

Volta River Authority

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter | October - December, 2023

Volume 38

SPECIAL EDITION

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S 2023
END-OF-YEAR MESSAGE
TO STAFF**



**SAMUEL YEBOAH IS NEW
SOVRAE PRESIDENT**

**CHRISTMAS AND NEW
YEAR MESSAGES FROM
HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS**



**VOLTA
RIVER
AUTHORITY**

VRA... We Add Value to Lives

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S

2023 END-OF-YEAR MESSAGE TO STAFF



My Dear Colleagues,

We have come to the end of another eventful year. I will be the first to say that this year brought significant challenges to us as a corporate institution. I am gratified that at the end of it all, we still have been able to stay whole, as an institution. It is therefore for no ordinary reason, that we have the theme "Giving thanks, Counting our blessing" for this Thanksgiving service.

As has been our tradition, today marks a very special day in our corporate calendar. Today offers us a renewed opportunity to come together and express our profound gratitude to God for His enduring Mercies.

God indeed has been good to us this year.

My dear colleagues, let me take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you. We should be proud to have a group of staff with the right skills, attitude and mindset. That is clearly what sets us apart from others.

If the challenges of this year have taught us anything, it is that we are resilient and can ride the stiffest challenges that our business will encounter. Talking about challenges, let me assure our colleagues, and indeed, all those downstream of Akosombo who were affected by the recent controlled spillage, that we continue to empathise with them. We still stand by our assurance that we will work with them and the Government to restore them to their original lives. No one, as we have often assured, will be left behind. We make the same commitment to those who were flooded upstream of Akosombo as a result of the heavy rains in our catchment this year.

As Dam Managers, we have ensured through the controlled spillage that the Akosombo and Kpong Dams are safe and operable despite inflows that were almost twice the long-term average. We certainly made very good technical decisions, however admittedly, we cannot say the same about our communication with the public.



That is a significant lesson for the future.

Colleagues, as we join hands to give thanks to God Almighty, I would also like to extend my personal and Management's deepest appreciation to the Board for steering and directing the affairs of the Authority throughout the year. To my hardworking colleague Executives and Management, I say thank you. Last but not least, to all staff of the Authority who have worked tirelessly, I say "ayekoo" for a great job done! [I think we all deserve a big round of applause!]

While at it, let me also commend all our major stakeholders including the Office of the President, Retirees Association, SIGA, ECG, GRIDCo, PURC, Energy Commission, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Information, among several others, for their commitment and support to the overall growth of the Authority.

As you are aware, we began the year, full of optimism, to build on the gains made the previous years on our financial, operational and sustainability strategies. We have made significant achievements, including but not limited to the following:

- **The substantial completion of the Kumasi 1 Power station through the relocation of the Ameri plant from Aboadze to Anwomaso.**
- **The successful completion of the 15MW Solar project (kaleo phase 2)**
- **Completion of the Akosombo Generating Station SCADA project**
- **Acquisition of two brand new 35-seater Electric buses and charging stations. This makes us the first in Ghana to introduce EV buses.**
- **Successful renegotiation of the NGAS Gas Sales Agreement to reduce the payment and security obligations**
- **Introduction and provision of value-added services to our customers.**
- **The commencement of 3-month quasi-classroom and industrial attachment for our thermal staff with Saskatchewan Polytechnic and Saskatchewan Power in Canada**
- **The introduction of the VRA Creativity & Innovation Day**
- **The revision of our core values from "ACT IT" to "S.O.C.I.E.T.I" ...amongst others**

Colleagues, having been largely successful with our business strategy for the year, we need to ensure that our mantra to be a public institution with a private sector mindset is foremost in our minds. We must be resolute in making efficiency and excellence our hallmark.

As I stated in my Planning Letter for 2024, we owe it to ourselves to double up on our efforts, refresh our perspectives, and implement strategies that can help us continue to run our business in a sustainable manner.

Each one of us must see him/herself as an ambassador of the Authority, with a pivotal role to play in the advancement of our business. With such a resolve, the opportunities to transform and grow our business will be endless, for ourselves and future generations.

Colleagues, in conclusion, on behalf of the Board and Management, I would like to thank everyone once again for your commitment, determination, dedication, and hard work during the year. Without these values, we will not be where we are today.

Indeed, God has been good to us.

As we approach the festive season, I want to encourage us all to take personal responsibility for our health and safety and, that of our families and friends.

Let us return in the New Year, fully refreshed to make a positive difference to the Authority's business in 2024.

On that note, I wish each and everyone of us and our families a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year,

Afehyia Pa oo!

Afi oo Afi!!

Kp3 Ye Ye

Daadi Saabon Sheekara

God bless the Authority,

God bless Ghana,

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL





PHOTOS FROM THE ACCRA THANKSGIVING SERVICE





CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

From Departmental Heads





Christmas Messages



ENGINEERING SERVICES DEPARTMENT

We thank God Almighty for seeing us through a rather challenging year. The Authority went through one of its most difficult years following the controlled spillage from the Akosombo Dam and the consequent impact on downstream communities. I am proud of our contribution to managing the spill and alleviating the effects on the affected communities. The spillage also showed the effectiveness of our efforts over the past years to maintain awareness of downstream communities of the possibility of a spill and their response if it were to happen. Our initiative to undertake a spill simulation, “Da Wo Ho So,” was particularly useful in enhancing the understanding of the NADMO and District Assemblies in managing the effect of a spill. This is why no lives were lost, despite the widespread damage.

The Department also achieved some notable milestones, including the award of contracts for the Consultancy assignment for the Kpong GS spillway retrofit and the Climate Change Risk Assessment for Akosombo Dam. We also completed the feasibility study for the 25MW Floating Solar Plant as well as the completion of the 3rd Phase of the Kpong Dam rehabilitation. We also developed the Energy Supply Plan for 2024 and carried out the mandated quarterly updates to the 2023 Energy Supply Plan to guide Executive decision-making and the efficient operation of the Authority’s plants.

We could not have achieved such success without your dedication and hard work, and I particularly appreciate your hard work and sacrifice, especially during our difficult moments. I hope to see you all back in the new year, refreshed and rejuvenated to work even harder after a well-deserved break.

Greetings to you and your families, and may the yuletide be one of joy and priceless memories.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Ing. Kwaku Wiafe

Director, Engineering Services Department





Christmas Messages



HYDRO GENERATION DEPARTMENT

Ing. Kwaku Sarpong Mensah
Director, Hydro Generation Department

As we approach the end of another eventful and transformative year, I wish to take this opportunity to extend my warmest wishes to every one of you. Together we have navigated the challenges, celebrated victories and continue to uphold the values that define us as staff of the Hydro Generation Department.

In the face of uncertainties, your resilience was nothing short of inspiring. Your commitment to excellence, adaptability and unwavering dedication to our shared goals have been the driving force behind our collective success. No doubt we have been adjudged the overall best-performing department as per the Corporate Strategy Department's 2023 annual departmental performance ranking with a score of 99.67%. Indeed, we "FOCUS - The Hydro Way". Ayeekoo to us all!!!

What a pride to have resilient workers, true professionals with the desire to excel in the management, operation and maintenance of the Authority's Hydro Plants to contribute to the National and Sub-regional energy requirements.

During the year, we faced various challenges, including excess water spillage from September 15 to October 30, 2023. Despite these hurdles, we are committed to fulfilling our mandate to the best of our ability. We empathize with those negatively affected by the water spillage from the Akosombo Dam and we will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders in restoring their livelihood. This year has not only tested our abilities but has also provided us with opportunities to learn, grow and

innovate. As we reflect on the milestones we have achieved and the challenges we have overcome, let us carry those lessons forward into the new year. Our collective strength lies not just in our individual accomplishments, but in our ability to collaborate, support and uplift one another.

To all our serving and retired staff, we thank you for the great job done. There is no better time to express our thanks and sincere appreciation for your hard work, commitment, and dedication to duty. We are indeed a great team that has demonstrated the ability to face any challenge and become successful.

On a sad note, we lost one of our dedicated staff, Mr Awudu Gariba of Kpong Generating Station during the year. He was a promising fine gentleman. May his gentle soul Rest-In-Perfect Peace.

Looking ahead, I am confident that the coming year holds greater promise for us. Together, we will continue to innovate, surpass expectations and set new benchmarks for excellence.

I wish you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season and a very Prosperous New Year. May the coming year 2024 be filled with new opportunities, personal and professional growth and continued success for everyone.





Christmas Messages



PWALUGU MULTIPURPOSE DAM PROJECT

We began the 2023 work year with poise and a determination to see our dear Authority achieve significant operational and service growth. As we wind up the year, I am thankful that our vision for progress did not fall by the wayside.

Through Management's unyielding dedication to the VRA vision and staff demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility towards the strategic objectives, we forged forward amidst the challenges in the power market.

The year 2023 has been anything but a breeze, but we at the Pwalugu Multipurpose Dam Project have worked tirelessly to ensure that VRA satisfies her contractual commitments towards the Project. This year, we have completed the signing of fifty-six (56) copies of the Project Cadastral Map towards the acquisition of Project lands, finalized the Masterplans and Architectural Designs of the new resettlement townships, developed action plans to address environmental sustainability issues, and obtained an environmental permit from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Hybrid Solar Power Project under the PMD Project, amongst others.

In the ensuing year, the PMDP will continue to consolidate its efforts to ensure that the objective of augmenting the Authority's generation portfolio with hydro and solar power will make significant progress toward construction.

As we go on this well-deserved break, let us reflect on our actions this year and how we can improve our capacities to contribute value to the Authority. I congratulate the PMD Project staff and all employees of the Authority for their efforts towards VRA's growth. I hope that we can come back revitalized to do more for the Authority.

The PMD Project wishes all staff a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. As we add value to lives, may value be added to ours. May this wonderful time of year bring us good fortune in all our endeavours.

Afehyia Pa!



Ing. Dan Onny

Director, Pwalugu Multipurpose Dam Project





Christmas Messages



HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Dear VRA family,

I extend my heartfelt wishes to each of you during this festive season.

As the year ends with the festive season unfolding, I want to take a moment to express my utmost and sincere gratitude for your dedication, hard work and cooperation which ensure a harmonious working relationship throughout the year. Your staunch commitment and professionalism have been the driving force behind our collective success in the year, especially when the very survival of our organisation was threatened.

Your contributions make a difference, and we are excited about the journey ahead. As we reflect on the challenges and triumphs of the past year, let us also look forward to new beginnings and opportunities in the coming one. Remember that each one of you played a crucial role in our collective journey and I look forward to another year of collaboration, innovation, and shared achievements. Thank you for being an essential part of the VRA family and our achievements in the year.

May the spirit of Christmas and the holiday season fill your homes with moments of joy, laughter, a sense of togetherness and cherished time spent with loved ones, and the coming year renewed

energy, exciting new opportunities for growth, prosperity, continued success, in your personal and professional endeavours.

Wishing you and your families a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with prosperity, good health, and endless possibilities.



Mr. Eric Mensah Bonsu

Director, Human Resources





Christmas Messages



VRA ACADEMY

It's amazing how quickly the days run past, and once again Christmas season is here with us.

On behalf of the entire staff at the VRA Academy and Schools, and my own behalf, I would like to wish us all a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.

2023 has been a very challenging year at both the Academy and Schools in more ways than one, and yet with dedication, hard work and the tremendous effort put in by all, we were able to surmount these challenges to achieve the goals that we had set before us. As we close the year, I would like to appreciate the efforts of all and to celebrate the successes that we have had.

I want to thank the staff at both the Academy and Schools for their hard work, dedication to duty and invaluable contributions, and I would like to thank all our esteemed stakeholders, both within and outside VRA for their continued support and patronage. I believe that 2024 will be a year of more opportunities to grow the Academy, the Schools and ultimately, the Authority.

Once again, I wish everyone the compliments of the season; joy, peace and goodwill to you and your loved ones.

Afenhyia Pa!



Mr. Kingsley Gyamfi
Chief Learning Officer





Christmas Messages



Mr. Benjamin Arhin Sackey
Director, E&SDD

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (E&SDD)

All too soon, 2023 has passed us by and the Environment & Sustainable Development Department (E&SDD) will want to say a big thank you to all our stakeholders for their contribution in making the year a big success. A big success because 2023 saw us again chalking various awards at the 2023 Sustainability and Social Investment (SSI) Awards, a testimony of recognition of our performance.

E&SDD in 2022 was restructured as part of the corporate-wide organisational realignment exercise. Going forward, the department is now basically restricted to monitoring and auditing the Authority projects and actions to ensure adherence to environmental legal requirements. Our strategic management actions will therefore put in place, an effective environmental management system to enhance our environmental service delivery both internally and externally as well as coordinate efforts in achieving a Net Zero Carbon. To this end, we are collaborating with the Technical Services Department to achieve an ISO 140001 Certification, the procurement process of which has been completed.

Our partnership strategy took a new leap when we finalised various collaborative arrangements with stakeholder organisations. To ensure efficiency, we are now collaborating with the University of Health & Allied Sciences and the Ghana Health Services through its Greater Accra and Volta Regional Health Directorate in our schistosomiasis control programme. The Asuogyaman District and the Kpone Katamanso Municipal Assemblies are now providing support in our pest control activities at the various power plant facilities. The execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Environment & Sustainable Development in Somanya and the University of Northampton in the United Kingdom is expected to enhance our research and advisory services.

Environmental issues and decarbonization of our industry are now on the top agenda for the Authority. We as a department will be playing a leading role in supporting the Authority to achieve its agenda on climate change. We would like to take this opportunity to also recognize and appreciate the support from our staff, stakeholder departments, Management, and all external stakeholders whose immense roles have helped us to achieve our contribution to the sustainable operation of the Authority.

We wish everybody a happy and prosperous new year.





Christmas Messages



CORPORATE STRATEGY DEPARTMENT

Warmest Season's Greetings to all cherished members of the VRA Family.

As the pages of a remarkable chapter for the Authority bid us adieu, let us pause to reflect on how far we have come these past 50 weeks. Although this chapter is drawing to a close, it stands as the prologue to the transformative odyssey that VRA has just embarked on.

In 2023, we encountered unforeseen challenges leading to significant disruptions. These experiences provided valuable lessons to boost our resilience, strengthen stakeholder relationships, and enhance our brand image for a more robust future.

The year was also marked with triumphs— a period of new opportunities, milestones, and growth. We successfully introduced the new core values, S.O.C.I.E.T.I., and continued our S.P.I.C.E. objectives dissemination drive. We advanced the Authority's business processes by digitizing departmental performance and risk registers and revamping the Sustainability Plan into the VRA Strategic Plan to position the Authority to meet the needs of the evolving energy landscape over the next five years. These strategic initiatives serve as the cornerstone for us to become "A Model of excellence for Power Utilities in Africa"

As we retreat to the embrace of our homes, and families this Christmas, let's carry the lessons and achievements of the past year with us. We look forward to the promises the coming year holds for us all.

May God bless us all abundantly. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful and very Merry Christmas.



Mr. Clement Boakye
Director, Corporate Strategy





Christmas Messages



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION UNIT

As we approach the joyous season of Christmas, I want to extend my warmest wishes to everyone. This year has been nothing short of remarkable, filled with challenges that we faced and triumphs that we celebrated together as one big family.

In the spirit of reflection and gratitude, I am immensely thankful for the dedication, hard work, and resilient leadership VRA Management provided in steering the Authority to stand tall in the face of challenging economic times.

A big thank you also goes to all Staff for your commitment to excellence. It has been an incredible journey since the establishment of the DTI in March 2022. The tremendous enthusiasm, resilience, commitment and innovative spirit have propelled the VRA Digital Transformation Agenda forward.

As we take a well-deserved break to spend time with our loved ones, I encourage you to cherish the moments of joy and relaxation. This is an opportunity to reflect on the bonds we share, the accomplishments we've achieved, and the lessons we've learned.

Let's carry the spirit of collaboration and innovation into the coming year, embracing new opportunities and pushing boundaries together.

We look forward to a transformed VRA positioned within the paradigms of energy innovation that leverages digital technology to become a transformed power generation business to create value.

We wish you all happy holidays and a fruitful new year!



Mr. Abakari Addy
DTI Unit





Christmas Messages



FINANCE & INVESTMENT DEPARTMENT

Colleagues, so soon another year is just about to end. The difficult macroeconomic environment has been a challenge for the Authority in trying to sustain its finances. With the support of Management and the Finance and investment team, we managed to sail through the year despite the constraints.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all staff for their determination and combined effort that made it possible for the Authority to successfully handle the overwhelming situation which confronted us in the later part of the year.

As we take stock of the year, let us continue to do all we can in our various capacities to bring back the Authority to the desired level, upholding our values.

As we proceed on this festive season, I wish you all a Christmas break full of joy, celebrate every moment with friends and family and look forward to a successful New Year ahead. Afehyipa.



Ing. Paul Seniagya
Director, Finance and Investment





Christmas Messages



The festive season is upon us, and while it has been another busy year for the Procurement Department, I hope you will have a chance to rest over the Christmas break.

In the face of challenges especially in this last quarter occasioned by the dam spillage, we worked round the clock to deliver quality service to add value to the lives and livelihoods of the people living in communities impacted by the spillage. We are grateful to all staff who put in a shift and continue to give up their time to help these local communities.

As we come to the end of the year, I would like to wish each one of us a holiday season filled with joy and special moments with friends and family. My wish is that we will have a good rest and return next year with renewed energy to work towards our mission of adding value and raising the living standards of the people of Ghana and West Africa.

The coming year will hold some challenges for us, but we have proven in the past that when faced with tough times, we have delivered efficient and quality services.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jacob Fosu-Kyei

Director Procurement



Mr. Jacob Fosu-Kyei
Director, Procurement





Christmas Messages



AUDIT DEPARTMENT

Colleagues, Seasons Greetings to you all.

The Audit Department is thankful to the Almighty God for His goodness and faithfulness throughout the year. I am elated for the continued contribution towards the Authority's success story and impactful work throughout the year.

We appreciate the support and leadership of the Risk & Audit Committee of the VRA Board, the Independent Audit Committee and the Executives. The Committees' roles in approving and reviewing the execution of the Internal Audit Plan, conducting quarterly meetings with Internal Auditors and Management to discuss matters of Audit concern and ensuring our independence and compliance with statutory requirements were tremendous. We also appreciate the internal and external stakeholders whose cooperation and candid feedback aided us in improving our processes.

The Department achieved its goals and targets amidst challenges and opportunities. We are pleased with what we have accomplished: our value-added and advisory services and support to the Executives to achieve stated objectives. These were done through our assurance and monitoring reports, and regular engagements/discussions with our cherished clients.

Internal Audit staff's role and contribution towards achieving our goals are worth celebrating. The execution of our 2023 approved work plan, quarterly reporting to the Audit Committee and

Statutory bodies, organisation of the 2023 Audit Week, the election of Director Audit and Manager Management Audits as Vice President and Council member responsible for Certification & Professional Development Committee of the Institute of Internal Auditors Ghana respectively, among others are successful activities and events worth mentioning.



Mr. Ebenezer Kwadwo Omari-Mireku
Director, Audit



The internal auditing landscape is changing rapidly vis-à-vis increasing stakeholder and regulatory demands as well as processes, methodologies, and technological changes. Audit professionals must be willing and able to have critical thinking and problem-solving skills, apply creativity and innovation to address issues, take a forward-looking approach to providing assurance and advisory services, remain open-minded, provide real-time recommendations, engage clients at the appropriate responsibility level, and be agile in our engagement plans to meet market conditions and stakeholder demands. Further, the support of all staff is critical to understand better the Authority's business and emerging trends in the industry, deliver timely results, and provide evidence-based reports.

In the coming year, Audit would champion the establishment of combined assurance within the Authority to improve the efficiency of processes. All stakeholders can be assured that our role to contribute to the Authority's successes will not be compromised.

Just as the year wanes away to make way for a new one, it is my prayer that brand-new blessings will besiege our endeavours. I wish all staff a season full of celebrations, peace, happiness, and love. May this season bring you, your family and loved ones assurance of hope, abundance of God's grace, excellence, and transformed minds.

Let us return from the festive season with rejuvenated zeal to soar higher.

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!





Christmas Messages



REAL ESTATE & SECURITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

All too soon, we are drawing the curtains of 2023, as we prepare to usher in 2024.

On behalf of the staff of the Real Estate and Security Services Department, I extend warm felicitations of the season to all our staff and numerous stakeholders.

The yuletide is a period we all look forward to, as it enables us to spend time with families, friends and loved ones to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with goodwill and gratitude towards all.

The year 2023 witnessed the Akosombo Dam spillage with the effect of displaced persons in surrounding villages. The Real Estate and Security Services played a pivotal role in the distribution of relief items and coordinating the establishment of safe havens for displaced persons and other critical relocation efforts and interventions, for and on behalf of the Authority.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the VRA Board, Management and other Departments who supported us in this all-important National Assignment.

Significant milestones we achieved as a department were the completion of the automated guesthouse reservation system and the digitization of our land register.

We wish to commend all staff for their invaluable contribution in ensuring that the Authority was able to surmount its challenges.

Let us all have a restful and fulfilling Christmas and New Year break and return with positive energy, particularly in our quest to deliver our public service mandates with a private-sector mindset to confront the myriad of challenges and also take advantage of opportunities that surround us.

“Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection” – Winston Churchill

We look forward to more accomplishments and successes in 2024.

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

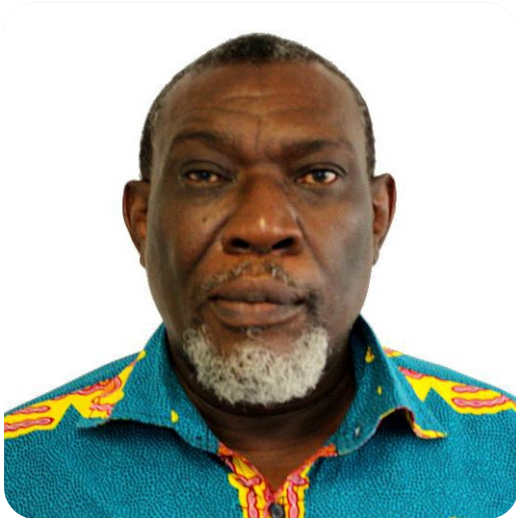


Surv. David Adomako-Mensah
Director, Real Estate & Security





Christmas Messages



LEGAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Francis K. Yalley

Ag. Director, Legal Service Department

As we approach the close of another eventful year, it is both a privilege and a pleasure to acknowledge and celebrate our achievements amid the challenges. Together, we have navigated legal challenges, triumphed in courtrooms, and provided indispensable counsel that has safeguarded the interests of our esteemed Authority.

Our dedication and expertise have translated into significant victories in various legal battles. Our commitment to upholding the law and securing favourable outcomes has reinforced the Authority's standing and protected our interests.

Our Department's success extends beyond the courtroom to the boardroom, where our strategic legal advice has been pivotal. Our keen insights and meticulous guidance have ensured that the Authority makes informed decisions, navigates regulatory landscapes, and operates with the utmost integrity.

The collaborative spirit within our Department and our partnerships with client departments have been integral to our success. Together, we have seamlessly integrated legal expertise with operational needs, resulting in fruitful collaborations that have exceeded expectations. The experience with the consequences of the Akosombo Dam Spillage has been a classic example of what an all-hands-on-deck collaboration can achieve. For this, we say ayekoo to our client departments for the support and co-operation we enjoyed not only during this period but also throughout the year.

I extend my sincere appreciation to each member of the Legal Services Department for their unwavering dedication and hard work. Your passion for the law and commitment to excellence have been the driving force behind our achievements. It is truly a privilege to work with such a talented and dedicated team. We also extend our immense gratitude to Management, we could not have navigated the year successfully without your staunch support.

As we embrace the festive season, I want to take a moment to wish Management and staff a Merry Christmas. May this joyous occasion be filled with warmth, laughter, and shared moments of happiness with your loved ones. Reflect on the successes we have achieved together and let this holiday season be a time of well-deserved rest and rejuvenation.

Let us look forward to the coming year with optimism and anticipation and prepare to overcome challenges and achieve success anew together.

Thank you for your exceptional efforts throughout the year. Here's to a successful 2024!





Christmas Messages



DCE (E&O) OFFICE, RENEWABLE ENERGY UNIT

As we close out this year, we should all take the opportunity to savour the moment and be Thankful for the events and circumstances which we have endured throughout 2023. We should be Thankful to our customers, the communities in which we serve, our stakeholders, colleagues, families, and friends for persevering throughout the year. We should remain hopeful for the New Year and the opportunities that may be presented to our organization in this Energy Transition era.

I would like to personally thank my Branch Head, the Corporate Office and the Renewable Energy Unit team, for working safely, executing diligently, and delivering measurable results.

I wish you and the entire VRA staff a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Prosperous, Joyful and Peaceful 2024!



Mr. Richard Ahenkora Osei

Director, DCE(E&O) Office, Renewable Energy Unit Head



SAMUEL YEBOAH IS NEW SOVRAE PRESIDENT

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra



The Society of VRA Engineers (SOVRAE) has elected the Plant Manager of the Tema Thermal Power Complex (TTPC), Ing. Samuel Yeboah, as its new President. He takes over from Ing. Kwaku Sarpong Mensah, Director, Hydro Generation, VRA, who held the mantle of administration for the 2019/2023 session.

The election which was held electronically across all the VRA and NEDCo work locations was declared during SOVRAE's 31st Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Tamale recently, where the new executives were sworn into office.

Other elected executives were Francis Yormesor, NEDCo Area Manager, Wa, as Vice President, Derrick Okyere, Principal Electrical Engineer, as Secretary and assistant Secretary, Alice Ama Erwuah, a Civil Engineer, and Treasurer - Akosua Owusu-Efaa, Senior Civil Engineer and Director, Finance, Mr. Paul Seniagya as Ombudsman.

Acknowledgement

In his victory speech, Ing. Yeboah, who was elected unopposed expressed gratitude to the entire membership of SOVRAE for the trust and confidence reposed in him, saying, "Thank you for entrusting us with this responsibility. It is an honour to serve as your President for the next period. Many thanks go to our immediate past President and all the Executives, the Planning Committee for this year's Conference, and all the NEDCo Team for the experience given us."

He said the agenda for the term of office for his administration was set by the Ing. Kwaku Sarpong Mensah-led administration and reechoed by all the various speakers at the Conference. "I am hopeful that together we would build bridges of innovation, connect circuits of collaboration, and engineer a future that elevates us all, our various organisations, departments, and the communities we operate from."





The Conference

Addressing the Conference, the immediate past President of SOVRAE Ing. Kwaku Sarpong Mensah said this year's Conference which was under the theme; "Leveraging Sustainable Energy Innovations in Power Business for a Cost-Efficient and Sustainable Future" was of particular significance as it was the first time in the society's history to organize it outside the Akosombo/Akuse area.

He recounted some initiatives introduced during his tenure, such as a mentorship program to guide new engineers, seminars to improve the competence of engineers, a SOVRAE newsletter and the launch of the SOVRAE website to showcase the activities of the society among others.

Other Speakers

The Chief Executive of VRA, Mr. Emmanuel Antwi-Darkwa in a speech read on his behalf urged the engineers to resolve to rise to the challenge of building a resilient, viable and enviably sustainable VRA, which would continuously deliver on its mandate of providing dependable energy solutions for Ghana and beyond.

He implored them to view the challenges ahead not as obstacles but as opportunities for growth and positive change. "By leveraging sustainable energy innovations, we can build a power sector that is not only robust and efficient but one that aligns with the broader goals of environmental conservation and economic viability."

The Managing Director of NEDCo, Mr. Osmani Aludiba Ayuba who chaired the function made it known that his outfit was at an advanced stage of receiving Board approval of its five-year Strategic Plan code-named ARISE. According to him, that strategy would shape attitudes, improve achievements, reduce failures, embrace potential, and the way forward to improve business processes.

Other Speakers included the Deputy Minister of Energy, Mr. William Owuraku Aidoo, as Guest of Honour, who was represented by the Director, of Legal Services, Mr. Francis Yalley. Ing. John Nuworlo, Former MD, NEDCo, addressed the function as the Guest Speaker, whereas sister institutions such as PURC, GhIE and AVRATE took turns to address the conference with solidarity messages.





Isaac Ewuah

Finance and Investment Analyst

Pensions & Investments



WHAT IS THE IDEAL AGE FOR RETIREMENT? FINAL PART

Continued from the previous issue.

What do the experts say about the right time for retirement?

Retirement is a major life event that requires careful planning and consideration. Deciding when to retire can be a difficult decision, as there are many factors to take into account. While some people may choose to retire early, others may work well into their late 60s or even 70s.

So, what do the experts say about the right time for retirement?

One trend that has emerged in recent years globally is the increase in retirement age. Most of these actions are driven by financial sustainability concerns of various governments and managers of pension schemes.

1. Consider your financial situation

One of the most important factors to consider when deciding when to retire is your financial situation. You need to make sure that you have enough money saved up to support yourself throughout your retirement years. This means taking into account your retirement savings, Social Security benefits, and any other sources of income you may have.

2. Health considerations

Another important factor to consider is your health. If you have a physically demanding job or suffer from a chronic health condition, you may need to retire earlier than someone who is in good health. On the other hand, if you are in good health and enjoy your job, you may be able to work longer.

3. Your retirement goals

Your retirement goals are also an important consideration. Do you want to travel the world, volunteer, or pursue a new hobby? These goals may require a certain level of financial security or flexibility that you may not have if you retire too early.

4. The impact on your social life

Retirement can also have a significant impact on your social life. If you have a strong network of friends and colleagues at work, retiring may leave you feeling isolated and lonely. On the other hand, if you have a busy social life outside of work, retiring may give you more time to pursue your interests and spend time with loved ones.

Contd. on next page



What is the ideal age for retirement...

Contd. from previous page

5. The benefits of working longer

While many people look forward to retirement as a time to relax and enjoy their golden years, there are also many benefits to working longer. For one, working longer can help you build up your retirement savings and Social Security benefits. It can also help you stay mentally and physically active, which can improve your overall health and well-being.

6. The risks of working too long

On the other hand, there are also risks associated with working too long. As you age, you may become more susceptible to health problems or injuries that could make it difficult or impossible to continue working. Additionally, if you stay in a job that is physically or mentally demanding, you may be at risk for burnout or other stress-related health problems.

7. Balancing work and leisure

Ultimately, the decision of when to retire comes down to finding the right balance between work and leisure. You need to consider your financial situation, health, retirement goals, and social life, as well as the benefits and risks of working longer or retiring earlier. It's important to take the time to carefully evaluate your options and make an informed decision that is right for you.

8. Planning for retirement

No matter when you decide to retire, it's important to start planning early. This means setting financial goals, creating a retirement savings plan, and considering your options for healthcare and other benefits. You may also want to consider working with a financial advisor or retirement planner who can help you navigate the complex world of retirement planning.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, deciding when to retire is a complex decision that requires careful consideration of a variety of factors. While there is no one-size-fits-all answer, it's important to take the time to evaluate your options and make an informed decision that is right for you. Whether you choose to retire early or work well into your golden years, the key is to find the right balance between work and leisure. The relationship between life expectancy and early or late retirement is a complex issue that requires careful consideration. While some argue that retiring later can lead to a longer lifespan due to increased social engagement and mental stimulation, others believe that retiring earlier allows for more time to pursue hobbies and passions outside of work. Ultimately, the decision to retire early or late should be based on individual circumstances and priorities. Individuals need to consider their financial situation, personal goals, and health when making this decision. By carefully weighing these factors, individuals can make an informed choice about when to retire and how best to enjoy their golden years.





Mrs. Marian Atta-Benyah

Human Resources, Aboadze

A RESILIENT MINDSET - KEY TO MAINTAINING THE VRA SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Our mantra of inculcating a private sector mindset in our public service delivery to ensure the sustainability of VRA cannot be realised unless we continually and consciously work with a resilient mindset.

Resilience refers to how effectively one handles difficult experiences in life. It is often described as the ability to 'bounce back' and comfortably carry on amid adversity. It also involves being able to effectively regulate your thoughts and emotions, as well as perceiving challenging situations as an opportunity, and not a personal threat (Liz Burton-Hughes, Writer)

It is the fuel that powers us to develop a positive approach to life, making it possible for us to stay motivated in times of adversity and solve problems in the workplace. Therefore, with a resilient mindset, you naturally feel the day-to-day tasks at the workplace are more approachable.

While there is natural resilience in all of us, we need to nurture adaptive resilience at the workplace and where it is missing, get the necessary training to restore it.

Studies have proven that a lack of resilience can be an agent towards stress and anxiety, which most often impact workplace productivity and relationships.

Pillars of Resilience

Some key pillars of resilience by experts are as follows:

1. Emotional well-being – how well you manage your emotions and thoughts, and how healthy and realistic your views are of yourself and the world. This is the most fundamental pillar of resilience.
2. Inner drive – your ability to set goals and motivate yourself, as well as adopt a forward-thinking approach to progress through life.
3. Future focus – your level of foresight, as well as an ability to focus on solutions and positive change. It also encompasses acceptance of failures and adversity.
4. Relationships – having a strong social network with friends, family, colleagues etc., which provides emotional and physical support.
5. Physical health – recognizing the importance of looking after yourself physically, as poor physical well-being can directly impact the other pillars.

The above pillars are all interlinked and contain their building blocks, which you must develop to strengthen the pillars as a whole. For example, one of the essential components of emotional well-being is understanding and regulating your thoughts.

Contd. on next page



Contd. from previous page

What does Resilience look like? (Characteristics of Resilience)

What makes some employees more resilient than others? What are their resilience examples? It is not that resilient individuals have fewer stressors at work. They are just better equipped to cope with the challenges they face. Below are some characteristics of resilience exhibited by employees:

- Seeing change as an opportunity or challenge (rather than a setback)
- High level of adaptability
- Optimistic outlook
- High tolerance of negative effect
- Secure attachments with others and the ability to engage their support
- Personal goals
- Strong sense of humour
- Patience

Why is Resilience Important in the Workplace?

The workplace in the modern era of digital transformation is an ever-changing and sometimes extremely stressful environment. Given the evolving needs of organizations, growing resilience is a key strategic priority. Workers need to be resilient to cope and bounce back from challenging situations, most often taking these as opportunities for success. Resilience is strength, and you need it to achieve your career goals.

Some importance of resilience as highlighted by experts:

- Shape the way employees respond to and manage the stress of change.
- Develop an internal focus of control
- Improves organizational and employee performance
- Get cushioned from burnout

- Have improved overall health
- Have better mental health, which results in a reduction in absenteeism
- Build better relationships among workers
- Build positive beliefs
- Transform failure into success.

Building Resilience at the Workplace

Building resilience at work takes practice, time, and self-reflection, making it more of a personal endeavour. We all have the power to develop a resilient mindset; just like a muscle, it needs to be conditioned and strengthened every single day. Research has found that resilience can be learned, people who have low resilience can see a 125% increase with just 3-4 months of coaching. Resilience is a factor of mind and body. It should be encouraging to know that, as important as resilience is, many of the resilience factors that drive it are within our power to change.

Some factors to consider in building Resilience (The Resiliency Solution.com)

1. Pay attention to your health
2. Focus on your physical wellbeing
3. Mind your mindset
4. Get connected – social support network
5. Practice Self-awareness
6. Watch your stress levels

Conclusion

In the 2024 CE's Planning Letter, the Chief Executive indicated, "We owe it to ourselves to double up on our efforts, refresh our perspectives, and deploy strategies that can help us continue to run our business sustainably."

This implies that the Authority needs to continually build and sustain the successes achieved over the past sixty-three (63) years. It is therefore imperative for all staff to be resilient, and forward-thinking and work assiduously to achieve our objectives.





Ruth Owusu, Asst. RTI Officer

RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) CORNER

EXEMPTIONS: What Cannot be Accessed

Dear Reader, in our previous edition of the RTI Corner, we explored the various basis upon which an RTI request can be denied, as well as the procedure available for an applicant who is dissatisfied with a decision on an application for access to information.

In today's edition, we will delve into the categories of information classified by the RTI Act, 2019 (Act 989) as exempt information.

Although the RTI Law provides for the implementation of the constitutional right of persons to request and be granted access to information generated by, and in the custody of public institutions, it is subject to some exemptions.

Some of these classes of information exempted from disclosure, covered under Sections 5 through to 17 of the RTI Act, are discussed below:

- Information for the President or the Vice-President – Information that has been prepared for submission or submitted to the President or Vice-President for consideration is exempt from disclosure.

Additionally, information containing matters, the disclosure of which would reveal information concerning opinion, advice, deliberation, recommendation, minutes or consultation made or given to the President or the Vice-President, and is likely to undermine the deliberative process on the part of the President or the Vice-President, or prejudice national security is exempted.

- Information relating to Cabinet – Information cannot be disclosed if it is prepared for submission to Cabinet for consideration, or is before Cabinet, not published or released to the public.

Also, information is exempted if it contains matters, the disclosure of which would reveal information concerning opinion, advice, deliberation, recommendation, minutes or consultation made, and is likely to:

- Prejudice the effective formulation or development of government policy;
- Frustrate the success of a policy by premature disclosure of that policy;
- Undermine the deliberative process in Cabinet; or
- Prejudice national security

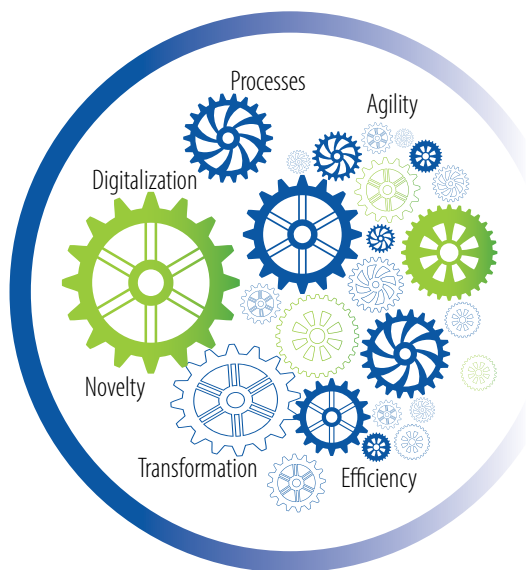
It is important to note that information which contains factual or statistical data is not exempt from information under these categories. Furthermore, information that may ordinarily be exempt can be disclosed if it reveals evidence of:

- a contravention of, or failure to comply with a law;
- an imminent and serious threat to public safety, public health or morals, the prevention of disorder or crime, or the protection of the rights or freedoms of others;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an abuse of authority or neglect in the performance of an official function; or
- any other matter of public interest

In the next edition of the RTI Corner, we shall continue our discussion on the other categories of exempt information under the RTI Act.



LET'S 'SPICE' UP OUR 'BRAISE' STRATEGY



Creativity & INNOVATION

The Anchor for Our Sustainability

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

For further information/enquiries, contact
Corporate Affairs & External Relations Unit, Corporate Office
Tel: +233 302 664941-9 Ext. 252, 236 & 453
PLC 724252/413/309/453.
www.vra.com