



CAYMAN ISLANDS
GOVERNMENT

2013 THRONE SPEECH

Delivered by Her Excellency the Governor, Mrs Helen Kilpatrick, CB

Monday, 7th October 2013 / Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly Building

INTRODUCTION

Madam Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, it was less than a month ago that I swore to serve Her Majesty the Queen and the people of the Cayman Islands in the role of Governor.

Since that time, the people of this country have greeted me warmly. They have also put a human face on the statistics that speak to the state of our economy and society.

We all know that we face serious issues relating to the economy, unemployment and crime. The Economics and Statistics Office has also reported the largest increase in the cost of living since the start of the global economic recession in 2008.

Good governance, which I am charged to promote, involves careful and planned management of resources, so that we all benefit from their allocation in a sustainable way.

In the context of the Cayman Islands, this means that we must spend our limited resources wisely, to maintain a world-class reputation as a centre for financial services and tourism. At the same time, we must provide our people with the resources that they need to thrive in this environment.

The Public Service has responded by reducing expenditure and moving towards more strategic ways of working.

The budget that is being presented to you today proposes to fund intelligence-gathering, planning, consultation, standard-setting, international collaboration, monitoring and evaluation, as well as stricter enforcement.

You will find that a recurring theme is the use of technology to achieve these goals in a cost efficient way, an initiative that will be led by the very able Deputy Governor.

Accordingly, it is my privilege to share with you the Government's plans to deliver public services in the context of the Framework for Fiscal Responsibility.

I will begin with the independent offices of Government, before moving on to the responsibilities of firstly the appointed and then the elected members of Cabinet.

The Office of the Auditor General, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary, will seek to enhance its independence by working towards a new Auditor General's Law.

As part of its mandate to be more accessible to the people of the Cayman Islands through outreach and education, the **Office of the Complaints Commissioner** will republish the Small Claims Handbook. It will also publish a report on whistleblowing before the end of 2013.

The **Information Commissioner's Office** will make further recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on the review of the Freedom of Information Law.

Faced with an expanding workload and corresponding demands on its existing space, the **Judiciary** will explore ways to fund a new court house as a matter of urgency.

It will also implement an information technology strategic plan that includes a revamped judicial website that gives access to unreported judgments and laws currently in force as well as e-filing.

The **Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions** will work with criminal justice departments and law enforcement agencies to progress the development of a formal witness protection programme.

Meanwhile the program of legislative work facilitated by the **Portfolio of Legal Affairs** will include the following key pieces of legislation:

- The Data Protection Bill
- The Immigration (Amendment) Bill ; and
- The Standards in Public Life Bill

We anticipate being assessed for effective implementation of the 40 Financial Action Task Force Recommendations as part of the fourth round of mutual evaluations.

Accordingly, the establishment an Anti-Money Laundering Unit under the aegis of the Attorney General's Chambers is proposed.

Before the assessment begins, the Portfolio will spearhead the development of a National Risk Assessment, to be used as a benchmark for measuring compliance with the 40 Recommendations.

It will also assist in discharging the Government's overall commitment to the G-5 project for Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Corruption matters.

I turn next to the **Deputy Governor's Office**, which will bring legislation to improve the governance of statutory authorities and government companies.

It will also conduct a review of public entities, which will aim to rationalise these, or identify those that are obsolete, in need of transfer, or which require separation or amalgamation. Consideration will also be given to opportunities for privatisation or outsourcing where this is feasible.

Focus will also be placed on succession planning for key civil service roles.

A voluntary separation package for civil servants who volunteer to leave the service before the end of 2013 has been announced. Applications from civil servants wishing to take up the offer of separation must be accompanied by a business case that shows how the civil service entity expects to achieve improved efficiency from the staff member's departure.

Changes to the Police Law will establish a commission to offer civilian oversight of the Police.

The **Cabinet Office** is working to secure Cabinet approval of the revised Cabinet Guidelines and Code of Conduct. This first revision in 20 years aligns processes and procedures with the 2009 Constitution.

It is also working with key stake-holders to complete a national policy for persons with disabilities by the end of the year.

Within the Cabinet Office Portfolio, Government Information Services also plans to provide enhanced electronic services to subscribers of the Cayman Islands Gazette.

Next we turn to the Ministries, for which the elected members of Cabinet are responsible.

In the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service will continue to target serious crime through a variety of strategies, including a pro-active task force that patrols vulnerable locations.

Her Majesty's Cayman Islands Prison Service will work to mitigate issues identified by the United Kingdom and local Prison Inspectors. The prison will also address long-term estate needs while making emergency repairs on existing facilities.

It will construct facilities that separate male juveniles from the adult population, and work towards the same for female juveniles.

Separate facilities are being constructed for juveniles detained by the RCIPS.

In the area of information technology, as Government moves towards optimising online services, the Computer Services Department will work with stakeholders to identify and address gaps.

Plans to restructure services and programmes offered by the Department of Children & Family Services will occupy the **Ministry of Community Affairs** in 2013/2014.

To bring these services in line with the Children Law (2012 Revision), it will separate clinical from welfare services.

The DCFS will continue to provide clinical social work services, which will focus on the management of the Children Law and other clinical matters surrounding children and families.

Meanwhile, the Needs Assessment Unit will seek to efficiently and comprehensively manage financial assistance services.

A key legislative initiative for the Ministry during the fiscal year will be to amend the Poor Person's Relief Law and enact the accompanying Regulations.

During the 2013/14 fiscal year, the **Ministry of Finance & Economic Development** will review the Public Management & Finance Law and the Financial Regulations.

It will also begin the establishment of a Central Procurement Office which will standardize Government's procurement processes.

The Customs Department will reform and modernize its compliance management, intelligence and risk management, in order to enhance border security and revenue collection.

Meanwhile the Cayman Islands National Insurance Company, will focus on the implementation of its new eligibility and medical management software systems.

The Ministry of Financial Services, Commerce and the Environment has planned a number of key initiatives in the coming year.

The Department of Commerce and Investment will set up committees to review and propose changes to legislation governing liquor licensing, trade and business licensing, the Special Economic Zone, and the licensing of local companies.

It will also analyse the impact of potential fee structure changes for various licences, and develop an enforcement and monitoring arm.

Meanwhile the Department of Environment plans to table the National Conservation Bill, and open it to public consultation.

It will also meet with residents of West Bay, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, to discuss the draft Marine Parks Regulations.

The Financial Services Secretariat will increase engagement with the OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. It will also develop the partnership with the local financial services industry.

Meanwhile the General Registry will upgrade the Companies Online Registry Information System (CORIS). It will also upgrade the disaster recovery programme for corporate records.

The Cayman Islands Monetary Authority will also introduce a corporate governance regime within the fiscal year.

The **Ministry of District Administration, Tourism and Transport** has extensive plans for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman in the coming financial year, many of which relate to fostering the tourism industry.

The Ministry will establish a Cayman Airways Reservations Centre and Cargo Facility in Cayman Brac.

It will also expand the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport to accommodate security and screening equipment for the processing of international flights. In addition, it will establish a runway in Little Cayman that is adequate to allow an efficient and cost effective turbo prop aircraft service to that island.

In the area of sports, upgrades to the Cayman Brac FIFA certified field will include additions such as changing rooms and bleachers which will create opportunities for sports tourism in Cayman Brac.

Government also plans to convert the hurricane shelter site there to a secondary school.

On Grand Cayman, phase one of the redevelopment of the Owen Roberts International Airport will include expansion of the departure lounge.

The Ministry will continue to progress the procurement process of the proposed cruise berthing facility in Grand Cayman.

It will also enhance the Royal Watler Cruise Terminal to accommodate increased cruise visitors in 2014 and 2015.

A review of the Port Authority Law and Regulations is also anticipated.

National food security will be a key focus of the **Ministry of Planning, Lands, Agriculture Housing and Infrastructure**. Its multifaceted approach will include– the expansion of Protected Agriculture Systems for crop production, as well as the promotion of backyard and community gardens and the improvement of the livestock sector.

It will also seek to build on linkages between the Market at the Grounds, local restaurants, and the tourism sector.

In addition, it will actively cooperate with regional counterparts on pest safeguarding initiatives, regulatory enforcement, as well as proactive (pest and disease) surveillance and monitoring programmes.

The Petroleum Inspectorate will continue its push to strengthen the Dangerous Substances Law through Regulations to ensure a safe, healthy and sustainable petroleum sector, while working with the petroleum industry to establish fuel quality parameters for motor fuel, particularly gasoline.

The Department of Vehicle and Driver Licensing will review and update the Road Code, 2012 Edition.

A new Bodden Town Licensing Office should help to alleviate traffic congestion at the Crewe Road location.

In addition, the agency will collaborate with Computer Services to improve online services for the renewal of drivers' and vehicle licences.

The Department of Vehicle and Equipment Services will tender for and award the contract, for the provision of fuel to the Cayman Islands Government.

Meanwhile, the Department of Planning will aim to increase the efficiency of the planning process at both the department and industry-wide levels.

Recent changes which allow postal staff to represent the customer in the assessment of duties on parcels by HM Customs, will facilitate the move by the Postal Department towards parcel delivery during the financial year.

Implementation of a new box rental database will allow customers to conduct all box rental matters at any post office within the Cayman Islands.

The Water Authority will commence work on the upgrade and extension of the piped water distribution system in Cayman Brac.

Regulations will also be revised to implement the Rate Cap Adjustment Mechanism method of calculating annual rate adjustments.

In response to the need for a further 36 megawatts of electricity on Grand Cayman, the Electricity Regulatory Authority will conduct a competitive solicitation for the development and operation of a new power generation plant. Another important goal in the coming fiscal year will be to support the National Energy Policy Committee's mission to establish a National Energy Policy for the Cayman Islands.

I turn now to issues relating to education and employment.

In 2013-14, the **Ministry of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs** will move towards a phased implementation of the National Strategic Plan for Education and will introduce a new legislative framework for education.

In particular, there will be a continued focus on strategies to improve teaching in maths and literacy.

The year will also see the formal launch of the new “Safer Schools” strategy, an umbrella programme of initiatives that promote respectful learning environments which value individual safety. Areas of focus will include anti-bullying and parenting programmes, as well as initiatives to support pregnant teens.

A code of practice for gifted and talented students will be developed and work to expand vocational programmes in high school and beyond will take place.

In the sphere of tertiary education, the University College of the Cayman Islands will add new programmes and courses. These will include an associate of arts degree in legal studies in collaboration with Chartered Institute of Legal Executives; and an executive certificate in global leadership in collaboration with the University of Texas at Arlington.

The National Workforce Development Agency will benefit from a legislative framework to underpin its work. It will also introduce improved employment services, including the provision of assessment tools to identify skills and knowledge deficits.

In addition the agency will implement a national work readiness programme, in which barriers to employment and career progression are effectively identified and remediated.

Finally the agency will develop a national strategy to facilitate a culture of life-long learning in the Cayman Islands.

At the Sunrise Adult Training Centre, staff will work to develop an internship programme for persons with disabilities and will partner with the NWDA to increase employment placements for adults with disabilities.

With regards to employment and benefits, the Department of Labour and Pensions will benefit from major legislative changes through a revised National Pensions Law and amendments to the Labour Law.

In addition, the activation of the new Inspections Unit, will allow for proactive inspections and audits of workplaces in accordance with the law.

The Gender Affairs Unit will continue to work towards having the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women extended to the Cayman Islands.

It will provide a 10 year review and update of the National Policy on Gender Equity and Equality.

I move next to the key area of health.

The **Ministry of Health, Sports, Youth and Culture** will identify a major overseas healthcare provider to explore partnerships that will enhance our capacity to provide a world-class level of healthcare.

New Cancer Registry Legislation will enable policy makers, researchers, clinicians and public health professionals to monitor the burden of cancer, evaluate treatment programme success, and identify additional requirements for cancer prevention and control efforts at a national level.

In addition, the ministry will seek to improve diagnostic services through the installation of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology.

It will also explore the feasibility of promoting and safely regulating health research and clinical trials in the Cayman Islands.

The implementation of the updated Mental Health Law will include the appointment of a Mental Health Commission. The Ministry is also committed to the delivery of proper mental health facilities.

In addition, the Ministry will seek to engage the public in the preservation and promotion of the Cayman Islands' cultural heritage through educational programmes.

There will also be a continued focus on developing Sports Tourism.

The Mosquito Research and Control Unit will explore field trials for a proposed Oxitec project as a comprehensive and effective strategy for Dengue prevention.

Finally, the Ministry will also be publishing a Request for Proposal for a comprehensive and integrated waste management solution for the Cayman Islands.

Conclusion

Madam Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is incumbent on this honourable house to ensure that the proposals submitted by Government for the coming financial year offer the people of the Cayman Islands value for money. This is a weighty task, the importance of which cannot be overestimated.

I would like to acknowledge those who have played a role in the preparation of the budget, an arduous job that can take many months.

The civil service is also to be commended for the reduction that it has achieved in personnel and operating costs. Their savings to the country have come at a cost to many. However, ensuring the sustainability of these Islands is a noble and worthy cause.

The work of Government has an impact that is far-reaching. We must all do our duty to help Caymanians and residents to meet the challenges of everyday life.

Thank you for listening and may your deliberations be guided by the hand of Almighty God.