



Public and
Commercial
Services Union

Members' Briefing REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP

To: **All Members in CDIO and RCDTS** (other PCS members for information)

cc: **Branch Secretaries, Group Executive Committee, Equality Chairs, VOAC** (for info)

Can this Briefing be circulated via HMRC IT systems: **NO**

Website: **YES**

Action to be taken: **For the attention of all members**

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HMRC ANNOUNCES RCDTS TO CLOSE Anti-Union "Subsidiary" to be broken-up

- *Part of RCDTS to be fully re-incorporated into HMRC*
- *Part of RCDTS work to be fully privatised*
- *RCDTS Bosses still refuse to allow PCS to directly support their staff*
- *Some other CDIO members also facing privatisation, but covered by PCS recognition*
 - *PCS to issue detailed TUPE guidance*
- *Union meeting to be organised for Thursday 20 January at 13:00*

On Wednesday 12 January 2022, after months of prevaricating, HMRC announced that the anti-union, "wholly-owned subsidiary of HMRC", Revenue and Customs Digital Technology Services (RCDTS), will be broken-up. Part of RCDTS will be re-incorporated into HMRC and part of it will be fully privatised.

Union-busting experiment fails

From the get-go, the RCDTS project was little more than a dismal attempt at union-busting. The Directors of RCDTS were all senior managers in HMRC (where unions are fully recognised), RCDTS staff were all sitting alongside HMRC staff in HMRC buildings, the RCDTS personnel functions were all performed by HMRC, and they have even been included in the HMRC People Survey. Yet when it came to recognising Trade Unions, RCDTS refused to engage with PCS, preferring instead to create a puppet "Employee Forum", totally dependent on RCDTS for its resources, and trying to kid the workforce that the "Forum" could represent members of staff without any of the detailed training and facilities available to representatives of an independent Trade Union. Obviously, the so-called "Forum" has no collective bargaining rights whatsoever.

We can see what a marvellous job these anti-union bosses in RCDTS have done. They botched the introduction of their pay and grading system, which far from delivering a coherent structure, has resulted in massively broad pay ranges resulting in a complete lack of role/grade clarity. They botched the handling of some of the "New Fair Deal" pensions transfers. It's reached the point where even though there's no recognised Trade Union to directly challenge their handling of the business, HMRC's most senior management have now effectively taken their toys away and sent them back to their room.

And let's make no mistake, 'back to their room' is exactly where these Directors will be going. Unlike some staff in RCDTS, these Directors will not be facing the threat of a forced move to a private company, they'll be moved effortlessly and seamlessly to a nice, cosy, senior role back in the mainstream department; and whilst the department paves the way for that, in another last-gasp act of pettiness which has so typified their management of RCDTS, these Directors are still refusing to allow PCS to assist RCDTS members

facing a Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) transfer – otherwise known as a TUPE transfer - out of RCDTS; preferring instead to expect inexperienced and relatively untrained “Employee Forum” members to handle the impact of complex employment legislation. On top of that, it’s still not clear what they’ll do if these “Forum” members leave RCDTS before the end of the transfer process. Perhaps these Directors will ask staff to just trust them to protect their terms and conditions of service; after all, as the SS RCDTS hits the iceberg and begins to slide silently into the deep, it’s clear that they’ve done a cracking job of protecting members’ interests so far.

Impact on wider CDIO

It isn’t just RCDTS staff who’ll be affected by the plans, which form part of the Technology Sourcing Programme (TSP). HMRC members of staff in the Chief Digital Information Office (CDIO) will see significant change brought about by the move of RCDTS staff fully into HMRC; whilst some HMRC staff are facing the threat of privatisation as well.

However, PCS are recognised by HMRC for collective bargaining purposes, and the department has made the commitment to fully engage with PCS on this, and on the wider TSP exercise. PCS, and our sister union ARC, are continuing to press HMRC, calling on them to redeploy within the department, any staff who do not wish to transfer to the private sector. Following the department’s apparent move away from this approach, as recently as December 2021, [PCS and ARC wrote to HMRC](#) to reinforce this fundamental demand.

What we are also doing, is preparing detailed written guidance and advice on the TUPE process, to support both RCDTS and wider CDIO members. We will arrange to email this to all personal email addresses, so please ensure that the personal email address we hold for you is up to date.

PCS arranging urgent members’ meeting

PCS are planning to hold an all-members meeting, open to all RCDTS and wider CDIO members, to discuss the latest developments.

The meeting will be held at 13:00 on Thursday 20 January 2021 via Microsoft Teams. [The link for the meeting can be found here.](#)

Join PCS today

There is clearly much work to be done, to try to safeguard the interests of both CDIO and RCDTS staff impacted by these plans. Being a member of a strong and independent Trade Union is your best chance of safeguarding those interests. So, if you’ve read this briefing and you aren’t yet a member of PCS, then [join today](#).

Get involved!

Remember, HMRC applies restrictions on the content of union circulars distributed using the department’s email system, so make sure that you stay in touch with your union. You can find your membership number in your latest email digest from PCS.

If you haven’t already done so, let PCS have your personal/non-work email address and your mobile phone number. We’ll only use it to keep you informed about PCS matters. You can update your details securely online by registering for [PCS Digital](#) or by contacting your local PCS rep, and asking them to enter your details securely on the PCS Organising App.

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