



**VOLTA
RIVER
AUTHORITY**

NEWS

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TARIFF ADJUSTMENT: 'The Percentage Scare must Stop'

Access to efficient electricity supply is a key driver of economic development.

Although Ghana is yet to be declared a country with universal access to electricity, majority of the population has access to electricity, thanks to the rural electrification project embarked upon in the 1980s.

Even with electricity expansion, power consumers are dissatisfied with services the utility companies. Under investment accounts for the poor services to consumers.



Ing. Kirk Koffi, CE, VRA, flanked by Board Members of VRA. Left to the CE are the Board Chairman, Mr. Lee Ocran and Mr. Ahmed Yakubu Salifu, Member of Board to his right

Electricity consumers in various parts of the country have expressed opinions on the recent tariff increase applicable to service providers: the Volta River Authority (VRA), Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo), Electricity Company

of Ghana (ECG) and the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL).

The VRA is demanding an increase from 15 Ghana pesewas per unit to 30 Ghana pesewas while GRIDCo has proposed an increase from 4 to 5 pesewas. NEDCo is

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OUR VISION

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

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asking for an increase from 16 to 43 pesewas per Kilowatt hour (KWh) and the GWCL wants an increase from GH¢1.70 to GH¢4 for one cubic metre (1,000 litres of water).

While some have kicked against the proposed increase, others are for the increase provided only these would translate into quality service.

Those against the increase are of the view that the utility service providers would always come with an argument for tariff increase to improve the services after receiving the approval, while services remain the same or even worse. Others also feel that the proposed increase are reasonable but must correspond with quality service delivery. Many people think the

utility companies must rather retrieve receivables from some public institutions and the government before asking for any tariff increase.

The VRA is proposing tariff increase to recover production cost. The Authority in 2011 for instance, spent about \$220 million buying crude oil, but was only able to recover just 60% of the cost.

Background of Tariff Adjustment

In July 2002, the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) published its Proposed Transitional Plan for Electricity Rate Adjustment for the period 2001-2004. A key component of the Transitional Plan involved the implementation of an Automatic Adjustment For-

mula (AAF). The main objective of the AAF was to review quarterly, electricity tariffs to reflect changes in factors whose effects on operations were considered beyond the control of the utility companies.

To a very large extent, volatility in the spot price of Light Crude Oil (LCO) on the international market and the Cedi — US Dollar exchange rate and their impact on electricity generation from thermal sources became the main focus of the model.

Though the Commission's Proposed Transitional Plan for Electricity Rate Adjustment was designed solely for electricity, its implementation also affected water tariffs. With respect to tariff adjustments based on the AAF, it is worth noting that crude oil pric-

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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

The VRA is proposing tariff increase to recover production cost. The Authority in 2011 for instance, spent about \$220 million buying crude oil, but was only able to recover just 60% of the cost.

es surged during the period of implementation of the formula from November 1, 2003 to April 30, 2006.

In the latter part of 2009, (November 2009) and early 2010 (January-February, 2010), the utility service providers submitted proposals to the PURC for upward review in tariffs. Consequently, the PURC, after critical analysis and evaluation of tariff proposals submitted by VRA, GRIDCo, ECG and GWCL, announced on May 31, 2010 an average increase of 89% in electricity and 36% in water tariffs effective June 1, 2010.

As part of the Commission's future Tariff strategy which was announced concurrently with the tariff increase on May 31, 2010, electricity and water tariffs were to be reviewed periodically under an Automatic Adjustment Formula. This decision, according to the PURC will help minimize the impact of long delays in approving adjustments in electricity and water tariffs.

To effectively address concerns of all stakeholders, the AAF which was implemented under the transitional plan has been revised taking into account other variables which have been identified as having significant impact on electricity and water tariffs approved by the Commission.

In a recent interview with Mr. Kofi Ellis, Director, Planning and Business Development, VRA, he noted that, the PURC's traditional system ensures that major tariff reviews are done every two years. This is done after a careful study and consideration of proposal submitted by VRA, for instance, for major price review based on cost of production.

"In-between the two new prices, is where you do the Automatic Adjustment based on fuel price hikes, exchange rate, changes in thermal and hydro generation patterns until two years is due before you can call for a major review. But if you fail to twig it, PURC will be expected to put into the major review all those adjustments you failed to do—that is what sometimes make it look too big. But in terms of quantum, the value we are talking about is still small for that commodity," he stated.

The Monster Called 'Percentage'

The VRA has made a strong case to back calls for tariff increase, to sustain its operations with demand outstripping supply over the last three years.

In the midst of the challenges, however, power being distributed in an on-going nationwide load shed-

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COST REFLECTIVE TARIFFS KEY TO SUSTAINING VRA OPERATIONS — *Board Chairman*

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

Board Chairman of the VRA, Ambassador (Amb.) Lee Ocran, has stated that paying cost reflective tariffs is critical to ensuring that VRA continues to stay in business.

Mr. Ocran made the remark when he addressed key stakeholders at the VRA's 6th Annual Stakeholders' Interface, held at Akosombo. The interface, likened to an Annual General Meeting, is the Authority's platform for discussing its performance.

Mr. Ocran noted that although tough measures had been taken by Management, the Authority made an operating loss of GH¢74.13 million in 2014, compared to a profit of GH¢208.11 million in 2013. He said, though the VRA had kept open some real possibilities for continued growth and development, as part of efforts to ensure electricity availability and accessibility, the Authority was unable to make a profit to even recover its operational costs for 2014.

He mentioned the volatile macro-economic situation of 2014, which, he said had resulted in numerous challenges and suggested that that was the reason he was calling for the cost-reflective tariffs, so that the VRA could sustain its operations.

VRA's Chief Executive, Ing. Isaac



VRA Board members and participants



Ambassador Lee Ocran

Kirk Koffi, told the stakeholders that the total energy sold to VRA's customers decreased by 576GWh (6%) in 2014, from 10,325GWh in 2013. The power system, he noted, was experiencing a load deficit of about 700MW. A situation, he said, had been compounded by low inflows into the Akosombo reservoir. He reiterated that the VRA was working on additional generation projects to complement the efforts of the government in improving the power supply situation. The 220MW KTPP Project, he said, was



Section of the key stakeholders

on-going and was expected to be commissioned by the end of 2015. Additionally, he said: "it is our expectation that the 250MW AMERI Power Project and the 38MW TT2PP Expansion Project would also be commissioned by the close of the year." "We are hopeful these additional generations would contribute to ameliorating the current situation," he added.

On the challenges encountered in 2014, the Chief Executive recounted that Jubilee Gas started arriving late in 2014, with frequent in-

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TAKORADI THERMAL (T3) POWER PLANT WILL BOUNCE BACK

MICHAEL DANSO — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, ACCRA

Management of the VRA is stretching every sinew to ensure the defunct T3 Power Plant is back in operations by the middle of 2017.

The decision to procure two new gas turbines to revive and re-commission the plant is not only prudent but critical, considering that all the Authority's generation facilities need to be marshalled to ameliorate the biting energy crisis that has been lingering on since 2012.

In 1994 government, as part of its move to increase generation capacity in the short term, acquired 420 acres of land for the construction of the T1 and T2 Power Plants. Following a power crisis in 2006 and 2007, the idea of expanding the facility to be called the T3 Power Plant was conceived. The 132MW Combined Cycle Plant was to be fired with gas or Light Crude Oil (LCO).

The expectations that heralded the completion of the USD\$270 million project became short-lived, as the plant failed to deliver the needed capacity addition at a time it was needed. This was particularly so as the idea of building the plant had been hinged on the energy crises of 2006 and 2007.

According to the Ag. Director, Thermal Generation, Ing. Richard Oppong-Mensah, barely two



months after beginning commercial operations in March 2013, the plant, originally designed to run on both LCO and natural gas, suffered a major hardware failure at its combustion and turbine sections, after operating two units on LCO. Eventually, it was decided to run the plant solely on natural gas.

There were also component failures in the remaining two units, rendering them unoperable. He said, the failures had been “consistent with design and manufacturing issues” and VRA has had to bear the loss in terms of revenue and undertaking repairs to revive the plant. It is evident that a lot of expenditure has gone into solving the problem. “With the loss of 132MW, we have had to procure this capacity from other sources. We continue to service our debts, in spite of the unavailable capacity for power generation,” he noted.

The failure of the plant resulted in speculations in the media. While the technocrats defined it as equip-

ment failure, believers of tradition suggested that the plant would continue to fail until a river god had been pacified and relocated from the plant premises. VRA had to bend its back to accommodate that view.

In spite of this, the machines continue to fail. Mr. Oppong-Mensah, whose team of engineers have collaborated effectively with the Canadian Commercial Corporation and their subcontractor, Magellan, on trying to solve the problem, says: “to forestall a recurrence of the situation, VRA’s standard rigorous tendering process when contracting power project should be strictly followed.” This he says, would ensure that only proven technologies were procured.

Ghana needs sustained power generation for development therefore, every effort must be made to ensure the existing facilities are in good shape. It’s therefore, gratifying that the VRA is doing all it can to enable the plant to bounce back.

TARIFF ADJUSTMENT: 'The Percentage Scare must Stop' ← Contd. from pg.3

ding is being threatened by the lack of natural gas from Nigeria to VRA's thermal facilities.

According to Mr. Ellis, an increase in tariff is critical, adding, the current tariff regime is affecting the operations of VRA. "For as long as we are not paying to cover the fuel and other things, then somebody has to take up that responsibility for the difference. And who else is taking that responsibility?"

It's difficult to get money from anywhere to make up for the difference so whoever consumes it, must be prepared to pay. Especially where the person's alternative(s) (candles, generators, etc) is costing him about six times more.

He emphasized that "for as long as the public complains that they cannot pay, somebody has to intervene to make up for the difference. It's either the consumer or the government paying for it. If not then we have to look for the difference from the financial market; these are the only options we have."

He argued that, the local media has periodically focused on the word called 'percentage' whenever there's a proposed tariff adjustment. He pointed out that "It is not the percentage that drives the argument –it is the value behind it. Let us not be obsessed with what does not actually drive the equa-

tion; let's deal with what drives the equation which is the true value of the commodity."

"I believe that the media must move away from the percentage concept. That is what we've been doing for the past five to ten years. I think this has been the problem for some time now. That has been the battle between producers and consumers. If you cannot pay for a commodity it doesn't change how much it cost to produce it. You just have to find ways to cover that cost of production."

He added, "if that cost of production is not fully covered, you'll get partial production and not full production because, if you're supposed to produce 100 and need 100 cedis and you're given 50 cedis, you'll produce 50."

Mr. Ellis stated that "we have demonstrated that fuel alone is costing us about 25-26 pesewas so we are asking for 30 pesewas plus so that the remainder will be used to cover the rest of our operations."

According to him, VRA is asking for 30 pesewas with the wild assumption that the cedi does not continue to fall. "Let's say the 30 pesewas we are asking for is eight cents. If tomorrow the cedi falls again against the dollar to let's say GH¢4.5, the 30 pesewas then becomes about 6.5 cents.

So if the eight cent was able to buy eight cargos of crude oil just a few steps ahead it will buy six cargos but; I need eight so who pays for the two? So if the cedi does not stabilize you'll see us coming again to ask for more tariffs. We cannot get money anywhere else to make up the difference."

The way forward for VRA

Meanwhile, some players and energy analyst in the power generation business have said that the new tariff regime when approved, will improve network protection systems, reduce outages, allow the connection of additional customers to the national *Contd. on pg.9→*

It's difficult to get money from anywhere to make up for the difference so whoever consumes it, must be prepared to pay. Especially where the person's alternative(s)(candles, generators, etc) is costing him about six times more.

VRA Chief Executive Honoured By Institution Of Engineers

SAMUEL DEGRAFT-JOHNSON — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS, ACCRA

The Chief Executive of the Volta River Authority (VRA), Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi has been honoured by the Ghana Institution of Engineers (GhIE), for demonstrating engineering excellence in planning, leadership, and organisation.

His award, which was in the Engineering Business Management category, was to recognise his leadership and management roles, which led to the procurement of design, supply and installation of PTFE bearing cavitation that saved Ghana the supply of 170MW which would have been lost for 30 days each year at the Akosombo Generating Station, beginning in 2010.

Other works that attracted recognition include the replacement of Analog Turbine Governors with digital ones in 2011; installation of the new General Electric (GE) Digital Exciter; initiating and securing

Contd. on pg.17→



VRA Adjudged Best Organisation in PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

INI-AM ISSAH SULEMANA — NATIONAL SERVICE PERSONNEL, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS, ACCRA

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has been adjudged the Best Organisation in Performance Management by HR FOCUS.

A citation to the award, received by the Director HR, Mr. Isaac Aidoo on behalf of the VRA, reads: "With a remarkable performance management philosophy and performance management system, your company continuously encourages its employees to soar to greater heights. Your effective performance management processes have enabled you to thoroughly evaluate and measure individual

performance and optimise productivity.

Your arduous efforts and passion to instill excellence in your employees have resulted in stellar performance management, which has in turn reflected in your output.

Your practices are in keeping with the finest traditions of performance management. Your organisation is not just a work place for employees, but a training ground where they are encouraged to deliver nothing but the best."

Contd. on pg.17



Director, HR, Mr Aidoo, receives the award, flanked by some staff members of the VRA

VRA Commissions BIOFIL Toilets At Kebenu

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH & NII AYITEY-STONE — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

The Chiefs and people of Kebenu in the Central Tongu District of the Volta Region have taken delivery of over thirty separate micro-flush standalone Biological Filtered (Biofil) water closet toilets.

The toilets valued at GH¢106,650 and assembled by the Biological Filters and Composters Limited (BIO-FILCOM), a Ghanaian manufacturing company was provided by the Volta River Authority (VRA) as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility to its impacted communities.

Deputy Chief Executive (Services), Ing. Joseph Sutherland, said: “Kebenu was chosen as the first beneficiary, because it had the highest schistosomiasis prevalence of about 85%.” He advised the beneficiaries to own the project, ensure good maintenance and observe the rules on their usage, so as to minimise the infection of bilharzia.

The District Chief Executive for Central Tongu, Mary Theodora Agbenyenu promised to ensure that the toilets are well kept. She said: “the Assembly would institute a sanitation award scheme to reward the best hygiene-conscious households..” *Contd. on pg.9→*



Ing. J.W. Sutherland speaking at the ceremony



Chief of Kebenu, Togbui Kofi Aho IV, addressing the gathering



A cross section of VRA staff and invited guests



Madam Mary Theodora Agbenyenu delivering her speech

VRA Commissions BIOFIL Toilets At Kebenu ← Contd. from pg.8

The Chief of Kebenu, Togbui Kofi Aho IV, thanked the VRA and expressed hope that the toilets would not only help reduce the prevalence of schistosomiasis but would also be the basis for good sanitation for the community.

The Project Engineer of BIOFILCOM, Mr. Dennis Buabeng, said his company was excited to have partnered the Authority in its desire to bring decent toilet facilities to its impacted communities.

Madam Abba Fiadjoe, Director, General Services, Mrs Thandy Chothia, Manager, Corporate Administration, and the Head of Nursing at the VRA Health Services (SBU), Love Ofori, were present at the function.



D.C.E (Services) cutting the tape to commission the facility

TARIFF ADJUSTMENT: 'The Percentage Scare must Stop'

← Contd. from pg.6

grid, increase the reliability of power supply to customers and improve infrastructure for quick service delivery.

Mr. Ellis believes that the new tariff proposal when approved would be a step in the right direction to improve electricity supply but that alone cannot guarantee a brighter future and an end to the operational challenges that the Authority incurs in the course of production.

He however proposed that, the VRA must adopt a paradigm shift from its traditional way of doing things. "The VRA has a brighter future if only we'll think with a private mindset. We have to start behaving like a private company and you can only do that very well if we allow some private injection into our way of doing things," he stated.

COST REFLECTIVE TARIFFS KEY TO SUSTAINING VRA OPERATIONS

— Board Chairman

← Contd. from pg.4

interruptions owing to the unavailability of some thermal facilities, and faults at the Atuabo facility and, particularly, erratic gas supply from Nigeria.

Ing. Koffi said VRA was considering additional gas supplies because of the inadequacy in supply from Ghana's own field and from Nigeria.

"Exploration of other sources of power generation, such as the 140MW of hydro from the Pwalugu and Juale in the Northern Region, construction of the 186MW T4 Power Project, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and Coal, have begun, as they are expected to play a major role in the country's generational mix," he stated.

Present included representatives of the Ministry of Power, Ministry of Finance, Energy Commission, Public Utility Regulatory Commission, State Enterprises Commission, Ghana Grid Company and Electricity Company of Ghana.

MOTEC-LIFE UK

Partners VRA

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH & NII AYITEY-STONE — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

Medical Director of the VRA Health Services, Dr. (Mrs.) Rebecca Acquah-Arhin, has called on health professionals to continuously update their knowledge, to ensure the delivery of effective and efficient services.

She made the remark during a three-day workshop organized for physiotherapists by the VRA in partnership with MOTEC-LIFE UK, a non-governmental organisation. She noted: “the health profession did not consist only of doctors and nurses. Rather it was a pool of vital sections which must work together to provide the best health care.”

The Nurse-in-Charge of the Physiotherapy Unit, Miss Gertrude Obodai, noted: “The role of the physiotherapist cannot be under-estimated and VRA’s readiness to embrace it is in the right direction.” She pointed out that since January 2015, VRA has been offering physiotherapy services and urged staff and their dependents to patronise it.

Health Services Manager, Mr. Kwasi Aniagyei, stated that a lot of changes were taking place in the



Group photograph of participants after the ceremony



Mrs. Rebecca Acquah-Arhin delivering her welcome address



Manager, VRA Health Services, Mr. Aniagyei addressing participants.

health sector, hence the need for industry players to adjust to these changes.

Former vice-president of MOTEC-LIFE UK, Dr. (Mrs.) Christine Amaechi, expressed her organisation’s satisfaction with the partnership with the VRA and called on stakeholders to ensure sustained training of physiotherapists.



A member of MOTEC-LIFE UK making a demonstration to the participants

HUMOUR BREAK



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Career Guidance And Counselling For VRA Scholarship Holders

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH & NII AYITEY-STONE — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

The Volta River Authority, through its Community Development Programme (CDP) Senior High School Scholarship Scheme, has provided Career Guidance and Counselling to 78 beneficiaries.

The programme, the third in a row, was held at the Akosombo International School and was aimed at equipping the beneficiaries with career guidance, particularly as they prepare for tertiary education.

Speaking at the function, Head of the Corporate Communications Unit (CCU), Mr. Samuel Fletcher, noted that the programme is crucial to the Authority's vision of ensuring that the beneficiaries received the necessary guidance in their education. "We believe these students have to be supported in their decision-making by receiving career guidance," he stated. He expressed hope that the platform would address the challenges that confront them.

Senior Community Relations Officer (CCU), Mrs. Rhoda Arthur, on behalf of the Director, Career and

Placement Centre, University of Ghana, Mrs Jocelyne Buckman, urged the beneficiaries to set realistic goals in their pursuit of academic excellence. She urged them to consider their interests, abilities, values and personalities while setting their goals and making career choices.

Mr. Samuel deGraft-Johnson, Mr. Ernest Fiifi Tharkor, Mr. Ulysses Hammond, Mr. Kwasi Darko Aniagyei, Major Jeff Kweifio Okai, Mr. Patrick Mireku, Mr. Augustine Asiamah, Mr. Love Aryee, Mr. Daniel Onny, Mr. Kwame Osei from the CCU, Hydro Generation, Legal Services, Environment & Sustainable Development, Engineering Services, Health Services, Projects & Systems Monitoring Departments and VRA Schools engaged the students during the mentoring session. They shared their experiences and encouraged them to be resilient in their quest for excellence.

Officials of the Ghana Education Service also took part in the programme. They advised the students to eschew practices that would bring the name of the Authority and their families into disrepute.



Head of Corporate Communications, Mr Fletcher addressing the Beneficiaries



Mrs. Rhoda Arthur delivering her speech



A section of the beneficiaries at the programme



Mentors sharing their experiences with the students



Group photograph of Mentors and Beneficiaries



The role of a Human Resource Manager, essentially, is to plan, direct, and coordinate the administrative functions of an organisation. He/she oversees the resourcing of staff; consults with Management on strategic planning and serves as a link between an organisation's Management and its employees. It is obvious that such a position must be very sensitive and challenging.

Managing people is not easy and sometimes, for no reason at all, the Manager can be disliked, even hated, for insisting on the right things. Some women have not shied away from the challenges that come with the position of Human Resource Manager and they deserve to be recognised and appreciated.

One such woman, who deserves to be celebrated for her exceptional leadership, is 58-year old Mrs. Adina Ayikailey Quarshie, Manager of the Accra-Tema Area Office of the Human Resources Department (HRD) of the VRA.

The following was the outcome of an interview with the VRA News (VN):

UP CLOSE WITH MRS ADINA QUARSHIE

MICHAEL DANSO & REXFORD DARKO, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS, ACCRA

VN: Who is Mrs. Adina Quarshie?

Adina Quarshie (AQ): (She chuckles) Mrs. Adina Ayikailey Quarshie hails from Accra - Ga and was born on May 30, 1956. I started my education at the Kumasi Ridge School and continued at Christ the King International School in Accra, owing to the many transfers my parents were involved in.

From Christ the King, I went on to Aburi Girls' Secondary School in 1969, and then to the University of Ghana, Legon in 1976, to read Psychology. At the time there was a lot of political unrest in the country, leading to several disruptions in academic work. Fortunately, I was able to complete my studies in 1979. This situation reduced the duration of my National Service to one month. In September/October 1979, I started my National Service in the Personnel Department of the Volta River Authority.

VN: When did you join VRA?

(AQ): I joined the Personnel Department of VRA in 1979. After I had worked for about thirteen months, I got married and had to leave to join my husband.

While away, I had the opportunity to work on a second degree in Business Management. When we returned home, I was re-engaged by the Authority through the Management Trainee Programme in May 1989 and started with the Organisational Services Department. This was, in effect, nine years after I had

left the Authority; I was then transferred to the Planning and Programming Project, which later became the Planning and Programming Department. I was subsequently transferred, following a restructuring, to the Human Resources Department, where I was appointed the Recruitment Officer. I served in that position for ten years until 2009, when, in response to an advert for the position of Accra Area Manager, I applied and was successful. I have held the position till date.

VN: How long have you worked with VRA?

(AQ): I have been with the Authority for 25 years now. My initial thirteen-months of course, does not count.

VN: What are some of your memorable experiences and lessons?

(AQ): I would say they are numerous. Over the years, I've worked under different leaders, with different leadership styles and ways of doing things. For instance, working under Mrs. Akuffo Freeman, a former Director of Human Resources, was an unforgettable experience.

One thing she taught me was: If you are ever in doubt when a superior asks you to do something, which you feel is not right, just write to confirm it, so that you have documentation to cover your actions. A Chinese proverb says 'the faintest ink is sharper than the sharpest

brain'. Never overlook the little mistakes you commit, because they will become big when you least expect them.

VN: How do you combine work and family life?

(AQ): Hmmm! I would say it's been relatively easy, since that was my lifestyle while we lived outside Ghana. While our two children were growing up, my husband, who was lecturing at Legon, would pick them up after school and then they would pick me up, so that we all went home together. The children were well-behaved, by God's grace, and so things were relatively easy to manage.

I have been married for the past thirty-four years to Rev. Dr. B. Y. Quarshie, currently Rector of the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture, at Akropong-Akuapem. In addition to the two children, we are also blessed with two grandchildren.

VN: Is it difficult being an HR Manager?

(AQ): Of course it is!! People always say that I am too rigid; I'm not nice; I don't help people." But if you get to know me, my philosophy is very simple.

I am in absolutely no doubt that I have to answer to a higher authority: One day, when I die and stand before the Lord, I want to be able to say I did the right thing at every turn while I had the opportunity on this earth. I always want to do what I know is right and to avoid doing what I know is wrong. As a Christian, I entreat all to be ethically sensitive and mindful of what is right and wrong.

VN: Does the VRA have a future?

(AQ): Of course, it does. Considering the current trends in the demand for electric power, and the considerable efforts that the Authority is making to generate more power from a variety of sources, it is obvious to me that the Authority has a very bright future.

VN: Any message for your colleagues?

(AQ): Well, I'll say the VRA is a very good employer, and for that matter workers should always endeavor to give of their best. If we don't put in our best as employees, we can't expect the Authority to have the capacity to offer the best care possible to us, as employees. I will urge my colleagues to change with the new VRA and make the Authority a better place, not only for themselves as employees, but also for the nation as a whole.

VRA LADIES ELECT NEW OFFICERS

The Newly-elected National Executive of the VRA Ladies' Association have pledged to uphold the tenets of the Association, serve with humility and ensure the promotion of women's welfare within the Authority.

Delivering a brief address at the handing over ceremony on September 3, 2015, the Outgoing president, Mrs. Tandy Chothia noted: "it is not an easy task mobilising women to achieve targets, but it is possible." She recounted the difficult experiences of the past and concluded by commending the newly elected as a "better team, who would keep the flame burning to attain greater heights."

The new president, Mrs. Stella Dey, expressed hope that her team would build upon the successes chalked by the outgone executives. She promised that her administration would contribute more to corporate issues and support public education. "We will champion the course of women in matters concerning capacity building, health, transfers, promotions and welfare," Mrs. Dey stated.

Deputy Chief Executive, Finance, Ms Alexandra Totoe who doubles as Patron of the Association was represented by the Principal Administrative Officer, Mrs. Sena Dornoo said: "the visibility of women within the organisation has increased since the inception of the VRA Ladies Association." She praised past executives for their invaluable contributions in helping to mobilize women for a better course. She congratulated the new executives on their election and hoped they would work hard.

Dignitaries at the function included the Ag. Director, Human Resource Department, Mr. George Koranteng, and the newly-appointed Chief Learning Officer of the VRA Academy, Mrs. Efua Garbrah Sarfo.



The new national executives taking the oath of office

Building Relationships

Relationship is the building block of every society. How we relate to people in our lives depends on how our relationship is at home. A relationship is the way in which two or more concepts, objects or people are connected.

You need to build relationships with people if you want them to become involved in your group or organisation.

In the business world we need relationships and support from people. When we network, we are finding ways to build relationships. A good business relationship helps us grow our business.

Also, relationships make us feel a sense of accomplishment when we positively help someone. In our everyday life we need relationship to demonstrate our expertise. The more we develop relationships, the more people will see us as subject matter experts. You need to share with people what you know so that they can provide opportunities for you.

For one to have a healthy and long-lasting relationship, one needs to consider the following:

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS ONE AT A TIME. Make yourself available to help others and make people feel important. First impressions are lasting.

BE FRIENDLY AND MAKE A CONNECTION. A friendly word or smile can make someone's day. Let the other person feel welcome.

ASK QUESTIONS. People love to talk about themselves and about what they think. Take time to listen to them attentively; they can become your good friends.

TELL PEOPLE ABOUT YOURSELF. People won't trust you unless you are willing to trust them. Tell them what you genuinely care about and what you think.

ACCEPT PEOPLE THE WAY THEY ARE. You don't have to agree with people all the time in order to form a relationship with them. Accept them for who they are and not what they are.

OVERCOME YOUR FEAR OF REJECTION. Many of us suffer from the fear of rejection. There's only one thing to do about that: get over it. If you want to form relationships, consider being rejected some of the time. You will be richly rewarded the rest of the time with the new relationships you have made.

BE PERSISTENT. People are often shy and suspicious. It takes a while to win trust. You can always form a relationship if you stick with it.

INVITE PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED. People want to become part of something bigger than themselves. Many people are looking for an opportunity to meet other people who share common goals. Do well to invite such people to get involved.

ENJOY PEOPLE. If you genuinely enjoy people, others will be attracted to your attitude. Most people will want to be around you.

In every relationship there are misunderstandings and some of the ways to fix relationships are listed below:

TAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO EACH OTHER. This is not always easy. Each person should take some time to listen while the other person talks.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE OTHER PERSON'S SHOES. Everyone in a conflict has distinctly different views of the situation. In the thick of a fight, people are usually convinced they are absolutely right. Try to see why the other person sees things the way he does. Just your attempt to do so will help the other person see that you are trying.

LOOK AT WHAT IS TRUE ABOUT WHAT THE OTHER PERSON IS SAYING. See if you

can correct the situation. If you need to apologise, go ahead and apologise. It may feel horrible, but an apology can often help a relationship get back on the right track.

SEPARATE EMOTIONS FROM REALITY. Everyone has emotions that surface intermittently. People often say things they don't mean when they are in the middle of an emotional upset. Allow time and space for people to feel their emotions before you try to work things out.

CONTINUE TO APPRECIATE AND RESPECT EACH OTHER. Even though it may be difficult, focus on the positive aspects of the relationship. If you show appreciation, the other person will often follow.

SPEAK FROM YOUR HEART. As you try to unravel the difficulty, keep focused on what you and the other person care about most.

DON'T GIVE UP YOUR PRINCIPLES. Don't sacrifice what you believe just to make a relationship work. If you give up on your principles you won't be effective and the relationship won't work anyway.

HANG IN THERE WHEN THINGS GET HARD. You can take some breathing room, but try not to give up on the relationship altogether. When things are the toughest, there are important lessons to be learned. It's best to keep a relationship in which you've invested your time and care.

You can act independently to improve any relationship. Even if the other person or group of people is/are acting negatively you can act in a way that is positive, respectful, constructive, and thoughtful. This may surprise people, and they may follow your lead.

Remember, Attention, Interaction and Motivation (AIM) can be a memory aid for relationship skills. If you AIM well at your target, you have a much better chance of reaching it.

VRA, Ministry Of Finance Resolve To Rescue VLTC

The fortunes of the Volta Lake Transport Company (VLTC) are expected to be revamped following the expected injection of an amount of three million dollars (\$3 million) into the company's operations.

Stakeholders took the decision at a recent two-day forum dubbed "VLTC Stakeholder's Engagement Forum" organized by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Volta River Authority at Akosombo to find lasting turnaround strategies to save the company from collapse.

The funds would help the company re-establish links with the Bulk Oil Storage and Transport Company Limited (BOST) and other Bulk Distribution Companies (BDCs) for continued business, generate and pay for salaries and undertake basic maintenance. The funds are also expected to help in the rehabilitation of the company's marine engines to improve operational efficiency and shorten turnaround time.

The Volta Lake Transport Company, a subsidiary of the Volta River Authority has over the past years been struggling to break even in its operations as a result of malfunctioning equipment and dwindling level of the Volta Lake.

Speaking on behalf of the sector Minister, Deputy Minister of Transport, Hon. Mrs. Joyce A.B. Mogtari said: "The VLTC performs an important national duty and therefore must not be allowed to collapse." She commended the stakeholders for taking up



Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi, Chief Executive, VRA



Hon. Mrs. Joyce A.B. Mogtari, Deputy Minister, Transport



The stakeholders in a memorable pose

the challenge to help government find a lasting solution to the challenges facing the VLTC.

Chief Executive of the VRA, Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi, who is the Board Chairman of VLTC, disclosed that over the last few years, VRA has assisted VLTC by paying their salaries so that they could focus on their operations. He stated: "despite VRA's challenges the Authority could look on unconcerned for the company to collapse."

The Director, Public Investment Division of the Ministry of Finance, Mrs. Magdalene Apenteng, who chaired the function said: "there is the need for the VLTC to go through a re-structuring

programme to ensure that whatever funds that are injected do not go waste." She said, restructuring the VLTC is critical to saving it from going down the drain, adding it would help put in place the needed structures to enable it function properly.

At the function were former Presidential Advisor on energy, Mr. Amarquaye Armar, former Chief Director of the Ministry of Transport, Mr. E.A Kwakye, Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, Ghana Maritime Authority and the National Development Planning Commission.

Strategic Risks And Their Management

INTRODUCTION

We have, for some time now, been looking at some types of risks and have discussed Human Resources and Financial Risks. This current article focuses on Strategic Risks and their Management.

WHAT ARE STRATEGIC RISKS?

Strategic risks are those risks that are most consequential to an organisation's ability to execute its strategies and achieve its business objectives. They are the risk exposures that can affect the organisation's viability. They manifest, when one or more future events invalidate the fundamental assumptions underlying an organisation's strategy or when the organisation's business model does not effectively align with its strategy.

They arise from both internal process issues and disruptive changes in the external business environment, due to the actions of competitors, changing customer wants, technological advances, changes in financial markets and the economy, and the actions of regulators, among others. They are therefore key matters for Management and the Board and have corporate-wide impact.

These risks are significant because they can be substantial value creators or killers, and more importantly may not be known to Management and the Board. For example, innovation of any kind can improve quality, create new markets, reduce costs, extend a product range, and replace products and services in ways that the market may not expect. Disruptive innovation, such as minicomputers dislodging mainframe computers, personal computers dislodging minicomputers, digital photography dislodging chemical photography, DVD players dis-

lodging VHS players and the internet altering the business-to-customer experience, has presented both opportunities and threats. An opportunity to leapfrog the competition as a result of creating or accelerating disruption, and a threat of being displaced due to reacting too late to competitor actions and other market developments.

TYPES OF STRATEGIC RISKS

Types of strategic risks include:

- New products or services development, technological change, capital projects, investments, economic factors affecting products/services sale and cost.
- Current and prospective impact of strategic decisions made by Management, arising from adverse business decisions, improper implementation of business decisions, lack of responsiveness to industry changes, etc.
- The risk resulting from an incorrect assessment of future market trends when making the initial strategy.
- Risks associated with future plans and strategies including plans for entering new services, expanding existing services through enhancement and mergers.
- Exposure to loss resulting from a strategy that turns out to be defective or inappropriate.

STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT (SRM)

Strategic risk management is a process, performed by Management, for identifying, assessing and managing the risks in the organisation's business strategy, including taking swift action, when any of these risks are actually realized. This aspect of risk management is focused on the most consequential

and significant risks to key stakeholders value, an area that requires the attention of Management and the Board.

BENEFITS OF SRM

Effective management of strategic risks will yield the following benefits:

- Preparation for major risks will enable mitigation of those risks and promote stability of the organization.
- An organisation that prepares better for risks than its competitors, will obtain competitive advantage.
- SRM is a tool for thinking systematically 'outside the box' about the future and helps in identifying downside risks and opportunities.
- SRM can transform strategic threats into growth opportunities and allow an organisation to move from a defensive position into an offensive one.
- SRM can also lead to optimisation of resource utilisation and cost reduction.
- It can further lead to value creation for the organisation and stakeholders. Value may be untapped and lost if the organisation views risk only as an impediment rather than a potential opportunity.
- Effective Strategic Risk Management protects and elevates the reputation of an organisation.

CONCLUSION

For effective achievement of strategic objectives, the Board and Management need to understand, identify, assess and manage the major risks that their strategies and strategic decisions involve.

Strategically managing such risks will not only protect against major losses, but reduce uncertainties and seize opportunities.

Chief Executive Honoured By Institution Of Engineers ← Contd. from pg.7

funding for the refurbishment of the Kpong Hydroelectric facility, and the implementation of the Modern Digital Multifunction Relay System.

Ing. Isaac Kirk Koffi, a Fellow of the GhIE, received the award at the recent Engineering Excellence Awards, held in Accra. The event was under the theme: **“Engineers, Rise up and Reconstruct the Nation.”**

Ing. Koffi graduated from the KNUST in 1981 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He joined the Volta River Authority (VRA) soon after as an Assistant Mechanical Engineer. He has risen through the ranks to become the Chief Executive of Ghana's biggest power generating company.

VRA Adjudged Best Organisation in PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ← Contd. from pg.7

The event, HR Focus Conference & Awards 2015, was organised to identify, recognise and honour organisations that have built up the tradition of best practices in human resource management. The occasion also gave organisations the opportunity to showcase some of their recruitment processes, products and services.

MTN and Vodafone won multiple awards, with the former winning the Overall Best Organisation in HR Practice. The event, held at the State House Banquet hall, was attended by staff of the HR Department and some subsidiaries.

VRA STAFF WIN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT IN TECHNOLOGY (IIMT) AWARDS

NATHANIEL EKUE MENSAH — CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, AKOSOMBO

Two employees of the Volta River Authority (VRA) have made the organisation proud by winning the International Institute of Management in Technology's (IIMT) Best Management Summary 2015 awards.

The recipients, Ing. Alfred Daniel Sackeyfio and Ing. Kenneth Mensah Arthur, Plant Manager, Takoradi Thermal Power Station and Manager, Mechanical Maintenance Section of the Akosombo Hydro Generation Department respectively were awarded for graduating with great distinction, “Magna Cum Laude”.

Sponsored by the Authority to pursue a one and half years Post Graduate Degree course in Executive Masters in Business Administration, in Utility Management, the recipients were presented with the first and third awards for their thesis in **“Asset Management of VRA's Fossil Power Generation Business”** and **“Strategic Analysis of Competitiveness of Public Electric Utility Companies in a Deregulated Environment – Case of Volta River Authority”** presented by Ing. Alfred Sackeyfio and Ing. Ken Arthur, respectively.

The IIMT of University of Fribourg in Switzerland is a leading Competence Center for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Utility (electricity, gas, water) Management, offering Executive Master Degree Programmes and International Research work.

Speaking to the VRA News from Switzerland, Ing. Ken Arthur expressed their gratitude to the Authority and assured that the knowledge acquired would greatly impact on the Authority's operations and promote the Authority's vision of setting the Standard for Public Sector Excellence in Africa.



Ing. Kenneth Mensah Arthur



Ing. Alfred Daniel Sackeyfio



The recipients and their wives celebrating their achievement



Christmas & New Year Message from **Chief Executive**

Colleagues,
Sooner than expected, the year 2015 is gradually winding up. Challenging as the year has been I am grateful to the Almighty God for steering us through the storm of operational challenges that confronted us.

Overwhelming and daunting as the challenges have been; we should be proud of our modest achievement as together we braced the storm and successfully navigated to the end. I am certain that our challenges have given us wider insights and perspectives into our challenges which should guide us in 2016.

Poor inflows into the lake again this year is an affirmation that we need to rethink our total dependence on hydro generation. Though it presents us with more financial challenges; thermal generation is the way to go. This is the very reason PURC would have to bend its back and approve a cost reflective tariff for our operations.

As Management, we would continue to put in place interventions that would enable us increase capacity. It is our expectation that before the end of first quarter 2016, KTPP and Station 3 Siemens Expansion projects would be fully operational adding about 240MW to the system. We are also working to bring the proposed T4 project to a financial close, so that work can start. Additionally, we are committed to ensuring the T3 project becomes operational again by 2017. Finally, we are actively collaborating with our Chinese partners; Shenzhen Energy, on the development of the 2000MW Coal-fired Power Plant. We expect that 700MW

of this project would be ready to supply power by end of 2019.

VRA remains confident its gas supply challenges would be effectively resolved. Additionally, we are pursuing our engagements with private entities for the provision of more gas. Also, we anticipate that the completion of the proposed gas reverse flow project would in the future boost gas supply in the Tema enclave.

These, in our view, should strengthen our position, as sustainability in gas supply would bring the relief desired to meet our obligation of providing adequate, regular and stable power.

Our restructuring efforts were taken to the next level with the successful inauguration of Boards for these Strategic Business Units. It is our hope the Board Members would provide the needed leadership to ensure the Units become commercially viable entities.

Friends, Christmas is a season of love, joy and thanksgiving to God, friends and family. However challenging, God has seen us through, and so we must be appreciative of His goodness and mercy.

All said and done, let us celebrate the Season with care so that in 2016, we would return in good health, and together forge ahead with tenacity of purpose.

I am sincerely grateful for your hard work. Let us continue to work together and make VRA a preferred utility service provider of choice. I wish you all a Joyous Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Ing. Kirk Koffi



Ding Dong Merrily! The reminiscence of Christmas bells and carols echo in the air. Ding Dong Verily! The Christmas bells are just about to start ringing, reminding us that the curtains are being drawn on yet another eventful year. Yes, reminding us to pause and say Ebenezer! (1 Samuel 7:13-14) oh Yahweh, thou has been our Rock of Ages! You have been our Great Assurance Provider!

In preparation for the upcoming yuletide, I gratefully pause to wish you all a warm and happy Holiday Season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year. 2015 has both been problematic and successful in almost equal measure at the National, Corporate and Household levels. We continued to struggle with inadequate tariffs and mounting receivables culminating in liquidity challenges. We also chalked some success keeping ourselves together. Some of our capex such as KTPP are on course to help us weather the ‘dumsor’ menace and improve our service delivery as well as add value to the lives of Ghanaians. We also received national recognition for our Performance Management System.

Nonetheless, without the support of our stakeholders our struggle to survive as a corporate entity is akin to a drowning man clinging to a crocodile to survive. From the Internal Audit perspective, I would really like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your steadfastness – Members of the Authority, Executive, Management, Staff and our cherished clients, and indeed the committed staff of the Audit Department, for your spirit of collaboration, forbearance and tenacity.

There is no gainsaying the fact that times are changing and we are living in interesting times but with a bleak future. May be it is tautology to say that change is the only constant factor that does not change. We are currently at the threshold of navigating through the restructuring exercise. Some would be asking: so how is Internal Audit preparing to go along with us? Better still, what initiative is Audit going to introduce and execute with novelty in the New Year? You would agree with me that the changes in our business world today and the risks associated with them are accelerating like Usain Bolt on tartan tracks. Internal Audit, The Champions of Excellence, is poised to navigate these risks together with all stakeholders.

Even though we all dream, the achievers are those that strive to work towards the attainment of their dreams, whilst that of non-achievers is relegated to the limbo of industrial forgetfulness.

The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), which is the standard setting body for internal audit function globally, recently unveiled enhancements to its body of knowledge to provide Internal Auditors worldwide guidance to assist their organizations navigate business risks associated with thought-provoking times like ours. In consonance, one of the new things we will do in the New Year is to live by the new IIA Mission for internal auditing viz: **“To enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight.”** The newly introduced mission articulates what internal audit aspires to accomplish within an organisation.

In the words of Larry Harrington, Senior Vice Chairman of the IIA’s Global Board, “the enhancements are designed to strengthen internal audit’s position as an invaluable partner in business success. As we traverse an increasingly complex business environment, we must be clear what internal audit’s mission is and underscore the basic tenets and principles that will continue to propel our profession forward.”

The message of Christmas is the message of the heaven host: **Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men.** It is a peace the world cannot give, peace that the world cannot take away. This provides us assurance to look ahead with hope. Faith makes everything possible, Hope makes everything work, and Love makes everything beautiful.

May you have all the Three as you begin the New Year.

May your holidays sparkle and shine as you renew your faith and refresh yourself to carry the Authority to new heights. I wish you, your families and loved ones a very special Christmas and Happy New Year devoid of “dumsor”!

**Mr. Jabari Napour,
Director, Audit**





The year 2015 is coming to a close and we are grateful to the Almighty God for bringing VRA this far. The past few years have been increasingly challenging for the Authority and 2015 has been no exception. I take this opportunity to thank all staff of the Planning and Business Development Department for all their efforts, commitment and support in these trying times.

Our Department continued to guide and monitor the strategic direction of the Authority, by administering the Corporate and Departmental Balanced Scorecard (BSC) system for monitoring organisational performance. We also monitored the budget of the Authority judiciously, in the face of limited financial resources.

In terms of gas supply for 2015, the Authority benefitted from an increased supply both from Nigeria and Ghana. Supplies from Nigeria (at certain times) were even above the contractual volumes. Raising enough funds to pay for these supplies has been a major source of worry this year. The Authority still procured light crude oil to supplement gas supply for thermal production, with very serious consequences on the finances of the Authority.

We maintained focus on all our customers, providing reliable and regular information, especially on the present load shedding. Our interaction with the PURC intensified, in 2015, for a major tariff adjustment for regulated customers. We engaged consumers and stakeholders nationwide to justify the need to pay tariffs that covered the cost of production. We are very hopeful that we will have reasonable tariff adjustment to support the Authority's finances.

Our department has been very active in the development of the 2000MW Coal fired Power Plant with our

Chinese partners, Shenzhen Energy. It is expected that 700MW of this project will be ready to supply power by end of 2019.

The Ghana Power Sector continues to struggle through the on-going load management, owing to a power supply shortfall, and this has seriously affected the Authority's finances as well as its image. A number of interventions, including the completion of the Kpone Thermal Plant, are being put in place and we expect the situation to greatly improve by the end of 2015.

The challenges of 2016 are expected to be many. With the lower than expected water inflow into the reservoir in Akosombo this year, the energy demand supply dynamics of 2016 will require careful planning for the Authority to maintain its financial viability. Increase in energy demand with an inadequate selling price, will call for the careful planning of our business strategy, to successfully go through 2016. As the competitive electricity market picks up speed, we need to be more business-minded, to ensure that we maintain our customers, and possibly increase our share of the electricity market. This department will continue to pursue new business areas and work towards reducing the cost of operation of VRA, to make us more competitive.

I, therefore, urge the entire staff of VRA, and especially staff of this department, to play their various roles with dedication, time-consciousness and cost-effectiveness in 2016.

I wish all staff of VRA and their families a very Happy New Year, filled with good health and abundant blessings from God.

**Mr. Benard Kofi Ellis,
Director, Planning
& Business Development**

The VRA News wishes all its cherished readers

*Merry Xmas &
Happy New Year*





Greetings!

This year has been tortuous and we thank God for seeing us through despite all our challenges. The year 2015 saw us operating below our minimum 240ft and recording a very low inflow of 16.48MAF. The dwindling fortunes of our hydro put a strain on our finances and gave us negative publicity.

Thankfully, we were able to capitalise on this seemingly gloomy situation to carry out all our maintenance activities for sustained reliable operations in the years ahead. During 2015 we were able to replace all analog protection relays on all six generators at Akosombo. We also completed modernising and upgrading of the low and medium voltage switchgears at Akosombo. The Kpong GS Retrofit Project is also progressing steadily and, as with any major plant refurbishment, the first unit (19G2) has revealed many major unforeseen defects, and, therefore, not covered in the original scope. These additional works are critical for the realisation of project objectives and would require additional funding.

I am delighted to note that for two years running we

have not recorded any lost-time accident in any of our hydro plants, and have managed to maintain a cordial industrial climate.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the maintenance, operating, planning and administrative teams for their commitment and hard work. Indeed, we couldn't have sailed through "stormy 2015" without collectively keeping our hands on the plough. Ayekoo!

On behalf of the Hydro Family, I extend my gratitude to our support Departments for their support services. We couldn't have sustainably managed and operated our hydro assets without the support services. While we enter into a New Year, we look forward to collaborating with all Units and Departments to move the Authority closer to its vision.

As we unwind this festive season, I ask all of us to reflect on the events of 2015 and plan for a successful 2016.

I wish you all Afihyia Pa!

Ing. K.B. Amoako,
Director, Hydro Generation Department

All too soon, the year 2015 is drawing to a close. We are grateful to the Almighty God for guiding us through the turbulent waters of the year, thus far.

It is a fact that the Authority has been confronted with serious financial challenges for quite some time now, which has spilled over into this year, leading to a slowdown of activities of the department in particular and the Authority as a whole.

However, I would like to congratulate every member of staff of the Engineering Services Department for their resilience through the year, which has seen us this far in spite of the challenges and to commend the sacrifices they have all made in bringing the department this far.

As we get ready to embark on the traditional Christmas break, I would like to call on every member of staff to do an evaluation of 2015, identify whatever mistakes we might have made, and formulate fresh perspectives to determine our strategies for action in the ensuing year.

I trust and hope that even while we commemorate the divine birth of our Redeemer, we would not only celebrate but also stay conscious of our health, spiritual as well as physical needs that would ensure our readiness to confront the year 2016 with fresh vigour to take the department for that matter, the Authority to heights never attained before.

I take the opportunity to wish each Tom, Dick and Harry a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year, 2016, in advance.

May God Bless us all.

Ing. Charles Addo
Ag. Director,
Engineering Services Department





INTRODUCTION

Very soon, the year 2015 would be history and we would be ushering in a new one: 2016. Our attitude to CHANGE will determine our success or otherwise in the coming New Year.

CHANGE, it is said, is the only constant in our world. Some say the only permanent thing is CHANGE; EVERYTHING ELSE CHANGES! How you handle change has a direct effect on your success or failure in life. Even as you read this piece, your body is going through various changes. Let's have a few examples, to start with:

YOUR SKIN: The epidermis, or surface layer of the human skin, is renewed every two to four weeks.

YOUR TASTE BUDS: The tongue is covered with around 9,000 taste buds that help us detect sweet, salty, bitter or sour flavours. The buds renew themselves every ten to fourteen days.

YOUR BRAIN: We are born with all the brain cells we'll ever have – around 100 billion – and most of the brain does not regenerate as it gets older. In fact, it dies! We actually lose brain cells, which is the underlying reason for dementia and why head injuries can be so devastating.

YOUR LUNGS: The cells on the lung's surface renew every two or three weeks.

YOUR INTESTINES: OUR intestines are lined with cells known as villi – these are tiny, finger-like branches that increase the surface area and help the intestine absorb nutrients. They have a very high turnover rate and are replaced every two to three days.

YOUR LIVER: The liver is known for its amazing capacity to repair and re-grow itself thanks to its rich blood supply. This means it can continue with its main job of flushing toxins out of the body. Liver cells only have a life span of around 150 days.

YOUR HAIR: Each individual hair lasts up to six years in women and three years in men. Eyebrows and eyelashes are renewed every six to eight weeks.

YOUR NAILS: We all know that our finger and toe nails change. Our nails are made of cells rich in a tough protein called keratin. Fingernails grow by 3.4mm every month - almost twice as fast as toenails.

As you can see, various parts of our bodies go through various changes. Not only do our bodies go through changes, but even our environment also changes, as do circumstances in our lives. People around us change and these affect us in many ways. Seeing that change is a certainty in our lives, it becomes imperative that we approach life's changes with the right attitude, if we are to make it work for us.

But what is CHANGE anyway? What should be the right attitude to CHANGE? What is CHANGE? Among the many definitions of CHANGE in the English Encarta Dictionary, I like the one that defines CHANGE (Verb) as: "Pass from one state to another." Indeed, the opposite of CHANGE is "Status Quo" – things remain the same.

Before we proceed, I would like to state that there is a being who doesn't change; that being is GOD. God does NOT CHANGE! Scriptures from the Old as well as the New Testaments assert the fact that God does NOT CHANGE!

*Mal 3:6 (New International Version – NIV)
(6) "I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.*

*Jas 1:17 (New International Version – NIV)
(17) Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

SO GOD IS NOT SUBJECT TO CHANGE; WE ARE!

Change is a reality of our life. Change is the only constant thing in life. No day is the same as the other; each day's experience is different from the previous one's.

Consequently, we have a choice of how we see CHANGE; we have a choice in the attitude with which we handle change. Change will inevitably happen. The question is: How should you see or handle CHANGE? I present to you, dear reader, three ways people often react to CHANGE and will suggest one attitude with which one can benefit from the changes that confront you.

1. RELUCTANCE, OR RESISTANCE, TO CHANGE

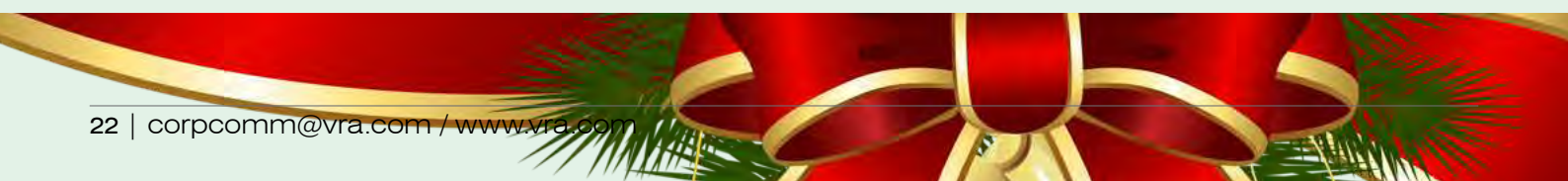
We find that most people are afraid of Change. Many of us tend to be Reluctant to Change or Resist Change because:

- We are creatures of habit
- We fear the unknown
- Change brings uncertainty and ambiguity
- Change requires moving out of our comfort zone
- Deep changes always involve a paradigm shift: New cultures, new systems, new standards, etc,' and these involve painful transitions.

As a result, many of us are reluctant to change; some even resist change. That is why some of us go to great lengths to cover up change. Some of us refuse to grow because we fear the change our bodies are presenting us with. Many men and women go to great lengths to appear younger, with the application of cosmetics. The result is that they tend to look like caricatures of their former selves.

Some even go to the extreme extent of undertaking plastic surgery to cover up age. Unfortunately, some die in the process.

Reluctance, or resistance, to change





holds us back in every way; spiritually, socially, physically, financially, etc. When you develop resistance to change, you fail to see new information as and when it appears .

Resistance, or reluctance, to Change is dangerous! Resisting Change is DEADLY!!!

Another view to change is Tolerance, or being Impervious, to change.

2. TOLERANCE OR IMPERVIOUS TO CHANGE

Some people make strenuous efforts to tolerate CHANGE. They try to be neutral and often become impervious to or ignore change. They exhibit what I call “the heating frog syndrome”. This type of response, or attitude, to change was demonstrated in an experiment with a live frog. When the frog was dropped into boiling water, it immediately jumped out. But when it was dropped in normal-heat water and the water put on an electric stove, the frog remained in the water until it was boiled and died.

Why? Because the change in temperature was gradual and incremental, and so the frog tolerated it. That response to Change is also DEADLY!

A lot of the negative social changes in our lives fall in this category – they are gradual or incremental. As a result, many of us tolerate CHANGE.

Tolerating CHANGE is also DEADLY! Recognise Incremental Change and respond appropriately. Ignoring or Tolerating Change can be DEADLY! Remember “the heating frog syndrome”.

3. EMBRACE AND ANTICIPATE CHANGE

The best response to CHANGE is to embrace it, even anticipate it. As you enter the New Year, you should be excited about CHANGE. It is only when you Embrace CHANGE and let CHANGE work for you that you fully benefit from CHANGE.

As you work for the Authority, remember that a time will come when you will be required to separate because you are due for retirement. How are you preparing for that CHANGE? Are you waiting to receive a letter from HR before you frantically look for a place to call your own? That CHANGE will come, whether you prepare for it or not. The smart person will take note and acknowledge that change will come and take steps to prepare for it. Indeed, I would even suggest that if you are currently staying in an institutional house, you take steps to get your own place and relocate, way before you are due to retire. That way, you would be well acclimatised to the new environment and usher in that phase of your life, with minimum disruption. This is what it means to Embrace and Anticipate Change.

But God requires us to CHANGE. God requires renewing of our mind. In effect, God requires us to embrace Change. As Apostle Paul wrote in the book of Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2 (reproduced below):

Rom 12:2 (New International Version – NIV)

(2) Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

Every growth and development require CHANGE. For you and me to improve in life, we must change! Growth is impossible without CHANGE.

CONCLUSION

As long as we live in this body, we are subject to change. Whether we like it or not, CHANGE HAPPENS. Change happens to our bodies. Change happens to our environment. Change happens to our relationships. Change

happens to our loved ones. Indeed, change happens even to the Universe!

How should we see Change? What should be our attitude to CHANGE as we enter the New Year? EMBRACE CHANGE. ANTICIPATE CHANGE and plan for it. Take advantage of CHANGE and let CHANGE work for you. CHANGE IS INEVITABLE.

I leave you with six quotes about CHANGE:

1. Resisting change is deadly. So don't resist change.
2. Not anticipating change is short-sightedness.
3. Allowing change to by-pass you is anachronism.
4. Letting change work for you is wisdom and gain.
5. Remember, Growth is Impossible without Change.
6. The only thing that does not change is change.

Never forget that Growth is Impossible without Change!!!

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

EMBRACE THE CHANGE!

**Ing. Theophilous Nii Okai
Director,
ESSD & PSMD**





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

Final part

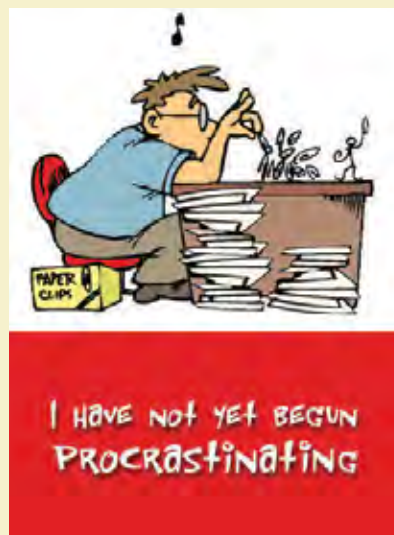
4. Be accountable. It is always easier to get things done if you have a deadline looming, or someone to account to. Set your date, and commit to it in a big way – you will naturally step up to the challenge. Here are some ideas:

- Need to get an important presentation or signature-talk prepared? Commit to do a review or “dry run” with a colleague or peer, at a defined date.
- Want to launch a new book, product or service? Announce a launch date, publicly commit to it and then identify a coach, consultant, peer or colleague to support you in getting there.

5. Take a “No Excuses” approach. This is probably one of the most empowering

commitments that an individual can make. Never allow excuses, such as, ‘I do not have time’, or ‘I am too busy’ to get in your way. YOU always have a choice!

Delay is a reality in our lives, but it is up to you to decide whether you will allow it to control your thoughts, your mindset and your life. Whether it is a difficult phone call, an inconvenient conversation, a new business project, or even business administration or marketing, do not delay your own success – Just go out there and do it!



IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- ◆ CE's Vision

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

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