



CAYMAN ISLANDS
GOVERNMENT

2011 THRONE SPEECH

Delivered by His Excellency the Governor, Mr Duncan Taylor, CBE

Monday, 23 May 2011 / Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly Building

INTRODUCTION

Madam Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is a real honour for me to stand here today, with a sense of humility before the elected representatives, to present my second Throne Speech.

The past year has allowed me to get to know the Cayman Islands much better. I still have much to learn about our society. But I can testify to the extraordinary friendliness and hospitality of the people of the Cayman Islands. My family have been made to feel very welcome everywhere we have been. The most enjoyable part of the job of a Governor is undoubtedly getting out and about, meeting and talking to people and hearing their views (and their stories!). A particular favourite habit of mine is to visit the Market at the Grounds on a Saturday morning; but I have also had an enjoyable and interesting day with some local fishermen on some choppy waters to try and understand what it is really like to make your living catching fish! My regret is that pressure of work has meant that I have not been able to get out and about in the Districts as much as I would like. I hope to do better in the coming year.

The past year has been a challenging one for the Cayman Islands, not least because of the continuing recession and the impact of this on our public finances. Madam Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, we are still feeling the impact of the global financial crisis and the recession which it provoked. Like most countries around the world, we are having to take difficult decisions to cut costs, in order to bring government finances back onto a sustainable track. It is a painful process. I have been impressed by what we have achieved in this regard since I arrived early last year. But much more still remains to be done. We hope to deliver a small surplus in the current fiscal year with regard to recurrent revenue and recurrent expenditure. This in itself will be a welcome achievement and represents significant progress over the past two years. But, when our capital expenditure, including paying back capital on some older loans and capital investments in projects like the Government Administration Building and the new High Schools, is included, we are still spending significantly more than we are earning: in other words, we continue to live beyond our means. That means that we still need to continue to find ways of reducing costs to get our finances back on to a sustainable track. That will always be challenging. To secure the agreement of the FCO Minister, Henry Bellingham, to allow us to borrow necessary additional funding this year,

Government had to commit to a Three Year Plan demonstrating incrementally reducing expenditure year on year. We need to meet the commitments we have made. We are on the right trajectory but it is vital that we keep to the task: I am afraid that that means more tough decisions.

It is against this difficult background that I present the Throne Speech today. The Government's overall aim is to continue to deliver high quality public services whilst making necessary savings. That is not an easy balancing act. But I am confident that, working together, we can achieve it.

A year ago I delivered the first Throne Speech under the new Constitution. We have done much work since then to implement the provisions in the Constitution. We are still feeling our way sometimes: there is a great deal to absorb, to think about and to deliver. Since this time last year we have set up the Judicial and Legal Services Commission and the Advisory Committee on the Prerogative for Mercy and these are now settling down to their roles. We have also recently appointed the Cayman Islands' first ever Director of Public Prosecutions; and Government has passed legislation to introduce the Advisory District Councils. We have begun the work to prepare for the introduction of the

Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities. This is an exciting area.

There is still much to do. The work, training and education will gather pace in the next fiscal year: we have less than 18 months to ensure that we are fully prepared for this important change.

The key themes that I see for the Cayman Islands in the year ahead remain the same as those I set out last year.

I have already mentioned the challenges in the area of **public finances**.

Providing **security** to our people remains a priority. I believe we have made good progress in this area and we are, as a result, seeing a welcome reduction in most crime figures, at a time when most jurisdictions are seeing crime figures rise. But just one crime is, of course, one too many; the recent increase in robberies is a particular concern. We will continue to do everything we can to ensure that our people and visitors to these islands can feel safe and unthreatened. The National Security Council has met several times over the past year and has agreed a Crime

Prevention Strategy, addressing some of the long term causes of crime, which will be made public shortly.

Finally, we need to maintain constant vigilance to promote and ensure **good governance** and respect for **human rights**.

I now turn to the plans of the Ministries, Portfolios and Departments.

The Office of the Auditor General

The **Office of the Auditor General** will continue to work to promote good governance, transparency, and accountability in the use of public funds. Core activities will be the financial audits of the 38 Government entities and providing the Legislative Assembly with up to six financial and performance audit reports in 2011/12. The Office will make a difference by holding Government accountable for its spending and for providing value-for-money in public services.

Office of the Complaints Commissioner

The **Office of the Complaints Commissioner** will make itself more accessible to all the residents of the Cayman Islands.

It will carry out fair, thorough and independent investigations, where necessary; and will conduct Own Motion Investigations on matters of special public importance. The Office will also set standards for, and monitor, the effectiveness of internal complaints processes throughout government.

Office of the Information Commissioner

The **Office of the Information Commissioner** will hear, investigate and rule on appeals filed under the Freedom of Information Law. It will conduct own-initiative investigations, to ensure all applicants and public authorities are treated fairly. It will continue to promote the public's understanding of the Freedom of Information Law. And it will contribute to the ongoing review by the Legislative Assembly of the Law.

Judicial Administration

For the **Judiciary**, a new courthouse remains on hold, because of continuing economic restrictions. In the meantime, the Judiciary is modernising its operations by implementing an information technology strategic plan.

This starts this current fiscal year, in June. The Judiciary will improve the website's functionality, with the addition of e-services, over the next two years. During the 2011/12 fiscal year, e-filing will be piloted in the Grand Court's Financial Services Division. If this is successful, e-filing will be expanded to the court's other divisions and jurisdictions. Electronic case management will be introduced in Cayman Brac. Plans are also being made to allow e-searches online. And the public can expect to see the addition of e-payments, coinciding with the issuance of e-tickets by the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service.

The success of the Drug Rehabilitation Court has resulted in the planned establishment of similar courts for mental health and domestic violence issues.

Cabinet Office

The **Cabinet Office** will focus on its new Constitutional mandate of driving the coordination of public policy development and implementation. The initial focus will be Government's new Crime Prevention Strategy. This key initiative will require extensive cross-Ministry coordination and cooperation.

The Freedom of Information Unit will offer public-sector training and support on the Freedom of Information Law; and it will work on the eventual introduction of data-protection legislation.

Computer Services will expand online Government services and implement advanced automation and business reporting systems. These efforts will help government agencies increase efficiency, without increasing staff numbers. Furthermore, Computer Services' expansion of the electronic document management system will offer government agencies the ability to revamp processes and procedures, improve workflows, and minimise costs for storing and manipulating paper documents. In addition, this department will work to contain or lower IT

costs, through government-wide coordinated staffing, purchasing, and project and contract management.

GIS Marketing and Communications, in collaboration with Computer Services, plans to upgrade the Cayman Islands Gazette website in order to save production costs, raise efficiency and improve its service to the public. GIS staff will also develop Government's social media presence. Using these tools, they will work with relevant agencies to streamline crisis communications, in order to provide timely, accurate information to the media and the public.

The Temporary Housing Initiative, under the Cabinet Office, will close its final trailer site, at Fairbanks, in the first half of the fiscal year. It will help the remaining residents to find suitable, more permanent housing.

The Portfolio of the Civil Service

The **Portfolio of the Civil Service** will further develop what is known as "blended e-learning." This will provide civil servants with targeted, accredited e-learning programmes through the Civil Service College, in partnership with top universities. Programme benefits include cost

reductions; an expanded curriculum; and a means to link learning and performance management.

The Portfolio also will continue supporting the steering group and review teams that are carrying out the Public Sector Reviews.

The Deputy Governor's Office

In the **Deputy Governor's Office** staff, in conjunction with the Portfolio of Legal Affairs, will continue to work to prepare Government for the November 2012 implementation of the Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities. This is a significant, key and challenging task, which will require the cooperation of the whole of Government. The preparations will include educating and training all public servants about the bill's provisions.

The Deputy Governor's Office will also assist in implementing the Crime Prevention Strategy, and provide strategic oversight for the ongoing Public Service Reviews.

Under this Office, The Commissions Secretariat will support the four commissions established in the Constitution: the Constitutional

Commission; the Human Rights Commission; the Judicial and Legal Services Commission; and the Commission on Standards in Public Life, to help them fulfill their mandate. The Secretariat will also provide support to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs

Within the ambit of the **Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs** the RCIPS will train and develop staff, to ensure that its resources are used as effectively as possible to secure and protect the country's borders and communities, as well as to protect visitors to the Cayman Islands. Key to effective policing, is the availability of intelligence. This year will see continued efforts to develop strategic partnerships with US, Canadian and Jamaican Law Enforcement Agencies. Those partnerships have already enhanced capabilities, complementing the training and development of staff to help secure our borders and prevent organised crime from gaining a foothold on these islands.

Public confidence remains an elusive goal. The RCIPS recognise the key benefits of having officers at neighbourhood level, known and trusted by those they serve and key to the securing of public confidence. This

year, resources permitting, the RCIPS will increase the number of officers working with and at the heart of our communities.

In line with its mandate to rehabilitate prisoners, the Prison Service will offer programmes designed to reduce prisoners' criminal thinking and drug and alcohol use. Vocational training also will be offered. Prison Video Links, will allow remand offenders to appear in court via a live video link from prison. This will reduce the need to transport large numbers of remanded persons from prison to the courts.

In the Department of Community Rehabilitation, staff will play a significant role in the first phase of implementation of the Alternative Sentencing Law which provides additional community-based rehabilitation alternatives to imprisonment. They will also develop three key initiatives: an intensive day supervision programme; an annual art programme for persons who offend; and a mentoring programme for young and/or first-time offenders. In conjunction with the Prison Service, Department staff will establish a more comprehensive programme to support persons returning to the community.

The Department of Immigration will focus on the professional development of its staff, including in the area of communications, in order to serve the public better.

The Emergency Communications and Electronic Monitoring Department will begin monitoring phase 1 of the National CCTV Programme public surveillance camera system. In addition, new software for computer-aided dispatch and records management will be fully implemented.

The Government will address current gaps and loss of perspective on the history and heritage of the people of the Cayman Islands by commissioning a series of subject-based histories. It will begin with a re-assessment of the history of representative government that will update and otherwise augment existing publications on the subject.

A small committee will be appointed, under the auspices of the Hon. Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, to oversee the research and publication process.

This commitment is made in partial response to the need to broaden and deepen current understandings of who we are, where we come from, and what we stand for.

Portfolio of Legal Affairs

In the coming fiscal year, the programme of legislative work led by the **Portfolio of Legal Affairs** will include proposed amendments to:

- the Judicature Law, in order to widen the list of persons eligible to serve as jurors;
- the Pawnbrokers Law, to assist with the regulation of the emerging Cash for Gold market;
- the Rehabilitation of Offenders Law, to further streamline the rehabilitation periods for offenders; and
- the introduction of a Judicial and Legal Services Commission Bill, as well as a Commission of Standards in Public Life Bill, to set out and underpin the procedures for these two commissions.
- a Legal Practitioners' Bill.

Working with other agencies, the Portfolio will continue its ongoing review and identifying necessary amendments to legislation, in order to ensure conformity with the new Constitution.

Finally, as the public is aware, under the previous Constitution, prosecutions were conducted by this portfolio. I am glad to report that the **Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**, created in the new Constitution, has now been set up. This will ensure more efficient and effective handling of this aspect of legal work. The Portfolio and DPP's office will work to ensure a smooth transition in creating two separate, independent offices.

Ministry of Finance, Tourism and Development

To promote tourism, the **Ministry of Finance, Tourism and Development** will continue developing Owen Roberts International Airport, and it will seek to secure financing for this project. It is also continuing with plans to develop cruise-berthing facilities in George Town and Spotts. Negotiations and proposals for these developments and enhancements are ongoing, and the Ministry intends to complete these projects within the next

two years. This will enhance the airport and seaport facilities' safety and security for visitors and locals. The Government will also continue to pursue its policy of enhancing the Cayman Turtle Farm through a partnership lease.

Other initiatives include training tourism service providers and public servants; and promoting the *Go Green* initiative, to promote the Cayman Islands as a premier eco-tourism destination.

In the coming fiscal year, the Ministry will also build on its successes in both sport and medical tourism with regard to social agencies with strong connections to Cayman's maritime culture. The Ministry will continue supporting them through scholarships and incentives, with the goal of these agencies becoming self-sustaining and profitable.

In addition, the Ministry plans to initiate more private-public sector partnerships for prestigious events such as the Cayman JazzFest, in order to reduce Government's financial contributions.

The Premier's office has continued the development of Barkers National Park, as the Ministry secures additional property and employs Park Rangers. This will protect important aspects of our natural resources and culture, while again enhancing our tourist attractions.

These initiatives are intended to diversify Cayman's Tourism industry, and generate hundreds of jobs that will contribute to Cayman's gross domestic product.

In the area of development ongoing plans include a new cargo facility in East End. The developer has completed a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment which has been reviewed by the Department of Environment and is now posted online. This is in keeping with a commitment to follow due process in the necessary approvals and public consultation, which the government welcomes.

And the Department of Investment and Commerce, working with the financial sector, will be heavily involved in attracting business to the country and strengthening Cayman's global competitiveness as a well-regulated, international financial services centre.

Ministry of District Administration, Works, Lands and Agriculture

Under the **Ministry of District Administration, Works, Lands and Agriculture**, the Electricity Regulatory Authority expects to complete the first draft of the National Energy Policy in early 2012.

Staff of the National Weather Service will oversee construction of the Doppler Early Warning Radar System, which is scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2012. They will also work on developing the Lightning Detection Station, provided by the UK.

At Recreation, Parks and Cemeteries, plans include the promulgation of parks legislation, in order to better regulate these public green spaces.

Department of Environmental Health staff will promote a comprehensive facility for solid-waste disposal management, and waste-to-energy, for Grand Cayman. They will also review and promulgate new environmental health legislation, focusing on food safety, solid waste management, recycling and waste-to-energy facilities. On Cayman Brac, staff will complete solid-waste environmental impact assessments.

The Department of Vehicle and Equipment Services will create efficient fleet management and maintenance systems and introduce fuel management equipment to prevent misuse of fuel supplies. Meanwhile, the Department of Vehicle and Drivers' Licensing will promulgate new traffic legislation; and will continue to develop online services for the renewal of drivers' licences and vehicle licensing.

At Lands and Survey, scanning of all survey files will be completed this fiscal year, in order to allow full online research facilities for licensed land surveyors and department staff. Aerial photographs, to be taken in early 2012, will provide users of the National Geographic Information System with up-to-date information. These photographs will be used to upgrade the official street atlas.

Turning to District Administration, road resurfacing along Cayman Brac's south coast and the development of the affordable housing initiative for the Sister Islands, will be continued. The Brac hurricane shelter also will be ongoing, in order to increase shelter capacity.

Ministry of Education, Training and Employment

The **Ministry of Education, Training and Employment** will continue its drive towards a world-class education system, with a reform agenda that revolves around four priorities:

- Enhancing the education system's leadership and governance.
- Enhancing student performance.
- Enhancing skills for work readiness.
- And expanding and improving Early Childhood Care and Education.

Key initiatives include:

- Continued implementation of the Education Stabilisation Plan, and the development of a National Strategic Plan for Education.
- The introduction of graduation criteria for secondary schools, to include academic requirements.
- Phased completion of the new secondary schools, and relocation of staff and students to the new sites.
- Completion of the national primary school redevelopment programme, in order to stop using temporary classrooms and to provide more classroom space, including space to reintroduce Reception classes.

- Implementation of a comprehensive “Safer Schools” initiative, to provide school environments that are conducive to learning for all students, including our “at-risk” students.
- Development of a national numeracy strategy, to improve teaching effectiveness and pupil performance.
- And the launch of an Early Childhood Care and Education Unit. This unit will expand and improve outcomes, and improve the teaching and learning experiences and environments, for the country’s youngest learners.

Ministry staff will also build on a comprehensive review and realignment of labour and pension services, and a new supporting legislative framework, with these two key initiatives.

- The launch of a Human Capital Development Agency, to deliver innovative, high-quality programmes and services that support human capital development planning, workforce preparation, and the employment needs of job seekers and those who want to further their careers.
- And second, the launch of the Department of Labour and Pensions, to provide a one-stop shop and more effective and

efficient mechanisms for managing compliance and enforcement of pension and labour matters.

Ministry of Community Affairs, Gender and Housing

In the **Ministry of Community Affairs, Gender and Housing**, the ongoing objective is to empower vulnerable and disadvantaged persons by helping them to improve their quality of life. In 2011/12, human development services will be strengthened and enhanced in order to support the well-being of children, families and communities.

The Ministry's broad strategic goal is to develop a holistic approach in addressing human needs. It aims to achieve this by:

- offering and enhancing social work services, focusing on foster care and the elderly;
- using a gender perspective to better address the causes of social issues;
- providing community based counselling and residential programmes for people who require assistance with drug and alcohol issues, family and relationship difficulties and/or issues related to personal development;

- providing nurturing and safe residential care for children in need of care and protection;
- strengthening youth rehabilitation by implementing a therapeutic community programme, and commencing the construction of an on-island facility for youth who demonstrate antisocial and/or offending behaviours;
- providing affordable housing programmes for low-income families; and
- working across ministries and alongside key stakeholders, to ensure that the needs of children, families and communities are met.

This Ministry's key legislative initiatives are:

- enactment of the Children Law and Regulations;
- approval of amendments to the Adoption of Children Law and Regulations;
- amending the Poor Person's Relief Law and enacting Regulations; and
- passing the Gender Equality Bill, 2011.

Ministry of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports and Culture

I conclude with the **Ministry of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports, and Culture**. Its strategic plans for the coming fiscal year include the following initiatives:

- Identifying and implementing policies and programmes to help control healthcare costs, while ensuring that access and quality of patient care is uncompromised. This goal will be achieved in consultation with health stakeholders.
- The Ministry also intends to formalise, and strengthen, partnerships and processes between the public and private sectors, with regard to environmental considerations. This undertaking will ensure that development projects are planned and designed with a full understanding of environmental impacts. In addition, the Ministry will encourage mitigation of these impacts during project design, to enhance the projects and their benefits for the Cayman Islands.
- To ensure that youth gain maximum benefits from the delivery of a coordinated, focused youth programme, the Ministry will improve inter-Ministerial and inter-agency working groups in the area of youth services.

- It will also encourage further development of the six focus sports, by empowering the relevant sports associations to boost the planning and development of these sports in the Cayman Islands.
- Finally, the Ministry will work with its cultural partners in fostering cross-agency communication, while enhancing partnerships in cultural programme delivery.

CONCLUSION

Madam Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, before I finish, I would like to thank the members of the public service who have helped draw up these plans and who have the responsibility to implement them. The budget setting process has been a challenging one, stressful and prolonged: I would like to put on record my gratitude to all concerned for the hard work and long hours they have put in. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who contribute through their work on the Boards of Statutory Authorities and Government Companies and on the several Commissions, Committees and Councils set up under the Constitution; and, last but not least, all those volunteers, many of whom I

have had the good fortune to meet over the past year, who so unselfishly give up their time to support Church and Community Groups and charities.

I pray that God will provide wisdom and guidance to the Members of the Assembly and that He will continue to bless and protect the Cayman Islands.

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