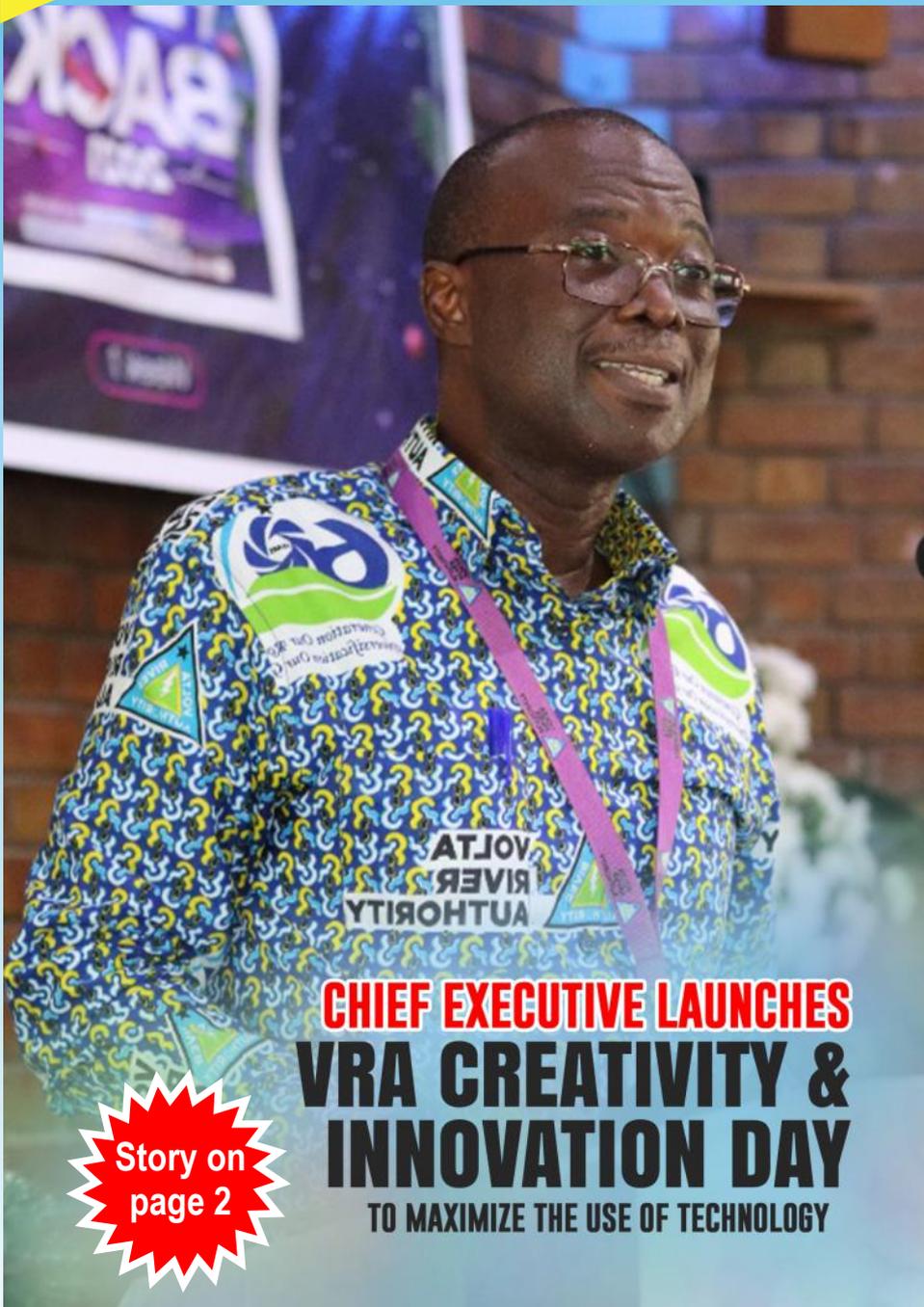


VRA NEWS

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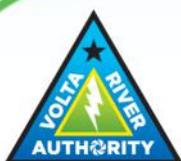
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IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING

A MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY CAMPAIGN

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**VOLTA
RIVER
AUTHORITY**

CHIEF EXE. LAUNCHES VRA CREATIVITY & INNOVATION DAY TO MAXIMIZE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra

In the quest to fully exploit the use of technology and modernization in its operations, the Chief Executive of the Volta River Authority (VRA) Mr. Emmanuel Antwi-Darkwa has launched the VRA Creativity and Innovation Day programme.

The event which has been incorporated into VRA's corporate calendar, would be celebrated annually to drum home the need to employ technology and innovation to resolve emerging challenges in the energy sector.

Launching the Creativity and Innovation Day which formed part of VRA's 61st Anniversary celebration, the Chief Executive drew attention to the need to adapt quickly to the evolving global energy trends to stay relevant and competitive since the massive technology transformation in the energy sector is set to alter the conventional energy supply channels.

According to him, the new technology is presenting viable solutions with the capacity to



The Creativity and Innovation Committee.

maximize the use of natural sources, rather than traditional fossil fuels.

He stated that, “The world of today is not the same as the world of 60 years ago. There are a lot of changes in the world, especially in the energy industry. A lot of things are evolving and our sector in Ghana is also adapting in response to what's happening in the world. Our objective as an institution is to modernize our operations so that we are not different from the big boys in the sector throughout the world.”

Mr. Antwi-Darkwa used the occasion to inaugurate a 12-member Steering Committee that would manage the celebration of the Creativity and Innovation Day as part of the VRA Day every year.

A member of the Steering Committee, Ing. Philip Tetteh Padi, Principal Water Resources and Generation Planning Engineer, in a presentation justified that the program would help redefine VRA's operations to remain the market leader.

He noted that, “We have just launched the initiative activity and everybody in VRA must adapt to it and come out with ideas so that we do things differently. Our top Management is so committed to making sure that we work differently, so that going forward we can do our things diligently, efficiently, and smarter.”



The Chief Executive exchanging pleasantries with the Committee members.

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS BRANCH TO BE RESTRUCTURED

Benjamin Yemo Quarshie, CSR/CR, Akosombo



Mr. Edward Obeng-Kenzo

The Engineering and Operations (E&O) Branch of the Volta River Authority (VRA) is to undergo a massive restructuring exercise to boost teamwork, performance, and efficiency to streamline its business processes to meet the evolving commercial objectives of the Authority.

The process will re-order the organisational hierarchy of the six departments under the Branch, namely Engineering Services, Hydro Generation, Technical Services, Environment & Sustainable Development, Thermal Generation and Commercial Services to fully utilize their expertise.

The Deputy Chief Executive, (E&O), Mr. Edward Obeng-Kenzo made this known when he met with staff of the Hydro Generation, Environment and Sustainable Development and Technical Services Departments in Akosombo recently.

According to him, the restructuring is to prudently position VRA's business to ensure it becomes more efficient as possible and ultimately have a significant impact on future profits and the Sustainability Plan.

He demystified fear and agitations about the change which he said would

move some units from one department to the other. He emphasized that the restructuring is to ensure compliance to achieving corporate goals. "Just like a football team; a mid-fielder replacing the injured goalkeeper is just a strategy to win the match," he said.

"See the VRA business as yours. Own it. Be accountable to it. Be committed to it and make sacrifices to it as if it is your private business so that at the end of the day, we will all go home and enjoy the fruit of our labour and be happy within ourselves", he urged staff.

He said VRA as an organisation is transitioning from the way it operated 60 years ago but the cardinal area of change rests entirely on its Engineering and Operations Branch. "If Engineering and Operations fail, VRA fails. As Engineering and Operations, we do not have a cause to fail, therefore, we must do better than what we did 60 years ago", he said.

He stated further that, "Every single staff is important regardless of what you do; together we achieve a common goal. There is strong competition in thermal generation now, and I believe we can do it better than the Independent Power Producers."



Some staff of the E&O Branch at the meeting.

CURBING AKOSOMBO PERENNIAL FLOODING: STORM DRAINS TO BE EXPANDED

Benjamin Yemo Quarshie & Emmanuel Okyere-Boateng, CR, Akosombo.

The storm drainage systems in the Akosombo Township are to be redeveloped and expanded to prevent the perennial flooding of households, streets and key institutions in the town when there is a heavy downpour.

This was disclosed by the Director, Engineering Services Department (ESD), Ing. Kwaku Wiafe, during an inspection of some flood affected areas in Akosombo following a heavy downpour in the town recently.

Ing. Wiafe who was in the company of the Deputy Chief Executive, (DCE) Services, Ing. Kenneth Arthur said a contract had been awarded for the expansion of the drainage systems and the contractor was mobilizing to move to site to kick start the expansion project.

Other Senior Officers who formed part of the inspection team included Surveyor, Adomako-Mensah, Director Real Estates & Security, Ing. Isaac Bedu, Manager, Project Management, Mr. Dzefi Ametefe,



DCE, Services, and the team inspecting one of the affected areas.

Akosombo Estates Supervisor, Mr. Michael Brempong Environment Sanitation Supervisor, and Mr. Samuel Amoah, Development Control Supervisor, AMC.

Areas visited included Church Ridge, CO Quarters, VLTC Quarters, Cuddle Me International School, Combine, and Akosombo Fire Station among others where affected victims pleaded for

expansion of gutters and drainage systems to avert recurrence.

DCE, Services, Ing. Ken Arthur tasked Director, Engineering Services to factor in all pertinent concerns raised by the victims of the flood in his report to enable the project contractor to execute a good job.



One of the victims indicating the level of the water when it flooded his house



Another victim explaining a point.

VRA THREATENS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST SENTUO STEEL OVER POLLUTION AT TTPC

Linda Appiah, CSR, Kpone



Thick smoke emitting from Sentuo Steel.

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has hinted that it would initiate legal action against Sentuo Steel Limited, a Chinese steel manufacturing company operating within the Tema industrial enclave over air pollution at the Tema Thermal Power Complex (TTPC).

According to Manager of the Complex, the unguarded pollution from the chimneys of the Chinese firm which has persisted since 2010 is compelling the Authority to press legal action against it, since all efforts to address the issue has proved futile.

Addressing the media during an inspection in Tema recently, Ing. Samuel Anim Yeboah, Plant Manager, TTPC, said air pollution in the form of thick smoke that comes from Sentuo Steel (which share a common wall with the power complex) was not only affecting the operations of the Plants but also, the health of workers.

He said apart from the smoke that permeates the whole atmosphere at the complex, the wind also carries a mix of sand and iron dust directly into the turbines. According to him, “the turbines need to operate effectively in a clean environment. Dust that emanates from Sentuo Steel chokes the filters embedded in the power turbines which also increases the of cost maintenance.”

He noted that the Tema Thermal Power Complex adds about 300 megawatts of installed capacity to the national electricity grid and the activities of the Steel Company continue to negatively affect the operations of the two thermal plants at the station as well as some key entities in the energy sector operating from the complex.

He said, although VRA has reported the issue to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), no action has been taken against the company. He, further, intimated that the EPA should call Sentuo Steel to order.



Industrial waste and smoke at the wall between TTPC & Sentuo Steel.



Ing. Yeboah addressing the press



Officials of VRA engaging the media.

VRA DONATES 20-SEATER BIOFIL FACILITY TO ADJENA SECTECH

Linda Appiah & Gregory Naaeke, CA&ER Kpone



The Biofil facility. (Insert), The school's pit latrine.

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has commissioned a 20-seater Biofil sanitation facility which comprises 10 Microflush Biofil with Urinal for males and 10 Microflush Biofil with a changing room for female students of Adjena Senior High/Technical School in the Asuogyaman District.

This gesture which is worth One Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand Ghana Cedis (GHc175,000.00) formed part of the Authority's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) under its Community Development Programme.

The project became necessary following a request made by the school because of an upsurge in enrolment numbers with the introduction of the Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy. In line with the Authority's support for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG'S), the facility was designed to address the poor sanitary conditions in the school in a manner that is environmentally sustainable.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Samuel Fletcher, Manager, Community

Relations, expressed VRA's continuous commitment to supporting needy schools within its catchment areas. He highlighted the need to mainstream the issues of sanitation and encouraged all stakeholders to contribute toward improving the status quo. He also advised the students to take care of the facility to derive the needed benefit from it.

Mrs Rhoda Arthur, Principal Community Relations Officer, on her part explained the focus of the Authority's Community Development

Programme (CDP). The CDP provides social support for VRA-impacted communities in the areas of Education, Social infrastructure, Health, etc. She particularly encouraged the students to take their studies seriously to benefit from the VRA scholarship programme for tertiary students.

The Chief of Adumasa, Nana Ansah Kwao IV, on his part, pleaded with VRA to adopt and collaborate with the school to include Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to create job opportunities for students and members of the Adjena community.

Mr. James Afadu, The Headmaster of Adjena SHTS, on behalf of the school Management expressed appreciation to the Authority for its continuous support. Appreciating the gesture, he recounted the struggles of both staff and students as they depended on a dilapidated toilet structure for convenience. Therefore, the newly built 20-seater Biofil facility donated by VRA will significantly improve the health and sanitation conditions of the school.

Present at the ceremony were the District Chief Executive (DCE) for Asuogyaman District, Hon. Samuel Kwame Agyekum, the Project Manager, Biofil Limited, Mr. Dennis Kwaku Buabeng, and VRA Community Relations Officers.



Group photograph of dignitaries, officials of VRA, school authorities, opinion leaders and students.

THREE VRA IMPACTED COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM SOLAR-POWERED MECHANIZED WATER PROJECTS

Linda Appiah & Gregory Naaeke, CA&ER Kpone



Okogyeaman Kwasi Anyan I, cutting a tape to officially commission the water project as Director E&SDD applauds.



One of the solar-powered projects.

Three VRA impacted communities in the Eastern and Volta regions have benefited from the Authority's three Solar-powered mechanized water projects at a cost of GHS180,000.00, aimed at providing potable water solutions.

Each of the communities: Battorkope, Dansokrom-Asikuma and Akplorti (Agbeve) received one of the Solar-powered mechanized water systems in partial fulfilment of VRA's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy to its impacted communities.

Director, Environment & Sustainable Development, VRA, Mr. Benjamin Arhin Sackey, in an address at Dansokrom-Asikuma in Asuogyaman District, reiterated the Authority's long-standing social contract with its impacted communities.

He stated that VRA sees the construction of the solar mechanized water solution as part of its social contract to its impacted communities, who are important stakeholders in the Authority's business operations. He said the essence of the water projects was to ensure that the communities are guaranteed safe and treated water at no cost to them.

Mr. Samuel Fletcher, Manager, Community Relations, said the vision of the Authority was to prevent diseases through the provision of safe and treated water to all its impacted communities.

The District Chief Executive (DCE) of Upper Manya Krobo, Joseph Sam commended VRA for its unflinching support to the people of the Upper Manya district over the years; adding that, the water project is critical because the lives of children and women will be improved.

Chiefs of the beneficiary communities expressed their gratitude to the Authority for providing potable water to them and gave the assurance that the water facilities would be properly managed sustainably.

The Solar-Powered Mechanized water projects were executed by Project Maji Foundation, a subsidiary of Binatone.



A group photograph of traditional/opinion leaders, staff of VRA and the project contractor.

VRA COLLABORATES WITH REGULATORY AGENCIES TO PROTECT VOLTA LAKE

Benjamin Yemo Quarshie, CSR, Akosombo



The fact-finding team.

The Volta River Authority (VRA) in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Water Resources Commission, Fisheries Commission, and the Asuogyaman District Assembly, have embarked on a four-day monitoring and inspection programme along the shoreline of the Volta Lake to clamp down on illegal private developers whose activities negatively affect the quality of water of the Lake for hydropower generation.

Ahead of the programme, Manager, Environment and Social Impact (ESI) of VRA, Mr. Ulysses Ocran-Hammond briefed the monitoring team on the importance of the exercise which specifically sought to stop illegal activities especially in the aquaculture business that affect the integrity and sustainability of the Lake.

According to him, the importance of the Lake as source of potable water, irrigation, fishing farming, and employment among others cannot be overemphasised and urged the

representatives of the regulatory agencies to ensure compliance.

The Surveillance Monitoring Team which was led by Mr. Emmanuel Muallah, Environment Officer, VRA, visited nine aquaculture sites to inspect their operational permits and level of compliance.

The sites visited included: Crystal Lake Ltd, Triton Aquaculture African Limited, China Aquaculture Development Limited, SAI SRI ARK, Delta Fisheries Limited, Grace Farms, TROPO Farms Limited, DAGAN Farms and GOFFEL. The team also visited the Dzemeni Market in the South Dayi District of the Volta region and Dedeso Holding Incorporated, a sawmill company along the Lake at Serdom, near Akosombo.

It came to light that, apart from Dagan Farms Limited, all the remaining companies visited did not have operational permits. In addition to that, it was observed that, their sanitation facilities did not meet expectation.

Mr. Muallah noted that, the said culprits had trespassed the legitimate 280 feet contour boundary, a VRA declared protected zone. He said according to Section 11 (1b) of Act 46 of 1961, the boundary falls within the operational regime of VRA as well as lands within the Volta Gorge Area.

Touching on the sanitation situation at the Dzemeni Market, he said the hygiene situation at the Market which operates close to the shore was appalling. “The shoreline is heavily polluted with trash and human excreta which seeps into the Lake. Fisher folks have adopted the use of yellow gallons as floaters for fishing purposes. These gallons are usually abandoned and eventually settle on the Lakebed.”

Mr. Muallah urged representatives of the regulatory agencies to submit their report to their respective authorities to enable them to apply appropriate sanctions to non-compliant people and companies.

ECG MANAGEMENT & BOARD TOUR TTPS

The Managing Director of the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG), Mr. Sam Dubik Mahama and Members of the ECG Board of Directors have paid a day's working visit to the Takoradi Thermal Power Station (TTPS), Aboadze, to familiarize themselves with the operations of the thermal power enclave.

The Managing Director was accompanied by the Chairman of Board Finance Committee, Mr. Francis Kyeremanteng; Board Member, Ing. Dr. Nicholas Smart Yeboah; Chairperson Board Legal Committee, Ms. Maataa Opare; Board Secretary, Mr. Apegyei Apeakorang; General Manager, Energy Acquisition & Risk Management, Mr. Ebenezer Baiden; Manager, Metering, Ing. Victor Awuku; and Manager, Power Plant Monitoring & Evaluation, Ing. A. Adu-Amankwah.

They were met on arrival at the thermal facility by Director, Thermal Generation of VRA, Ing. Jacob Brown-Yawson; Manager, Community Relations, Mr. Samuel Fletcher, and a host of others.



Ing. Brown-Yawson conducting the visitors on a tour of the Plant.

According to the Managing Director of ECG, the purpose of their visit was to acquaint themselves with the operations of the thermal plant to gain more practical knowledge on how it is run and also discuss major issues of common interest to improve service delivery. He said the visit was useful because it would help the Management of ECG establish a relationship with

VRA to drive mutually beneficial value adding initiatives.

The Chairperson, Board Legal Committee, Ms. Maataa Opare also indicated that, in order to help improve the power situation of the country and beyond, it was important for the ECG Board to gain a solid understanding of VRA's operations. This she said was necessary because the two companies are interconnected in the sense that a problem for the Authority more than likely leads to a problem for the ECG.

The Director, Thermal Generation of VRA, Ing. Jacob Brown-Yawson led a team of Engineers who toured the visitors round key installations including the T1, T2, T3 and AMERI thermal plants.



VRA staff ready to engage the visitors from ECG.

VRA MOVE TO PROTECT ENDANGERED 'T. GENTII' TREE TO BOOST TOURISM IN AKOSOMBO

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra



'Talbotiella gentii'

The Volta River Authority (VRA) is making frantic effort at increasing and protecting the population of critically endangered 'Talbotiella gentii' (T. gentii) tree stands, as part of efforts to restore the degraded Sapawusu Forest Reserve, one of the natural habitats of T. gentii in Akosombo to boost eco-tourism.

According to the 2020 Africa Report, 'Talbotiella gentii' is a tree species endemic to Ghana and listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List as Critically Endangered. This is because the natural

range of the species has been extensively destroyed by wildfires, human activities, and subsequent exploitation of forested areas, resulting in reduced populations and increased fragmentation.

It is in this regard that the Authority through its Environment and Sustainable Development Department (E&SDD) in partnership with the Forest Services Division, Somanya District of the Forestry Commission of Ghana, is currently intensifying conservation efforts to save the tree against inimical human activities.

Speaking to this reporter in an interview on the sidelines of the 2022 Green Ghana Day in Akosombo, Environmental Officer of E&SDD, Mr. Blankson Baffo, made it known that *Talbotiella gentii* locally known as 'Takorowanua', is unique because, research had established that, across the world, it can only be found in few forest reserves in Ghana along Afram and Volta Basins particularly in Bandai Hills, Yongwa Forest and Sapawusu Reserves.

He noted that, "We have more than 500 stands of the tree in the Sapawusu Forest which are over 100 years old. It is a much sought-after tree species due to its superior quality and durability."

He said T. gentii is not a high-value commercial timber species, but its dense wood makes excellent charcoal, and it is cut preferentially for charcoal/fuelwood. "It is known locally as 'Takorowanua' or 'charcoal tree' in direct reference to traditional use by local communities on the forest fringes. A small amount of T. gentii is exploited by local communities for medicinal use (for stomach ulcers), bridge construction, furniture and building pillars."

He said VRA has stepped up its effort at restoring the degraded Sapawusu Forest Reserve with close collaboration with the Forestry Commission to develop the area for Eco-tourism. He added that; "That is why VRA planted 1,300 seedlings to rehabilitate the area and refurbished the signpost to advertise the area to commemorate the 2022 edition of Green Ghana Day."

DIRECTOR CORPORATE STRATEGY MARKETS VRA AT APSCA CONFERENCE

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra



Mr. Clement Boakye

Director, Corporate Strategy, Volta River Authority (VRA), Mr. Clement Boakye, has shed light on the Authority's core business to patrons of the 2022 edition of the Africa Public Sector Conference & Awards (APSCA) organised in Accra recently.

According to him, VRA has diversified its power generation portfolio to take advantage of available and sustainable sources of energy in hydro and natural gas, liquified petroleum products and renewables.

Mr. Boakye who was contributing to a panel discussion at the 3rd APSCA said VRA supplies between 54-55 percent of the electricity demand in Ghana from its generation aspect of the energy supply chain.

He told the gathering which showcased international and local participants that, "The Authority owns and operates a total installed electricity generation capacity of 2,532MW. The two main hydro plants, Akosombo and Kpong Generating Stations both located on the Volta River have 1,020MW and 160MW respectively.

These are complemented by a 2.5MW Solar PV Plant at Navrongo in the Upper East Region, a 6.5MW Solar PV Plant at Lawra and a 13MW Solar PV Plant at Kaleo, both in the Upper West Region. We also have a number of thermal plants located in Aboadze near Takoradi, and the Tema enclave which operate on Light Crude Oil and Liquified Natural Gas."

Responding to a question on how VRA has repositioned itself to continue to offer sustainable power, he noted that VRA's tagline is to *Add Value to Lives*. Therefore, its ultimate goal is to provide reliable, environmentally friendly, and competitively priced power to improve the lives of its direct beneficiaries.

He stated that, "Between 2017-2018, when we realized the volatility in crude oil prices, we switched to natural gas which enabled us to stabilize the cost of power production. Electricity prices have relatively not changed from our production cost over the past few years."

He said VRA currently provides the cheapest source of power to both industries and domestic consumers and also supplies power to Togo, Benin and Burkina Faso. "We supply between 30-35 percent of the power used in Burkina Faso."

This year's APSCA which was on the theme: 'Repositioning Africa's Public Sector for Sustainable Development', brought together citizen-centric stakeholders who deliberated on international and local case studies for innovative, transformative and sustainable solutions.

VRA STAFF PARTICIPATE IN MAY DAY

Ernestine Emefa Akorli, NSP, CA&ER, Accra



Staff of VRA in a route march to the Independence Square.

Staff of the Volta River Authority joined other workers from both public and private sectors institution to commemorate this year's annual Labour Day held at the Independence Square, Accra.

The Labour Day, also known as 'Workers' Day' or 'May Day' is a day set aside to recognise and appreciate workers across the globe for their immense contributions to socio-economic development.

This year's May Day was marked with a march past by various work groups who expressed their grievances and advocated for better working conditions to authorities on placards.

Led by the then Deputy Chief Executive (Services), Dr. I. Stella Agyenim-

Boateng, VRA seized the opportunity to directly educate the public on energy conservation measures.

VRA Staff brandished placards some of which read, "Energy Conservation is a Cost Cutter; "Replace the Bad Seal on Your Fridge Door to Ensure Good Cooling"; "Electricity is Money, it Serves You Better When Used Wisely". Others were also scripted: "Support VRA for Efficient Delivery of Power and Leading the Solar Revolution".

Delivering the keynote address on the theme, 'Protecting Jobs and Incomes in the era of COVID-19 and Beyond', the President H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo assured all workers that measures were being put in place to build the productive capacities of job-creating sectors such as agriculture, ICT,

manufacturing, and tourism among others. This, he said, is intended to create and increase the jobs and incomes of workers across the country.

"I urge all of us to work hard to increase productivity so we can increase salary levels and provide the basis for paying a 'Living Wage'", he added.

Prior to the event, Dr. I. Stella met Staff at the head office and commended them for their resilience, hard work, and contributions to the success of the Authority. She expressed hope that Staff would continue to portray the Authority positively and maintain the solidarity that has positioned VRA in its primacy.

PERSONALITY PROFILE *Unclose With* MR. TIMOTHY AKYEA-OBENG

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra



Mr. Akyea-Obeng responding to a question.

He is a true dyed-in-the-wool Presbyterian, an astute and meticulous accounting person, a dependable family man, self-disciplined worker, jovial, affable and a music lover who is blessed with an innate ability of moderating corporate and social events with good quality public speaking skills.

He is a certified Marriage and Trauma Counsellor in his local church. As a chorister of the Presbyterian church, he has served in various office-holding capacities including:

Six years as General Secretary for Ga Presbytery Church Choirs' Union

Six years as President of Ga Presbytery Church Choirs' Union

Six years as National Vice President of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana Choirs' Union

Six years as National President of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana Choirs' Union and currently the Adviser to the National Union by virtue of his position as the Immediate Past President.

He is a man of virtue and simplicity—a living inspiration to many young ones. His excellent human relations endear him to many people. His love for the most edifying accounting profession was directly inspired by his late father who worked as a Chief Internal Auditor for the State Transport Corporation (STC), Ghana.

Ooh lest I forget, he is a die-hard fan of Accra Hearts of Oak.

Our distinguished guest was born into a family of five children comprising four boys and a girl on Wednesday, November 6, 1963. He happens to be the last child of his parents. He joined the Volta River Authority (VRA) in April 1985 as an Accounts Clerk and

has had a feel of almost all the sections under the Finance Department including Payables, Cash Office, Final Account and Cash Accounting—his current office.

For answers to what influences his ability to excel in his field as an accomplished Accounts professional, the VRA NEWS got up-close and personal with Mr. Timothy Kweku Akyea-Obeng, the man many people call 'Timoo', a.k.a 'Uncle Tim' to dig more into his corporate, personal, and religious life.

VRA NEWS (VN): Who is Mr. Timothy Akyea-Obeng?

TIMOTHY AKYEA-OBENG (TAO): The name is Akyea-Obeng Timothy Kweku. I am a typical Presbyterian. That's why my surname comes first. I come from Anum in the Eastern region.

I am married to a beautiful woman called Millicent Akyea-Obeng with whom I have three children. One boy and two girls.

VN: Can you tell us a little about your educational background?

TAO: I started Forces Primary School in Kumasi, continued to St. Anthony's Preparatory School here in Accra, went back to Kumasi to further my education at the State Experimental School where I sat for my Common Entrance Examination before going to St. Peter's Secondary School, Nkwetia-Kwahu in the year 1975. From there I went to Takoradi Polytechnic where I had my Diploma in Business Studies. In 2015, I furthered my education and acquired an HND in 2018 and currently an Accounting Assistant in VRA.

VN: When did you join VRA?

TAO: I joined VRA on the 9th of April 1985 as an Accounts Clerk. I applied for a VRA advertisement I saw in the dailies for Finance Officers while doing my National Service.

Following my success at the interview, I had a letter from VRA which indicated that my qualification did not match with the job function but there was a position for Accounts Clerk which I opted for after five months. This is because I wanted to finish with my National Service first before entering corporate life.

I've been in Accra throughout my 37 years working life in VRA. I first worked with the Payroll Section under Mr. Alfred Agbewavi. From there, I moved to the then Input-Output Section where we worked on data entries on VRA following the introduction of computers in the Authority at the time. We were using a specialized computer known as WANG to produce the payroll, pay register, printed payslips, expense analysis report and all other reports.

After that we submit to the Final Account Section for them to produce their balance sheet and scrutinize our records including our permanent, non-permanent and semi-permanent data before giving us the greenlight to run the pay register.

VN: Are you satisfied with the way VRA has been run over the past 37 years?

TAO: Very satisfied. There have been tremendous changes in the last couple of years. I can talk of 'BRAISE', the Sustainability Plan and, the Innovation and Creativity plan are brilliant ideas that would help the growth of the Authority.

VN: What has been an unforgettable experience in your carrier?

TAO: I think the Cash Office was a challenging one because I came under a myriad of temptations. I remember one officer (currently on retirement) came to refund some huge amount of money and later returned to convince me to reverse the account, so we share the booty in equal measure. Although he was my senior colleague, I told him bluntly that it was against my moral and corporate ethics and would not compromise that. He did not take it lightly, but I gained some sort of respect and had my integrity intact.

In another instant, a staff (still in active service) came to tell me he wanted to pay

something into the Authority's account which I knew was not the right thing to be done. So, I declined and even advised the Officer to consider the prospects ahead of him in the Authority and be careful with such frivolous transactions. He did not take my advice and went ahead but paid for it later.

VN: You are exiting VRA next year?

TAO: Definitely!

VN: How does that make you feel?

TAO: Great! I think I have paid my dues in full to VRA. I don't regret anything I have done for VRA because I have also benefited immensely from the Authority. I served as the local Chairman for the PSWU, Accra, and moved up to the Division where I had the opportunity to attend some leadership courses in South Africa and ILO International conferences in Geneva, Switzerland, to broaden my knowledge in the interest of the Union.

VN: What would you miss the most when you go on retirement?

TAO: I'll miss the people of VRA. But I have consolation in the fact that, the world is a stage. When you finish performing your role, you exit for others to use the same stage.

VN: What would we be seeing you doing after VRA?

TAO: After 38 years of active service, I would like to take at least a six-month break and contribute to building the work of God.

VN: Can we then say you are going to be a Reverend Minister?

TAO: No. But there are other responsibilities in the church such as youth development, post-marital counselling, and human empowerment which you do not need to be a minister before you can offer your services.

VN: What advice would you give to the next generation of VRA employees?

TAO: They should be diligent in the work they do. They must work hard to sustain the Authority to guarantee their livelihoods. This includes all the staff I have personally mentored in VRA and NEDCo.

VN: What will be your final remarks?

TAO: I would like to advise especially those who find themselves in positions in society and in the corporate world, to see themselves as the privileged few who have been put in such positions by God on purpose to help and serve humanity. You do not need to use your position to intimidate and frustrate others because times and seasons change.

VN: The VRA NEWS team would want to wish you greater success and sweet retirement when it comes.

TAO: Thank you very much.



Mr. Akyea-Obeng

AKUSE 'AVRATE' GETS NEW EXECUTIVES

Narki Ayerh, Community Relations, Akuse

The Akuse branch of the Association of Volta River Authority Technician Engineers (AVRATE) have sworn into office a five-member newly elected executives to handle the administration of the association.

The newly elected branch executives have Mr. Benedict Eshun Dadzeban as Chairman, Mr. Luke K. Dei, Vice-Chairman, Mr. Felix Osen, Secretary, Mr. Caesar J. Ralph, Financial Secretary/Treasurer, and Mr. Solomon Bronya as Organizer.

Addressing the executives, Director, Engineering Services, Ing. Kwaku Wiafe, said the vital role of VRA Technicians is critical in sustaining the Authority's position as the market leader in the energy sector, and urged them to take up the position with utmost commitment, hard work and be resolute in bringing back the past glory of AVRATE in the Authority.

He was hopeful that a vibrant AVRATE together with SOVRAE, would enable the Authority experience greater successes since Technicians and Engineers play a vital role in the operations of the Authority.

Similarly, Plant Manager, Kpong Generating Station, Ing. Akim Tijani, emphasized the need for both AVRATE and SOVRAE to collaborate and identify best practices that would be beneficial to the two associations and VRA.



The new Executives with some participants.

He also encouraged the association to set the standard for Innovation and Creativity in the Authority. “The Sustainability strategy will indeed need our collective drive and synergy to enable us become the model of Excellence for power utilities in Africa”, he added.

The newly elected Chairman of AVRATE, Mr. Benedict Eshun Dadzeban, on behalf of his colleagues expressed gratitude to the membership of the association for the trust and

confidence reposed in them. He called on all members to join forces by showing love and commitment to the activities of the association to make it, strong and resolute.

According to him, “It is this that would enable us build the right synergy anchored on the principles of good corporate governance to achieve the Authority's strategic plans.”

Congratulations AKOSOMBO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Award Winner:
**“Your World Video Competition
Global Winner 2022”**

RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) CORNER



Cont'd from 1st Quarter Edition

EXCEPTIONS TO THE FOURTEEN-DAY RULE IN RTI IMPLEMENTATION



Ruth Owusu, Assistant RTI Officer
(Secondment, Information Services Department)

Information (RTI) Law's purpose is to foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and democratic governance.

The first edition of the RTI Corner published in the previous quarter of the VRA NEWS focused on the fourteen-day timeline for responding to requests. There are, however, certain exceptions to this rule.

Today's edition of RTI Corner focuses on the exceptions to the fourteen-day deadline for responding to RTI requests.

First, an application for information necessary to protect a person's life or liberty must be determined and the applicant provided with the requisite information within 48 hours, in the case where access is granted.

Also, when the information requested is not in the custody of the Authority, the Information Officer shall refer the applicant or transfer the application to the appropriate institution within two days of receipt of the request.

In addition, an RTI request can be deferred, and the applicant notified within three days if the information is required to be published within ninety

days, or has been prepared for submission to any person but yet to be submitted.

For the reasons stated below, the Chief Executive may extend the time allowed for processing the application by up to seven days from the day when a decision on the application should have been made:

- When the application is for a large volume of information;
- When the information has to be gathered from more than one source; or
- When consultations with a person outside the Authority are required

An Information Officer or any public officer who denies the right to information commits an offence and may be fined between 250 and 500 penalty units, or imprisoned for up to 3 years, or both.

For further information and enquiries on the implementation of the RTI Law in the Authority, please contact the RTI Officer via telephone: 057542334 and email: vra.rti@vra.com.

The Right to Information Act, 2019 (Act 989) was passed to operationalise the constitutional right to information granted under Article 21(1)(f) of the 1992 Constitution. It provides the framework for the implementation of the right to access official information held by public institutions and relevant private bodies subject to some exemptions. The Right to



PRIVATE SECTOR MINDSET: AN OLD LEXICON FOR NEW HABITS

Mrs. Marian Atta-Benyah, Health Services, Aboadze

The private sector plays an indispensable role in economic development. It does not only contribute to national income and economic growth, but also a principal job provider. In effect, the private sector has a key influence in the business climate.

But what is the business mindset of the private sector? The private sector is primarily focused on being profit driven and is free from many of the bureaucratic restrictions in the public sector.

As we seek to diversify our work culture to suit that of the private sector, this article seeks to discuss the role both Management and Staff of VRA must play to make our vision of inculcating private sector mindset in our public service delivery a reality.

I have been wondering how we have been operating all these years without such an important mindset in our service delivery and continue to be successful in business. That notwithstanding, I am particularly happy that, after a successful

implementation of the five-year 'BRAISE' Strategy by the Volta River Authority (VRA), Management in 2021 rolled out the "SUSTAINABILITY PLAN", a fresh outlook to help hold on to the gains achieved over the period.

The Sustainability Plan is premised on delivering our public service mandate with private sector mindset to serve as a conduit for the new era of our business operations to stimulate competition and business growth that would result in better profit margins and quality service delivery.

For me, the mantra, "Inculcating private sector mindset in public service delivery", as a catalyst for our sustainability efforts, is spot-on, but we need to make it part of our everyday work culture just like other corporate mantras such as "ACT IT", "We Add Value to Lives" and "Generation our Role, Diversification our Goal".

Let me use this article to reiterate the Chief Executive's Private Sector Mindset agenda and serves as a refresher on the characteristics of the private

sector mindset and the expected behaviours of Staff. I would discuss the first characteristic of the private sector mindset and feature the rest in my subsequent articles.

The first characteristic of the private sector mindset is "speed and quality in service delivery" with the expected behaviour as "I deliver my work on time and strive to eliminate errors." Let us ponder on the following questions.

1. How well do you do your work?
2. Do you attach urgency to what you do?
3. How many days does a document stay on your table before passing it out?
4. How many days does it take you to call another Department to make enquiry or seek information to enable you work on an assignment or give feedback to another colleague?
5. Do you portray lackadaisical attitude towards your work?
6. Do you work anyhow?
7. Do you strive for excellence in all your dealings at work?
8. Do you provide quality service?
9. Do you make conscious effort to eliminate errors in your work?
10. Do you work with speed and ensure that the best services are provided on time?

The above questions are teasers to prepare our minds towards the private sector mindset agenda with its characteristics ("Speed and quality in service delivery") and expected behaviours (I deliver my work on time and strive to eliminate errors.") by Staff.

Speed in service delivery

Speed in service delivery does not just look at how long it takes your service team to reply to the customer. It measures how long it takes them to reply to the customer and fulfill their support request. "Everybody has a need for speed, and you actually make your product, or service more attractive when you do them fast." – Brian Tracy, Author and Speaker.

One of the top reasons for customers to leave a company and or provide poor comments about a company would be

slow service. Online transactions and shopping carts are abandoned daily for the same reason. Customers see no reason to wait or accept slow service, and with so many choices, customer loyalty is already fast becoming short-lived and a depleting asset. For companies, speed in customer service, would mean staying current and fresh in the mind of their customers. If a company is always there and ready with service and solutions, customers would gravitate towards it.

A company that is unable to match pace with these expectations, and accelerate the speed in customer service it provides, can expect to be ignored and side-lined by the customers and the market. Top quality customer service now encompasses speedy and fast service too. A survey conducted by Emily Newman, a Writer in California, USA, revealed that speed in customer service exceeded efficiency, accuracy, professionalism, and knowledge of agents in businesses. The combined voices of customers are becoming louder and echoing the same sentiment as slow responses and service would not be tolerated. The good news is that speed in customer service is not that hard; technology has ensured it. With so many different customers service channels, communication, and engagement with customers are now only a click of a button away.

Quality in Service Delivery

Quality in service delivery is a term used to describe the extent to which services meet the customer's needs according to Russell, Author, VP Delivery Guide. Customers often define quality by the level of service they receive, the cost, and their overall satisfaction. Most business leaders recognize that quality service delivery is vital to the success of their enterprise. However, the term "service" can be broadly defined. For example, a company might provide a wide range of products or services. Customers purchase services as a response to specific needs. They either consciously or unconsciously have certain standards and expectations for how a company's delivery of services fulfills those needs. A company with high service quality offers services that match or exceed its customers' expectations.

Russell highlights some elements of quality service delivery as follows: A

company should be reliable, respond quickly when a problem arises and provide exactly what the customer wants in a very timely manner. When you can do that, then you will be able to provide your customers with the quality service they deserve. That will make them much more likely to return to your business again in the future. Measuring and improving service quality can increase your organization's profits and reputation. Regardless of the industry, service quality can have a direct impact on your company's ability to satisfy customer needs while remaining competitive.

Delivering Work on Time

Regardless of where you work or what you do, every workplace is going to have deadlines. Being able to finish your task on time is crucial to workplace productivity and effective time management. Since [deadlines show discipline, working within them is a must rather than an option when time is of the essence. Ashley Andrews, Marketing Strategist, Activia Training, UK and other Experts have outlined some ways to ensure employees deliver work on time. Prioritize tasks, create planner, start your work early, keep time limits for each task, make a commitment, understand the specifics, remove any distractions, ask for help and do not be afraid to ask questions.](#)

Eliminating Errors at the Workplace

The best way to deal with error or mistake is to avoid making it in the first place. Though we do not make mistakes intentionally we know that they are avoidable. There are some mistakes we make and realize later they could have been easily avoided if we had paid a little extra concentration in what we were doing. The quicker moving world makes us hurry up with the work. But if we are in a rush, nothing good comes out and sometimes we make mistakes that cause regrettable consequences. Here are some most often made mistakes shared by professionals:

funny or sometimes insulting email typos (because we usually don't want to waste time on proofreading),

money-involved mistakes like adding

another zero when filling the bank transfer orders,

losing the documents,

being late on important meetings or skipping them,

inappropriate behavior towards superiors,

failure to meet deadlines,

actions performed but not discussed with superiors or other team members.

Experts have identified some actions to take to avoid errors at the workplace. Give full attention to what you are doing, avoid distractions, take breaks, ask questions and create a checklist or To-do list. These points will go a long way to help avoid errors or mistakes at the workplace.

The Private Sector Mindset Agenda is important to VRA in the realization of the Sustainability Plan. All Staff are to work with speed and provide quality service. Staff are expected to deliver their work on time and strive to eliminate errors. Let us all resolve to put into practice the private sector mindset agenda. I urge all staff to raise their right hand and say with pride that "I shall deliver my work on time and strive to eliminate errors."

ROAD TO BECOMING A CLIMATE ACTIVIST

Acquah Lilian Asieduah, NSP, CSR, Kpone

Intentions toward climate action have deemed it necessary to birth Climate Activism and thus Climate Activist(s). We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it, as such, it deserves to be a huge priority to act now.

Climate change exposes everyone and everything to a long-term pattern of weather in a particular area. The world we live in now is featured with impacts of climate change that affect us all and to mention a few; homes are being damaged by floods, there are more allergies and health risks like asthma attacks as a result of worsening air quality, food is more expensive due to increasing temperatures and longer dry periods affecting crops and livestock.

The economy, as well, stands to suffer because of its dependence on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture and energy. Regarding the energy sector, access to fresh water is expected to become more challenging and reduced water supply will have a negative impact on hydropower which provides 54% of the country's electricity power.

Like a bolt from the blue, climate change is currently affecting unborn babies to boot. In a newspaper "Medical News Today", recent article by Robby Berman on June 27, 2022, on the topic "Climate change affecting children and even before



Acquah Lilian Asieduah, NSP, CSR, Kpone

birth" says heat exposure prior to birth is associated with a higher risk of pre-term births as well as low birth weight and is linked to infant hyperthermia.

Some of our daily activities that cause climate change including the unscrupulous way of disposing waste, end up producing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Electricity wastage is also a contributor of GHG, deforestation and land degradation, air pollution etc., are all contributing factors.

The world is no more eco-friendly for both the living and the unborn ones, and this is a clarion call for all hands-on deck to create a SUSTAINABLE FUTURE. It is possible to have and enjoy a

healthy environment if our daily lifestyle can be centered around becoming a climate activists.

Since communication is key to wherever we find ourselves, it is important we talk about the changes we want. We must champion climate-based conversations and be a check on each other. We must adapt a lifestyle of reducing energy use by turning off lights and appliances when not needed and also replacing light bulbs with LEDs or other low-energy lights. Also, respecting and protecting green spaces will absorb carbon dioxide that are associated with lower levels of air pollution. We can as well try to minimize waste by recycling used and unwanted items.

We are assured of cleaner air, secured supplies of energy and other resources, reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, public health improvement, lessened harm to ecosystem and species, water resources and clean water conservation and benefits to farmers to yield harvest if we take responsibilities as Climate Activists.

Let's be more intentional about saving the planet because today decides tomorrow.



Price list

GRADE	KGS	UNIT PRICE GH¢
A	5X5kg	230.00
	25kg	220.00
	5kg	55.00
AB	5X5kg	220.00
	1x25kg	200.00
	1x5kg	50.00
B	5x5kg	140.00
	1X25kg	130.00
	1x50kg	250.00
	1x5kg	30.00
C	1x50kg	220.00
	1x25Kg	100.00
	1X5kg	20.00
Rice Bran	35kg	30.00



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NPG TO BENEFIT FROM VRA'S POWER OPERATIONS EXPERTISE

Emmanuel Tetteh, NPG, Accra



Dr. Stephen Yamoah

The Deputy Chief Executive (Services) of the Volta River Authority (VRA), Ing. Ken Mensah Arthur has said that the VRA will ensure support to Nuclear Power Ghana (NPG) in all its related activities toward the realisation of Ghana's Nuclear Power Project.

Ing. Arthur noted that in the current era of energy transition, nuclear power must be viewed positively, especially with all the regulations and guidelines associated with its pre-construction, construction, operations and decommissioning stages.

He said VRA, with its over-60 years of best practice and experience in power generation and operations, has some of the best and most experienced technical and non-technical staff to share their expertise, skills and experiences to impart knowledge and help smoothen the path for NPG to avoid or surmount some of its challenges.

He added, “If NPG gets it right, definitely it is going to be very advantageous to Ghana”. He made the statements during NPG's institutional engagement with Managers and key staff of the Hydro Generation Department at Akosombo. The engagement is part of NPG shareholders' engagement plan to provide information on Ghana's nuclear power project and value addition on professional diversity of skills.

The Executive Director of NPG, Dr. Stephen Yamoah, said nuclear is Ghana's green and clean energy solution since it provides sustainable, affordable and reliable support to the existing energy sources.

He spoke about the key milestones achieved under Phase-1 of the Programme/Project and the high-points of Phase-2 – which will culminate in selection of the Preferred site, Strategic Vendor/Technology type and government's public declaration.

Dr. Yamoah emphasised that nuclear power is well-regulated and policed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), even though it is a government to government (country-to-country) subject.

Dr. Seth Debrah, the Director of Nuclear Power Institute (NPI) at the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC), said that Ghana has been using nuclear technology since the 1980s in the areas of health, agriculture and industries. His presentation highlighted the various job diversities and unique opportunities associated with a new nuclear power project. He challenged the VRA to add value to its support for NPG; reconsider the huge energy market available for industries in the sub-region; and leverage the opportunities that Ghana's nuclear power project offers.

Dr Debrah noted that VRA has qualified and experienced professional staff in most of the areas needed for the Nuclear Project and could assign those with the right attitude and training to provide the needed support to NPG.

“VRA and BPA provide the funds for NPG's activities, and I do not want to perceive that VRA, after putting in all the huge sums of money, would want it to go to waste. Therefore, assisting NPG with the right human resources is a way of protecting and realising your investments in the Project”, he added.

Addressing the issue of radiation, Dr Debrah explained that all human beings are exposed to radiation every day from the sun, through x-rays, and food items such as bananas and cassava, which contain potassium 40, a radioactive isotope. However, radiation becomes harmful if it exceeds the normal exposure limit.

The Ag. Director of the Hydro Generation Department and Plant

Manager of the Akosombo Generating Station, Ing. Kwaku Sarpong in his remarks noted that Nuclear Power is one of the best clean power options for reliable electricity supply without a negative impact on the environment.

He stated for Ghana to attain energy security, then nuclear is the way to go citing France as an example. “France decided to go Nuclear in the 70s, since

then, they have energy security and have not recorded a single accident in their operations. This means that it is possible to operate Nuclear Power Plants without any safety issues.”, He said.

Ing. Akim Tijani, the Plant Manager for the Kpong Generating Station, in his closing view, believed that Ghana should consider the Small Modular

Reactor (SMR) because of the current Grid challenges which cannot support a 1000MW capacity reactor.

He urged Government to lean to the SMRs for Ghana's adoption but cautioned that strategic timelines should be followed for additional capacities to attain the expected capacity desired for Ghana's industrialisation.



Our ability to innovate to come out with new solutions for existing and emerging challenges in the energy sector is imperative if we are to make our Sustainability Plan successful.

Emmanuel Antwi-Darkwa



Hydro

Solar

Wind

Biomass

Geothermal

Renewable Energy

Come Partner us to make a Huge Difference!

Our Mission:

The Volta River Authority exists to power economies and raise the living standards of the people of Ghana and West Africa. We supply electricity and related services in a reliable, safe and environmentally friendly manner to add economic, financial and social values to our customers and meet stakeholders' expectations.

OUR VALUES

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

VRA SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

INCULCATING PRIVATE SECTOR MINDSET IN PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

INCREASE RENEWABLE FOOTPRINTS

IMPROVE REVENUE

IMPROVE STAFF COMPETENCIES & EFFECTIVENESS

INCREASE STRATEGIC ALLIANCES & RELATIONSHIPS

IMPROVE BUSINESS PROCESSES LEVERAGING I.T

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- ◆ Creativity and Innovation team attend workshop
- ◆ VRA participates in 20th APUA Congress
- ◆ VRA engages Stakeholders

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

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