



Press Statement

by

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Minister of Public Works

101 Jobs for 101 Days

April 5th, 2018

Good afternoon.

It has been almost 9 months since we assumed office and it would be fair to say that all of us – the 24 elected members of parliament and the 5 appointed Senators – have not let a day pass when we haven't been racking our brains to create new initiatives to provide employment for Bermudians.

Much work has been done over that period but much of that work is working towards long term goals with long term benefits – we believe we must do both.

This government is fully committed to meeting our promises to provide opportunities and employment for an increasing number of Bermudians and that responsibility is shared by both the Cabinet and Caucus - not just the Minister responsible for workforce development – we are a team and as such all of us will continue to work on behalf of the people of this country in this regard.

In the Ministry of Public Works alone there are a number of initiatives that are not moving as fast as many of us would like – so during the budgeting process in November and December last year - we also considered actions that we could take to accelerate and provide some immediate work for those unemployed.

So today I am pleased to announce another step forward in that quest – **101 Jobs for 101 Days**. Not a gimmick but real employment for people right now – albeit it initially temporary.

The aims of the programme are twofold:

To provide a means of income in exchange for services for those individuals who find themselves unemployed that will allow them to sustain themselves in the short term (rather than the alternative of financial assistance); and to provide an opportunity for

those individuals to showcase their skillset, work ethic and update their resume with more recent job experience.

The work will be generally unskilled work – so no one is excluded – covering such tasks as minor construction works, bulk waste and horticultural removal along with Government office moves and other miscellaneous jobs that need attention.

The programme will be managed under the Hustle Truck umbrella ably managed by the Bermuda Housing Corporation - those interested in participating can contact the **101-4-101** Office co-located with the Hustle Truck Office at Harmony Club lower –Telephone number – 236-0540 or email: hustle@tbinet.bm or for further information contact BHC at 295- 8623.

The first wave of 20 workers – already identified - will start this Monday, April 9th – to begin the clearing of rubbish and debris from the former Club Med site in St. George's. As a part of the agreement with the St. Regis Hotel developers – the government must deliver up a clean site. Sadly, irresponsible residents have been using the site as a regular dumping ground for all manner of things including beds, appliances, furniture and household garbage. This is a major exercise that will involve placing various large bins onsite and sorting items of garbage there before delivering to the appropriate disposal locations.

Considering the large volume of garbage we anticipate several weeks of work to clean the site following which it will be secured and I take this opportunity to warn those who may wish to return to depositing garbage there that we will prosecute any abusers to the fullest extent of the law. (I attach some photographs of the site so you will appreciate the magnitude of the problem). Evidence suggests that not just the residents of St. George are guilty of this abuse but others from other parts of the island or unscrupulous truckers have used it as a dump site as well.

The Works & Engineering department - based primarily out of the Government Quarry will provide equipment and vehicular support to this effort in partnership with the 101 workers.

The remaining participants will be administratively processed to commence work the following week. Two more of the initial projects will include the gutting of the Allenhurst Building (the former Hamilton Police Station) on Parliament Street and the removal of surplus furniture and some minor demolition works from the recently purchased IAS Building – soon to be renamed BHC House on Church Street.

It is anticipated that work on the Allenhurst Building will commence the week of April 16th – the Buildings Department will hire a contractor to oversee the work as it does require some skilled supervision as the building has been unused for several years and while structurally sound has suffered some deterioration and dilapidation. The plan is to clean out old carpets, fallen ceiling tiles and miscellaneous contents that need to be stripped out and disposed of. Broken windows need to be boarded up to weather proof and secure the building – we will likely demolish the old cells and clear out the courtyard as well. Our

Ministry Safety & Health Officer has placed some guidelines for persons entering the building who must wear personal protective equipment such as hard hats, disposable masks, rubber or vinyl gloves and disposable shoe covers.

Conceptual drawings, design plans inclusive of the installation of an elevator for the building have been completed and we are in internal discussions about possible future uses once the building is rehabilitated. A more specific announcement about this will come in due course.

There are several other small projects that will be assigned to the **101 Team** going forward as the need arises.

Everyone is aware of this government's commitment to small contractors – particularly those who have not been able to secure government work before.

Ministry wide we shall shortly be launching combined quotes for several small projects so that we can accelerate the forward movement we seek. The bureaucracy will still be fed by meeting the financial requirements that are in place but bidding for several small projects will be combined– so that those small firms who do not have a large back room operation will not have to commit project specific resources but can combine their submissions that will be considered for several projects at the same time. I have been encouraged by the enthusiasm and input with which Ministry staff tasked with this responsibility have reacted to this initiative – they see the merit in such an approach and the efficiencies that can be achieved without any negative effect on financial regulations, fairness or equity.

I am quite excited by the prospects of this initiative – which has several positive obvious benefits – small contractors can commit collective administrative resources to several projects at the same time, staff can assess multiple projects at one time, concurrent work can occur and we can achieve greater progress as a government than we would otherwise. The benefits to our community and our people are enormous as employment will increase.

Now – while this work is temporary – we shall continue to work aggressively on expanding opportunities for full time employment but I am certain that some full time work will come from this exercise as private contractors working with us will observe the work ethic and habits of some of these workers and offer them full time employment.

The people of this country can rest assured that their government will not rest until we have secured significant success with the covenant we entered with them on July 18th, 2017.

Thank you.

Photographic archive of dumped materials found at the St. Regis Site





