eastern and Western Divisions including those Units and Districts to be absorbed into other Divisions or Areas.
- o As a result of the re-structuring, some existing positions will not be carried forward on the new structure, while some new positions will be created and a few others modified.

2. The process of implementation will be initiated on a phased basis between now and the end of 2004, a period of approximately 18 months. The rate of separation and the number of positions separated at any one time will be determined primarily by the capacity of the Commission to do so while maintaining service to its customers. No separation will be done at a time that the particular separation will precipitously affect the ability of the NWC to maintain service to its valued customers. Obviously, this process has to be carefully managed so as to avoid disruptions at the work place.

3. The process of re-organization is also affected by the number of employees who apply - in a separate process - for voluntary separation and the process of staff selection for the newly created positions on the new structure. The selection process involves:

- o Internal Advertising
 - o Interviews of applicants
 - o Selections, where deemed suitable and qualified
 - o External advertising as per usual where no internal candidate is deemed appropriately qualified and/or suitable.
4. The Interview and selection process at the highest levels involve Members of the Board of Commissioners, Consultants KPMG Peat Marwick, and the President so as to allow for transparency and professional determinations.
 5. Members of staff continue to be advised on an ongoing basis of the process of implementation through a series of internal Re-Organization Bulletins and other communication.
 6. A Re-organizing NWC Help Desk has been established where employees can access additional information and have concerns and queries addressed.

All the Unions representing employees and other critical stakeholders have been engaged in months of consultations, and the NWC has allowed for the full presentation of issues and concerns to the management and the consultants.

As of yesterday, all Unions have also been provided with information regarding the positions in respect to their bargaining units to be affected in the earliest phase of the re-structuring to take effect at the end of August.

Work continues at all NWC locations and the NWC expects normality to continue in its operations across the island since:

1. It has been agreed by all concerned that this re-structuring exercise is both necessary and unavoidable if the NWC is to be efficient and viable in serving the people of Jamaica.
2. The NWC continues to honour all its commitments during this process and continues to act in the best interest of the entity