

The Cost of ‘Dum-Sor’ on Ghana's Economy

The need for a stable, adequate, and regular power supply in stimulating a country’s development cannot be underestimated.

There is no doubt the energy crisis being experienced throughout Ghana has arisen from a multiplicity of factors, including: low levels of the Volta Lake, erratic supply of natural gas from Nigeria and machine breakdowns.

Across the world, countries with good governance, good economic indicators, good human resource base and, most importantly, a sustainable power supply, have seen tremendous industrialisation and



their citizens often enjoy high standards of living. Germany, USA, South Africa and Botswana, are good examples.

Ghana need not be different, especially when she is now considered a middle income country with an enviable natural resource base.

But, can development take place in the midst of an unstable power supply regime, a phenomenon now largely described as “dum-sor,” or “adundum-adundum?”

Indeed, what had started as short-term power outages, has grown into a monstrous load-shedding rou-

Contd. on pg.2→

OUR VISION

**SETTING THE STANDARD
FOR PUBLIC SECTOR
EXCELLENCE IN AFRICA**

IN THIS ISSUE:

- | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|
| ◆ The Cost of ‘Dum-Sor’ on Ghana's Economy | p1 | ◆ VRA Marks 54th Anniversary | p8 |
| ◆ VRA Inaugurates Boards of Subsidiaries | p4 | ◆ VRA Launches Knowledge Management Portal | p9 |
| ◆ VRA Staff Celebrate Labour Day | p7 | ◆ VRA Allays Fears of Lower Volta Communities (1) | p7 |

The cost of 'Dum-Sor' on Ghana's Economy ← Contd. from pg.1

tine requiring that all sectors of the economy operate at minimal levels, with very serious economic effects.

Undoubtedly, with almost three years of dum-sor, one can imagine the negative effects this erratic power supply regime is having on the socio-economic development of the country.

First, many companies have resorted to the purchase of generators, increasing their overhead costs, besides being compelled to reduce operational hours. To compensate for this, many captains of industry have chosen the alternative of laying off some of their staff.

In the 2013 World Bank Enterprise Survey on Africa, the widespread, poor electricity supply was mentioned as one of the biggest barriers to growth in Ghana and Nigeria's economies, and a hindrance to

many multi-national investors.

In more advanced countries, while the majority of power failures last only a few hours, blackouts that last days or even weeks are classified as major catastrophic failures that can completely shut down production in telecommunication networks, financial services, water supplies, and hospitals, etc. And this is not uncommon there.

In the USA, for example, an analysis of blackout events show that a 30-minute power cut results in an average loss of US\$28,709 for medium and large industrial setups, and nearly US\$95,000 for an eight-hour interruption. Even short blackouts – which occur several times a year in the US – add up to a loss of between US\$104 billion and US\$164 billion. How much more Ghana, where it is usual to have more than 12 hours,

sometimes 24 hours of power failures, several times a week, for the better part of the past three-years?

IMPACT ON SOCIAL LIFE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

News on the power crisis continues to dominate headlines in the media, mainly drawing attention to the murky side of the crisis. It was recently reported that the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) had lost over US\$100,000 in 24 hours of continuous power failures at Tema Harbour.

Also, Oil Marketing Companies have sunk in excess of GH¢100million since the start of this year, into battling the ongoing power crisis. According to the Association of Oil Marketing Companies (AOMCs), there are more than 3,300 retail outlets for petroleum

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Corporate Social Responsibility

— Social Enhancement Projects

Social Enhancement Projects for the Communities include:

- Classroom blocks
- Cold Store
- Potable Water
- Health Facility
- Public Place of Convenience (KVIP)
- Asphalted Road from Inchaban to Aboadze
- A first Class Road from Inchaban to Dwomoh

— Community Development Programme

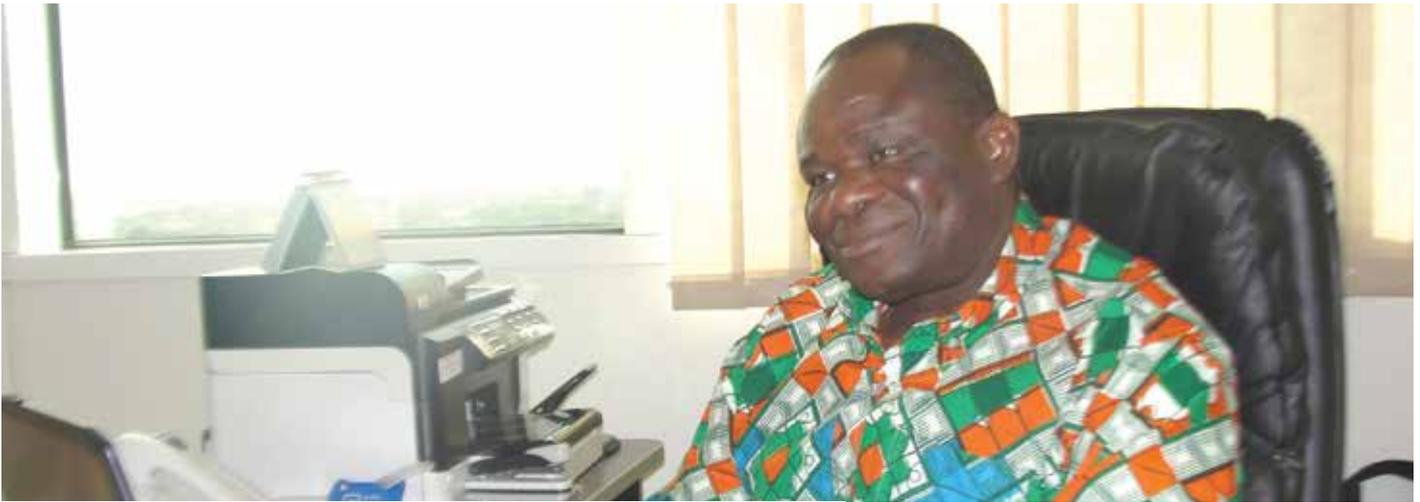
To continually provide support for communities, the Authority has a Community Development Programme (CDP) under which communities also benefit from:

- Youth Training Programme
- Education
- Income Generating Activities
- Social Infrastructure
- Support for cultural activities



Working at VRA

A career at VRA is one to be proud of. Opportunities abound in personal development, rewards and aspirations. What is more, you will be challenged to thinking outside the box, while contributing to the growth of an industry leader. Whatever it is you do at VRA, you will know you are contributing to a cause which not only impacts Ghana, but also the West Africa sub-region. All these, and an organisation deeply committed to accountability, teamwork, integrity and trustworthiness. Welcome aboard!



Mr. Kofi Ellis, Director, Planning and Business Development

products across the country. A retail outlet, on the average, spends about GH¢10,000 a month on small power generators.

A Joy News report noted recently that some children were forced to leave their homes at night to study at odd places. Some of these children, as young as nine years were left with no option but to leave their homes in search of places with light, and that was the frontage of the Société Generale (SG-Ghana) Bank on the Fanofa Street at Kokomlemle in Accra.

Several companies are laying off employees as part of efforts to stay in business, following the worsening effects of the current power crisis on their operations. Speaking to Joy Business, the General Secretary of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union, Solomon Kotei, said his Union was being inundated with redundancy letters from manufacturing companies.

Another report said the Founder of the Accra-based Heaven's Gate International Ministries, Evangelist

Nicholas Osei, popularly known as "Kumchacha," had said, the current energy crisis had brought a number of churches down on their knees, as offertory and tithes had dwindled drastically. He says, churches spend lots of money to buy fuel to generate electricity in order to enjoy a lively service.

Meanwhile, Ghana's health sector has noted that mental health cases are on the increase, following the incessant and unplanned power outages. Mental health doctors say the number of psychological cases being recorded in connection with the 'dum-sor' is becoming alarming.

Speaking in an interview with Accra-based Joy FM, Chief Psychiatrist at the Accra Psychiatric Hospital, Dr. Akwesi Osei, said: "This is really stressful because, for example, at home if you don't have power to do what you want, say, you are

“In the 2013 World Bank Enterprise Survey on Africa, the widespread, poor electricity supply was mentioned as one of the biggest barriers to growth in Ghana and Nigeria’s economies, and a hindrance to many multinational investors.”

a student studying and the power goes off and you don't have an alternative. "These are really stressful situations and no doubt about it that it does cause mental problems."

WHAT VRA HAS FAILED TO DO

The Volta River Authority as a major power generation company was established in 1961 by an Act of Parliament.

VRA combines hydro, thermal and solar facilities to generate electricity for supply to the local and

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VRA inaugurates Boards of Subsidiaries

MICHAEL DANSO — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, ACCRA

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has inaugurated five-member boards for each of its newly created Subsidiary Business Units (SBUs): PROP-Co, VRA Schools Ltd. and VRA Health Services.

The SBUs have had to be restructured to give impetus to the government's power sector reform policy that obliges VRA to focus on its core mandate of power generation. This follows the introduction of Independent Power Producers (IPPs) into the emerging competitive energy market.

The restructuring will, among other things enable the business units to operate effectively as self-financing, stand-alone entities and enable the VRA to adjust to the speed of change in its external environment by promoting its competitive strategy and ensure marketing and organisational effectiveness.



Dr. Kwabena Donkor, Minister of Power, swearing new Board members into office

Speaking at the inauguration, the Minister of Power, Dr. Kwabena Donkor, noted that in the face of imminent competition in the rapidly growing energy market, it was only prudent that the VRA rediscovered itself by focusing on its key mandate in order to survive.

Dr. Donkor said the government was determined to split thermal generation from hydro generation, in order to improve performance, availability and reliability of that component of the

country's energy mix. He said, VRA's expertise in hydro generation was not in doubt and something similar needs to be done for thermal generation, so that Ghana can build a robust generation system that could meet all challenges.

Mr. Lee Ocran, Board Chairman of the VRA, said the separation of VRA's non-core functions was necessary to allow the VRA to focus on its core business of power generation.

"The VRA has had to take into ac-

VRA, TECNICAS REUNIDAS to Build Power Plant

MICHAEL DANSO — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, ACCRA

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has signed an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) agreement with Tecnicas Reunidas (TR) of Spain for the construction of a combined cycle power plant.

The project which is expected to be completed within 30 months is estimated to cost \$239 million. Under the agreement, the Spanish company

is expected to build a power plant to generate about 186MW, under the Takoradi 4 (T4) Thermal Power Project.

Under the contract, Ghana is to provide 15% of the funding for the project, while TR Spain, the contractor, provides 85%.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Minister of Power, Dr. Kwabena Donkor, said, demands in the power sector was growing by 12% each year, posing, a huge challenge in the generation sector.

He challenged VRA to be an organisation that every Ghanaian would be proud of by being more efficiency-driven and more aggressive. He added, "We just don't want to be a generator of power; we want to be the most efficient power generator in the sub-region."

The Minister continued, "We want the excellence that VRA has achieved in hydro to be translated into thermal generation, so that Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's vision of Ghana being capa-

count the speed of change in its external environment. The need for structural flexibility to reconfigure itself and restructure the non-power operations satisfies both market objectives and organizational effectiveness," he said.

Mr. Ocran assured members of the newly created Boards of Management's support to ensure that corporate plans were developed for all the subsidiaries. This, he said, was to enhance their organisational capabilities as well as their marketing objectives. He promised to ensure that the new subsidiaries operated as autonomous bodies without external interference.

"Our expectation is that the Boards would demonstrate commitment to the subsidiaries, operate along transparent lines, guarantee fairness to all stakeholders and ensure disclosure of all relevant financial and non-financial information in an easily understandable manner."

Ing. Kirk Koffi, Chief Executive of VRA, noted that members on the various Boards had been selected based on their experience and expertise and

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Dr. Kwabena Donkor, Minister of Power, flanked by his Deputy, Mr. John Jinapor, Ing. Kirk Koffi and Mr. Lee Ocran, Board Chairman of VRA, in a pose with Board Members of PropCo



Dr. Kwabena Donkor, Minister of Power in a group photograph with the Board Members of the VRA Health Service Department. With them are Mr. Lee Ocran (second from left) and Ing. Kirk Koffi



The VRA Schools Board Members in a group photograph with Dr. Kwabena Donkor, Ing. Kirk Koffi, and Mr. Lee Ocran



Minister of Power, (middle) in a group photograph with Board members of the various SBUs after the inauguration

ble of managing its own affairs would be actualised in the power sector."

Dr. Donkor invited potential investors, especially local investors, to invest in the power sector, and to switch from the traditional buying and selling to productive investments, including the power sector.

The Chief Executive of the VRA, Ing. Kirk Koffi, in a brief remark said Management would ensure the project was executed as planned so that it would contribute to the solution of Ghana's power deficit. VRA he said was prepared to add more power, or enter into Joint-Venture Partnership agreements as part of measures to reduce the current generation deficit.

The Executive Director of TR, Spain, Mr. Cesar Suarez Leoz, assured the Ministry of Power of the company's commitment to support the power sector by bringing its expertise to bear on Ghana's energy sector. He noted that his company was proud to work on the project and thanked

the VRA for the opportunity, adding: "We shall put on the table our best experiences."

The Engineer in Charge of Project Management at the VRA, Mr. Isaac Bedu, pointed out that the project would be in two phases: the first, to be completed in 20 months, and

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Mr. Cesar Suarez Leoz, the Executive Director of TR, Spain, exchanging the contract documents with Ing. Kirk Koffi, Chief Executive, VRA

The cost of 'Dum-Sor' on Ghana's Economy ← Contd. from pg.3

export markets. The local market consists of the Electricity Company of Ghana (61% of market consumption), the mines, and industrial establishments (who purchase electricity directly from VRA), with the export market comprising Communauté Electrique du Benin (CEB) (for the Republics of Togo and Benin) and SONABEL (Burkina Faso).

Thermal generation has gained consistent prominence in VRA's power generation mix since the mid 1990's when VRA commenced the diversification of its generation source beyond the Akosombo Hydro-electric plant. Crude oil and gas used in powering VRA's thermal plants are imported through various suppliers.

With a total installed generation capacity of about 2,956MW, of which VRA contributes 63 per cent, it can be said that the Authority has been able to fulfill its mandate of generating electricity to power the socio-economic development of the country but not without challenges.

This nail-biting situation has taken away the enviable record of

VRA, which includes: integrity, commitment, accountability, reliability and, above all, our corporate mission of 'Setting the Standard for Public Sector Excellence in Africa.'

What more could be so damaging to the image of an engineering organisation such as the VRA.

The current power crisis presents a perfect opportunity for the VRA to use communication strategies to scale-up and update information to the people.

Mr. Kofi Ellis, Director of Planning and Business Development of VRA, could not agree more with this assertion. He told VRA News: "There's no way the public can smile with us when, for more than two and a half years we have been unable to generate adequate power. We have lost that credibility and we have not been very good at explaining ourselves to the people. It's always been complaints, and our counter-story has not been convincing enough."

He stated further: "People sympathise with us at public fora because they realise that we are so disadvantaged that it is difficult to

blame us, even though we have to take some of the blame by ensuring our machines are in top shape." He remarked that if VRA were able to focus well on that, tell a wider story and clearly indicate their responsibilities and how well they had carried them out, they would enjoy greater credibility.

"Traditionally, VRA doesn't talk; now we are being forced to talk but we are not doing it. That does not mean we should defend ourselves but we need to make the public understand first of all what goes into power generation and get them to share in that knowledge with us. People are complaining about the cost of running a small generator, and this according to Mr. Ellis, is the time to educate people on how expensive it is for VRA to operate its big generators. People are complaining about buying two or three gallons of diesel to run their generators yet for one generator we need more than 5,000 barrels of crude oil each day."

VRA spends almost \$3 million a day to run a thermal plant using light crude oil. A cargo of light crude oil (at US\$65/barrel) is used for thermal generation every 20 days, at the cost of \$30 million. From September to December 2012, for instance, a total of \$340 million was used to generate thermal power, a time when the price of crude oil was in excess of US\$100/barrel.

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VRA Staff Celebrate Labour Day

MICHAEL DANSO — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, ACCRA

Workers of the Volta River Authority (VRA) joined scores of others at the Black Star Square in Accra to celebrate this year's World Labour Day.

Described as 'May Day', the 1st of May 2015 witnessed workers from all spheres of the economy, particularly from the public sector, clad in their corporate colours and branded attire, congregate at the Black Star Square for a mini-march past. They were later addressed by the Secretary-General of the Trades Union Congress, Mr. Kofi Asamoah, and the President John Mahama, who was the Guest Speaker.

Leadership of the VRA Division of the Public Sector Workers Union (PWSU) mobilised staff to celebrate the Day.

The exhausted-looking staff were refreshed at the end of the event.

This year's event was marked on the theme: "Addressing the Energy Challenges, the Role of Organised Labour".

A cross-section of the workers at the Black Star Square expressed their frustration over the energy crisis, popularly referred to as 'Dumsor'.



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"This, therefore, is an opportunity for us to make the people understand that as a major generator of power, we face the same difficulty. If we have six of such generators, we are expected to fuel all of them comfortably, to generate power and sell it to the people, so, that they can be okay. Where do we get the money to do that?" he asked.

The country's installed capacity of about 2,956MW has now de-

creased to about 1,634MW.

It is evident that a lot of expenditure has gone into solving the power crisis, but reasons for the power deficit keeps intensifying as a result of the low water levels at the Akosombo, Bui and Kpong Dams, coupled with irregular gas supplies from Nigeria and the breakdown of some generating plants.

In the short to long term;

a) Engineers are working

around the clock to bring on stream the plants that are currently unavailable because of one problem or the other.

b) Under a directive of the sector Ministry, VRA has recently engaged the services of an Operations and Maintenance Company (O&M) to work hand in hand on the Authority's thermal plants.

c) It is also anticipated that the completion of unit 1 of the Kpone

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Chief Executive of the Volta River Authority (VRA), Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi, has reiterated his call on Staff to remain steadfast and committed, in spite of the challenges confronting the Authority.

“We are aware of the tremendous, but surmountable, challenges that confront us; that is why as Management, we are doing all we can to stabilise the situation and ensure that VRA rediscovers its former self. All we need to do is to remain dedicated and eschew all acts that can undermine our efforts,” he said.

The Chief Executive raised these sentiments at a Thanksgiving Service in commemoration of the Authority’s 54th anniversary at the Wesley Methodist Church, Akosombo.

There is no way VRA would succeed if those who should be committed towards the realisation of its vision and mission give up. This is why we must stand up and be counted as we fight to overcome our challenges, he said.

The Chief Executive noted that the celebration for 2015 was not so much a festival, but a solemn occasion to pause, look back at VRA's activities and take a moment to look ahead and reflect on the mountains that remain to be climbed.

The theme for the event: “Celebrating the Goodness of God: VRA @ 54,” according to Mr. Koffi, had been carefully chosen to remind Management and Staff that despite the changes in the Authority they

VRA Marks 54th Anniversary

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO



Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi with a cross-section of VRA staff



Kirk Koffi addressing staff at the 54th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service



Very Rev. Moses Aidoo preaching at the Thanksgiving Service



VRA staff at the Service



Dam City Choir ministering at the Service

needed to remain steadfast, as there were many things to be grateful for.

Said Mr. Koffi: "It's my strongest conviction that as an organisation, we have discharged creditably our sole obligation of providing electricity to accelerate the socio-economic development of Ghana these last 54 years, in spite of our challenges."

Preaching the sermon, Superintendent Minister of the church, Very Rev. Moses Aidoo, stated that

the Authority had remained steadfast in the Lord, irrespective of its challenges and expressed hope that the VRA's situation would change for the better.

The Service was attended by the Deputy Chief Executives (Engineering and Operations, Services and Finance; and the Directors, of the Human Resource and Hydro Generation Departments, and a cross section of staff.

VRA *Launches* Knowledge Management Portal

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

Former Chief Executive of VRA, Ing. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, has commended Management and staff of VRA for ensuring the coming into fruition of the Knowledge Management Portal.

Delivering a speech as Guest of Honour, Ing. Kweku Awotwi applauded the Knowledge Management Team for conducting an inventory of existing portals, documents and information sources and finally coming up with the VRA portal which, he said, would facilitate and enhance the Authority's operations.

Referring to international best practice, Mr. Awotwi mentioned the relevance of Knowledge Management Portals across the world and said the Authority could continue to remain competitive and relevant only if it began to learn to adapt and share its data, as has been the case in the advanced world.

"It is certainly my hope that with the tools provided by the VRA Knowledge Management Portal, the Authority would continue to remain relevant, vital and nimble in addressing the ever-changing challenges it faces." In his welcome ad-

dress, Deputy Chief Executive (Engineering and Operations) Ing. Richard Badger, commended the Project and Systems Monitoring Department (P&SMD) for creating awareness among the Authority's staff on the need to adopt and appreciate knowledge management practices as a means of facilitating knowledge sharing to enhance the Authority's operations.

Chief Executive of the Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo), Ing. William Amuna, who chaired the occasion, praised VRA for this novelty, and expressed hope that it would, indeed, go a long way to facilitate and enhance the operations of the Authority. He said GRIDCo would learn from the Authority's attempt at managing and sharing knowledge.

Launching the portal, Chief Executive of the VRA, Ing. Kirk Koffi, said: "Establishing a Knowledge Management system in the Authority would facilitate a better, more informed decision-making process and build knowledge that can be used to streamline the Authority's operations".

He added: "The VRA is constantly churning out streams of data and infor-

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Ing. Kirk Koffi addressing the participants at the KM Portal Launch



Immediate Past Chief Executive, Ing. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, delivering his speech



Ing. William Amuna, Chief Executive of GRIDCO, addressing participants



Administrators of the KMP in a group photograph



Deputy Chief Executive (E&O) presenting his welcome address

Mastering the Art: Giving Your Business Communication the Winning Edge

— *The Elements*

PRECISION WRITING

Another important element of the writing *process* is precision writing. This is the style of writing in which the primary objective is to convey information; it is an appropriate mode of writing for technical communication, but can also be used in non-technical situations. To think clearly is a necessary first step toward precision writing. Always use words that will adequately cover your meaning. Let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way round. George Orwell, in an article, entitled “Politics and the English Language,” written in 1946, expressed concern about bad English, in his time. He observed: “In prose, the worst thing one can do with words is to surrender to them... Probably it is better to put off using words as long as possible and get one’s meaning as clear as one can through pictures and sensations.” Make a conscious effort and hunt for the exact words that seem to fit a writing situation.

AUDIENCE AND FRAMEWORK

All aspects of writing take place with the readers in mind. Every reader requires that a framework must be established, so that reader understand what is being talked about. You must, therefore, establish some background, assumptions, and terminology, to set the stage for conveying information.

REDUNDANCY

Some form of writing will deliberately require redundancy as a strategic



technique intended to increase understanding of the text. Redundancy involves excess information that is included to decrease the possibility of miscommunication. Sometimes there is the need to add more understanding to ensure effective writing. What is important is the quality of information, rather than the quantity.

FAULT TOLERANCE AND DIAGNOSTICS

You can receive immediate feedback from inter-personal, face-to-face conversation, but the situation is quite different in a mass communication situation. when you are not physically present to guide the reader about what you have written. The reader does not have the advantage of immediate feedback. The best thing to do, then, is to include diagnostics in your writing, to pre-empt any ambiguity. This is why it is important to write with precision.

TERMINOLOGY

Consider the choice of good terminology and use it consistently. Choosing terminology means you are giving names to things or ideas. These names must be easy to use, logical and memorable. Poor or inconsistent terminology can be a significant barrier to precision communication.

COMPRESSION AND EXPANSION

Writing is compressible. Writing can be terse or long-winded. Avoid both extremes. Sometimes you can compress ideas, while at other times a more wordy or detailed expansion is needed.

CONCISENESS

Avoid the use of many words when a few words would do. Norman Fenton of the School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science, University of Lon-

don, provides a good example of conciseness. Take a look at the following two sentences that give instructions to some employees:

1. It is of considerable importance to ensure that under no circumstances should anyone fail to deactivate the overhead luminescent function at its local activation point on their departure to their place of residence, most notably immediately preceding the two- day period at the termination of the standard working week.

2. Always turn the lights out when you go home, especially on a Friday.¹⁴

The meaning of both statements is the same, but we believe that the second is easier to read and understand. Always write your annual report in a style that is easy to read and understand.

WRITE FOR YOUR READERS

It is quite evident that purpose and use have implications for a clear understanding of business communication. Your readers must occupy a special place in the organisation of your business communication; you must write for them. Effective business communication requires that you find out as best you can the informational needs and background of your readers. For this information need of your readers control, to a large extent, what your communication should include and what should get emphasis. Your readers' background determines the manner in which you present the information.

INFORMATION NEEDS

Although you may have little knowledge of the information needs, or the reading habits, of your audience, effective communication requires that you have a good knowledge, or some very accurate assumptions, about your audience. Whether the audience is known or not, find out, or assume, answers to the following questions:

- ◆ What does the reader want?
- ◆ What does the reader need to know in order to understand?
- ◆ What is the audience's background?

Your answers to these questions will influence what you write. Providing your readers with what they want is your primary obligation. Your communication will succeed only if you and your readers understand each other. Souther and White emphasise that writers will be successful only if they can foresee what content would be necessary for a full understanding of the reports they write.

When your readers have posed, and carefully answered the question of what a reader needs to know, you can effectively get the following outcomes:

- ◆ You can specifically define the content of your communication letter than you could if you were to stop with what the reader wants.

◆ Essentially, the answer to “what does the reader want?” indicates the major subject areas of the report, whereas the answer to “what does the reader need to be told to fully understand what he or she wants ?”(--) indicates subdivisions of these major areas.

You must, therefore, define your subject matter in even greater detail. A more detailed definition will ensure that you give out what is important to your readers' understanding.

Asking what the reader needs to know is important. This information would help you:

- ◆ Suggest necessary areas of content that might not be so obviously related to what the reader wants.
- ◆ Provide not only what readers want to know in order to understand fully the material and its significance at the time they are reading.

DECIDE THE OBJECTIVE OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

◆ **Decide what the objective of your writing is.** This is very important. If you cannot do this, you are certainly going to produce a business communication that is unsatisfactory. Every communication must have a single, clear objective. Make yours as specific as possible.

◆ **Write Down Your Objective.** It is recommended that you write this in one brief and concise sentence. For example, the objective of this article is *to help business communicators to write a compelling business communication and to achieve positive results.*

◆ **Always Have in Mind a Specific Reader.** Generally, you should assume a background and write, for persons of intelligence and good general knowledge, but without much experience in the specific subject you are reporting. However, it is important to be specific and know beforehand what the reader profile is. Avoid writing in a manner which suggests that no one should read the report except those with the same profession, interest, and experience as your(--). If you attempt to write in that style your report would fail to communicate to your readers.

To produce a successful business communication, you must frequently work at translating technical ideas into non-technical, everyday language. Your responsibility must be to present ideas that your readers will understand. Do not assume that readers will look up unfamiliar words, or provide themselves with the education necessary to understand highly technical details. Your business communication must be at a level suitable for all types of readers including those whose education; training and experience are in fields different from yours.

To Be Continued

MICHAEL O. SACKEY
— EDITOR

The Risk Management Process in a SNAPSHOT

In previous articles we discussed steps of the Risk Management Process. The current article brings together all these steps. So far, we have learnt that risk is anything that prevents, or even enhances, the achievement of objectives. We have also learnt that for our objectives to be achieved, we need to effectively manage the risks associated with them. In managing risks, we follow the defined risk management process prescribed by ISO 31000 as shown in the diagram below:

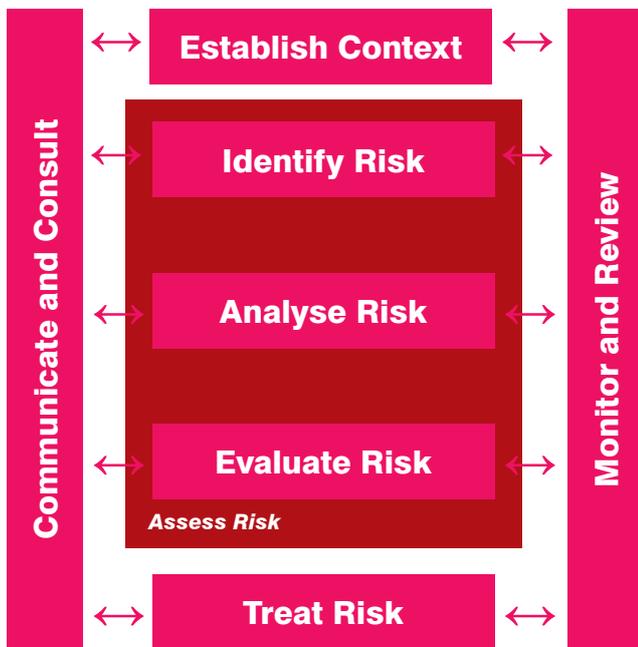


Figure 1 : THE RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

In addition, there are two important concepts: Communication and Consultation, and Monitor and Review – that apply to every step of the Risk Management Process. These are discussed at the beginning and end of the main steps of the process.

Communicate and Consult

Communication is the sharing of information and viewpoints. Consultation is a process that uses communication to make effective decisions. Communication and consultation are essential to the overall risk management process.

Effective internal and external communication are important in ensuring that those responsible for implementing risk management, and those with a vested interest, understand the basis on which decisions are made and why particular actions are re-

The main steps of the risk management Process are:

1. Establish the context
2. Identify Risks
3. Analyse Risks
4. Evaluate Risks, and
5. Treat Risks

quired. For example in VRA, Risk Champions communicate and consult with key stakeholders during meetings and discussions when preparing department/special unit risk registers.

Step 1: Establish the Context

Establishing the context is concerned with understanding the background of the organisation and its risks, scoping the risk management activities being undertaken, and developing a structure for the risk management tasks that follow.

The objective of this step is to provide a comprehensive appreciation of all the factors that may have an influence on the ability of an organisation to achieve its intended outcomes.

The external context defines the external environment in

which the organisation operates, and the relationship between the organisation and this environment. Examples of external context are cultural, political, legal, regulatory, financial, economic and competitive. It is particularly important to take into account the perceptions and values of external stakeholders and establish policies for communication with them

The internal context considers the goals and objectives of the organisation. Examples of internal context include the organisation's capabilities (e.g. capital, people, competencies, processes, systems and technologies), among others.

Establishing the Risk Management Context involves the definition of risk management responsibilities, and the depth and breadth of the risk management activities to be carried out, including specific inclusions and exclusions.

Step 2: Identify Risks

This involves identification of where, when, why, and how events could prevent, degrade, delay, or enhance the achievement of objectives or goals.

The identification process considers each strategy, activity or function and initiative, as defined at the 'Establish the Context' stage and looks at what is critical to their success. It then considers what may go wrong. Anything that limits or enhances their achievement is defined as a risk. Methods or tools that can be employed to help in the risk identification process include:

- Brainstorming/Workshops
- Incident and adverse outcome analysis
- Personal organisational experience
- Focus group discussion
- Audits or physical inspections

The objective of risk identification is to generate a comprehensive list of risks based on those events and circumstances. This list of risks is then used to guide the analysis, evaluation, treatment and monitoring of key risks.

Step 3: Analyse Risks

Risk analysis is defined as the process of determining the likelihood and impact of an event. It is the systematic process to understand the nature of the risk and to determine its level.

Risk analysis helps to guide the evaluation of risks by defining the key parameters of the risk and how these may impact on the achievement of organisational objectives. One of the key outcomes of the risk analysis process is determining levels of risk exposure for an organisation. The data and related information collected during the risk analysis process can be used to guide risk treatment decisions.

Step 4: Evaluate Risks

Risk evaluation is the process of comparing the results of risk analysis with risk criteria, and to determine whether the risk and/or its magnitude are acceptable or tolerable. Risk criteria, in the above definition, refer to the terms of reference against which the significance of a risk is evaluated. Risk evaluation allows managers to determine whether further controls are required to bring the risk within a level acceptable to the organisation. The output of the risk evaluation phase is a prioritised list of risks.

The purpose of risk evaluation is to make decisions based on the outcomes of risk analyses - about which risks need treatment (mitigation), and to prioritise treatments for further action.

Step 5: Treat Risks

Risk Treatment involves identifying a range of options to reduce the consequences and/or likelihood of a risk. The aim is to increase potential benefits, while reducing potential costs. The treatment options available to us are Accept, Reduce, Transfer and Avoid.

A key outcome of the risk evaluation process is a list of those risks requiring further treatment, as determined by the overall level of the risk against the organisation's risk tolerance levels. However, not all risks will require treatment, as some

may be accepted by the organisation and only require occasional monitoring. The risks that fall outside the organisation's risk tolerance levels are those which pose a significant potential impact on the ability of the organisation to achieve its set objectives. Such risks are treated to minimise or eliminate the potential impact that they could have on the achievement of the set objectives.

Monitor and Review

Monitoring and Review involve:

- Analysing and learning lessons from events, changes and trends.
- Detecting changes in the external and internal context, including changes to the risk itself, which may require a revision of risk treatment and priorities.
- Ensuring that risk control and treatment measures are effective in design as well as operation.

Organisations are dynamic and operate in dynamic environments. Things very rarely stay constant at the workplace. Changes in the organisation and the environment in which it operates must be identified and appropriate changes made to systems. Regular monitoring and review processes are carried out to:

- determine whether the risk information is current;
- determine whether the risk management process is effective and adequate;
- determine whether the measures adopted resulted in what was intended;
- ensure that the procedures adopted and the information gathered for risk assessment are appropriate.

Conclusion

Risk management enhances achievement of objectives, and to carry out effective risk management one needs to follow the steps of the risk management process.

The Positive Marriage and Career Image

GINA FITZ-SULLEY—INTERN, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, ACCRA

When the cock crows or the alarm sounds, waking up at 4am to beat the heavy traffic in the early hours of the day is inevitable. Joining the same long queue back home adds to the stress from work. But, meeting a happy family afterwards is the only compensation that erases the memories of a bad day.

Life presents us with many opportunities, and one that is said to be ordained by God himself is marriage. In striving for survival and to collect all the laurels in this competitive world, a greater portion of attention is made towards building a Career Image, which gradually relegates the "Marriage Brand" to the background. This trend, of not striking a balance and not setting a common standard for married couples, has become the reason for broken homes and stale marriages.

Living the marital dream is like living our own dreams: it can get better if we consciously live it as a blessing and not a curse. From the PR perspective, branding is done to set a company apart from others. This can have a positive, or a negative effect. So which of these do we want to expose our marriages or relationships to? Your guess, I suppose, must be as good as mine, but

the bigger question is, how do we achieve a positive marriage brand side by side with a positive career image?

Who we really are (IDENTITY) and how people see us (IMAGE) both influence the choices we make in our marriages or relationships. A careful workout on improving our Identity gives us an attractive personality and offers greater rewards in Image enhancement, be it in our marriage, relationship, or in other facets of life.

A great attribute for brand recognition in every corporate society is Trust. If this is faithfully practiced among couples, it would paint the union in the best possible light. Because a partner needs to feel she knows the other person's brand, as a good old friend should.

Every human institution, such as marriage, or relationship has the tendency to change in a competitive landscape. As the years go by,

new electrifying, irresistible trends set in to kill the warm and affectionate gaze of the old brand. This decline stage in marriages and relationships must have rebranding, to breathe new life into the union and repackage it into an enviable brand.

Unlocking every communication gap at this point plays a vital role in producing the most effective shifts. Most important, to achieve better results, communication should not be seen as a one-way street, but as an interactive dialogue.

Building a unique family brand is as good as enhancing the career image. Embracing the two equally is a natural therapy in a successful marriage.

Success will surely come when couples selflessly work hard to achieve the common goal —

THE POSITIVE MARRIAGE BRAND.

Every
love story
is beautiful, but
ours is my favorite

VRA inaugurates Boards of Subsidiaries ← Contd. from pg.5

expressed confidence that collectively they would manage the subsidiaries to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

He said the Power Sector Reform had made it necessary to recognise the introduction of Independent Power Producers (IPPs) into the energy market, with the aim of opening up the market to competition in order to meet the country's growing electricity demand.

Ing. Kirk Koffi said the separation of the non-power operations is an attempt to allow the VRA concentrate on its mainstay of electricity generation. "We believe this separation would support VRA's competitive strategy aimed at market and organisational effectiveness," he added.

The Board members are: Mr. William Bobie (Managing Director), Mrs. Eva Andoh-Poku, Mr. Martin Nantwi, Mrs. Alice Osei-Okrah and Mr. Peter Osei-Asamoah (PROPCo); Mr. Arnold Seshie (General Manager), Dr. George Ofei, Mr. Emmanuel Ofosu-Ofei, Mr. Abdulai Alhassan Adams and Mr. Stephen Opere (VRA Int. Schools Ltd.); Dr. (Mrs.) Rebecca Acquah-Arhin (Medical Director), Dr. Ken Sagoe, Mrs. Kokui Adu, Mr. Anthony Forson and Mr. Ludwig Hlordze (VRA Health Services Ltd.). They were sworn in by the Minister of Power.

Also at the function were Mr J.W. Sutherland, Deputy Chief Executive (Services); Mr. Maxwell Odoom, Advisor, (Restructuring); Mr. K.T.K. Agban, Director, Legal Services and Secretaries to the Boards.

VRA, TECNICAS REUNIDAS to Build Power Plant ← Contd. from pg.5

would provide 126MW of electricity. While the second phase, would be completed in 10 months and would add another 60MW.

In attendance were Ms. Maria Alonso, Spanish Ambassador, Ing. Richard Badger, Deputy Chief Executive, Engineering and Operations, Ms. Alexandra Totoe, Deputy Chief Executive, Finance, and some VRA Board Members.

TR, Spain is an International General Contractor engaged in the engineering, design and construction of various industrial facilities for a broad range of customers throughout the world, including many of the principal national oil companies and several multinationals.

It is an outgrowth of the former Spanish subsidiary of Lummus Española, S.A., founded in 1960. In 1972, a Spanish Group of Investors acquired 100% of the shares of Lummus Española and renamed the company Técnicas Reunidas. Since 1960, the TR Group of companies has designed and built more than 1000 industrial plants worldwide.

The cost of 'Dum-Sor' on Ghana's Economy ← Contd. from pg.7

Thermal Power Plant (110MW) by the third quarter of 2015 would add more megawatts to the system.

d) The Government is importing a 450MW emergency powership. This will be in two installments, each of 225MW, and is expected to commence commercial operations in September 2015.

Mr. Ellis notes that within the same quarter, the water level at Akosombo is expected to start rising. "If it does, and we are able to cross the 250ft level, we'll feel more confident in running four or more machines at higher capacity. That alone can bring the deficit, including the thermal machines, down to 100MW, or even lower. And we are likely to have a reserve, all things being equal".

Also, if TICO is able to resolve their vibrating machine, the power deficit of about 500MW will go down further by 100MW. The steam component of 50MW

would add up to 150MW. That should bring everything down to 300MW and that is a manageable level for ECG, so that the timetable can be followed effectively.

From the scenarios considered above, the future seems bright for the country. The question is, would we, as a policy, continue to add to generation annually, as required by international best practice? Best practice suggests that a country maintains about 18% of its installed capacity as reserve. Thus with a growth of more than 10% annually, consciously adding to generation, as expected, would forestall a repeat of the current situation.

As the country's largest energy producer, VRA has a mandate to ensure that it provides adequate, stable and regular power to its customers. The onus, therefore, lies on VRA to ensure that it streamlines its activities and ensures it is in a position to meet that requirement.

VRA Launches Knowledge Management Portal ← *Contd. from pg.9*

mation. This overload of data and information, increasingly require that we develop a system to manage our information resources, which form the basis of a knowledge capital.”

He said by making learning a routine, VRA would be creating a culture where everyone would continuously assess himself, his unit and his department, especially the competitive business environment. It would help staff embrace change and encourage ideas and insights which can lead to innovation.

Ing. Kirk Koffi entreated staff to participate and make efficient use of the Knowledge Management (KM) facility and its capabilities, to guarantee improved performance.

Guests at the launch were taken through a brief demonstration of the Knowledge Management Portal by the Data Administrator, Mr. Shafian Abdel-Rahman of the Projects & Systems Monitoring Department.

The VRA Knowledge Management Portal is a relatively new

attempt to help unlock knowledge, share mainstream best practices, leverage intellectual assets and facilitate knowledge creation in the Authority.

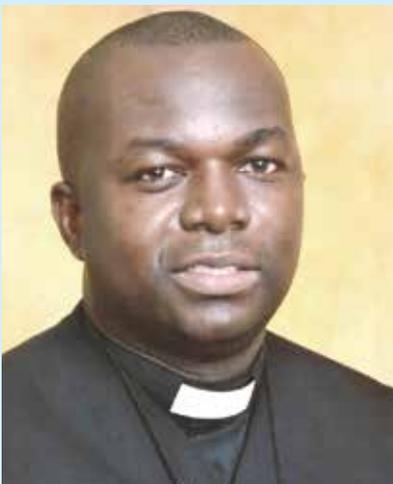
Present at the function were some Directors and staff from the various departments.



Participants at the KM Portal Launch

T.T.P.S ENGINEER ORDAINED MINISTER

BY SAMUEL M. CANN - ABOADZE



Rev. Ing. Felix Nii Klorkwei Tetteh

Rev Ing. Felix Nii Klorkwei Tetteh, Senior Chemical Engineer at the Takoradi Thermal Power Station (TTPS), has been ordained a Minister of the Gospel, by the Rev. Dennis Osei-Manu, Senior Pastor of Covenant Family Community Church, at the church’s

premises at East Cantonments, Accra.

Among the several dignitaries at the gathering were Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi, Chief Executive, VRA, Ing. Richard N. Badger, DCE, (Engineering & Operations), Nana Safo Kantanka, Managing Director, TAQA and Mr. Isaac K. Aidoo, Director, Human Resource, VRA and some other staff of the VRA.

Rev. Klorkwei Tetteh’s encounter with Christ began in the late

1980’s through the Bible teachings of his eldest sister, Mrs. Joyce Armah. He accepted Christ during one of these teachings and scripture memorisation sessions and rededicated his life to Christ in 1990 under the Ministry of the late Rev. Vincent Edwin McCauley, during an Evangelistic and Friends Day Service.

Rev. Ing. Felix N.K. Tetteh attended the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and earned a BSc. in Chemical Engineering. He later pursued a Masters in Engineering programme (Industrial Operations with Management) at the same University. Rev. Ing Tetteh is a corporate member of the Ghana Institution of Engineers (GhIE) and currently its Western Regional Secretary. He is also a member of the National Association of Corrosion Engineers (NACE) International, USA, and the American Society of Quality (ASQ).

TTPS, as a corporate institution, benefits from the other side of Ing. Felix Tetteh’s life as a clergyman – he sometimes leads prayer sessions at the Station during occasions such as Corporate Annual Thanksgiving Services. He is married to Dr. Nana Esi Tetteh and are blessed with two children, Danielle and John.

Profiling the Fraudster

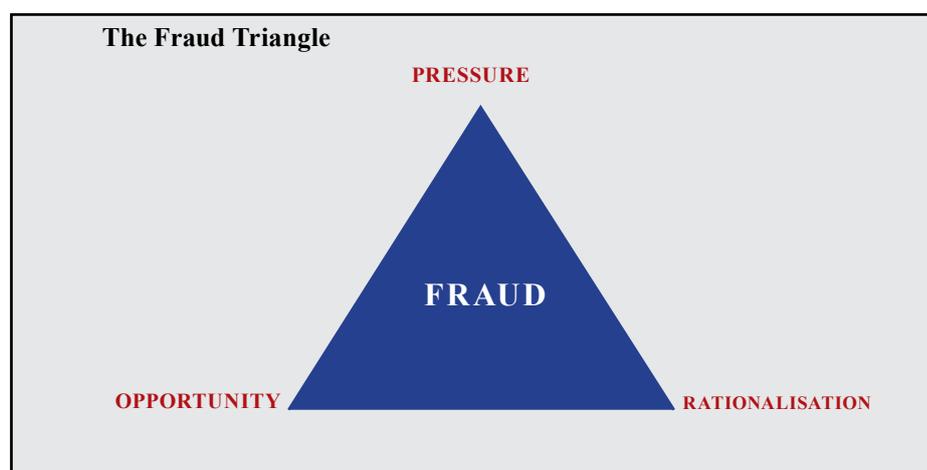
Fraud specialists have long sought to develop an exact-fit profile of a fraudster that could enable organisations to identify persons involved, or likely to be involved, in fraud, beforehand. The prediction of a crime before it occurs is, at least for now, the subject of science fiction. Nevertheless, an analysis of the constantly changing nature of fraud, and the fraudster, can help organisations reinforce their defences against criminal activities. Fraudsters are always developing new methods and organisations need to respond by updating their defence methods. Fraud risk management is not only deemed a smart and proactive proposal, but also a sharp survival instinct.

“The intriguing thing about fraud is that it is always morphing, like a strain of flu; you can cure today’s strain, but next year it evolves into something as bad, if not worse,” says Phil Ostwalt, Global Coordinator for Investigations for the Global Forensic practice at KPMG.

In order to understand a fraudster’s profile it is useful to consider three key drivers of fraud: opportunity, motivation, and rationalisation. It is also worth noting that people commit fraud when motivation, opportunity, and the ability to

rationalize the act occur simultaneously. Therefore, in combatting fraud, organisations should strive to adapt to the fraudster’s ever-changing profile. Forewarned is forearmed.

personal and financial problems. In 53 % of cases investigated the culprit held a senior management position that gave him access to sensitive information and the ability to override controls. 25% of them



That workaholic executive may be up to more than meets the eye – he may be stealing from the organisation, a KPMG study notes. In fact, the profile of a typical fraudster is a male senior manager in his 30s or 40s, possibly in a finance-related function, with more than 10 years on the job, according to the report, *Who Is the Typical Fraudster?* The report is based on analyses of 348 cases investigated by KPMG worldwide between 2008 and 2010.

The high stature of the fraudster profiled by KPMG differs somewhat from that of other fraud studies that have portrayed fraudsters as long-serving but lower-paid employees who are often motivated by

are CEOs. More than 60% colluded with another individual, say a vendor or a customer. *“Knowing the common traits of a fraudster can help employers be better prepared to prevent damaging incidents,”* says Philip Ostwalt, U.S. leader of KPMG’s Forensic Services Investigations Network.

The organisations themselves are part of the problem, though. Management in most organisations is blind to fraud warning signs, says the study. More than half of frauds investigated involved one or more danger signals that should have alerted management to a potential problem. But only in 10% of all such cases did management act before a full investigation was needed.

Contd. on pg.20→

VRA Allays Fears Of Lower Volta Communities (1)

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

Mr. Michael Dade, Principal Officer, Public Health Section of the Environment and Sustainable Development Department of the (VRA) says the Authority is making efforts to allay the fears of riverine communities, following the use of glyphosate in the fight against water hyacinth.

This has become necessary following the introduction of the chemical in the fight against the plant, owing to the dangers the plant poses to the Authority’s operations. Water hyacinths can dry up water bodies in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Dade made these remarks during interactions with representatives of Municipal and District Assemblies and communities within the Lower Volta area, to solicit views on the use of the chemical in fighting the water hyacinth menace.

The Principal Officer noted that the increasing spread of water hyacinth on the Volta Lake was of great concern to the Authority, hence the need to bring it under control. He said the control of water weeds in the Volta Lake had been an on-going activity since the impoundment of the Volta River at Akosombo in 1965 and Kpong in 1982. It was in 1998, however, that the menace of weeds appeared to have worsened, he noted.

Mr. Dade noted that over the years it has been observed that the removal of these weeds manually, as



The VRA team with South Tongu District Assembly officials



Mr. Michael Dade educating a community on the use of Glyphosate



Group photograph with members of the community after the sensitization



A member of the VRA team addressing representatives of the Central Tongu District Assembly



The Central Tongu District Assembly officials with the VRA team

well as their biological control with the use of bio-agents, has been slow, especially where the weed cover was extensive and not easily accessible. He continued that “In such instances, the rate of control was outpaced by the high rate of proliferation.” It is in this regard that the application of herbicides for rapid control has become not only prudent but imperative.”

He assured the Municipal and District Assemblies and the communities that the use of glyphosate is known to have none or minimal effects on humans or fishes.

Mr. Dade said water hyacinth was first reported on the Oti River in 1998, then in 2003 at the Kpong Headpond and in 2006 at the Lower Volta Basin.

Contd. on pg.20→

VRA, GRIDCo MPA Students Graduate

MICHAEL DANSO — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, ACCRA

Thirty-nine Middle Management staff from the Volta River Authority (VRA) and Ghana Gridco (GRIDCo) have graduated from the Ghana Institute of Public Administration (GIMPA) with a Masters in Public Administration (MPA).

The group is the first batch of students to do the one-year customised MPA programme organised for the two power sector institutions.

In a short statement at the closing ceremony, Dr. Patrick Tandoah-Offin, the MPA Course Coordinator, noted that GIMPA was a Management Development Institution established in 1961 to serve as a training school for Ghana's Public Service. The School of Public Service and Governance, established in 2005, he said, was the only one among GIMPA's four schools that carried out its original mandate of providing a broad range of services to the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Dr. Tandoah-Offin said there is now a need for countries in our part of the world to continue training and education as a means of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of Public Sector Administrators, to ensure the design and delivery of quality public services. This led to the formation of a committee in January 2014, to commence the design of a customized one year MPA for the energy sector, in response to a request they made.

He said the maiden programme, which started in April 2014 was delivered in a five-session, one-year programme module, instead of the traditional two-year MPA programme.



New Graduates being addressed by Ing. Kirk Koffi



Graduates, Facilitators and Management of the VRA and GRIDCo in group photo

In a brief statement, Ing. Kirk Koffi, Chief Executive of the VRA, reminded the graduands that the future of both institutions depended on their human resource capacity and not only their physical assets. He asked them to remain relevant and be able to rub shoulders with competitors in the power generation business.

The VRA Chief Executive expressed regret at the inability of successive governments to take pragmatic measures to add to power generation capacity thereby causing the current energy crisis. "We would not have been where we are today if the right steps had been taken."

Ing. William Amuna, Chief Executive of GRIDCo, noted that about 80% of the Engineering Directors at GRIDCo would be retiring from active service by 2018 and a new breed of competent Directors need to be appointed to fill the vacancies. He was of the view that it was only prudent that this training programme was established to equip the new breed of leaders with the needed skills.

Rector of GIMPA, Prof. Franklyn Achampong Manu, commended the course participants for exhibiting academic maturity during their studies and called for continued collaboration between GIMPA and the two power utility companies.

Profiling the Fraudster ← Contd. from pg.17

Nearly all fraudsters are repeat offenders, so it is not surprising that frauds would be in progress for 3 to 4 years, on the average before they are discovered.

Red flags raised by the study include business units that are thriving while their competitors struggle, excessive pressure on Senior Managers to achieve unusually high profit targets, complex or unusual payment methods, multiple banking arrangements that reduce financial transparency, excessive secrecy about a business function, and increased profitability without increased cash flow.

“Senior Management must be aware of the unique fraud risks in their companies, in addition to analysing cases brought to their attention for trends on potential future issues, or that demonstrate a breakdown in their control processes,” Ostwalt notes.

Ostwalt advises organisations to consider the relevance of internal controls and other processes as their growth goals and market conditions change. In ad-

dition to the standard prescription of ethics policies, background checks, and reporting procedures, he calls for monitoring potential risks by conducting “pulse checks” of how employees view ethics and compliance.

The clarion call is that Executive Management of companies should not stand still and allow mundane controls to address today’s, or tomorrow’s, fraudster. Today, one major change is the growing use of technology by fraudsters. Technology not only enables the fraudster to act, but also the organisation to defend itself. Newer approaches, such as data analytics and data mining, give the company a much better chance of catching the fraudster.

Culled from the October 2011 edition of the “Internal Auditor” because of the different perspective it offers on the topic and the threat that fraud, especially by highly-placed persons, poses to the very survival of an organisation. It is also meant to engender staff involvement as stakeholders, and to identify and fight fraud.

VRA Allays Fears Of Lower Volta Communities (1) ← Contd. from pg.18

He explained the plant grows very fast and is able to double its population within two weeks, under suitable environmental conditions.

He pointed out that the invasion of water bodies by water hyacinth has become a nuisance worldwide. “For us in VRA, its presence in the Volta Lake, particularly the Oti arm, the Kpong headpond and the Lower Volta segments has dire effects on the management of the Kpong headpond reservoir for power generation, protecting the lake environment, and safeguarding the health and well-being of the lakeside dwellers.”

Note to Readers: We shall publish the concluding part of this write up in the third quarter. This will discuss the nature of the water hyacinth; the dangers it poses, and the modes of fighting its spread.



A section of Mafi Dugame residents being addressed by the VRA team



VRA representatives with residents of Mafi Dugame after their sensitization



A Group photograph with the Ada East District Assembly



North Tongu District Assembly being briefed on the use of Glyphosate

VRA Donates Learning Materials to Schools

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has donated 70,000 VRA-branded exercise books, 1,944 story books, and 120 HIV/AIDS Games to communities impacted by its operations.

The items were presented to schools within the Lower Volta Basin, through Municipal/District Assemblies (MDAs) during this year's Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) sensitisation workshops held from April 8 to April 22

The donation is a follow up to the Authority's Community Development Programme (CDP) Framework which underlines the Authority's commitment to providing continuous educational support to brilliant but needy students. Making the initial presentation of 10,000 VRA-branded exercise books, 324 story books and 20 HIV/AIDS Games at Battor in the North Tongu District, Head of Corporate Communications, Mr. Samuel Fletcher, stated that the Authority had over the years shown that education played a pivotal role in its operations, as the biggest power generator in the country.

He advised stakeholders in the educational sector to collaborate effectively with the Authority, to enable the Authority support education in its impacted communities.

The VRA Corporate Communications Manager urged the pupils to study hard to become good citizens, not only of their communities but also of the nation at large. "Education is the only guarantee to a better future. So I implore all of you to learn hard in order to secure your future." He said.

The District Chief Executive (DCE) of North Tongu, Madam Delphia Fafa Agbai, received the items on behalf of her district, and expressed her gratitude to the Authority, promising that her office would do everything possible to ensure that the books were used for the purpose

for which they were intended.

The Central Tongu District Assembly, Ada East District Assembly, Kpando Municipal Assembly and South Tongu District Assembly, each received 10,000 VRA-branded exercise books, 324 story books and 20 HIV/AIDS Games. Keta Municipal Assembly received 15,000 VRA-branded exercise books.

The VRA CDP framework document, launched in May 2012, sets out the guidelines for support for the development of

all communities impacted by the operations of the Authority. Its primary goal is to continue to maintain mutually beneficial relationships with the communities in which the Authority has carried out its primary operations since its establishment in 1961.

The CDP focuses on the following key areas: social infrastructure projects; environmental protection activities; education; health; support for cultural activities and industrial attachment.

Community Development Programme Donations



Mr. Samuel Fletcher and his team addressing the North Tongu District Assembly



VRA representatives with North Tongu District Assembly representatives



VRA, Keta Municipal Assembly officials and students



VRA Team with the Central Tongu District Assembly



Students present at the presentation at Keta Municipal Assembly



Mrs. Rhoda Arthur illustrating how the HIV/AIDS Game is played to the pupils

ENCOUNTER WITH MR FRANCIS EGHAN EKUBAN

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO



“I found out retirement means playing golf, or I don't know what the hell it means. But to me, retirement means doing what you have fun doing.” Dick Van Dyke

The above words may probably be close to what the former Akosombo Area Human Resources (HR) Manager, Mr. Francis Eghan Ekuban (FEE) may be considering as he retired from active service on April 8, 2015.

Nathaniel Ekue Mensah of the Corporate Communications Unit (CCU), Akosombo caught up with Mr. Francis Eghan Ekuban (FEE) after his 60th birthday and retirement party, in the following interview.

CAREER WITH THE AUTHORITY

CCU: *Sir, can you please tell me when your career with the Authority began?*

FEE: I joined the VRA as an Assistant Administrative officer posted to the Akuse Operational Area in 1985 and rose through the ranks to become the Town Manager in 1993. I was then transferred to the HR Department as Manager for the Akosombo Area HR in January, 1999.

CCU: *Please tell us about your experience and contribution.*

FEE: Well, as the HR Manager for the Akosombo Area, I brought a lot of reforms but the most significant of them for me is adding a human face to the department by trying to demystify the notion that the HR Department was a place to be feared. Initially, I noticed that staff found it difficult to approach the office of the Area Manager to express their concerns and grievances so I had to quickly get to work on bridging the gap between staff and management to enable them think like a unit.

That notwithstanding, I encountered a lot of challenges and one of the biggest hurdles I faced was during the tenure of the former Chief Executive Dr. Charles Wereko Brobby between 2001 and 2003 when the VRA was in an uproar against him, and as an HR Manager, I had to try and manage staff in such a way that it would not degenerate into a crisis since it was Management against Staff.

ON VALUES THAT DEFINE HIM

Having been shaped by the values and policies of the Authority, I believe that my success as HR Manager is as a result of the work ethics of the Volta River Authority.

CCU: *Sir, from my encounter with you I know you are a devout Christian. Any Christian values that you espouse?*

FEE: Yes that is true. My main driving force is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added to me. I

also hold the view that secular work is the same as sacred work.

EDUCATION AND FAMILY

With a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and History from the University of Education Winneba in 1978, Mr Francis Eghan Ekuban went to do his two years mandatory National Service at the New Juabeng Secondary Commercial in Koforidua after which he proceeded to the University of Ghana for his post graduate degree in Public Administration between 1981-1984.

The first of nine children, Mr. Ekuban hails from the Central Region of Ghana: Breaman Asikumah to be precise in the eastern part of the Central Region.

He is married to Mrs. Emma Ekuban and they have five Children.



| 2015 STAFF ATTRITION |

FULL NAME	DEPARTMENT	POSITION	LOCATION	RETIREMENT DATE
Siam, Alhaji Mohammed Erzuah	NEDCo.	Head, Public & Community Relations	Tamale	Feb 12, 2015
Sam-Appiah, Mr. William Etruo	Corporate Office	Staff Director	Accra	Mar 7, 2015
Eghan-Ekuban, Mr. Francis	Human Resources	Area Manager, Human Resources	Akosombo	Apr 8, 2015
Gamah, Mr. Jacob Kwao	General Services	Principal Driver	Accra	Apr 9, 2015
Entsie, Mr. Joseph Kwesi	Thermal Generation	Driver	Aboadze	Apr 10, 2015
Tetteh, Mr. Seth Ahia	VRA Hospitals (SBU)	Principal Driver	Akosombo	Apr 12, 2015
Afriyie, Mr. Meister Joseph	VRA PROPCo. (SBU)	Manager, Special Assignments	Accra	Apr 18, 2015
Sarkodie, Mr. Acheampong	NEDCo.	Principal Accounts Clerk	Sunyani	Apr 18, 2015
Gbologah, Mr. Winfred Kwaku	Engineering Services	Assistant Chief Technician Engineer	Akuse	May 1, 2015
Appah, Mr. Ernest	Projects & Systems Monitoring	Principal Clerk	Accra	May 5, 2015
Tetteh, Mr. Henry Kwame	Finance	Senior Accounting Assistant	Tema	May 5, 2015
Asigbetsey, Mr. John Kwame	VRA Hospitals (SBU)	Head Hospital Orderly	Akosombo	May 20, 2015
Darko, Mr. Ebenezer Owusu	VRA Hospitals (SBU)	Principal Driver	Akosombo	May 23, 2015
Doetcher, Mr. Samuel	Environment & Sust. Development	Senior Coxswain	Ada Foah	May 27, 2015
Iddrisu, Mr. Mohammed Kofi	NEDCo.	Watchman	Dormaa- Ahenkro	Jun 1, 2015



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Our Mission:

The Volta River Authority exists to **Power Economies & Raise the living standards of the peoples of Ghana & West Africa**

OUR VALUES

- ☀ **Accountability**
- ☀ **Commitment**
- ☀ **Trust**
- ☀ **Integrity**
- ☀ **Teamwork**



Are We Still Procrastinating?

LOVERTH KUFE — NATIONAL SERVICE PERSON, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS, ACCRA

We are all too familiar with the saying, “Procrastination is the Thief of Time”. Well, today I would like to add that in business and in life in general, procrastination is also the thief of energy, enthusiasm, creativity, productivity and ultimately money and success.

Have you ever dragged your feet about completing an important task? Have you felt reluctant to have a difficult conversation with an employee or business associate, when performance was not good? Have you ever found excuses for not making difficult phone calls; avoiding tedious administrative tasks, such as bookkeeping, invoicing or filing? Or even for failing to complete projects or initiatives that could actually make you and your business smarter or better?

If you have experienced any of these

situations the chances are that you have experienced feelings of guilt and negative emotions. Or you may even have suffered some direct (or indirect) financial loss as a result.

Why do we do such things? Here are some possibilities:

- The task at hand may no longer be interesting or challenging enough.
- We may not be sure how to approach the project, or we may feel somewhat overwhelmed.
- The outcome, or the vision of what we want to accomplish, may not be clear.
- Hardly anybody likes to have discussions where egos may get bruised.
- Not everybody enjoys routine tasks that require attention to detail.
- We may not feel confident or skilled enough to effectively deal with the task at



I HAVE NOT YET BEGUN TO PROCRASTINATE!

hand;

We want to get it all perfect before declaring it done.

Initially our inaction, or avoidance of action, may make us think that we have things under control. But as time progresses, thoughts about the uncompleted tasks keep lingering, occupying mind-space, and eventually creating negative energy and even self doubt.

To be continued.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- ◆ Writing Workshop 7
- ◆ VRA Allays Fears of Lower Volta Communities (2)

Please send your concerns, questions, congratulatory messages, issues, worries, suggestions, etc., to corpcomm@vra.com

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