



PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSFORMATION UNIT

Communiqué # 3 May 2010

Dear Colleagues:

As you may recall from our last Bulletin, we indicated that having analysed the recommendation and information submitted by Ministries, Departments and Agencies, the Public Sector Transformation Unit (PSTU) held one-on-one discussions and consultations with Permanent Secretaries. Since then, we have shared the Draft Master Rationalisation Plan (The Plan) with the Consultative Monitoring Group (CMG). The PSTU received feedback from the CMG and the Draft Rationalisation Plan was presented to the Cabinet in March. As you are aware, the Honourable Prime Minister recently articulated that the Plan is to be tabled in Parliament, to invite public comment before a final decision is taken.

The Plan, as presented, proposes changes in the Public Sector which should improve the way Government operates and to address the following areas of deficiency:

1. Overlapping and duplication of mandates and functions
2. Organizations and structures that are no longer relevant
3. Shifts in mandate and core functions
4. Archaic systems and structures
5. Laws which are outdated
6. Lack of or inappropriate ICT systems and structures

In making our recommendations we were guided by the following questions: What should government do and pay for; what government must pay for but not necessarily do itself; and what government should neither do nor pay for. (Source: Osbourne and Plastrick, 1997).

In this initial exercise, we did not try to quantify any possible reduction in staff complement or to calculate any possible savings which could result from the changes. This will be done in the next phase of our operations, once the rationalisation plan is approved.

It is also important to note, that the PSTU does not have the authority to recommend the number of Ministries, as this is solely the prerogative of the Prime Minister. However, in some instances where appropriate, we have recommended modifications to Ministries' core functions. Recommendations were also made for the merger, transfer, privatisation and contracting out of some Entities, which were influenced by the benefits that could be realized by grouping related subject areas and complementary activities, possible efficiency gains and general cost effectiveness.

The Draft Master Rationalization Plan also includes recommendations for a number of initiatives to be undertaken, to promote cost containment and reduce the overall cost of the public sector. Some of these initiatives, include, but are not limited to:

- Reduction in the number of rental buildings occupied by public sector entities
- The introduction of shared corporate services in areas such as human resource management, among others
- Use of existing technology to reduce communications costs across government

The recommendations made by the PSTU benefited from research and an examination of what is done elsewhere such as, the United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Barbados and Trinidad. In doing this however, we always had to consider that Jamaica has its own unique culture and characteristics.

Since our last Communiqué, the Unit also hosted six (6) focus groups involving persons from many different areas of Jamaican life, to hear their views about the public sector and what changes they would like to see. For the most part, the feedback from the groups confirmed the need for change in the Public Sector and the belief that improvements in customer service (internal and external), the accountability framework and streamlining of processes will enhance the operations of the Public Sector.

Colleagues, the transformation of the Public Sector will require creating a new and different culture, one which supports the achieving of a well-motivated, efficient and accountable public sector that is results-oriented. Creating a culture of accountability, will require a significant change in thinking about how the business of government must be conducted. It will mean changing attitudes and behaviours to influence the results. Accountability therefore, must become a "cultural expectation" that propels the leadership of the Public Sector to achieve the desired results.

As mentioned in our previous Communiqué, it is vital that the process of Public Sector transformation involves us all working together in a positive way and sharing ideas and solutions. It is the only way transformation can occur in the Public Sector, if it is to succeed.

We need feedback and input from you. We encourage you to write to us with your suggestions, recommendations and ideas. Tell us how we can best fulfill our mandate to ***“lead, monitor, evaluate and facilitate the implementation of the restructuring of the Public Sector for efficiency, effective and economical Government”***.

You can contact us at info.pstu@cabinet.gov.jm. For further information visit our website, www.jis.gov.jm/special_sections/pstu/

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