



PROMETHEANS

AUGMENTING PEOPLE CAPABILITIES

## CASE STUDY



# Building a Mobility Framework Fit for Geographical Expansion Ambition

*When international expansion accelerates, the foundations of talent mobility are put to the test.*

## About Us

We are boutique HR consulting firm helping organisations build and scale up their capabilities to attract, motivate and retain talents to win in their respective markets.

We are fuelled by the belief that a people-centric organisational culture, astute adoption of technology, evidence-based decision-making, and a strong talent pipeline help organisations create competitive advantage.

We are borne out of a passion to guide organisations unleash the full potential of their people and future-proof their business - and we believe that technology is a game changer and a critical enabler in sustaining an organisation's success.

Our interventions focus on six interrelated elements of effective organisation design, i.e., strategy, structure, process, talent, reward, and technology.

## Context

A group operating across multiple markets had, over the years, developed an approach to international assignments that served its immediate needs - but had never been architected as a formal framework. Employees deployed to overseas subsidiaries were compensated through a hybrid model: part of their salary was paid in the home country, part in the host. On the surface, the arrangement offered flexibility. In practice, it had quietly accumulated a set of structural fault lines.

The organisation was now pivoting to a more aggressive international expansion strategy. The movement of talent - deploying experienced leaders into new markets and building capability across borders - was identified as a critical enabler of that strategy. Suddenly, what had been manageable friction became an active constraint.

# The Challenge

Closer examination of the existing model revealed three distinct, interconnected problems.

## TAX COMPLIANCE

The split-payroll structure had created unintended tax exposure. Income paid in the home country was not being declared in the host jurisdiction – a position that left both the organisation and individual employees at risk. As the number of international assignees grew, so did the organisation's compliance footprint and its potential liability.

## INCOHERENT INCENTIVE PRACTICES

Bonus payments had evolved without a governing framework. Different assignees had received different treatment over time, and there was no consistent logic tying incentive payments to either the home or host context. The result was a patchwork of arrangements that was difficult to explain, difficult to defend, and increasingly difficult to administer.

*The model that had worked well enough for a handful of assignees was not built to support the pace and scale of international growth the organisation was now pursuing.*

## REPATRIATION TRAPS

Perhaps the most acute challenge emerged when the organisation tried to bring talent home. Expatriate benefits – cost-of-living adjustments, housing allowances, and other assignment-related provisions – had, over time, become embedded in net compensation figures. Employees had built their financial lives around those numbers. When senior leaders were asked to return to the home country, even to take up significant roles, the conversation around compensation became fraught. The package they would return to bore little resemblance to what they were receiving, and the organisation had no structured basis for bridging that gap.

## MACROECONOMIC HEADWINDS

Compounding these structural issues was timing. In the first year of the transition, the host-country currency depreciated and inflation rose. Employees in the process of moving to a new compensation framework faced real purchasing-power erosion. Irrespective of the merits of the new model, there

# Solution

A new global mobility framework replaced the ad hoc model – structured around a clear separation between role-based and assignment-based compensation. Employees and managers could see exactly how packages were constructed, which fundamentally changed the repatriation conversation: assignment benefits were time-bound by design, so returning home became a planned transition rather than a compensation shock.

The split-payroll structure was replaced with a tax-compliant model correctly attributed across jurisdictions. Each existing assignee received an individual transition model comparing their position under the old and new structures. Where the new framework would have resulted in a real-terms reduction, a first-year protection was applied – a commitment that proved particularly important given the currency depreciation and inflationary pressures of that first year.

Clear mobility policies were developed covering eligibility, allowances, tax support, and repatriation terms. Assignee-facing materials and manager guidance ensured communication was transparent and consistent, so neither HR nor line managers were navigating these conversations alone.

The organisation entered its next phase of expansion with compliance risks addressed, repatriation conversations structured, and mobile employees clear on their packages from day one. The investment in getting the foundations right also sent a clear signal about how the organisation valued its people across borders – not incidental in a competitive market for cross-border talent.

*Mobility, done well, is not just a compliance or HR function – it is a strategic capability. Getting the foundations right made international growth a more executable ambition*

## Want to learn more?

If you want to know more about how we can help your organisation address your reward challenges, visit our website [www.prometheans.mu](http://www.prometheans.mu) or send us an email on [info@prometheans.mu](mailto:info@prometheans.mu). We would be happy to discuss and explore how we can be of assistance.