

Registers of Scotland

RoS Board

13 June 2023

Strategic Workforce Planning Update

Purpose

1. For the Board to note the progress of the strategic workforce planning (SWP) project and the evolution of the practice of SWP at RoS.

Recommendation

2. From the considerable work undertaken by the SWP project, recommendations of why, how and who takes forward SWP within RoS will be presented to EMT in Q2.

Background

3. The original scope for the SWP project was to review the process of SWP across the business and develop an SWP aligned to the current corporate plan and the recently published delivery plan.

4. Outputs from the project have surfaced a number of key considerations that require to be addressed to ensure the business is prepared and can afford the resource required, not only to achieve the delivery plan targets, but to look to stretch beyond current deliverables and accelerate the rate of clearing open casework. The project has broadened its focus to align with the number one priority to reduce the open casework. The project also needed to consider the updated delivery roadmap and the people implications of this.

5. The RoS board has been updated at various intervals on the work of the SWP project.

6. Considerable work has been completed to align financial planning with strategic workforce planning and this is now embedded in monthly business area reviews.

7. Insights and analysis are now available to understand key components of the workforce and any risks that might impact the business allowing C band managers to identify and plan for the future.

8. From the discovery work we now have a much clearer picture of the infrastructure we would ideally have in place to ensure SWP is robustly managed in the future.

9. SAT 2.0 will be presenting a full business case to EMT that will identify options within both the technical space and people and policy that will influence decisions

around the future workforce.

10. We are confident we have clarity on the capacity and capabilities of our current workforce and a better understanding of things that might impact it over the next 12-18 months. In line with the work currently being done by BIA and SAT 2.0 to model our requirements we have a plan for communicating this internally and where required externally to all stakeholder groups over the coming months.

11. This will include.

1. Running a programme of engagement internally to ensure our colleagues are clear on our priorities, why the workforce needs to change and how that might impact them.
2. Follow up sessions with managers on the back of Big Picture live to explain their role in the process, plans for change and update on progress.
3. Providing updates to the Economy and Fair Work committee regarding the proposed shape and size of the workforce
4. We will publish high level headlines externally for potential candidates.

Key data findings

12. One of the outputs from the project was to identify key risks to the business based on the current workforce and any risks moving to a new model and any mitigation we could put in place. Analysis of the data gathered shows the below areas of risk:

- Need for more capacity to do long standing open casework, within our current processes this would require additional HEO graded colleagues in registration
- Need to increase that pace of moving people through the grade structure including how we tackle training requirements
- Aging demographic of our operational areas which could result in the loss of key skills and knowledge through retirement
- Dependence on contingent workers in base operating or employee type roles in non-operational areas
- High levels of attrition and difficulty recruiting key skills in non-operational areas
- Succession risks in our senior management and EMT

13. Whilst we acknowledge the biggest changes are likely to come in the operational areas, we will continue to focus on the business holistically to ensure the plan mirrors any changes to priorities or how services are delivered in the future.

14. We will continue to rely on contingent workers in non-operational areas in the short term to provide key skills which we are unable to access through the substantive talent market within the available financial budget. We intend to reduce the risk and cost associated with this, and the balance between contingent and permanent staff and will be considering how best to do this through collaboration with our digital and people and change functions.

15. With recent and impending changes to EMT the Keeper is introducing a new senior management structure and organisation design options to support the key priorities and delivery of the corporate plan. These plans are now in place and will be rolled out over the summer.

Link to SAT

16. Over the next three years the design of the organisation will be adapted to deliver Strategic Objective one. As previously mentioned, there is significant investment planned, both in our digital functions and people, with current modelling in registration areas showing the need for people to be working on more complex work and therefore at a higher grade.

17. The key initiatives of the IT investment will be around:

- Releasing capacity from our AO and EO pool to fund a talent pipeline to create more HEOs to tackle complex historical cases. The major initiative on this is Automation of DWs in the next 18 months, with work beginning on automating DPA casework beyond that.
- Reducing complexity of the casework through better insights into what is contained in the open casework, and by testing ideas such as Embedded Title Sheet which aims to simplify the TP non dev registration process.
- To reduce the number of touch points, or clicks to complete, by streamlining the number of systems colleagues use to process applications, simplifying the process and improving the flow of work.

18. Within the people investment, there are a number of planned activities that will utilise capacity released from progress made with the technology investment to upskill colleagues and increase the capacity and capability to work on complex casework. The key initiatives in the people investment are:

- To create a talent pipeline that will allow Registration to move colleagues more quickly through the grades increasing capacity at the HEO level. This will require new ways of training, mentoring and changes to expectations around performance.
- Currently 40% of all colleagues in registration work in enabling functions i.e., Team Leaders, Referral officers, mentors. If we can make changes to processes and structures this will release capacity to move onto processing casework increasing overall capacity
- Performance is another key area that will be looked at to ensure that expectations on what is required, and what colleagues will need, are delivered to ensure Strategic Objective number one is achieved.

19. Together these initiatives will impact the makeup of the grade of colleagues and structures within Registration. Through this transition the overall size of registration will be broadly the same over the next three years but the makeup of colleagues within it will move from less junior roles to more roles at the higher end of the grade spectrum to complete the complex casework.

20. It is important to note, that whilst we do not intend to increase our headcount, options that will be explored will be whether by recruiting on a temporary or fixed term we could achieve quicker results if the technical improvements do not release capacity when it is needed. By accelerating promotion, we will create gaps which may need to be backfilled before the technology is ready. All this will be managed through clear ownership, robust governance and change management processes including key stakeholders within People and Change, Finance and the SWPG who will have a new set of terms of reference.

Conclusion

21. This SWP project is coming to a close and will make recommendations in relation to our findings including how we ensure SWP remains an integral part of our business performance. The discovery work has identified a number of areas for improvement across data/analysis, infrastructure and workforce planning process, which will be prioritised through engagement with our EMT.

22. Robust ownership and governance will be key to success. To ensure the work undertaken within the project is implemented and our future workforce needs are met we will be reviewing the purpose and make-up of the strategic workforce planning group (SWPG). Our recommendation is that this group moves from business-as-usual staffing requests and instead considers the skills and capability required to meet our current objectives and the potential future size and shape of the organisation.

23. This will be supported by the changes made to our financial management process what support is required for line and senior management and fundamentally what role People and Change have in ensuring the business is supported to be successful.

24. Further updates on our progress towards this goal will be provided as part of Corporate Plan reporting to RoS Board.

Business Development Director
13 June 2023