



CASE STUDY

“PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM”

THE BARBADOS EXPERIENCE

Background/History

The history of Barbados dates back to 1625 when an English ship returning from a trading voyage to Brazil touched at Barbados and took possession in the name of James I of England.

Archaeological evidence since then indicates that prior to 1625, the island had been inhabited by the Arawaks and Caribs, but there was apparently no sign of them when the English arrived. Later research too indicated that Caribs from neighbouring islands settled in small colonies in St. Philip and St. Lucy.

Barbados' first agricultural crop was tobacco with cotton in second place. As a result of poor economic returns, sugar was introduced by small peasants who in 1640 surrendered to the large plantation owner.

This switch from tobacco and cotton to sugar is probably the single most important event in the history of Barbados, for it brought with it a number of far-reaching changes. It saw the consolidation of land holdings into large estates and the end of the small farmers; the end of indentured European labourers and the drastic reduction of the white population; and the large scale importation of black slaves from Africa who provided plantation labour until their emancipation in 1838.

Barbados is the most easterly island in the Caribbean chain of islands stretching from Florida and the North American mainland to the Guianas on the northern mainland of South American islands. The island sits in splendid isolation at latitude 13° North and longitude 59° 37W with 23 kilometres (14 miles) at its widest point and 34 kilometres (21 miles) long and is a mere 416 square kilometres (166 square miles).

Most of the island is made up soft marine Deposits of coral limestone. This limestone-cover gives in the north-eastern part of the island to a terrain of clay and sand stones comprising the Scotland marine sedimentary formation. This area runs through the parishes of St. Joseph, St. John and St. Andrew and embraces about one-sixth of the island.

Barbados has been described as flat and low lying, but in fact, it rises from west to east in a series of gentle terraces to its highest point of about 1100 feet at Mount Hillaby in St. Andrew. The terrain dips in St. George to form the St. George valley, separating the main limestone terraces from lower limestone ridge in the Christ Church area.

Barbados enjoys a stable climate. The temperature rarely falls below 23°C or rises above 30°C. There is a definite “wet season” from July to November and a “dry season” with minimum rainfall recorded in February and March.

At the end of 2000, residential population stood at 267,900 with birth rate per thousand being 14.0 and population growth rate 0.2.

The infant mortality rate was 10.0 per thousand in 1999 and 16.7 per thousand live births in 2000.

Live births totalled 3,764 in 2000.

English is the official language.

As a result of its long-standing association with England, Barbados is mainly Anglican. The Moravian and Methodist churches were added to the list of denominations of the 18th Century. Since then, these have been followed by Roman Catholics, Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, the Salvation Army and many other small religious groups. There are small groups of Hindus and Muslims, as well as a small Jewish community. These groups all have complete religious freedom.

Barbados was colonised in 1627 in the name of Charles I (1625-49) by the Governor, Charles Wolferstone, as the representative of the Earle of Carlisle, after whom Carlisle Bay was named. Government comprised the Governor appointed by the island's "owners" (The Lord Proprietor), and a council appointed in turn by the Governor.

In 1629 the island was divided into six parishes, Christ Church, St. Michael, St. James, St. Thomas, St. Peter, and St. Lucy. 1639 gave rise to the birth of Parliament and local government. Representatives were chosen from among the resident freeholders to sit with the original council as a legislative body. Then in 1645, the island underwent further division – this time into eleven parishes. The Assembly comprised 22 elected members – two from each parish.

On February 16, 1651, the inhabitants of the island declared their independence of the Commonwealth of England.

On January 11, 1652, Articles of Agreement were signed between England and Barbados ensuring the "rights of the people". These were later ratified in English Parliament on August 18, 1652. Barbados also had its first elected Speaker of the House of Assembly – Col. Thomas Modyford. Thereafter, the two Houses of Parliament, the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly sat separately. The meetings of the Council were held at the official residence of the Governor.

Barbados had its first postal agency in 1663 to handle overseas mail.

In 1698, the Act to declare and ascertain the rights and powers of the General Assembly of the Island was proclaimed.

Barbadians came to accept this arrangement until the slave rebellion in 1816, led by Bussa, and a free mulatto Washington Franklin. As a result, the 1826 legislation to ameliorate the condition of slaves was passed. Then in 1834, slavery was abolished followed by emancipation four years later.

In 1843 Bridgetown became a separate constituency with two elected members one of which was Samuel Jackman Prescod – the first coloured representative to be elected to the Assembly.

The Executive Committee Act was passed in 1881—the first step towards representative government which was as a direct result of the ‘confederation riots.’

The island's first organised black political group was founded in 1924 by Dr. Charles Duncan O’Neal who was also representative for the City of Bridgetown in the House of Assembly.

In 1934, Grantley Adams was elected to the House of Assembly becoming the first real spokesman for the black population in the legislature since Prescod in 1843.

The year 1937 was marred with disturbances and a riot followed.

The Barbados Labour Party was formed in 1938 coming out of the earlier formed Barbados Progressive League. This was followed by the enforcement of the Trade Union Act in 1940, one year after its passing.

Full representative Government was established when Universal Adult Suffrage was introduced in 1950. The life of the House of Assembly was also extended from 3 to 5 years. In 1954, Ministerial Government was established and Sir Grantley Adams became the first Premier.

A second party – the Democratic Labour Party was formed in 1955 by a group which broke away from the Barbados Labour Party.

In 1958 Barbados became part of the West Indies Federation. Sir Grantley Adams was the first Prime Minister of the Federation. 1958 also saw the birth of a Cabinet system of Government in Barbados.

An Act was also passed to make better provision for Local Government in the island. The Act divided Barbados into zones, the City of Bridgetown with councillors elected for the separate wards of areas comprising (the City Ward, the St. Michael Ward and the Carlisle Ward). The City of Bridgetown also became a Corporation with a Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Aldermen (Senior Councillors) and Councillors. There was the Northern District Council with a Chairman, Aldermen and Councillors; and the Southern District Council, with the same structure as in the North.

Mr. Ernest D. Mottley (member 1946 – 71) was the first Mayor for the City of Bridgetown.

Barbados attained full Internal Self-Government in 1961. Errol Barrow became Premier following the DLP victory in the December General Elections securing 14 seats.

Bewilderment followed in 1962 when the West Indies Federation was dissolved.

In 1964 a Senate of twenty-one (21) appointed members replaced the Legislative Council.

Barbados gained independence in 1966 and Errol Barrow became the first Prime Minister. One year later the system of Local Government Council was dissolved and replaced by an Interim Commissioner of Local Government. The country's first Barbadian Governor General - Sir Winston Scott was appointed succeeding Sir John Stow.

Elections were held in 1971 and the Democratic Labour Party won a two-thirds majority out of 24 constituencies, the BLP won 6.

The Barbados Labour Party took over the Government in 1976 and continued until 1986 when the Democratic Labour Party was returned to power that same year.

In 1980, the seats in Parliament were increased from 24 – 27. In 1989, a third party emerged – the National Democratic Party which became the official Opposition replacing the BLP. In 1990, Parliamentary seats again increased, this time to 27.

DLP held on to power up to 1994 when the BLP regained power. The BLP has remained in power having won two elections since then. The number of parliamentary seats now stands at 30 having increased from 27 in 2003.

The present Structure of Government

The Arms of Barbados Government are the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive. In theory, there are separate but in reality the Legislature and Executive arms work together. The judiciary remains autonomous.

The Legislature

Barbados has a bicameral legislature namely: the Senate and House of Assembly, and a mature, social democratic party system, based on universal adult suffrage and total purity in elections.

The Senate has 21 members, all appointed by the Governor General, 12 on the advice of the Prime Minister, two on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, and 7 in the Governor General's discretion.

The House of Assembly has 30 members, all elected. Both entities debate all legislation. However, the House of Assembly may ultimately override Senate rejection of money Bills and other Bills except Bills amending the Constitution.

The House of Assembly sits 40 – 45 days a year and the Senate 20 – 25 days.

The Cabinet is formed out of this arrangement and is headed by the Prime Minister who must be an elected M.P. The Governor General appoints the other members of Cabinet as advised by the Prime Minister. The Barbados Cabinet presently consists of eighteen (18) members including the Prime Minister.

The Judiciary

The Judiciary comprises a hierarchy of Courts with the right to appeal from lowest (Magistrate's Court) to the highest (Court of Appeal of Barbados).

The Barbados Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal are the main courts of the judicial system in Barbados.

The Supreme Court is presided over by a Chief Justice and a number of other Judges, as may be prescribed by Parliament.

On April 16th, 2005, Barbados officially accepted CCJ as its final Court of Appeal.

The Executive

The Executive Arm of Government is concerned with the management of Government according to Laws and Regulations, Policies and Guidelines. In keeping with the British Whitehall/Westminster system of Government, the Constitution makes provision for the Cabinet to be “collectively responsible to Parliament.”

The Barbados Public Service

The Public Service of Barbados serves as the administrative machinery for implementing the policies of the Government with established legal frameworks and guidelines and in keeping with its political mandate. The colonial public service systems, which existed pre-independence, were modified in order to reflect new constitutional changes. Although the Public Service is a unified service, its functions are varied and diverse with an array of Ministries, Departments, Divisions, Corporations and Boards. The complement of these entities is subject to change contingent on the programmes of the administration in place at the time.

At the beginning of 2006, the Barbados Public Service comprised 18 ministries and 96 departments and a cadre of 26,000 public officers.

Barbados Economy

Before the advent of globalisation, Barbados was incorporated into the international system on passive terms that were not our own. Our economy was geared to

producing agricultural and manufactured products for preferred markets and was the recipient of concessionary financing for development. This position has subsequently changed. Barbados is now being required to compete without the benefit of special preferences in the new global economy.

The Barbadian economy is to a greater extent an import service economy, with tourism and international business, and financial services being the principal sources of foreign exchange earnings. Barbados' Tourism sector, which is the mainstay of our economy, is one of the fastest growing in the world, and it is one in which Barbados is competitive. Despite positive growth the sector experienced a drop in cruise ship arrivals- a decline of 20% in 2005. Value added for the tourism sector as a whole fell by 4.2% in 2005.

The Business Sector realized increased growth of 22% in 2005 when compared with 2004.

Sugar output rose by 10.3% in 2005 in contrast to a contraction of 5.4% in 2004.

Manufacturing expanded by over 3%. The construction industry grew by a whopping 17.6%. Exports of goods rose in 2005 to \$38.7 million up from \$340 million in 2004. Savings rose in 2005 to \$5.863 billion in 2005, up from \$5.25 billion in 2004.

Investment grew from \$1.067 billion as compared to \$975.4 million in 2004.

In the area of Commercial Banking, mortgage loans for private dwellings increased by over \$100 million between December 2004 and October 2005.

Current expenditure less amortization was \$1,425.9 million, an amount of \$87.6 million or 6.5% above that recorded for the corresponding period last year.

Capital expenditure was \$130.8 million, \$10.2 million or 8.4% more than for the corresponding period of 2004 – 2005.

Projections are that current revenue collected for the current fiscal year will be \$2,075.7 million. This will be 2.2% more than the \$2,030.8 million approved for the Financial Year and 9.4% more than collected in the last Fiscal Year.

Current expenditure excluding amortization is projected to be \$1,936.6 million during 2005 – 2006, an amount of 6.6% more than for 2004 – 2005. Capital expenditure is expected to be 6.7% more than the previous year and 6.8% less than the amount approved for the year.

Based on these projections, fiscal deficit for 2005/06 will be 1.7% of GDP, below that of 2.6% recorded for 2004/05 and 2.5% originally targeted for 2005/06.

Net International Reserves (NIR) of the Central Bank is projected to be \$1,209.4 million compared to \$1,190.5 in 2004 and represents 23.4 weeks of imports – well above the safety zone of (3 months).

Inflation was projected to exceed 4% in 2005. This resulted largely from rising energy prices.

Growth for 2006 is forecast to exceed 4%.

Domestic and International Challenges

One of the economic challenges facing Barbados is that of flexible labour. Barbados now has to compete and do business within a global economy which is opened for business on a 24 hour basis whilst we largely function as an eight hour shift economy. Barbados would therefore have to make the necessary adjustment to its present labour arrangements if it is to remain competitive.

A second challenge is that of building a stronger export culture, and tempering the effects of trade and financial liberalization as factors causing economic instability in our society. Reform in this area is inevitable given the frightening situation that too much growth is being generated by the sectors which consume foreign exchange rather than earn foreign exchange. Further, there has been a surge in domestic demand, driven in large measure by a major expansion in domestic credit which has resulted in a surge in imports and an external current account deficit of unprecedented and unsustainable proportions.

Rising international oil prices remains a challenge for the economy with local solutions still some way off, for example, the use of Ethanol as a transport fuel. Barbados also need to increase local production of liquid petroleum to 1500 BOPD and to increase the reserve production ration from 5 to 10 years remains a matter of urgency.

Natural Disasters have become more of a challenge today than it was before believed to be fueled by overall changes in the weather pattern. Barbados has been miraculously spared so far the brunt of what natural disasters can cause but what it cannot ignore as a cause for concern.

Another challenge has been to find a replacement for sugar or to find new ways of positioning it successfully following the decision of the European Union to cut the price for sugar by 36% over a four-year period.

Barbados is also challenged to find other ways to earn foreign exchange other than tourism which is vulnerable.

Some social challenges also exist, among them is poverty eradication, unemployment, housing, the staging off of crime and drugs from taking deep root and care of the elderly.

Implementation of the CSME is also another challenge, especially the area of “free movement of labour”. Barbados has had its problems in managing migration.

Public Sector Reform in Barbados

Since independence, the Barbados government has made efforts to reform its public service. In 1969, the government abolished the system of local government administration.

The Organisation and Management Division was instituted in the Public Service in 1971 when a small unit was set up on a temporary basis within the Establishments Division as a counterpart arrangement for an UN Advisor who had been recruited under UNDP technical assistance to promote a programme of administrative reform in the public service. On 1st April, 1973, a separate O & M Division was permanently established in the Prime Minister’s Office.

In the 1980s, a significant event in the public service was the creation of the Ministry of the Civil Service. This brought together Government’s human resource functions under one Ministry. This meant that Personnel Administration Division and Training Administration Division functioned under the management of the Ministry.

In the mid 1990s, there was a refocusing of the PSR effort and by 1997; the Office of Public Sector Reform (OPSR) was created. It should be noted that the Barbados Public Sector Reform programme was primarily a response to the perceived need to reform and re-engineer its government machinery in order to meet the challenges of a constantly changing global environment as well as its own dynamic internal pressures. Public Sector Reform is therefore, ultimately, about making ‘Barbados Work Better’.

The Office of Public Sector Reform

The Office of Public Sector Reform is a department under the Ministry of the Civil Service. The department has as its head, an acting Director who is assisted by an acting Deputy Director. It also has a number of Management Development Officers (MDOs) which comprise the technical arm of the department. These officers are directly involved with the various reform initiatives in the Ministries/Departments to which they are assigned. These initiatives are seen as a means of improving the way that business is being done in these agencies.

In spearheading the Public Sector Reform programme, the Office undertook an approach through the use of projects to deepen the awareness of Public Sector Reform.

This section of the overview highlights current and proposed reform initiatives undertaken and to be undertaken, by the Office up to November 2005.

Organisational Reviews

Organisational reviews are intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in the public service by reviewing and making recommendations on the systems, processes and procedures of Ministries and Departments.

Since 1997, the Office has assisted in the compilation of seventeen (17) organizational reviews. A number of these have been utilized in budget programme submissions, supporting organizational adjustments and, presently, in developing prerequisites for the Performance Review Development System.

Presently, the Office is conducting reviews and is waiting on a number of responses from the following organizations:

- National Library Service
- Analytical Services
- Glebe Polyclinic
- Black Rock Polyclinic
- St. Philip Polyclinic

A request from another agency to conduct an organisational review was received by the Office and is being addressed. The agency is:

- Urban Development Commission (**EAP exercises and Strategic Plan being completed first - already started**)

Challenges/Way Forward

Challenges in this area relate primarily to the need for organisations to respond to the draft reviews when completed and forwarded by OPSR for comment. Although in a number of cases it has been found that the recommendations were addressed or are being addressed, closure by response is required.

At present, the Office has been depleted in experience by the loss of nine (9) senior officers over the last five years, primarily due to, promotions. Although the Office advocates consideration for promotion of its officers to posts in the wider service, it requires the rebuilding of our skills and competencies base. We are pleased that the organizational worthiness of our officers is recognized and are being suitably rewarded. Recently, we have trained a number of junior officers and are looking

forward to conducting reviews in small to medium size organizations, when required. Reviews required by large organizations – depending on the scope of the intervention proposed - may have to be outsourced at this time based on our recommendations.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Plans are intended to provide government agencies with a management tool to assist them in producing fundamental decisions about their future direction as well as adjust objectives, strategies and resources to meet the opportunities and demands they may face in their changing environment. In addition, they are intended to provide the platform for the introduction of new management systems, such as, performance management, performance/programme budgeting and change management.

To date, the Office has assisted in the completion of thirteen (13) Strategic Plans.

Recently, the Office assisted in the completion of three (3) Strategic Plans and is assisting in others, these are:

- Urban Development Commission
- Fire Service Department (1st draft completed with OPSR's assistance – being reviewed)
- The International Business Facilitation Unit

Other agencies have requested assistance with their strategic planning exercises, these are:

- Barbados Vocational Training Board (not yet ready)
- Land Tax Department (on hold)
- Community Development Division (being reorganized – OPSR providing input here)
- Urban Development Commission (see above note)

The Office has consulted with these agencies and is ready to assist them as early as possible. It should also be noted that the MDOs continue to support the PRDS Unit with its training programmes by giving presentations and assisting Ministries/Departments with their prerequisites for the PRDS.

Challenges/Way Forward

The Challenges here also relate to delayed or non-responses to first drafts. However, with the need for Strategic Plans being one of the prerequisites for the PRDS, more agencies are taking their Strategic Plans seriously and earlier plans completed with OPSR's assistance are being revisited and fine tuned.

All junior officers will be trained in strategic planning in February 2006 at the Centre for Management Development. This will be a detailed comprehensive course which

senior officers would also have completed previously. This will complement their OR training.

Employee Assistance Programme

Since the introduction of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in the Public Service in 1998, the programme has developed quickly as a result of wide interest in the issues, which it addresses. Consequently, the programme has been expanded to include all the services offered under an EAP according to the standards and practices of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA).

- (i) Contracting the services of an EAP vendor;
- (ii) Individual and group counselling for public employees and their immediate family;
- (iii) Employee outreach and self-development through the provision of workshops on stress management, personal empowerment and motivation, conflict resolution and anger management, team building and improving work place morale, change management, managing workplace violence, personal finance, etc.;
- (iv) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and management on an *ad hoc* basis following any trauma or crises situations in departments; and for emergency and fire service personnel;
- (v) Departmental interventions at the request of Heads of Departments in situations where workplace violence or a breakdown in interpersonal relationships result in a crisis;
- (vi) Executive coaching for selected senior public sector managers;
- (vii) A programme for nurses, teachers and other ‘care givers’ to avoid burnout; and
- (viii) EAP supervisory training and departmental sensitisations.

The Office of Public Sector Reform through Network Services Centre conducts approximately 200 workshops/seminars per year in addressing emotional and psychological issues which have the potential to affect the productivity of officers in various departments. These workshops explore issues such as managing violence in the workplace, stress management, constructive confrontation for supervisors, personal empowerment and team building, grief/bereavement counselling, frontline counselling and change management. A sample matrix of workshops held during the period October 2004 – July 2005 is attached as Appendix 1 which indicates the variety of areas addressed in various workshops and interventions. This period also shows the

increased number of workshops held after March 2005 when there was a crisis of the burning of the local Prison by inmates and the programme was used in a timely and effective manner in addressing traumatized prison officers. Recent interventions also include attention to Postal Office staff after a robbery and the loss of three senior students, in a vehicular accident, from a secondary school (Deighton Griffith).

The Office of Public Sector Reform in conjunction with Network Services will be shortly introducing a workshop that will explicitly deal with Money Management and focus on issues such as attitudes to spending and planning for major financial goals, development of a spending plan and techniques for building wealth.

The Government of Barbados has recognized that the long term benefits of the EAP can help to reduce overall medical health care claims, workers compensation and disability cost through the proper assessment and referral of high risk employees to effective behavioural health and substance abuse programmes. In addition it seeks to improve employee's performance through reduce absenteeism and greater productivity. Also in balancing organizational change with attitudinal change the EAP is a very relevant initiative.

Challenges/Way Forward

This programme is one of the prime successes of the Public Sector Reform Programme. It is becoming more and more relevant to the public service in addressing all problems which materialize – from personal problems to inadequate working conditions to crisis situations of a tragic nature. The confidential nature of the programme has been so well handled that there is a growing confidence by public officers in utilising its various services.

Internal Reform Committees (IRCs)/Work Improvement Teams (WITs)

As a result of recent workshops held on this programme, an agreement was reached to embrace the term 'Work Improvement Teams', as an alternative title if preferred by any organisation developing IRCs. The responsibility for monitoring this programme is being reassigned since the officer with responsibility for the programme has been recommended to act at a higher level in another department.

Challenges/Way Forward

This has been the weakest initiative of the Office in terms of overall success. However, a number of departments such as Archives and Inland Revenue have shown that this initiative can be meaningful. A stronger effort will be made in the new year to get it going again but we must put in place a foundation for continuity which is the main problem due to 'key' persons leaving the groups. Strategy for continuance is being developed.

Customer Charters

Since the launching of the Customer Charter at the Land Tax Department, the Registration Department and, more recently, the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office, work is continuing on other agencies for additional Customer Charter launches. Other agencies such as, Inland Revenue Department, Government Electrical Engineering Department, Land Registry, Lands and Surveys, Town and Country Planning, Licensing Authority, Customs and Excise Department and Immigration Department are being prepared.

The Office is providing the requisite assistance to these agencies in the area of training and the development of standards, so as to help their frontline officers and supervisors understand the benefits of Customer Charters. In addition, there must be full input and support by all members of the organisation before a Charter is launched.

Challenges/Way Forward

After a slow start, more agencies are coming on board as we seek to develop service standards and launch/mount Charters as we show our commitment to good service in the public sector. The success of recent launches are getting attention and we expect more service providers, in particular, to pay more attention to the development of standards. Another important and key element of Customer Charters is, the setting up of monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure that standards are being met and that they can be enhanced/adjusted as necessary. The Office has recently acquired 'in-house' skills to do so and has begun to incorporate relevant measures with the cooperation of the respective agencies.

Humanised Management/Personnel Excellence Programme

The major thrust of this programme is to encourage work-friendly and customer-friendly environments in all public sector agencies. This would redound to healthy improvements in work-friendly relationships. The objective of the programme is to reduce the level of absenteeism in the work place and to promote a culture of excellent performance through raising the levels of consciousness of 'personal excellence' by persons in organisations.

As indicated in earlier reports, the Commonwealth experience has indicated clearly that successful reforms are built on a foundation of balanced organisational and attitudinal changes. The public sector reform process must '*capture the imagination of public officers if there is to be sustainable improvements*'. There must therefore be a deliberate process of changing attitudes in step with reforming structures, processes and systems. The Humanised Management and Personal Excellence Programmes are seeking to address this process. The Office continues to work in collaboration with the National Productivity Council, the Training Administration Division, Environmental Protection Department and the Unions (NUPW/BWU) in order to share our resources

in meeting the objectives of this programme. Consultation is always ongoing with other stakeholders such as the private sector, NGOs and various individuals to encourage feedback on our programmes.

Five (5) workshops have been held so far in this area for approximately one hundred and seventy five (175) public officers.

Challenges/Way Forward

The only major challenges are, the acquisition of resources for the workshops and the need for senior officers – especially Permanent Secretaries – to ‘take’ time out to attend. The workshops are very well received since they speak to important issues which affect the smooth passage of the reform process. In addition, the Office seeks to be pro-active in selecting the main topics discussed at these seminars/workshops e.g. the recently held seminar on ‘Addressing financial concerns in the public sector’ – as a result of recent unfavourable audit reports.

Communication Strategy

Since the inception of the Public Sector Reform programme, a number of public officers from various Ministries/Departments felt that the programmes/projects by the Office of Public Sector Reform and the Public Sector in general, were not communicated to the wider public service or the public. In order to promote the successes and activities of the reform programme, the Office developed a strategy whereby the Management Development Officers assigned to the respective departments would develop a profile on the Ministry/Department to which he/she is attached. Reform Liaison Officers are also being requested to provide information on their reform initiatives and activities in their Ministries and Departments for public relations purposes.

Profiles of agencies and related PSR information must be ‘accurate and approved’ before being forwarded for publication in the daily newspapers. As noted above, the entire public service and the public needs to be aware of what is the role and function of the various agencies and their various successes. A number of PSR related articles have already been published and information is being collected for others.

The core activities of the communication strategy take the following form:-

- To develop and maintain an ongoing communication strategy utilizing radio, television and print media;
- To maintain a website to allow public sector employees and critical stakeholders to access information in relation to the programmes/projects being undertaken by this Office and other PSR related material;
- To continue publication of the newsletter ‘Challenge to Change’ and;

- To carry 'Public Sector Reform Columns/Articles' in both daily newspapers.

This strategy has continued during the period being reported on and the Office will continue to seek publication of the various PSR activities in the Public Service. Articles related to PSR areas are being published in the newspapers on a regular basis. The Office is also very actively involved in assisting the PRDS Unit with its PR programme. Other offices have recently utilized the services of our Communications Officer including, the Town and Country Planning Department in their PR programmes. The Office has also assisted the Customs and Excise Department with the compilation of their 100th anniversary magazine.

Challenges/Way Forward

This programme is developing very quickly and the distribution of the newsletter has been vastly improved. There are hardly ten (10) copies to be found in the Office towards the end of each quarter as a result of demand. It is not, however, intended to increase the quantity of the newsletters printed during this year but rather, the 'quality' and to increase the number of pages. The Office continues to promote the principle that the good work being done by Ministries, Departments and individuals must be publicized. Reform initiatives of worth, must be highlighted – as is reflected in our monthly columns in the daily newspapers. The Communications Officer is very proactive in getting new ideas and initiatives for PR strategies – including the recent inclusion of public officers as a united and 'winning' public sector reform group in the Nation's Fun Walk. Our professional image is also being addressed by a marketing strategy which includes the distribution of desk pads, calendars, etc

Service Assessment and Improvement Programme

The basic objective of this programme is to establish quality customer service to:

- promote the establishment of basic service standards;
- raise the level of customer satisfaction with the delivery of public services;
- identify any weaknesses in the delivery of quality services and make recommendations for their improvement; and
- Promote the effective use of the telephone as a tool for business communication.

Methods of Achievement are:

- random telephone calls
- interviews of management and staff
- direct observation
- customer surveys
- training (workshops, counselling sessions etc.) and;

- monitoring and evaluation (including measurements) towards maintenance of standards

Further to our last report (June '05), over 350 public officers have been trained in Change Management/Customer Service since this programme started on 10th November, 2003. Personnel from agencies such as, Immigration Department, Customs & Excise, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Police Force and National Conservation Commission have attended our workshops. The Immigration and Customs Departments, in particular, have been cooperating fully and acknowledging our assistance. The Library Services are also being currently included in the programme.

Challenges/Way Forward

This programme has been going very well in targeting officers working at Customs, Immigration, Police Force etc. – key service providers re World Cup 2007. Again, the Office is being challenged with funding but we are doing the best we can with what is allocated. There is a need however, to work more closely with the National Initiative for Service Excellence (NISE) programme. We recognize this – especially since government is a major partner of this initiative as reflected in its input of funds. Co-sponsorship of a number of interventions will be pursued.

Review/Upgrade of Systems

These projects are initiated as a result of Ministries and Departments requiring the assistance of OPSR in setting up systems, streamlining operations, or giving advice in a specific area of operations.

Registry reviews ongoing/recently completed

- Training Administration (completed)
- National Council on Substance Abuse (report 95% completed)
- Poverty Alleviation Bureau (draft report being prepared)
- Value Added Tax Division (draft submitted for review – awaiting response)
- Government Information Service (Feedback still required from GIS – registry guidelines forwarded – training of clerical officer is required)
- Ministry of Health – requested assistance but have not responded to an earlier review forwarded for their comments – recently, Mr. Straughn has been assigned to assist
- Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports – project is currently ongoing.

Organisational Manual

- Barbados Vocational Training Board (on hold – to be reassigned)

Standardisation of Registries

This project was devised to examine the present systems and procedures and to recommend a structured standardised system, as well as, a procedural manual to be used in all registries in the public service. The OPSR is working on the manual (which is already at first draft stage – getting feedback) and will be assisting the TAD with a training manual. It should also be noted that the majority of Management Development Officers attached to this Office, have attended a two week course in Records Management, held by the Training Administration Division and facilitated by RIPA representatives. It is necessary however, that they be further trained in ‘Records Management’ to provide them with the requisite skills to further advance this project and also in facilitating Ministries & Departments in this area.

The drafting of guidelines for conducting a registry review is almost completed.

Challenges/Way Forward

A lot of effort has been put into the ‘standardization of registries’ project. It was recognized however, that if OPSR is to play a more meaningful role in a ‘records management’ programme – which is more encompassing; our officers will require supplementary training. Efforts are being made to acquire such.

Two manuals have been drafted and having been recently reviewed, will be printed and distributed. They are ‘Guidelines for Registry Reviews’ (for use primarily by OPSR officers) and ‘Guidelines for Registry Procedures’.

General (areas for further attention)

Public/Private Sector Nexus

The Office of Public Sector Reform intends to facilitate dialogue between public and private sector agencies in addressing the often mooted problem of inhibitive ‘red tape’. Although there are most likely specific reasons why required systems and measures must be put in place by the public sector, there may be ways of streamlining certain procedures which can benefit both sections. The Office will therefore seek to facilitate such dialogue by sponsoring workshops/meetings in this area, if arrangements can be made.

Public Sector/Unions Nexus

The Office continues to enjoy a working relationship with the unions with regards to feedback on its programmes etc. The unions in turn, invite us to give presentations on PSR at their seminars/workshops/meetings, on an ongoing basis. We will continue to

nurture this relationship. The Office in its ‘Humanised Management and Personal Excellence’ Programme seeks to improve relationships between management in the public sector and the union representatives by inviting frank discussions on issues which are causing problems for both parties. It is only when managers and union representatives can make genuine efforts to cooperate on ‘thorny’ issues, by ongoing communication and transparency, that the industrial climate will be less combative.

Public Sector Reform (PSR) Initiatives by other Public Sector Agencies

PSR is vital, if Barbados wants to compete in the regional and global environment. To this end, a number of significant reform initiatives to strengthen the public service and make it more professional, were introduced.

1. REFORM OF PUBLIC SECTOR RULES AND REGULATIONS

New Public Service Act

Start Up Date: 1999

In 1999, government set up a committee which was mandated to provide a policy framework for the preparation of a Public Service Act. Public sector rules and regulations have not been changed in any meaningful way in recent years. The new Act would address issues such as:

- The accountability of public officers;
- The establishment of a Code of Ethics to guide public officers;
- Enhancement of the role and functions of the Services Commission;
- Improving the current mechanism for appointments, promotions, transfers, discipline and tenure of public officers;
- Modes of leaving the public service;
- Management of financial administration;
- Developing a succession-planning system together with a compensation management system that would attract, motivate and retain employees in the public service;
- A clear definition of what constitutes misconduct; and
- A mechanism for handling grievances.

Presently, the Act is being examined by the Solicitor General’s Office.

Pensions Reform

Start Up Date: 1998

Since 1998, the National Insurance Board has instituted a Pensions Reform Programme which is expected to result in maintaining sufficient reserve funds to pay for benefits in the future.

2. INVESTMENT SECTOR REFORM PROGRAMME

The objective of this programme is geared towards increasing the competitiveness of the Barbadian economy and improving the climate for private sector investment.

Enabling Environment for Private Sector Investment (Eepsi)

Start Up Date: 2000

In today's world, business and investment decisions, whether national or international, are increasingly being made on the basis of information which is readily available on-line at the click of the mouse. International investors from the developed world are impatient for information and are no longer prepared to wait a day or two for faxed responses to basic information from a potential jurisdiction. Also, citizens increasingly expect the same level of service from government as they do from other organisations. Communication with other public service departments is vital, but is presently limited to a paper system. This is not to the advantage of people in a globalised world who are unwilling to fill out lengthy forms, stand in long lines and wait days and weeks for a response from a government department. The Eepsi project seeks to deal with these issues in an effective manner.

In a nutshell, Eepsi seeks to facilitate the investment process within Barbados by linking fourteen (14) critical Government Ministries, Departments and agencies in a single network. This revolutionary system will do away with the unnecessary red-tape and bureaucracy.

Anti-Money Laundering Authority

Start Up Date: 2000

The goal of this agency is to prevent or control money laundering and thus, protecting the vital financial sector of Barbados. The Financial Intelligence Unit was created to carry out the executive functions of the Authority.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management is the means by which public service goals are linked to individual target-setting, appraisal and development. It provides a strategy for increasing efficiency, by enhancing accountability and individual motivation, and improving communication to assist organisational change.

Performance Review and Development System (PRDS)

Start Up Date: 2001

The Government of Barbados recognises that to achieve its developmental objectives for the country, it requires a fully responsive public sector that must be infused with new values; a sense of mission and purpose and totally imbued with a spirit of renewed professionalism.

At present, officers are appraised annually using an archaic and subjective form which is not based on specific aspects of the work performed.

One of the major aims of the PRDS system is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of officers so that measures could be taken to offer them greater assistance in their effort to improve their performance.

The new PRDS will be conducted annually in four phases:

- Meeting between supervisor and employee to develop the employee's work plan (late March);
- First progress meeting (July);
- Second progress meeting (December); and
- Overall final assessment/performance evaluation meeting (March the following year).

The PRDS assesses/appraises performance in the workplace in relation to agreed performance standard. The appraisal system will affect all members of the public service with the exception of the Police Force and the Teachers who have separate systems.

This system is being pilot tested in a number of agencies before full role out to the wider public service.

One proposed aspect of the PRDS is the 360-degree feedback appraisal model for senior managers. The 360-degree feedback is an assessment process used to improve managerial effectiveness by providing the manager with a more complete assessment of their effectiveness, their performance and development needs. The final decision on the 360-degree feedback appraisal model presently rests with the Head of the Civil

Service and Committee of Permanent Secretaries. They have to make the final decisions on:

- A subcommittee to manage the 360-degree feedback model in terms of objectives, design and communication; and
- Whether the Minister would be included in the panel of raters.

Human Resources Management Information System (SmartStream)

Start Up Date: 1999

The Personnel module of the SmartStream Human Resources began in July 1999 and the first payroll was run in November 1999. The systems were at first centralised at the Ministry of the Civil Service, Personnel Administration Division, the Treasury Department and the Data Processing Department. This new system allowed rapid access to information on officers assigned to the Ministries or Departments. Essentially, Smart Stream Human Resources manages human resources functions, from hiring through termination, including, personnel administration and payroll and benefits processing. The personnel and payroll modules enable Ministries to develop more efficient processes for hiring, training and retraining of its workforce and management of information and processes for administering, calculating and disbursing the payment of wages, salaries and other forms of compensation.

The Personnel module facilitates the maintenance of information on the requirements, duties and compensation of each position within Ministries and Departments, thereby, affording ready access to this information. The module also provides activities to record and manage a wide range of information related to employee assignments, leave, qualifications and other personal data.

4. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING AND MANAGEMENT REFORM

Tax Administration & Expenditure Management Project

Start Up Date: 1993

The Government of Barbados has introduced a programme called “Tax Administration and Public Expenditure Management.” The project aims are:

- to strengthen the Ministry of Finance and the three (3) revenue collecting Department (the Inland Revenue Dept., the Customs and Excise and Excise Dept., and the Land Tax Dept.) in fiscal administration; and
- improve public expenditure management.

It should be noted that one of the main focus was the computerisation of the Treasury Department and the related financial accounting and management activities of Government. The software package chosen for this computerisation effort was, the *SmartStream Product Suite* developed by the software developers Dun and Bradstreet.

Financial Management Information System (SmartStream)

Start Up Date: 1998

SmartStream Financials provides a complete financial management system, organized around the fundamental activities or specific tasks that reflect the business being conducted by each ministry/department. This serves to enhance the productivity of the accounting processes and allows users to more effectively access and analyse financial information. The greatest benefit realised from the implementation of SmartStream systems has been the discipline which it has brought to management of government's financial processes.

Programme and Performance Based Budgeting (PPBB)

Start Up Date: 1996

In 1996, the government had introduced a system of Programme and Performance Based Budgeting (PPBB). PPBB aims to improve the budgetary and financial management systems of the Barbados Government. PPBB lays greater emphasis on the classification of the budget, and is viewed as forward looking. It also places greater emphasis on prior accomplishment and performance indicators.

Value-for-Money Audits

Start Up Date: 1998

In Barbados, the Audit General's Office is responsible for carrying out value-for-money audits in all government departments and agencies. The legal mandate to perform this type of audit is listed in section 26(3) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. This section states that "the Auditor General may carry out examinations into the economical, efficient and effective use of resources of any Ministry or Department or any other entity required to be audited by him." It is important to recognise that the Audit Office does not have any power to enforce its recommendations. It is the responsibility of the management of the Ministry/Department to ensure that it is utilizing its resources in an efficient manner.

Accrual Accounting

Start Up Date: 2004

The Government of Barbados has committed itself to the transition from cash accounting to accrual accounting. Accrual Accounting recognises activities and transactions when they occur, even if payment has not been received from a customer or bills have not been paid by the business. This method provides a more accurate picture of what the organisation owns and owes in economic terms.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has directed that, in keeping with developments in the international public sector arena, the Government of Barbados will move from a cash based accounting system to the introduction of full accrual accounting. In making this transition Barbados will become one of the first governments in the Caribbean to do its business using accrual accounting.

5. E-GOVERNMENT

Many governments have recognized that the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to all levels of government is an important part of public sector reform. The Government of Barbados is committed to utilizing all new and emerging technologies to improve its competitiveness as well as enhancing the quality of services it provides to its citizens.

Education Sector Enhancement Programme (Edutech)

Start Up Date: 1998

This is a comprehensive education reform programme for the primary and secondary school in Barbados. The Specific objectives of the programme are to:

- Repair and upgrade the existing school plant;
- Provide teacher training to enhance pedagogical skills;
- Achieve the desired balance between teacher-centered and child-centered approaches; and
- Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education to effectively manage the education system.

The **technological infrastructure** component of the Programme will allow for the equipping of all Programme schools with information and communication technology. Specifically, Programme schools will have teacher multimedia centers in classrooms, as well as PCs and laptops for the staff room. Moreover, at the primary level, classrooms from Classes 1-4 will be equipped with 4 or 5 computers, and there will be

one computer laboratory for schools with less than 500 students, and two laboratories for schools with more than 500 students.

At the secondary level, each classroom for Forms 1-3 will be equipped with 6 computers. Each secondary school will also have specialist subject rooms outfitted with computers and other information and communications technology, as well as a computer laboratory equipped with 30 computers. The types of technology in the Programme include PCs, printers, digital cameras, scanners, plotters, science probes, electronic whiteboards, multimedia projectors and TVs.

The Edutech programme should result in the future generation of Barbadians being technologically savvy and highly skilled. This will result in increased demands for E-government services, as well as, provide a pool of highly skilled workers.

Automated Systems for Customs Data (ASYCUDA ++)

Start Up Date: 1993

The Customs and Excise Department implemented the ASYCUDA version 2 in 1993. The ASYCUDA project led to the simplification of procedures where eleven (11) difference import and export declarations forms were replaced by the Single Administrative Document. The current ASYCUDA version 2.7 will be upgraded to the latest, ASYCUDA ++ version 3. The upgrade will enable the department to embark on full electronic document processing which will:

- Reduce the cost of doing business;
- Increase revenue collection;
- Reduce turnaround times;
- Improve trade data collection and retrieval; and
- Generally enhance departmental efficiency and effectiveness.

Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS)

Start Up Date: 2002

The Attorney General's Office, with the assistance of the International Development Bank (IDB), is undertaking a project to modernise the justice sector by improving court administration processes and enhancing access to justice in an effort to reduce the economic and social costs associated with crime.

The IJIS will encompass the reengineering of the justice sector agencies in order to achieve swift and efficient processing of cases through the system and will involve establishing a modern information exchange and document flow system with research

monitoring capabilities, which would interface with a computerised court management system.

Government of Barbados-Integrated Portal 2004

Start Up Date: 2004

The Government of Barbados Integrated Portal (BIG Portal) is an electronic gateway to all government information. It is an easy-to-search, access-free website, designed to give you a centralized place to find information from Government agency websites. It is your first click to the Barbados government!

The BIG Portal objective is, to provide a free service, enabling the Barbadian community and, by extension, the world to easily and rapidly find government information that has been posted on the Internet. It offers a powerful search engine and an index of web-accessible government information and services to help persons find what they need.

The BIG Portal was created to save persons time and take advantage of the simplicity and efficiency of the Internet. Within the BIG Portal, individuals can find out which government office can address their concerns, and find direct links to relevant information and services.

Government collects no personal information about the user when visiting the website, unless it is provided by the individual accessing the BIG Portal.

Lessons Learnt

1. That reform is a continuous process and not a destination.
2. Political will and dedicated resources – money, people, equipment, etc is necessary.
3. A need for building capacity – systems, processes, policies, etc.
4. The approach must be an integrated one.
5. Feedback in terms of experiences – How it is being played out? How is the process evolving? To allow others to learn.
6. Change must be managed – culture/behaviour, attitudes.

CONCLUSION

Successful reform programmes are powered by the determination to make public services more responsive to the people who use them. A re-conceptualisation of service users, as consumers of public services, has meant that passive recipients of services are increasingly seen as active customers and various attempts should be made to address them.

Finally, the Commonwealth experience has indicated clearly that successful reforms are built on a foundation of balanced organisational and attitudinal changes. A deliberate process of changing attitudes in step with reforming structures is therefore necessary. This is a critical role of performance management.

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