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Electronic Government in Barbados and the Caymans

The context of the workshop

Prior to the Commonwealth Secretariat Regional Workshop on e-Government Readiness for Effective Public Service Delivery (4–8 June 2007), the governments of both Barbados and the Cayman Islands had already adopted e-government on a department-by-department and a programme-by-programme basis. Websites and email were provided for select services, the purpose of which was to assist the general public and the business community. These ‘start-up’ projects were developed on an individual basis, because this strategy best reflected the limited resources and experience available at the time.

As a result, there were no ‘master plans’ or generalised implementation criteria for e-government in these locations prior to 2007. Nevertheless, it is still possible to get a ‘state of the art’ profile of Barbados’s e-government accomplishments by referring to the assessment of the Caribbean Technical and Advisory Support Facility (TASF) on e-Government, prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). This profile, which the authors reproduce in what follows, is presented on a publicly-accessible website¹.

BARBADOS

TASF's profile of Barbados (as of 2005)

This first section of the profile deals with the categories of available electronic services.

Table 5.1 Technical and Advisory Support Facility: profile of Barbados and available electronic services (2005)

Topics / solutions in Barbados	e-government stages (solutions)	Additional comments
Public policy	n/a	
Country strategies	n/a	The National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2005-2025, available at: http://www.barbados.gov.bb/Docs/NSP_Final%202006-2025.pdf [accessed 4 February 2008] Draft National ICT Strategic Plan, available at: www.commerce.gov.bb/Downloads/DRAFT_StrategicPlanFinalV.pdf [accessed 4 February 2008]
Networks interoperativity	n/a	
Electronic signature infrastructure	n/a	
Electronic certificates and digital signature legislation	n/a	The Electronic Transaction Act is in place and the regulations giving effect to this Act were being drafted at the time of writing. The Act makes provision for the establishment of a legal environment for the conduct of electronic commerce. See: www.commerce.gov.bb/Legislation/default.asp [accessed 4 February 2008]
Topics/solutions in Barbados	e-government stages (solutions)	Additional comments (indicate URL)
e-commerce legislation	n/a	The Electronic Transaction Act is in place; the Data Protection and the Computer Misuse Act were being drafted at the time of writing. See: www.commerce.gov.bb/Legislation/default.asp [accessed 4 February 2008]
Electronic fraud legislation	n/a	The Computer Misuse Act makes provision for the protection of computer systems and information contained in those systems from unauthorised access by individuals or from abuse by individuals with authorised access and for related matters.
Habeas data legislation	n/a	
Other legislations (please specify)	n/a	The Government of Barbados was considering the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act at the time of writing. A draft policy document, which offers guidance on a freedom of information regime, has been prepared; this document was being circulated for comments at the time of writing.

The above section lays out the general framework within which a country's readiness for the further application of e-government can be assessed. As can be seen in the case of Barbados, some areas already have an e-government capability, some are in the process of developing such capabilities, while other aspects of government have not yet been addressed.

The next section of the profile classifies individual electronic services according to the e-government stages they have achieved.

Table 5.2 Technical and Advisory Support Facility: profile of Barbados and classification of individual electronic services (2005)

Available services in Barbados	e-Government stages (solutions): I Informative II Interactive III Transactional	Additional comments
Tax declaration	I	Inland Revenue Department, available at: www.barbados.gov.bb/ird/ [accessed 4 February 2008]
Government procurement		Smartstream Product Suite includes Smartstream Procurement , made up of payables and purchasing modules. This application has been fully implemented.
Accountability		
Property rights registration	II	The Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office has a website where the public can view relevant legislation, download forms and search for registered companies, charities or business names. Available at: www.caipo.gov.bb [accessed 4 February 2008]
Payroll management		Smartstream Product Suite includes Smartstream Human Resources , of which payroll and personnel modules have been implemented.
Available services in Barbados	e-Government Stages (solutions): I Informative II Interactive III Transactional	Additional comments
Social welfare	I	The Ministry of Social Transformation has a website, which informs the public of the various services it offers. See: www.socialtransformation.gov.bb [accessed 4 February 2008] The Ministry of Social Transformation also has responsibility for the Community Technology Programme. This programme is geared towards ensuring

Promotion of exports and competitiveness	I	<p>that communities/individuals have the ability to acquire basic skills in ICT and access to the Internet.</p> <p>The Barbados Investment Development Corporation has developed a website to assist the department in fulfilling its mandate to promote and facilitate the establishment and expansion of business and the export of goods and services.</p>
Financial management		<p>Smartstream Product Suite also includes Smartstream Financials, which comprises ledger, funds control, accounts receivable and budget modules. This application has been fully implemented.</p>
Civil registry management		<p>An Electronic Document Management System is in use at the government's Registration Department. This application captures the image of original vital statistics records and automates the functions associated with the registration of births, deaths, marriages, wills, probate applications and the processing of certificates.</p>
Land Registry management	III	<p>The Land Registry was due to launch its website and online billing (Platypus) system at the time of writing. This online billing facility will enable the department to charge for virtually any type of data and in a variety of billing methods, including according to time periods, usage, day, bandwidth and even prepaid 'blocks'. The Platypus online billing application will also be capable of automatically sending invoices for charges incurred, as well as permit the creation of notices required to be sent to customers based on characteristics that include soon-to-expire services and 'funds declined' notices, to name a few. An Electronic Land Register will also soon be in place. This application permits an adjudication record to be created and automatic creation of the Land Register. Website available at: http://www.landregistry.gov.bb [accessed 4 February 2008]</p>
Public transportation management	I	<p>The public bus company (Transport Board) has a new ticketing system, the Wayfarer Ticketing System. This system utilises an integrated software package, which allows the board to generate reports to facilitate wide-ranging management decisions. In addition, it gives the board the opportunity to closely monitor 'ridership' patterns and as a result increase its operating efficiencies as they relate to productivity, allocation of routes and disbursement of buses, while also improving the productivity of ancillary departments. Website available at: http://www.transportboard.com/ [accessed 4 February 2008]</p>

Country's general statistics		
Available services in Barbados	e-government stages (solutions): I Informative II Interactive III Transactional	Additional comments
Public records available online		The public can download information and access other government websites through the government portal at: http://www.barbados.gov.bb/ [accessed 4 February 2008] Information can also be obtained from the Government Information Services website, available at: http://www.barbados.gov.bb/bgis.htm [accessed 4 February 2008] There is a project underway to replace this site with an integrated portal, which will be an electronic gateway to the government's information and services. A pilot has been successfully completed and funds have been approved for full implementation.
Promotion of exports and competitiveness	I	The Barbados Investment Development Corporation has developed a website to assist the department in fulfilling its mandate to promote and facilitate the establishment and expansion of business and the export of goods and services.
Legislative power online		
Records management		
Municipal administration		
Electronic voting		
Geographic information systems		The Government's Land and Surveys Department is planning to introduce a digital mapping system utilising ESRI GIS (geographic information system) software. At present, the department is undertaking a digital mapping programme, which will form the basis of the GIS system.
e-learning in public schools	II	The government has embarked on a comprehensive education reform programme (Edutech) in the primary and secondary schools in Barbados to integrate all available information and communication technologies within the school system. Additional information can be obtained from the Edutech website:

www.edutech2000.gov.bb [accessed 4 February 2008]

The Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, a training/vocational training institution in Barbados, has launched an online learning facility and is currently offering courses online. See: <http://www.sjpponline.edu.bb/> [accessed 4 February 2008]

e-democracy

II

The Parliament of Barbados has a website that the public can access, available at: www.barbadosparliament.com

As these examples from the TASF profile show, there are many e-governance and e-government initiatives underway in Barbados, all at various stages of development. Some of the examples also indicate the intention to upgrade existing services in the immediate or foreseeable future.

There is no Barbados Government Gateway website, nor does the Barbados Government Information website provide a list of the individual websites referred to above. However, some sense of what the Government of Barbados intends with respect to e-government can be gleaned from The National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2006–2025. The relevant sections of the Plan are provided below:

Social objective 2.4: To remodel the public service

EXPLANATION:

A streamlined, efficient and professional public service is absolutely essential for our continued development.

STRATEGIES:

- 2.1 Ensure that in the new paradigm of governance there is a better fit between the tasks of government and the way in which the public service is structured.
- 2.2 Promote greater openness, transparency and accountability in the operations of central government, as well as in the operations of public enterprises.
- 2.3 Facilitate the sharing of information and the quick and easy access to information throughout the public sector and access to information for the private sector and civil society organisations.
- 2.4 Remodel various aspects of the public service to reduce bureaucracy and increase efficiency and effectiveness through performance-based initiatives.
- 2.5 Integrate modern information and communications technologies into the operations of government to facilitate maximum operational efficiency.
- 2.6 Promote the development of a more customer and service delivery oriented public service.

2.7 Build the human resource capacity within the public service to allow it to operate at maximum potential.

2.8 Ensure that the public service has the human resource capacity and appropriate organisational structures to facilitate the efficient and effective attainment of national goals.

2.9 Reform the multi-processes across the public service to create an efficient and time effective sector.

TARGETS:

2.1 The enactment by 2007 of the Public Service Act which will be designed to encourage modern management practices and to develop a culture of openness, transparency and accountability in the public service.

2.2 The creation of the Central Information Management Agency by 2008 to champion the government's e-government strategy and programmes, which will be geared at ensuring the optimum use of information and communications technology to achieve maximum operational efficiency in the public service.

2.3 The development of a mandatory strategic training programme for the public service by 2008.

2.4 The establishment of ten-customer charters in public sector agencies through consultation with stakeholders by 2008.

2.5 Elimination of multi-processes across the public service by 2010.

2.6 Introduction in all ministries by 2010 of a revamped performance management system which appraises the performance of employees on objective and measurable work outputs.

2.7 The development by 2010 of a manpower resources plan for the public service that identifies the appropriate human resources required to meet national goals in the most efficient and effective manner.

2.8 Completion of organisational reviews of each ministry by 2015 to ensure that existing structures are appropriate to the attainment of organisational goals.

Fiscal objective 1.1: To develop a transparent and sustainable public finance management system

EXPLANATION:

The purpose is to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the current tax collection systems as well as the system of expenditure management. This would enhance financial stability and sustainability, improve compliance, reduce tax leakages and increase the level of tax revenue collection.

STRATEGIES:

Tax administration system

1.1 Undertake institutional strengthening and capacity building of the overall revenue collection systems, which will include the design of a new tax administration system for the Inland Revenue Department, the VAT Division and the Land Tax Department.

1.2 Develop e-government services with the aim of creating an enabling environment that would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness by which business transactions can be undertaken between members of the public and relevant government agencies with regard to the administration of the tax system.

1.3 Upgrade and modernise the various tax collection agencies, namely the Inland Revenue Department, the Land Tax Department, the VAT Division and the Customs and Excise Department. This will be done by undertaking a revision and automation of the current administrative processes at the various agencies and introducing new technologies and processes to bring the current systems in line with internationally recognised tax administration 'best practices'.

1.4 Undertake the automation and modernisation of the non-tax revenue departments, such as the Corporate Affairs and the Licensing Authority, to enhance the collection capacity of these institutions.

1.5 Give consideration to the establishment of a Central Revenue Collection Authority, to remove the administrative fragmentation that currently exists in the system.

Objective 1.2: To ensure easier access and use of telecommunications

EXPLANATION:

For Barbados to launch itself completely into the information age, the development of and access to telecommunications is a key stepping-stone. This requires having the physical infrastructure for telecommunications capable of responding to the technological challenges of the 21st century.

STRATEGIES:

1.1 Strengthen the linkages between telecommunications and the other sectors of the economy.

1.2 Promote access to basic telecommunications and information services. This may be accomplished through further community-focussed initiatives, through wider coverage in the education and training systems and through the promotion of technology-based businesses, such as Internet cafés.

1.3 Promote the development of telecommunications, and other information communication technologies (ICTs).

1.4 Promote the development of e-commerce, e-government and e-business.

1.5 Facilitate greater competition, development and innovation in telecommunications in order to expand the range of services and to increase value for money in the sector through reduced costs to consumers.

1.6 Improve the institutional and human resource capacity of the telecommunications sector.

1.7 Invest in and encourage the development and expansion of the physical infrastructure of telecommunications through enhanced satellite uplinks and other digital media.

CAYMAN ISLANDS

Profile of the Cayman Islands from the government website

There is no Cayman Islands e-government profile available from the TASF. Enquiries indicate that, at the time of writing, there was no centralised website for e-government in the Caymans. However, there is a general Cayman Islands website, and this includes a sub-section that lists existing Cayman Islands Government websites. By listing those available websites in a table, it is possible to get an idea of what the various government departments are doing in this regard. The Cayman Islands' civil service is, in fact, working on increasing access through e-government, but prior to 2007 each agency had been heading its own projects.

Table 5.3 Existing Cayman Islands Government websites

<i>Cayman Islands Government websites²</i>	<i>Website descriptions</i>
Blue Iguana Recovery Programme	Devoted to raising awareness of the Blue Iguana as an endangered species, and to promoting recovery measures
Boatswain's Beach	Information on Boatswain's Beach Park on Grand Cayman
CINICO	National Insurance Company website providing information and application forms
Civil Aviation Authority	Website of the aviation regulatory oversight board
Civil Service College	Forms, materials and log-in capability to the College
Cayman Airways	Flight schedules and booking facilities
Cayman Islands Customs	Customs forms and import/export restrictions
Cayman National Cultural Foundation	Cultural events and facilities on the Caymans
Cayman Prepared	National Hurricane Committee website
Civil Service Appeals Commission	Information on the adjudication of Civil Service personnel disputes
Communications, Works and Infrastructure	Promotes infrastructure for community development
District Administration, Planning, Agriculture and Housing	District planning and implementation of infrastructure projects
Dive Cayman	Website for bookings for diving excursions
Economics and Statistics Office	Data to serve the needs of local community and international investors
Ministry of Education, Training, Employment, Youth, Sports and Culture	Information on programmes for learning, working, and leisure activities
Education Portal	Access to information on the entire range of primary and secondary school facilities

<i>Cayman Islands Government websites³</i>	<i>Website descriptions</i>
Elections Office	Returning Officer's website and listing of election results
Employment Relations	Promotes labour relations and training opportunities
Environment	Promotes environment and natural resources conservation
Finance and Economics	Departmental site with information on macroeconomic and budgetary policies
Financial Services	Information on the Cayman financial services industry
Freedom of Information	Preparing the public for pending freedom of information legislation
Health Insurance Commission	Helping the public to utilise their health insurance and resolve any complaints about it
Health Services Authority	A guide to inpatient and outpatient services
Immigration	Work permit information for Cayman Islands companies
Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Authority	Information from the ICT regulatory authority on policies and decisions
Internal and External Affairs	For co-ordination of legislation and policy application, within the country and abroad
Investment Bureau	Information for potential investors on Cayman opportunities
Judicial Administration	The Judicial and Legal information website
Lands and Survey	Geographical and geological information
Law School	The Law School calendar and course schedules
Legislative Assembly	Order of Business of the House of Assembly
Mosquito Research and Control Unit	Ground and aerial spraying schedules by area
Meteorological Office	Weather forecasting and information service
Monetary Authority	Information on exchange rates and currency trading
National Drug Council	Information and assistance on eradicating drug abuse
National Gallery	Exhibits from and schedule for the National Gallery
National Museum	Preservation, research and display of national heritage
National Pensions Office	Information on the regulation of private pension plans
National Roads Authority	Promoting the design and maintenance of Cayman roads
National Trust	Preservation of national historical sites
Nature Cayman	Guide to natural wonders in the Caymans
Office of Complaints Commissioner	Site to guide Cayman residents on registering any complaints about their government
Office of the Governor	Official website of His Excellency the Governor
Planning	Promotes planning that assures the quality of life
Port Authority	Information on port facilities and shipping schedules

Postal Services	Postal rates, postal codes and stamp collecting
Public Service Pensions Committee	Administration of public service pensions plans
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<i>Cayman Islands Government websites⁴</i>	<i>Website descriptions</i>
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Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park	Park opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
Radio Cayman	Broadcasting schedules and programme features from Radio Cayman
Recruitment	Website for recruitment of government personnel
Sister Islands Tourism Association	Arranging excursions amongst the Cayman Islands (Grand Cayman, Brac Cayman and Little Cayman)
Shipping Registry	Registration of vessels and regulations affecting them
Stock Exchange	Listing brokers, agents and issues
Tourism Attraction Board	Manages the country's top five tourist attractions
Tourism	Promoting travel to the Caymans
University College	The Caymans institution of higher learning
Water Authority	Providing safe and inexpensive drinking water to the public
Women's Resource Centre	Addressing the needs of women in the Caymans
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There is indeed a proliferation of Cayman Islands Government websites, with a wide variety of information and services to the public and the business community. Two illustrative case studies follow.

Case Studies of e-government in the Cayman Islands

The Department of Communications, Works and Infrastructure is responsible for the building, operation and maintenance of all Cayman publicly-owned equipment and facilities. These public goods are the basis of the quality of life and key to development of the community and the country. The Department's website covers the Ministry's mission statement, subjects (areas of jurisdiction), ambit of the vote (policy framework), review of 2000 achievements and key objectives for 2001.

Department of Communications, Works and Infrastructure: Mission Statement:

'To promote a sustainable, high quality of community life, to keep pace with the level of economic development and changes in the Islands, and to ensure that each individual has the maximum opportunity to achieve his or her highest potential level of self-fulfilment and personal development, in terms of the physical, social, moral and spiritual aspects of life'.

Subjects (areas of jurisdiction):

- Anti-Drug Abuse Programmes
- Care and Protection of Young Persons
- Community Development
- Ecclesiastical Matters
- Ex-Servicemen
- Prisons
- Housing
- Refugees (Welfare of)
- Social Development Services
- Sports and Recreational Facilities (fields and parks)
- Seamen
- Sewage Treatment and Sewerage Systems
- Voluntary Sports Organisations
- Water Distribution and Sales
- Water Resources Protection
- Women
- Youth (Organisations, Activities, Policy)

Ambit Of The Vote (policy framework):

‘To formulate policies and support community activities; promote healthy lifestyles and provide financial benefits to eligible ex-servicemen and seamen, maintain sports and recreational facilities and programmes; formulate a Sports Policy, implement the National Youth Policy; and develop programmes to enhance the status of women and families; ensure the holistic implementation of community development in the three islands to keep pace with economic growth’.

Review Of 2000 Achievements:

1. Provided financial assistance to 512 ex-servicemen and 595 seamen
2. Revised the criteria for grants to community groups
3. Continued the process of developing a National Policy on gender and Gender Equity

4. Furthered developed and maintained the services, programmes and resource library at the Women Resource Centre by providing an administrative assistant and additional office space
5. The National Youth Policy was completed and submitted to the Legislative Assembly
6. Continued to provide after-school, youth workers and youth development grants to various churches and organisations

Key Objectives For 2001:

1. To continue to provide assistant to ex-servicemen and seamen
2. To commence work on a National Social Policy
3. To continue developing a National Policy on Gender and Gender Equity
4. To further develop and maintain the services, programmes and resource library at the Women Resource Centre
5. To develop plans for a 'Place of Safety' for victims of domestic violence
6. To develop an implementation plan for the National Youth Policy
7. To establishing a National Youth Commission, an independent body that will monitor the implementation of the National Youth Policy
8. To establish an inter-ministerial Committee on Youth

The Employment Relations Department is also a good example of website outreach – it provides a variety of necessary services to the community and the country. Some of the information from that website is listed below to show the department's public services.

Department of Employment Relations (ERD)

The Cayman Islands Government's Department of Employment Relations endeavours to develop a highly skilled, productive workforce that is able to compete effectively in the global economy. The Employment Services Centre's goals are achieved through advising, educating and training, promoting harmonious labour relations and ensuring that the rights and dignity of both employers and employees are protected.

ERD creates results for its clients by providing services in the areas of:

- Conciliation and mediation
- Inspection and compliance
- Job placement
- Human resource development
- Local and overseas scholarships

- Small-business development

The following hyperlinks are then listed through which the public can get relevant information:

- Training and Development
- Education Council
- Good Practice
- Investors in People
- Job Seeker
- Small Business
- Conciliation and Mediation
- Inspection and Compliance
- Occupational Safety and Health Information
- Download Occupation Wage Survey

Download Occupational Health and Safety Code of Practice for the Construction Industry.

Notes

1. Red de Lideres de Gobierno Electrónico de América Latina y El CaribeRed (GEALC), available at <http://www.redgealc.net> [accessed 4 February 2008]
2. Cayman Islands Government, website portal: http://www.gov.ky/portal/page?_pageid=1142,1595604&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL [accessed 4 February 2008]
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

