

### **Does RDNA replace existing qualifications?**

Professional qualifications underpin competence. While qualifications represent a level of attainment at a given point in time, as with all professions continuing professional development is a key issue. RDNA therefore does not replace but supports the professional qualifications which underpin it by providing a framework and architecture through which regulators can maintain and develop their competence throughout their career. Working closely with the professional bodies, the common approach to competence for regulators is designed to complement professional qualifications.

### **Does the RDNA self-assessment tool measure my competence?**

The tool supports personal development. It does not refer to levels of competency, nor does it measure competency. It provides a robust process enabling regulators to identify development needs in relation to their existing roles or future roles to which they aspire. Fundamentally, it is based on reflective self-assessment, to guide the creation of a regulator's personal development plan, after assisting discussions with his or her manager during the annual development review. It is not possible to pass or fail an assessment.

### **Will the use of the tool create a burden?**

Use of the tool is not mandatory. Our pilot evaluation showed that most participants found the tool easy to use and were able to complete their self-assessment reports in less than two hours. For a process that is likely to be undertaken once a year this is a proportionate investment in personal development planning. It should also speed up annual development reviews by pinpointing issues for attention. The tool has been designed with flexibility in mind, such that it can be applied as part of, and to enhance, a council's existing personal development procedures.

### **With so little money available for training, how can we meet development needs?**

The Guidance for Regulators – Information Point (GRIP) mirrors the RDNA structure and signposts regulators to relevant online resources. It is free to use and wherever possible the content it links to is free as well. There are often better and more cost-effective ways to address development needs than formal training courses, and GRIP provides supporting information on low and no cost methods such as coaching, e-learning, directed learning, job shadowing, mentoring and project work.

### **How can I benefit from the tool when my manager is not close enough to my work to validate my self-assessment report?**

Your self-assessment report should assist and facilitate discussions with your manager about your personal development needs. Effective line managers will be able to facilitate a purposeful and well-informed dialogue with officers about personal development needs even if they do not regularly work with the officer.

**If we identify development needs but continue to undertake our normal roles, could this lead to a legal challenge?**

This question was raised in 2008 when the original RDNA tool was piloted within health and safety regulation. The level of risk is no greater than for any other approach to continuous professional development. Personnel will always have development needs in any regulatory organisation, as the nature of their jobs, and the legislation they enforce, changes over time. Those organisations therefore require processes to identify and meet the development needs of their regulators so that their professional standards of competency are maintained. Used appropriately, the RDNA tool should help demonstrate that a local authority has a robust process for identifying and meeting development needs, based on the common regulatory competence standards supported by all the key players in the local and national regulatory landscape.