

Reorganizations or reductions?

Before you start playing a game, it is always good to know the rules!

This week, management will open discussions with trade unions about the reorganization of all of the **Paris news production and editorial services** which will likely be based on a **report by working groups on French coverage**.

Worryingly hasty

While the desire to review our production and editorial structures may be legitimate, on the contrary *SUD* notes the haste with which management wants to advance on this crucial issue which deeply affects our covery and our public interest mission.

Will there be a real debate? We have more than a little doubt given the calendar: the working group report was published in September, and a tendentious survey of staff was launched in October. Management wants to finish with its plans by the end of the year to propose its project in January!

This hastiness is even more suspect when one considers that the options favored by the working groups would raze the current organizational structure. Goodbye to the old Paris services (Infos Génés, Politique, Social, Eco, Société, BPA) and welcome to new thematic "poles" such as Ecological transition, Digital world, Security... Goodbye as well to the French domestic and World desks and welcome the "single desk".

If the stated goal of the reorganization is to "boost", "develop" and "improve" coverage, at the same time management acknowledges the need to "make choices". Decryption: we are going to do less...

A 25% cut in production journalists?

Another uncomfortable question (and far from the least important): the number of staff.

The report favors the creation of 10 "poles" of 10 to 12 journalists each, for a total of 100 to 120, while the six production services they are to replace currently have around 135 francophone journalists. It is unclear if managers are included in the 100-120 number. If they are not, the reorganization could end up being done without cutting jobs if the services are at 12 each plus two managers. If they are 10 each and just 15 managers overall, that would mean a 15 percent cut in jobs. If there are just 10 journalists in each of the 10 poles including managers, that would mean a loss of around 35 jobs or a quarter of the posts currently in these production services.

To this reduction we need to add the 16 francophone text jobs in Paris that are being cut as part of the Voluntary Departure Plan (PDV), most of whom will leave at the end of the year.

Why not restructure the existing services? Perhaps because a complete reorganization will mask the abandonment of coverage of certain subjects. It is harder to make before-and-after comparisons if all the beats and journalists have been scattered into new "poles".

Another uncomfortable question: will the reorganization be done by advertising of the posts? Or will the journalists be assigned as was the case in October for the technicians in the IT department?

The proposal to create a "single desk" also holds considerable risks. Under the cover of the "reevaluation of its role" it will add tasks to desks that are already losing staff due to the PDV. The goal to "develop synergies" means less specialist competence. All this erodes the primordial responsibility of desks: maintaining editorial standards.

Faced with these threats to the very foundations of AFP, SUD intends to push management to come clean on what game it is playing.

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SUD-AFP (Solidarity-Unity-Democracy)