

Introductory Remarks at Security Guards Workshop -
15– 17 October, 2003 – Grand Barbados,
Aquatic Gap, Bay Street, St. Michael

Madam Chairperson, Mr. Forte, Ms. Forde, Ms. Taylor, Mr. Cox,
Colleagues, Good Morning.

This workshop is a follow-up to two held recently in order to continue to educate public officers on the importance of good customer service. The Office of Public Sector Reform held one earlier this year for frontline personnel and in June for Security Guards. This workshop being held by the Ministry of Tourism therefore continues Government's effort to improve the level of customer service by all ranks of public officers.

First I want to thank all of you for coming to this workshop which I hope you will enjoy and learn some information which will be useful in your job.

A few months ago after visiting a number of service agencies – and Inland Revenue in particular it occurred to me that you – the security personnel – are also required to play an important role in facilitating customers. I therefore took it upon myself to set up this workshop with the support of the Defence and Security Division of the Prime Minister's Office and my officers – as evidenced here today.

This office has set itself an exciting programme for this financial year – amongst the programme we are seeking to promote and develop are the following:

- We will be working even harder with service agencies in developing and issuing customer service standards so that the public knows what time frames are set to meet their demands
- We will be developing and promoting a more effective communication strategy so that the public and our colleagues are aware of what progress is being made in public sector reform and what plans are proposed.
- We will be re-vitalising and promoting the setting up of more Internal Reform Committees so that more persons at all levels will have a voice in the reform programme.
- We are identifying Reform Liaison Officers with the assistance of various Ministries and Departments to improve our level of communication with them.
- We are setting up a service assessment and improvement programme so that the services being offered to the public can be monitored and on-going recommendations made for improvement.

- We will continue to seek feedback from the private sector, unions, our public sector colleagues and the general public in promoting the reform programme. We are in the process of developing a website to accommodate this and we will seek to meet our counterparts and stakeholders on a regular basis to discuss our programmes, projects and activities.
- We are developing a schools programme so that our young, budding public officers of the future will have an appreciation of what the public service is seeking to achieve.
- We will continue to support the Performance Review and Development System – since this programme is key to the development of our public officers in all areas of their work and relationships with colleagues.
- We will continue to assist Ministries and Departments with their strategic plans, organizational reviews and registry and other systems but they must be prepared to provide resources of support. At present we are also in the process of developing a Standardisation of Registries project for the public service. The reduction of red tape and the effective use of information technology are important components of our ORs.
- We will continue to develop the Employee Assistance Programme so that officers can receive counseling and support when needed.

Finally, I wish to encourage all public officers to support all aspects of the reform programme but especially by raising the level of customer service which we offer to the public. **Good customer service represents the wheels of public sector reform – without it we will seem to be making no progress. We have made steady progress in the ‘technocratic areas’ of public sector reform let us make even more progress in the ‘customer service area’ of public sector reform. Once more I appeal for our level of service to be the envy of the Caribbean. Let us also be mindful of the Cricket World Cup 2007 as an event where we will be required to showcase the very best of our customer service skills to the world. Barbados, in particular, and the Caribbean in general will put to the test. Let us ensure that we pass with flying colours.**

Once again I thank you for coming and I hope you participate fully and take to heart the principles of good customer service to be taught.

Mike Archer

Director (ag.) – Office of Public Sector Reform