

Languages Service Sectoral Assembly (LSSA) Minutes of the fourth meeting of the Bureau¹

Held on Thursday, 18 October 2018, from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m., room E-4116.

Attendees: Marine Acker (FTS), Wreda Amziani (ATS), Fatima Biad-Smith (CTU), Jamila Chedad (ATPU), Jianjun Chen (CTS), Marie-Agnes Deleschoux (RU), Emily Duggan (ETS), Pauline Escalante (ETPU), Hassan Harrafa (ATS), Yustiniya Khokhlova (RTS), Tatiana Jaques (RU), Olivier Meyer (President), Francisco Rovira Faixa (STS), Luz Urquizu Marroquin (STPU)

Main topics discussed:

- Activities of the President since the last Bureau meeting
- Stand-up desks (continued)
- Foreseeable changes and training needs: an update
- Productivity issues (continued)
- Update on the situation regarding the Reference Group
- Question about teleworking
- LSSA communication tools
- Any other business

Decisions taken:

1. *Stand-up desks:* As was described in a recent email from the President to LS staff (October 3, 14:04 p.m.), a stand-up desk can only be provided by the Organization subject to approval by the Medical Service, but to do so, a medical report from the staff member's doctor with a relevant diagnosis must be provided. This, in the view of the Bureau, means that prevention is completely disregarded. For its part, the office of the Chief of the Languages Service will try to obtain a number of desk converters (Varidesk). Interested persons are invited to contact their Chief of Section.
2. *Training needs:* In the face of growing uncertainty about linguistic professions within the Languages Service, the LSSA requests more clarity from management on the future perspectives of linguistic professions at UNOG. Moreover, it encourages management to be more proactive by preparing a training plan project as a pilot endeavour. The Bureau's understanding is that such a plan should include a complete skills assessment, a clear definition of objectives and deadlines (in accordance with the actual future needs of the Organization), and, to achieve these objectives, collective/individual training plans aimed at developing the skills necessary for the staff concerned to maintain their employment and ensure their professional progress. All available resources, whether internal (such as language courses, coaching sessions and skills assessment provided by CLM experts, cross assignments) or external (coaching and training provided by professionals recruited from DCM extrabudgetary funds) should be mobilized.
3. *Productivity:* At the request of the Bureau, it was clarified that, from now on, the productivity quota for all self-revising translators holding P-3 posts would be five pages across all sections. The President has prepared an explanatory document on other issues regarding the actual methods used to calculate productivity in order to discuss the issue further with management. The Bureau decided to look into the history of the different quotas.
4. *Update on the Reference Unit:* Seven selected members of the new team received a notification from HRMS stating that, starting from 1 September 2018, they would be reassigned to the Language Support Unit (LSU). For the moment, seven selected and five non-selected members are still in the Reference Unit (RU) under the temporary supervision of Mrs. Abdellaoui. The five non-selected members of the RU have still not been reassigned and four of them are still on cross-assignment. The Bureau remains concerned about the present and future status of selected and non-selected members of the RU.
5. *Teleworking:* It has been established that teleworking requests are treated on a case-by-case basis and ultimately it is the Chief of Service who decides whether or not to approve them. However, whereas for P staff the general condition seems to be a productivity of at least five pages per day, the Bureau requests clarification as to the conditions for the approval of requests for teleworking coming from G staff.
6. *Yammer group for LS staff:* The Bureau will create a Yammer group for LS staff. Its goal will be to provide a space for informal discussion of any topics of interest to staff. All suggestions for this group's name are welcome.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the opinions reflected herein represent staff suggestions and views collected by their representatives and are aimed at promoting communication between management and staff. In order to avoid misunderstandings, any comments or requests for corrections to the minutes should be submitted to the President of the LSSA only, for inclusion in the minutes of the following meeting.