

Building State Capacity in the Caribbean

The State of the Civil Service in The Bahamas

Prepared for the Innovation in Citizen Services Division by:

Joan H. Underwood

Institutions for Development
Sector

Innovation in Citizen
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BUILDING STATE CAPACITY IN THE CARIBBEAN

The State of the Civil Service in The Bahamas



Abstract*

The potential of public policies and the services provided by any State are closely linked to the quality of its civil service. The ways in which the civil service is managed—in other words, the human resource planning policies, recruitment and selection, professional development, and the incentives for professionalization, among other factors—are critical conditioning factors when it comes to attracting, retaining, and motivating suitable staff to carry out these tasks. This report presents the main findings of The Bahamas’ civil service diagnostic carried out in early 2018. It evaluates the efficacy of the human resource management (HRM) systems in the civil service. The analysis takes as reference the methodology used by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Latin American countries (Longo and Iacoviello, 2010) and the Charter for Caribbean Public Services led by the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). This is the first evaluation for the country, and it contributed as an input to the series “Building State Capacity in the Caribbean: A Baseline Report of the Civil Service.”

JEL Codes: H10, H11, J45

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Acronyms

BPSU	Bahamas Public Service Union	JDE	JD Edwards – Payroll engine utilized by the Government
CARICAD	Caribbean Centre for Development Administration	MOH	Ministry of Health
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	MPS	Ministry of Public Service and National Insurance
COLA	Cost of living adjustments	NDP	National Development Plan – Vision 2040
DPS	Deputy Permanent Secretary	OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
FAS	First Assistant Secretary	PAR	Performance Appraisal Record
FNM	Free National Movement	PLP	Progressive Liberal Party
FY	Fiscal Year	PM	Prime Minister
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PS	Permanent Secretary
GG	Governor-General	PSBOA	Public Service Board of Appeal
GNI	Gross National Income	PSC	Public Service Commission
GSW	General Service Worker	SAS	Senior Assistant Secretary
HRD	Human Resource Development	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
HRIS	HR Information System		
HRM	Human Resource Management		
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank		

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Executive Summary

Of the many factors that contribute to building state capacity, human resources are among the most important. The potential of public policies and the services provided by any State are closely linked to the quality of its civil service. It is civil servants whom we trust every day to carry out the tasks of public service in our countries.

The ways in which the civil service is managed—in other words, human resource planning policies, recruitment and selection, professional development, and incentives for professionalization, among other factors—are critical determinants in attracting, retaining, and motivating suitable staff to carry out these tasks. Effective management of the State's human resources is also important because of the amount of resources that taxpayers invest to finance this workforce.

In 2004, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) helped design and implement a methodology for measuring how the central government civil service operates in Latin American countries with respect to the reference points identified by the Ibero-American Charter. These assessments, implemented at different times in the last 14 years, helped generate a reform agenda and contributed to important progress in several countries (Cortazar, Lafuente, and Sangines, 2014).

In 2017 the IDB, persuaded of the importance of this subject, started an initiative to replicate this work in the Caribbean. The process began with the adaptation of the original methodology and analytical framework to align them with Caribbean realities and priorities.¹ In this regard, the Charter for Caribbean Public Services served as an essential reference point.

This report analyzes the management of the civil service in The Bahamas. It begins with an examination of the status of the civil service along the parameters detailed in the adapted methodology. The analysis culminates in a report card on the level of efficacy of the HRM systems in the civil service of The Bahamas. For this assessment, the definition of the Public Service² is restricted to central government and specifically those officers appointed by the Public Service Commission

¹ Please see full details of the methodology in Lafuente and Molina (2018).

² The term civil service is also used in the report and has the same meaning. In the Caribbean context, it traditionally refers to the group of individuals hired by the Public Service Commission and tends to exclude those government workers hired on contract or by the political directorate.

(PSC) and excludes those workers whose services are retained via short-term contracts or who are appointed by any of the other Service Commissions. The term civil service is also used in the report and has the same meaning. In the Caribbean context, it traditionally refers to the group of individuals hired by the PSC and tends to exclude government workers hired on contract or by the political directorate.

Good management of the civil service entails having in place solid workforce planning routines; reliable data on staff and pay; adequate organizational structures with updated and relevant job profiles; a merit-based system for recruitment, selection, and promotion with a reasonable level of flexibility; competitive and fair pay; a solid performance framework; career development opportunities for staff and good relations with staff associations, among others. In addition, having a high-performing organization in charge of the system is critical to make all this happen.

This report assesses 38 critical points to calculate aggregate scores for the eight HRM subsystems³ and the seven quality indices⁴ that are aligned with the practices described in the paragraph above. The maximum score for each HRM subsystem and quality index is 100. Higher scores are indicative of greater maturity, as evidenced by the degree of instrumentality (i.e., the availability of technical rules and instruments that enable the management practice established in the critical point to be developed), coverage (i.e., the extent to which the practice exists in the various public organizations in the country) and implementation (i.e., the degree of effective implementation and ultimately institutionalization of the practice). The following table summarizes the main results for The Bahamas.

The aggregated Civil Service Development Index enables both civil service development and degree of implementation of the CPS Charter to be measured. Countries can be classified into three levels of civil service development: (i) low, with scores between 0 and 39 points; (ii) medium, with scores between 40 and 59; and (iii) high, or professional systems levels, with scores above

TABLE 1
Quality Indices and HR Subsystems

QUALITY INDICES	2017
Civil Service Development (aggregated index)	19
Efficiency	16
Merit	47
Structural Consistency	10
Functional Capacity	7
Integrative Capacity	40
Management Capabilities	7
Diversity Management	10
HR Subsystems	
Human Resources Planning	11
Work Organisation	0
Employment Management	28
Performance Management	0
Compensation Management	25
Development Management	0
Human and Social Relations Management	40
Organization of HRM Function	10

Source: Author's elaboration.

60. A score of 19 out of 100 shows that The Bahamas has significant room for improvement.

The best-performing index was Merit, which evaluates the degree to which the civil service system incorporates guarantees regarding the application of professionalism into its practices and policies, thereby safeguarding them from arbitrariness, politicization, and rent-seeking. The score on this index was 47. This score is based on the extent to which the work of the PSC mitigates risks associated with arbitrary decision making for recruitment, selection and promotion, and other forms of bias including political persuasion.

³ The subsystems in question are Human Resource Planning, Work Organization, Employment Management, Performance Management, Compensation Management, Development Management, Human and Social Relations Management, and the Organization of the HRM Function.

⁴ The seven quality indices are Efficiency, Merit, Structural Consistency, Functional Consistency, Integrative Capacity, Management Capabilities, and Diversity Management.

At the other end of the spectrum, two quality indices tied for the lowest score of 7. They were Functional Capacity and Management Capabilities. Functional Capacity evaluates the civil service system's capacity to effectively influence the behavior of public employees, inducing the development of work practices that are in line with organizational priorities and that are aimed at improving public service delivery. It covers three aspects: competency, incentive effectiveness, and flexibility. Management Capabilities covers the spectrum from Transactional Management to Transformational Leadership.⁵ In the case of Functional Capacity, The Bahamas faces significant gaps in instrumentality related to job descriptions, performance standards, performance management, and pay structure. The low score for the Management Capabilities index is attributable to weaknesses in personnel management, alignment, and stakeholder engagement and lack of enforcement of strategic management.

Of the eight HRM subsystems, The Bahamas recorded the highest score for Human and Social Relations Management, which focuses on the relationship between the organization and its employees. The aggregate score of 40 reflects a relatively harmonious relationship between government and civil servants.

Three subsystems tied for the lowest score of 0. They were Work Organization, which defines and specifies the content of the tasks and the characteristics of the people required to carry them out; Performance Management, which involves planning, encouraging, and evaluating employees' contributions; and Development

Management, which focuses on individual and collective growth. In the case of Work Organization, there is considerable room for improvement in the development of job profiles and description to achieve some measure of standardization throughout the service.

The absence of standardized job descriptions is a primary contributing factor to the absence of a performance management system. Similarly, the lack of a comprehensive mechanism for assessing employee performance and identifying learning and development needs results in the lack of relevant data to inform key decisions about the type of training that is most needed.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations designed to help strengthen the less mature HRM subsystems and quality indices. Based on the results of the assessment, the most impactful interventions are likely to be associated with augmenting the planning, strategic alignment and management information systems. In tandem with these areas of focus, the government would benefit significantly from strengthening the centralized human resource management agencies. This strengthening should include human capital, financial resources as well as policies and procedures.

⁵ Transactional managers are concerned with the status quo and day-to-day progress toward goals. Transformational leaders operate at a more strategic level to enhance the motivation and engagement of followers by directing their behavior toward a shared vision. The lower the score, the more transactional the nature of the current approach to management.



Context

Background

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, which gained its independence from Britain in 1964, operates under a modified Westminster system. Parliament consists of two houses—the Upper House or Senate, made up of appointed members, and the House of Assembly. The May 2017 general elections resulted in a change in administration when the Free National Movement (FNM) led by Dr. Hubert Minnis won 35 of the 39 seats. The party of the former administration—the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP)—holds the remaining four seats.

In December 2016, the first working draft of a National Development Plan (NDP) was published. ‘Vision 2040’ was the outcome of what was described as “the first ever coordinated effort to plan The Bahamas’ development in a systematic manner using empirical data and analyses, while also obtaining input from private sector and civil society organisations.”⁶ Governance and Human Capital are two of the four pillars in the NDP. Further, improving transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in government was identified as a top priority.

Reforming the public service featured prominently in the FNM 2017 manifesto. Specific

mention was made of making the Service more meritocratic. Efficiency was another consideration, with specific mention made of improving The Bahamas’ standing in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business Report.

According to the World Bank’s country profile, The Bahamas’ 2016 population was 391,232. The gross domestic product (GDP) for that same year was US\$9.047 billion with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of US\$21,020, thereby earning the country the high-income designation.

For the purpose of this diagnostic of the HRM functions, the definition of the Public Service⁷ is restricted to central government and specifically those officers appointed by the PSC and excludes those workers whose services are retained via short-term contracts, persons employed by statutory or quasi-governmental bodies as well as

⁶ <http://www.tribune242.com/news/2017/may/10/minister-do-not-mess-national-development-plan/>.

⁷ The term civil service is also utilized in the report and has the same meaning. In the Caribbean context, it traditionally refers to the group of individuals hired by the PSC and tends to exclude those government workers hired on contract or by the political directorate.

those who are appointed by any of the other service commissions.

The methodology utilized in the diagnostic is a modified version of the [Longo methodology](#), which the IDB has used to conduct similar assessments in Latin America. The principal modifications to the Longo model were designed to secure optimal alignment with the Caribbean's priority agenda as reflected in the [Charter for Caribbean Public Services](#).⁸

Institutional Context

Two centralized agencies—the PSC and the Ministry of Public Service and National Insurance (MPS)—and HR units within line ministries and departments share responsibility for the various HRM functions. There is also a Public Service Board of Appeal (PSBOA), to which officers have recourse if they feel they have been aggrieved by a decision of the PSC.

Public Service Commission

As is the case in many of the other Commonwealth Caribbean countries, the PSC is enshrined in the Constitution. It consists of a chairman and not less than two or more than four members appointed by the Governor-General (GG) acting on the advice of the Prime Minister (PM) after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.

The PSC is mandated to ensure the impartiality and integrity of appointments and promotions in the Public Service. In doing so, it is required to base its recommendations for appointments and promotions on qualifications and merit and not patronage or pressure. Precedence in making appointments is given to persons already in the public service. Positions are only advertised externally if they are not filled through internal postings.

The most recent report on the operations of the PSC covers the period 2014–2016 and was laid before Parliament in January 2018. In the foreword to the report, Chairman Rev. Dr. James Moultrie asserted: *“The Commission contributes to the achievement of Government’s objectives*

*of building and supporting a highly capable workforce working together to enhance the principles of integrity, accountability and transparency.”*⁹

Ministry of Public Service

The MPS is responsible for operationalizing the decisions of the PSC as well as policy formulation, training and development, records management, office accommodation of government ministries in New Providence and Grand Bahama, management of insurances paid by the government for selected groups of officers, and the administration of pensions and gratuity. Approval for HRM policies developed by MPS may either be granted by the Minister through delegated authority or referred to the full Cabinet depending on the level or importance or the scope of the policy in question.

In July 1995, the government combined the administrative, budgetary, and registry staff of the PSC with that of the MPS. The intention was to achieve efficiencies associated with having both agencies share a Registry. Currently the MPS budget allocation is largely expected to cover the PSC's operation. This is reflected in the fact that the PSC's 2016/17 budget allocation was \$24,000, down from \$132,819 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012/13.

HR Units in Line Ministries

The HR units within the line ministries deal primarily with personnel administration functions. The size of the units varies based on the number of employees assigned to the ministry. In addition to the employee master file maintained by

⁸ In March 2017, 12 CARICOM member states endorsed the Charter for Caribbean Public Services. The Charter was designed to inform how member countries achieve public sector transformation by focusing on governance and productivity.

⁹ PSC (2018), Report of the Public Service Commission of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas for the Years 2014–2016, Government of The Bahamas. Available at: http://www.oas.org/juridico/PDFs/mesicic5_bhs_annex11.pdf.

MPS, line ministries are required to create and maintain individual employee records. While there is an officially mandated format for such files, compliance with the approved standards is not universal.

Public Service Board of Appeal

Like the PSC, the PSBOA is a creature of the Constitution. It is an independent body set up to safeguard the rights of individual officers. The Constitution stipulates that the Board shall consist of three members—a chairman appointed by the GG on the advice of the chief justice, one member appointed by the GG on the advice of the prime minister, and one member appointed by the GG with advice of “the appropriate representative body.” According to Chairman Justice Evans, traditionally the membership has consisted of a judicial officer, a retired trade unionist, and a retired civil servant.

Legal Framework

As previously asserted, the Bahamian Constitution establishes the PSC. The PSC Regulations came into effect in 1971. According to Article 108 of the Constitution, the authority to make appointments to public office, to remove, and to discipline public officers is vested in the GG acting on the advice of the PSC. In the case of Permanent Secretaries (PS) and officers of comparable rank, consultation with the PM is required. The Constitution also gives the GG the authority, acting on the advice of the PSC, to delegate certain powers.

In addition to the foregoing constitutional provisions, in carrying out their respective functions, HR agencies are governed by the Public Service Act and associated regulations, the Industrial Relations Act, and the Employment Act. The relevant legal instruments and their primary scope related to this exercise are detailed below.

TABLE 2
Relevant Legislation and Regulations

LAW/REGULATION/DIRECTIVE	SCOPE
Public Service Commission Regulations (1971)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part III – Appointment, Promotions and Transfers • Part IV – Determination of Appointments and Extension of Probationary Service • Part V – Discipline
General Orders (1971)	Rules governing the conduct of all employees
Industrial Relations Act (1971)	Establishes the Industrial Relations Tribunal
The Constitution of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas (1973)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter III – Protection of the Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of the Individual • Chapter VIII – The Public Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I – Public Service Commission • Part II – Appointments etc. of Public Officers • Part III – Public Service Board of Appeal (PSBOA)
The Public Service (Delegation of Powers) Order, 1974	Gave line ministries the authority to make certain appointments on probation or temporary terms provided that the PSC be immediately notified of all such appointments.
Employment Act (2002)	Establishes the rights and privileges of employees including those employed by the government

Analysis of HRM Subsystems

This diagnostic used 38 critical points organized under eight HRM Subsystems. This section presents a definition, the associated critical points, and a narrative on the status of each subsystem. The findings are based on secondary research as well as a series of one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and other consultations with internal and external stakeholders.

Human Resource Planning

This HRM subsystem addresses the degree to which the organization has the necessary human capital—both quantitative and qualitative—in place to effectively implement its strategy. This extends to the existence of appropriate HRM policies and procedures as well as the availability of information systems to enable management to gather, store, retrieve, analyze, and interpret staff-related information and use it to inform effective decision making.

Strategic Alignment

- **Critical point 1:** *Staff planning needs usually result from the organization's priorities and strategic orientation. The degree to which they are adjusted to one another tends to be high.*

At this point, there is no overarching plan governing decisions on staffing in the various ministries and departments. The Minnis administration has only been in office since May 2017, and there has not yet been an official pronouncement on its position on Vision 2040, which was published for comment in December 2016.

In November 2017, a Cabinet subcommittee identified some broad areas of focus, including efficiency, improving the country's performance in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business report, communication, service delivery, structural design, and training and development. These recommendations are scheduled to be submitted to the full Cabinet for ratification.

The PSC's 2015–2018 strategic plan includes a commitment to *“work closely in a constructive relationship with the Government, Ministers and the leadership of the Public Service to determine priorities and to achieve the desired outcomes.”* However, it is not clear what, if any, progress has been achieved in this regard.

The Cabinet Secretary has mandated that all line ministries develop strategic plans. During a consultation with Permanent Secretaries during the course of this diagnostic, participants indicated that they were at various stages of

development of their respective plans. However, these plans have not been definitively aligned to the draft NDP because the current administration has not formally adopted the NDP. Furthermore, there was no evidence of an established institutional framework to facilitate cross-ministerial collaboration at a technical level. Without such a framework, progress toward the government's stated intent to improve the country's ranking in the World Bank Doing Business Report could be adversely impacted.

In the absence of an approved NDP and strategic plans for the various ministries, workforce planning is rudimentary. Further, it has been reported that across administrations public sector jobs have been utilized as a welfare function. The leadership of The Bahamas Public Service Union (BPSU) posited that politics rather than strategic priorities are the dominant factor in determining the size of the various ministries.

As a result of the ad hoc approach to workforce planning, staffing policies, decisions and practices do not necessarily reflect national or sectoral strategic priorities. Both internal and external stakeholders opined that some ministries are significantly overstaffed, especially with unskilled workers. At the same time, significant quantitative and qualitative gaps exist in other ministries.

Information-based Decision Making

- **Critical point 2:** *The HR information systems (HRIS) enable a reasonable awareness of the quantitative and qualitative resources available, now and in the future, in the different organizational areas and units.*

According to a Deloitte report (2011), the current HR Information System (HRIS) is primarily paper-based. While the JD Edwards electronic payroll system (JDE) has HR modules, they are not utilized. Further, the government acquired another HR information management system—HRIS Blast—but at the time of the Deloitte report, it had not been fully deployed. Therefore, the existing system does not facilitate

effective and efficient data mining or the ready identification of available skills and competencies.

The lack of a comprehensive HRIS has also been associated with administrative loopholes and inadequate checks and balances, resulting in frequent instances of officers continuing to receive salaries even though they are no longer on active duty. In some instances, steps have been taken to recover the funds once the error has been detected. However, such efforts have not always been successful.

The challenges associated with the absence of an effective HRIS are so significant that the PSC included the establishment of a comprehensive human resource management information system as one of the strategic objectives in its 2015–2018 Strategic Plan. In presenting the rationale for that decision, the PSC asserted:

Effectiveness of Planning

- **Critical point 3:** *In general, there are neither significant staff shortages nor overages.*
- **Critical point 4:** *The overall cost of civil service staff is maintained within reasonable parameters that are compatible with the country's economic situation.*
- **Critical point 5:** *The technical level of the workforce is commensurate with a knowledge-based society. Skilled labor represents a significant proportion of the workforce.*

According to the most recent PSC report, at the end of 2016, the central government employed 20,310 workers. In addition to persons employed

Good data can increase the speed of decision making and is needed for planning and management of operations and for effective management of human resources. Good data are also critical for analyzing trends and making projections, and for identifying emerging trends which may need intervention.

TABLE 3
Overall Cost of the Public Service in The Bahamas

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Wages and salaries as % of GDP	7.3	7.3	7.6	8.2	8.4
Wages and salaries as % of revenues	43.0	37.6	34.5	33.8	36.5
Wages and salaries as % of expenditure	32.4	30.0	29.7	32.4	31.7

Source: IMF (2017a).

through the PSC, as of November 2017, the full complement of government employees including those whose services are retained through temporary contracts and/or by government corporations stood at 38,435.¹⁰ This represents a 6.3 percent decline from the pre-election figure.

According to the IMF (2017a), non-essential temporary workers account for as much as 30–40 percent of public employees. The Head of the Public Service indicated that the public service is overstaffed by as much as 40 percent.

The PS in the MPS indicated that, while the staff numbers were high, the civil service had a “hollow middle” and lacked essential skills. The Cabinet Secretary and several Permanent Secretaries as well as external stakeholders reaffirmed this assessment of the lack of essential skills. In fact, the Cabinet Secretary described the cadre of Deputy Permanent Secretaries (DPS) as “extraordinarily weak.”

In terms of how the cost of the civil service aligns with the country’s overall economic situation, the following table shows the wage bill as being fairly stable for the period 2015–2016. The wage bill absorbed 8.2 percent of GDP, 33.8 percent of revenues, and 32.4 percent of total expenditure in 2017. Preliminary projections for 2018 estimate an increase of the wage bill to 8.4 percent of GDP, 37 percent of revenues, and 32 percent of expenditure. IMF (2017a) highlights significant increases in the wage bill associated with pre-election hiring.

When compared with other countries in the Caribbean, The Bahamas presents a higher ratio of wages and salaries to GDP than Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, but comparable to ratios of

wages and salaries to revenues and expenditure in Jamaica (Figure 1).

Because of the lack of a comprehensive HRIS, MPS was unable to provide the requested qualitative and quantitative information. The specific information requested included the number of employees disaggregated by job category or level. The Ministry of Finance was identified as the entity most likely to have accurate information. However, attempts to meet with representatives from the Ministry of Finance were unsuccessful.

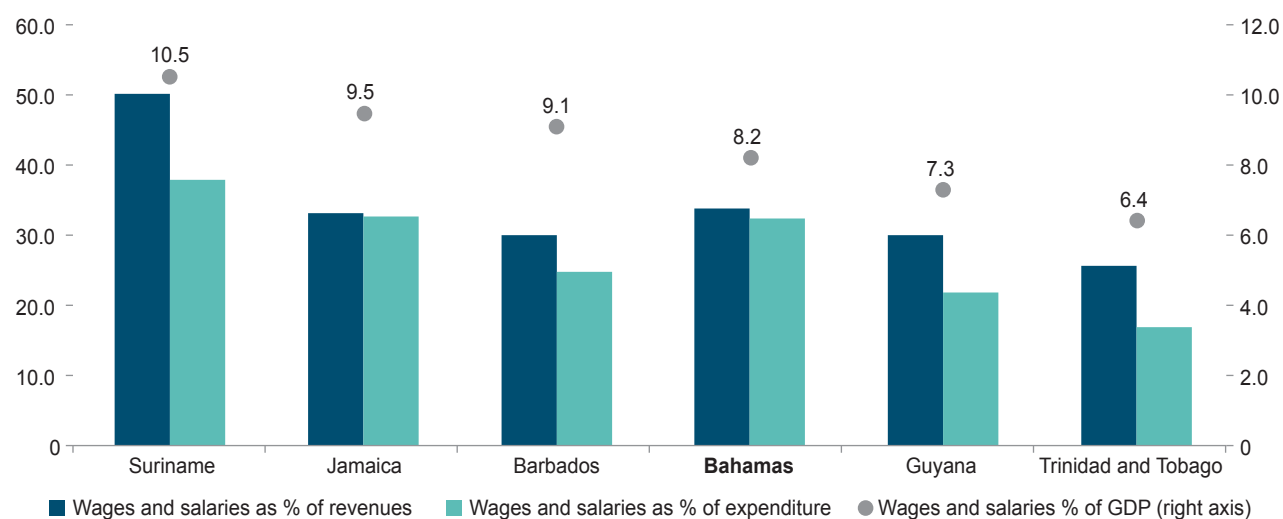
The available labor market data do not include details about the prevalence of university graduates within the workforce. However, multiple sources indicated that as many as 50 percent of students leaving high school failed to obtain a C average and that this was a reason for the poor writing skills of even some administrative and technical officers. While there are ongoing efforts to bring existing employees up to certain minimal skill levels, lack of funding has impacted the rate of implementation.

Strategic Human Resource Management

- **Critical point 6:** *The staffing policies, decisions, and practices in each area of HRM arise from intentions that are determined during the planning process.*
- **Critical point 35:** *Management proactively identifies mission-critical positions and builds capacity to fill those positions as incumbents transition out.*

¹⁰ The Department of Statistics – www.bahamas.gov.bs/statistics.

FIGURE 1
Overall Cost of the Public Service in the Region, 2017



Source: Elaborated by the IDB based on government data and IMF country-specific Article IV Consultations.

- **Critical point 36:** Senior civil servants go beyond managing day-to-day operations and craft strategies for taking the Service to the next level of performance and success.
- **Critical point 38:** Senior civil servants collaborate across ministries and sectors to secure coherence in policies and programs.

Due to their preoccupation with administrative duties, permanent secretaries seldom function at the strategic level. In fact, permanent secretaries only recently resumed meeting as a body after a lapse of several years. The meetings which are held bi-monthly are convened by the Cabinet Secretary who is the head of the Public Service. The typical agenda reflects a combination of policy matters as well as action items identified by the Cabinet Secretary pursuant to decisions taken by the political directorate. One of the current initiatives is the preparation of a PS manual to help clarify roles and responsibilities.

The lack of strategic orientation is also evident in the absence of a comprehensive strategic planning program or succession plan. The outcomes of these deficiencies include a “hollow middle” or lack of key skills and competencies

among mid-level public officers as well as the need to bring back retired senior officers on contract to fill skills gaps. This practice is likely to continue for some time since the current peer group of permanent secretaries and other senior officers is projected to be significantly depleted by retirement in the next two to three years.

Work Organization

Work Organization establishes and specifies the contents of the tasks for each job and the characteristics of the people who carry them out. This is reflected in the job design, that is, the description of activities, functions, responsibilities, and targets assigned to each position and the profile definition, that is, the competencies, skills, and aptitudes required for successful performance in the given role.

Quality of the Structure of Job Profiles

- **Critical point 7:** Job descriptions conform to managerial criteria rather than to legal considerations or collective agreements. The legal framework and the employment agreements are limited to establishing a broad framework

in which work is organized in accordance with organizational needs.

- **Critical point 8:** *Grading arrangements and job hierarchies result from rational criteria, which are adapted to each organizational environment.*
- **Critical point 9:** *Job profiles include the selection of competencies that in each case are considered key for the success of the job holder's performance.*

There is no standardized format for job descriptions. Even within a given ministry, different styles may be used. This is further exacerbated by the fact that the job descriptions have not been informed by job evaluations. As a result, the PS MPS indicated that people with the same rank may have completely different functions and scope of responsibility. Internal stakeholders indicated that there are significant instances of role confusion due to vagueness and lack of consistency in existing job descriptions. Among the examples cited were the differences in how ministries deployed general service workers (GSW). In some instances, a GSW may assigned duties typically associated with a chief clerk. This results in challenges related to equity and may also have implications for the quality of work produced.

During a job evaluation exercise completed in 2007, researchers found that substantive post titles were not a useful guide as to job content and that one substantive post title may cover many jobs while different substantive post titles may cover the same job. Further, an officer who appears to be more senior based on his/her job post may be carrying out a far more junior role than someone who holds a more junior post. This situation raises grave equity considerations.

The MPS has indicated that it is currently working on the preparation of post qualifications and competencies for all positions across the government as part of a rationalization exercise. No timeline for completion of that exercise was identified.

Employment Management

Employment management addresses the policies and procedures associated with an employee's recruitment, selection, induction/orientation, mobility, and separation from the organization. The most mature employment management subsystems help to ensure that the right talent is brought into the organization, effectively introduced to the organizational culture, provided with appropriate opportunities for upward mobility, reward and recognition and optimally supported through all phases of their tenure up to and including their transition out of the organization. Hallmarks of effective employment management include equity and transparency.

Recruitment, Transfers and Appointments

- **Critical point 10:** *Hiring to fill vacancies is open, by right and in fact, to all candidates possessing the required qualifications. These are established according to suitability and technical considerations, not arbitrarily.*
- **Critical point 11:** *The necessary safeguard mechanisms and procedures are in place against arbitrariness, politicization, patronage, and clientelism throughout the entire hiring process.*
- **Critical point 12:** *Staff selection is based on competency profiles for the potential job holders.*
- **Critical point 13:** *The mechanisms for functional and geographic mobility respond flexibly to the demands of personnel redeployment.*

The PSC is responsible for recruitment, transfers, and appointments. It operates through a secretariat, which is staffed by civil servants. Line ministries must first submit requests for new hires to the MPS, which is tasked with managing the approved established positions. A justification must accompany the request. The MPS Minister has the authority to create new positions.

According to their most recent report, the PSC appointed 203 officers each in 2014 and 2015. In 2016, that number increased to 268. In addition to the PSC appointments, the PS in MPS appointed 75 officers in 2015 and 101 in 2016. At this time the PS MPS is the only PS with the delegated authority to hire established officers.¹¹ All such appointments must be copied to the PSC. However, the PSC reported less than perfect compliance with that requirement.

Stakeholders indicated that positions are often filled without the benefit of prior advertising of vacancies. However, the PSC has the authority to determine whether a position should be advertised. The exercise of this discretion has raised concerns about transparency with the BPSU, which cited this as a major area of concern.

The PSC Regulations stipulate that, in making decisions about promotions, the factors to be taken into consideration include merit, ability, seniority, experience, and formal qualifications. The same provisions apply for acting appointments.

No competency profiles have been developed for the various established positions in the Service. Nor is there a standardized format for job descriptions. Therefore, questions exist about the criteria utilized to assess the suitability of officers to fill the positions for which they are being hired, transferred, or promoted. One of the ways that the PSC has sought to address this challenge is by introducing assessments to determine whether officers meet the requirements to be appointed to serve at higher levels. To date, such assessments have been conducted for administrative cadets, first assistant secretaries (FAS), chief executive officers, chief executive secretaries, registry supervisors and chief clerks, senior private secretaries, and chief registry clerks. The FAS assessments revealed that officers do not have a sense of how the whole of government works. The PSC attributed this to a failure in training.

An anomalous situation was identified related to the transfer of officers, particularly those appointed as teachers. Specifically, teachers have been transferred to other ministries while retaining their substantive appointments within

the Ministry of Education. As a result, they continue to be paid by the Ministry of Education even though that ministry no longer has the benefit of their service. Since the position is not vacant, the Ministry of Education is unable to hire a replacement teacher unless a new position is approved.

This practice may be a contributing factor to the Ministry of Education's inflated wage bill as well as the shortage of teachers. Both internal and external stakeholders referenced this practice, and it was confirmed by the PSC. The issue is so significant that the PSC's current strategic plan lists the streamlining of the existing model for the appointment, promotion, and transfer of teachers as one of its strategic priorities.

Terminations

- **Critical point 14:** *Dismissals or terminations of employment that affect professional positions are not motivated by a change in the government's political leanings.*
- **Critical point 15:** *There is the possibility of terminating the employment relationship due to objectively verified technical, economic, or organizational reasons that justify workforce reductions.*

Part IV Section 26 of the PSC Regulations makes provisions for the abolition of posts. A specific example of where this provision has been applied was cited as the elimination of the post of customs guard. It is also noteworthy that the 2002 industrial agreement between the Ministry of Tourism and the BPSU contains a section dealing with redundancy. Therefore, it is conceivable that employment could be terminated for objectively verified technical, economic, or organizational reasons which justify workforce reductions.

The overall number of government employees decreased by 6.3 percent in the six months following the general elections. As shown in the

¹¹ The power delegated to other permanent secretaries is restricted to disciplinary matters.

TABLE 4
Employed Persons by Employment Status

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	MAY 2017		NOVEMBER 2017	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Government or government corporation	40,990	20	38,435	19
Private employee/ apprentice	128,525	64	131,120	64
Self-employed	29,785	15	32,475	16
Unpaid family worker	355	0	605	0
Other/not stated	500	0	1,095	1

Source: Government of The Bahamas (2017).

table below, during this same period, there was an increase in all other categories of employment. While no definitive evidence was presented to explain the decrease, internal and external stakeholders opined that the change was most likely due to the expiration of fixed-term contracts issued in the lead-up to general elections.¹² The PSC echoed this view, adding there had been no large-scale terminations of people hired by the GG on its recommendation.

Safeguards against Discriminatory Practices

- **Critical point 34:** Men, women, minorities, and people from historically marginalized groups are treated fairly in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities.
- **Critical point 35:** Decisions related to hiring, promotion, compensation, discipline, and termination are free from institutional biases associated with variables such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, or place of origin.

An examination of the employment application form revealed that the information requested includes marital status, details about the applicant's spouse,¹³ the number, names, sex, and country of birth of any children, and background information about the applicant's parents.¹⁴ The ongoing inclusion of such information in the application form raises concerns about institutional biases related to gender, race, ethnicity, class, or place of origin. Both the PSC and the PS

in MPS indicated that this information was unnecessary and was not considered in their decision making. They conceded that the continued solicitation of these details could be construed as discriminatory or prejudicial.

Another possible area of concern is the real or perceived discrimination associated with the use of multiple, consecutive fixed-term contracts. Based on the Court ruling in the St. Andrews High School case,¹⁵ this practice could be construed as a mechanism for depriving employees of security of tenure and its attendant benefits.

Concern has been expressed that residents in the Family Islands might be disadvantaged compared to those residing in Nassau with respect to decisions about compensation and promotions. In a research paper published in the International Journal of Public Administration, Dr. Carolyn Rolle reported that focus group participants based in Freeport opined that the performance appraisal system was biased towards employees in Nassau (Rolle and Klingner, 2012). Respondents cited

¹² The Director of Labor pointed out that some of the pre-election contracts were for 12 months and that, therefore, a further reduction in the overall staff complement is likely in the coming months.

¹³ Requested details include spouse's name, date and country of birth, occupation, name and address of employer.

¹⁴ Information requested for parents include name, date and country of birth, nationality, occupation and address.

¹⁵ The Director of Labor indicated that the Supreme Court ruled that the use of seven consecutive two-year contracts constituted continuous employment.

preferential treatment in approving promotions to support the allegation. The BPSU also registered concern about discrimination based on place of origin.

Existing government policy as outlined in the 2014–2016 PSC report dictates that the recruitment of non-Bahamians may only occur when suitably qualified and experienced Bahamians cannot be identified. Unlike the other independent Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member countries, The Bahamas has not signed on to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. Therefore, this does not violate any of their obligations under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramus.

Performance Management

Performance management is the process of planning and evaluating the employees' contribution to the organization. Ideally individual as well as departmental performance should be cascaded down from the organization's strategic priorities and associated goals and objectives. In practical terms, this means that each employee should have specific performance targets which are systematically monitored, and feedback should be provided to help ensure that all targets are met during each assessment period.

Performance Planning and Monitoring

- **Critical point 16:** *Management normally defines guidelines and standards regarding expected personnel performance in accordance with the organization's priorities and strategy. Consequently, employees are aware of the aspects of their performance for which they will be evaluated.*
- **Critical point 17:** *Throughout the management cycle, management monitors, observes, and supports improvements in employee performance, provides resources, and removes obstacles wherever necessary.*
- **Critical point 18:** *The organization evaluates employees' performance against expected performance standards.*

In a mature performance management system, supervisors/managers work with their direct reports to identify performance gaps and any training and development needs that may be contributing to these gaps. They then create a plan to help eliminate them.

The PS MPS indicated that there is no formal performance management system in place. Based on the preliminary reports, performance standards are not utilized. The General Orders mandate that performance appraisals be completed annually. However, the compliance rate is reportedly low.

The PSC has also flagged the lack of performance standards as an issue warranting focused attention. In its 2015–2018 strategic plan, the Commission articulated a commitment to work with both internal and external stakeholders to build consensus on selected performance with the aim of achieving higher levels of efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of service.

However, the 2017 HR Policy Manual contains no reference to performance standards or their alignment to organizational priorities and strategies. Moreover, the PS MPS indicated that managers have very little time to devote to monitoring and evaluating employee performance.

A review of the Performance Appraisal Record (PAR) led to the following concerns:

- Rationale for the inclusion of information about marital status and nationality; and
- A lack of specificity with respect to competencies. PAR forms generally contain the same listing of skills and personal characteristics rather than aligning them to the specific job or position. An exception was found in the Department of Education where teachers were assessed on a number of areas related to specific areas of accountability, such as lesson plans, teaching, classroom management, and others.

In addition to the foregoing concerns about the structure of the PAR, it was noted that appraisers did not routinely provide comments

to support the assigned ratings or to assist the officer in understanding the precise nature of any existing performance gaps.

Compensation Management

This subsystem covers both cash and non-cash benefits. The goal is to achieve both internal and external equity. As such, there should be a clearly defined job classification system with rewards linked to either individual or group performance.

Competitiveness and Efficiency of the Compensation Policy

- **Critical point 19:** *The pay structure, including cash and non-cash components, is adequate for attracting, motivating, and retaining suitable people with the necessary competencies for the positions that the organization requires.*
- **Critical point 20:** *Pay levels, including cash and non-cash benefits, are not excessive compared with labor market costs for any similar sector or grade.*
- **Critical point 21:** *The compensation mechanisms encourage people to make more effort and encourage individual or group performance, learning, and competency development.*
- **Critical point 22:** *Compensation policy is set according to previously established criteria and consistent with the organization's structural design parameters.*

The salary scale system used in The Bahamas is extremely complex. A review of the 2014 Salary Book, which consists of 341 pages, revealed 30 different scales. They ranged from the generic (e.g. clerical, administrative personnel, and top management) to the very specific (e.g., air traffic, meteorological, and defense force). Within the various categories, the number of grades ranged from four to more than 24. The rationale for the high level of complexity is not readily apparent¹⁶ and has persisted despite prior recommendations for streamlining.¹⁷

The complexity of the system raises questions about horizontal equity. In this regard, stakeholders opined that placement in certain ministries (e.g., the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, and the Office of the Prime Minister) was more attractive because of compensation premiums and perks, which could be either cash or non-cash.

In December 2007, a Comprehensive Compensation Review report prepared by Pannell Kerr Foster (PKF) was released. The exercise that produced the report included job evaluations, a comparison of public sector salaries with those in the private sector, and the preparation of sample pay ranges.

Among the comments presented in relation to the compensation comparison is that the government has not adopted a compensation philosophy that is readily apparent. The comparisons for the different job categories/levels can be summarized as follows:

- The maximum public-sector salaries for jobs classified as managerial and professional were consistently lower than the average salaries paid by private sector employers that participated in the survey.
- The same applied for technicians and associate professionals.
- Clerks and secretaries were also poorly compensated relative to their private sector counterparts.
- Salaries of service workers, craft and trade workers, and plant and machine operators were mixed, with some government salaries in these categories on par with those in the private sector.
- Elementary occupations' maximum salaries are competitive. However, the ranges are quite

¹⁶ The 2016 Salary Book is even more complex, consisting of 453 pages.

¹⁷ The 2007 Compensation Review report also flagged this as something needing to be addressed.

TABLE 5
Comparison of Public and Private Sector Salaries

POSITION	AVERAGE PUBLIC SECTOR SALARY (2017)	AVERAGE PRIVATE SECTOR SALARY (2017) ^a	DIFFERENTIAL
Accountant	32,050	35,092	-9%
Engineer	42,050	75,000	-78%
Staff Nurse	30,850	25,434	18%
IT Manager	46,600	28,905	38%
High School Teacher	28,000	30,000	-7%
Administrative Assistant	27,200	22,183	18%

Source: Government of The Bahamas (2017).

^a <https://www.payscale.com/research/BS/>.

wide,¹⁸ thereby requiring considerable time for employees to reach the maximum.

The researchers concluded that public sector wages and salaries were generally lower than those in the private sector. They further indicated that the differences between pay rates for senior employees and those in the lowest-paying jobs were generally small, leading to concerns about vertical equity.

Since this research is over a decade old, a rapid comparison was conducted using a few benchmark positions. The results of that exercise are presented in Table 5.

Large negative differentials are typically associated with difficulty in attracting and retaining requisite talent. This is consistent with the new administration's expressions of concern about the lack of requisite skills and the associated low productivity. The large positive differentials could signal that the government is paying too much for the associated skill set, thereby lowering efficiency and contributing to an excessive wage bill. Alternatively, it could be a reflection of a mismatch with the benchmarked positions.

While this information does not lend itself to definitive conclusions, the wide disparity in the differentials could be interpreted as a further indication that there is no clear compensation philosophy to either lag, lead, or match the market. It is also important to note that the pension for persons appointed to the permanent and

pensionable establishment is noncontributory; other advantages for the public sector are fewer working hours and more days of leave.

The BPSU pointed out that the existence of low salary scales was exacerbated by the absence of cost of living adjustments (COLA). This situation contributes to problems with external equity and affects employee morale. The Union described the absence of COLA as an effective annual decrease in income.

The sole industrial agreement that was reviewed included provisions for increments based on job performance. However, the low compliance rate for completing staff appraisals and the lack of rigor vis-à-vis the use of performance standards raise questions about the reliability and validity of any performance-based salary increases.

Development Management

This subsystem covers promotion policies, career paths, training and development, and succession planning. At its best, it ensures that employee development aligns with organizational development, thereby optimizing the likelihood of retaining high-performing talent.

¹⁸ For example, the salaries for 44 such posts ranged from \$10,700 to \$20,300, with 25 steps of \$400 increments. These occupations include cleaners, gardeners, kitchen helpers and messengers.

Effectiveness and Quality of Promotions

- **Critical point 23:** *The promotion criteria and mechanisms link promotion to performance as well as to competency potential and development.*
- **Critical point 24:** *There are alternatives to positions that are strictly hierarchical, such as horizontal career progress, or remaining in the same position, based on recognition of professional excellence without necessarily increasing the formal authority of those affected.*

Given the absence of an effective performance appraisal system, promotion criteria are not clearly aligned with performance and competency. Furthermore, the BPSU believes that the onus for personal and professional development seems to rest with the individual employee. They pointed to the lack of managerial due diligence in completing performance appraisals as well as the low level of investment in training to support this contention.

Effectiveness and Quality of Training

- **Critical point 25:** *Training supports the development of collective learning, thereby building organizational capacity to tackle problems and provide effective responses.*
- **Critical point 26:** *Investment in training is made through plans based on a needs assessment and designed to support the organization's stated priorities.*
- **Critical point 27:** *Training is subject to evaluation, which extends to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, the cost-results relationship, and the impact on the performance of people in the workplace.*

During the Throne Speech delivered on May 24, 2017, the new administration expressed the view that outdated policies, inattention to the development of human resources, and the acceptance of mediocrity in the performance of duties had led to the inefficient delivery of public

services. The government pledged to move expeditiously to provide the appropriate training for all levels of the Public Service.

Despite the government's stated commitment to invest in the training of its human resources, the training budget for the MPS, which has centralized responsibility for training and development, was \$150,000. With an estimated staff complement of 20,000 established officers, this translates into an annual allocation of \$7.50 per employee. The initial budget request was \$1,000,000.¹⁹

The Public Service Centre for Human Resources Development within MPS focuses on training initiatives targeting lower-level staff. The Ministry previously offered a Diploma in Public Service Administration. There have been preliminary discussions about reintroducing that program. However, given the existing budget allocation, it is not clear how the initiative would be financed.

Development Management features prominently in the PSC's current strategic plan. The first objective identified in the plan is to *strengthen the institutional management and build institutional capacity in the Public Service through training*. The plan goes on to lay out a proposed plan of action which includes executive leadership development, leadership and management development for directors and managers and leadership and management development for emerging leaders. However, it is not clear how this initiative would be funded, since the PSC's budget allocation declined from \$80,000 in 2015-2016 to \$24,000 in 2016-2017.

The training evaluation forms currently in use focus on the relevance and design of the course content and associated materials, the knowledge and skills of the instructor, and the participants' response to the program. There was no evidence of any assessments performed at Kirkpatrick's Levels 2 to 4, that is, learning, change in behavior, and results/impact.

¹⁹ This is another issue which we were unable to explore with the Ministry of Finance.

Human Resources and Social Relations Management

This subsystem focuses on the relationship between the organization and its employees. It covers industrial relations, employee engagement, the maintenance of organizational culture, and the overall impression of the HRM function.

Management of the Work Climate and Communication

- **Critical point 28:** *The organization makes efforts to learn about its work climate, using reliable instruments for periodic evaluation.*
- **Critical point 29:** *The organization has specific communication instruments that serve to reinforce the sense of belonging and the commitment of employees to the overall organizational project.*
- **Critical point 30:** *Labor relations are preferably and habitually oriented toward agreement and consensus building rather than confrontation and denigration of adversaries.*
- **Critical point 31:** *The degree of labor conflict is not excessive in terms of either the number of conflicts, their effects, or the forcefulness of the means employed.*

The PS MPS described the current industrial relations climate as quiet and pointed out that many new collective bargaining agreements were completed ahead of the general elections in May 2017. The sole collective bargaining agreement that was reviewed (Ministry of Tourism and Bahamas Public Service Union, 2002) included a clause addressing communication and consultation. The clause in question highlighted the importance of maintaining effective bi-directional communication channels. However, no evidence was seen of systemized measures for maintaining such communication or for evaluating the work climate.

Further evidence of the desire to maintain a harmonious relationship between the government and the employees' representatives is reflected in the following excerpt from

the previously mentioned collective bargaining agreement: *"The Employer agrees that there will be no intimidation, interference, restraint or coercion exercised or practiced upon employees by Management Personnel..."* (Ministry of Tourism and Public Service Union, 2002).

The BPSU identified the existence of sick buildings as one of its primary areas of concern. A number of government offices are said to have significant issues with mold, and employees report adverse health consequences. Both internal and external stakeholders raised this issue during the country mission. The Director of Labor confirmed that it is indeed a problem and asserted that steps are being taken to rectify it. However, concerns persist about a perceived lack of urgency in resolving the problem.

At least one ministry has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and it is considering expanding the program as a good practice.

Organization of the HRM Function

This subsystem covers the centralized structure for the management of the HRM function as well as how the rest of the Public Service views them.

- **Critical point 32:** *Managers take responsibility and appropriately exercise their responsibilities as managers of the personnel within their sphere of formal authority.*
- **Critical point 33:** *The central civil service agency responsible for the system is viewed by the rest of the organization as a department that adds value to the achievement of the common goals.*

Public Service Commission

Internal stakeholders expressed a measure of dissatisfaction with the operations of the PSC. Among the specific concerns listed were extreme delays in processing appointments, transfers, and promotions. However, in responding to these concerns, the PSC pointed out that delays were often associated with the MPS' failure to submit all the

requisite documentation, thereby necessitating the return of the file to rectify the deficiencies.

Allegations of political interference and a lack of transparency were also reported. The Commissioners categorically rejected all such allegations.

The PSC has been proactive in identifying strategic priorities, including but not limited to the need to focus on training and development as well as performance standards. They also participated in the drafting of the NDP. However, the lack of human, financial, and material resources has adversely impacted the implementation of the Commission's current strategic plan, which was submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister in 2015.

In addition to recruitment, promotions, and transfers, the PSC has responsibility for discipline. However, some elements of that function are delegated to permanent secretaries and department heads. The PSC has expressed concern about the exercise of that delegated authority. The concerns relate primarily to tardiness in addressing or resolving disciplinary matters and failure to comply with the provisions contained in the General Orders, Union Agreements, and Regulations.

Delays in resolving disciplinary matters have a financial impact, since interdicted officers receive half their salaries while their cases are pending. There are reported cases of officers remaining on interdiction for years (even until their retirement) without the substantive matter being addressed or resolved.

Ministry of Public Service

The organizational chart presented in Figure 2 displays the approved structure of the MPS along with the responsibilities assigned to the various functional units in the ministry. The structure and associated functionality are aspirational since some of the critical positions, such as Director of Training, are vacant.

The MPS received very low ratings from both internal and external stakeholders. The published vision and mission statements were described as inspiring. However, the consensus is that they are not currently being operationalized.

Vision

To be a model organization delivering first-class human resource services.

Mission Statement

To maximize productivity in the public service by providing efficient, effective, and equitable human resource services to public officers and the community through the formulation and dissemination of policies.

Our Values

Productivity: *We consistently provide enhanced performance and high-quality work.*

Responsiveness: *We expedite matters and provide feedback relative to our customers' needs.*

Integrity: *We employ work ethics that are above reproach.*

Dedication: *We demonstrate a high level of commitment in meeting the customers' needs.*

Efficiency: *We maximize our resources to provide efficient, effective, and quality services.*

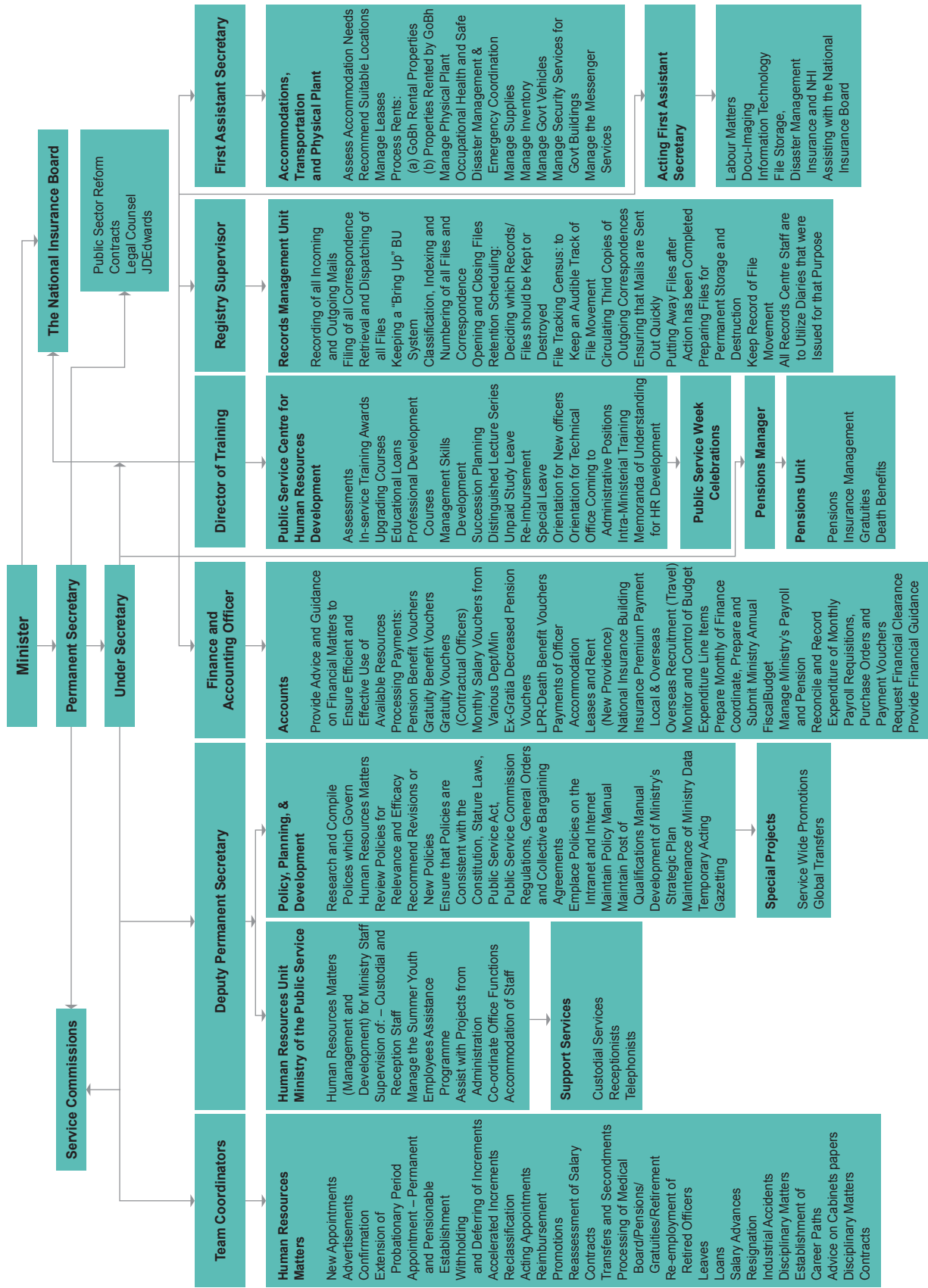
Concerns also exist about the degree of coordination between MPS and the PSC. While both parties indicated that there was a requirement to meet at least quarterly, no meeting has been convened since the general elections in May 2017. In contrast, MPS reported a high level of interaction with line ministries, including regular staff rotations between the MPS and the HR Units in line ministries.

HR Units in Line Ministries

The PS in the MPS stated unequivocally that all line ministries are failing in their personnel management responsibilities. Some internal stakeholders suggested that this was due, at least in part, to the practice of promoting HR practitioners to fill the role of DPS and other senior administrative roles.²⁰

²⁰ It is noteworthy that while this practice has supposedly depleted the HR talent pool, it has not been associated with a commensurate improvement in capacity within the DPS ranks.

FIGURE 2
Administrative Organizational Chart, Ministry of the Public Service and National Insurance



Source: Government of The Bahamas (2017).

In addition to the concerns expressed by MPS, internal stakeholders suggested that the HR Units focused more on their administrative functions than on duties related to human resource development. There appears to be significant room for improvement in both areas of responsibility.

Public Service Board of Appeal

The General Orders stipulate that an employee who has been the subject of disciplinary action may appeal the ruling to the GG via the PSC. Article 114 of the Constitution also provides recourse to the PSBOA. The BPSU, which represents established workers, expressed concern about the independence of the PSC and the PSBOA and opined that officers must appeal to the Supreme Court to procure justice.²¹ It is not clear whether this is a contributing factor in the relatively small number of cases lodged with the Board or whether the volume of appeals lodged is a reflection of officers' acceptance of the validity of the PSC's decisions.

Justice Milton Evans, whose three-year appointment as chairman of the PSBOA expired

on January 31, 2018, indicated that only about 10 cases were brought before the PSBOA during his tenure. He further indicated that the Board does not issue reports on its activities.

While the PSBOA does not publish reports on its activities, the PSC includes information about appeals to the Board in its report, which is tabled in Parliament. During the period 2014–2016, nine appeals were made. The decisions of the Commission were overturned in six of those nine cases, and one of the remaining three cases was withdrawn. Most of the decisions that were challenged related to dismissals, and reinstatement orders were issued when the PSC decisions were overturned. Factors cited included the lack of timely processing of matters²² and failure to adhere to relevant procedures.

²¹ While judicial review is indeed an option, it can be quite costly.

²² Justice Evans reported that one case was delayed for eight years.



Analysis of the Civil Service Quality Indices

This diagnostic uses the five quality indices of the methodology the IDB applied in Latin America, along with two additional indices, namely, Management Capabilities and Diversity Management, which have been developed specifically for use in the IDB's Caribbean Civil Service Diagnostics. These seven quality indices contribute to the Civil Service Development Index (aggregated index).

Countries can be classified into three levels of civil service development according to the Civil Service Development Index: (i) low, with scores between 0 and 39 points out of 100; (ii) medium, with scores between 40 and 59; and (iii) high or professional systems, with scores higher than 60.

A score of 19 points shows that The Bahamas has significant room for improvement. Within the quality indices, The Bahamas scores at medium level in the Merit and Integrative Capacity (47 and 40 points, respectively), and low levels in the remaining five (see Table 6).

The sections below describe each of the quality indices and present The Bahamas's scores per critical point under each of them. Scores of critical points range from 0 (lowest) to 5 (highest).²³

²³ See Lafuente and Molina (2018) for a detailed analysis of the methodology and a description of each level per critical point.

TABLE 6
The Bahamas' Civil Service Development Scores, by Quality Index (2017)

Civil Service Development Index (aggregated index)		
Simple average of the following indices. Measures the overall development of HRM in the civil service		19
1. Efficiency	Reflects the degree of optimization of the organization's investment in its human capital	16
2. Merit	Reflects the extent to which the organization has well-established policies designed to safeguard employees against arbitrary actions and favoritism in managerial decision making	47
3. Structural Consistency	Reflects the level of strategic coherence, management and process consistency existing in the organization's HRM systems	10
4. Functional Capacity	Captures the degree of provision, development, and encouragement of relevant competencies in the organization along with the effectiveness of existing performance incentives and overall flexibility/adaptability in the face of changing organizational priorities	7
5. Integrative Capacity	Measures the extent to which management, employees, and other key stakeholders experience a sense of belonging and the absence of conflict	40
6. Management Capabilities	Covers the spectrum from Transactional Management to Transformational Leadership	7
7. Diversity Management	Measures the extent to which opportunities in the Civil Service may be curtailed due to differences associated with race, ethnicity, language, gender, disability, and others	10

Efficiency

This index measures the civil service system by considering the degree of optimization of investment in human capital, as well as the relationship of this investment to fiscal policy and its reference markets.

It links the results obtained by the civil service system with the resources invested in its operation, as well as other considerations, such as expenditure efficiency in decision-making processes.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Efficiency	3	In general, there are neither significant staff shortages nor overages.	0
	4	The overall cost of civil service staff is maintained within reasonable parameters that are compatible with the country's economic situation.	1
	20	Salary levels, including cash and non-cash benefits, are not excessive compared with labor market costs for any similar sector or grade.	3
	27	Training is subject to evaluation, which extends to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, the cost-results relationship, and the impact on the performance of people in the workplace.	0
	35	Management proactively identifies mission-critical positions and builds capacity to fill those positions as incumbents transition out.	0

Merit

This index measures the guarantees of professionalism in the way that the civil service system works, placing a value on impartiality in decision making in each management subsystem.

Specifically, it measures the degree of effective protection against arbitrariness, political capture or clientelism, and the different ways that interested groups or sectors engage in rent-seeking.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Merit	10	Hiring to fill vacancies is open, by right and in fact, to all candidates possessing the required qualifications. These are established according to suitability and technical considerations, not arbitrarily.	1
	11	The necessary safeguard mechanisms and procedures are in place against arbitrariness, politicization, patronage, and clientelism throughout the hiring process.	2
	14	Dismissals or terminations of employment that affect professional positions are not motivated by a change in the government's political leanings.	4

Structural Consistency

This index measures the civil service's systemic soundness and integrity, considering the basic structural elements of which it should be composed. It includes the development of

fundamental management processes, their coherence with other management systems, and the development of senior management.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Structural consistency	1	Staff planning needs usually emanate from the organization's priorities and strategic orientation. The degree to which they are adjusted to one another tends to be high.	1
	2	The HR information systems enable a reasonable awareness of the quantitative and qualitative resources available, now and in the future, in the different organizational areas and units.	1
	6	The staffing policies, decisions, and practices in each area of HRM arise from intentions that are determined during the planning process.	1
	8	Grading arrangements and job hierarchies result from rational criteria, adapted to each organizational environment.	0
	22	Compensation policy is set according to previously established criteria and consistent with the organization's structural design parameters.	0
	26	Investment in training is made via plans that are based on a needs assessment and designed to support the organization's stated priorities.	0
	32	Managers take responsibility and appropriately exercise their responsibilities as managers of the personnel within their sphere of formal authority.	0
	33	The central civil service agency responsible for the system is viewed by the rest of the organization as a department that adds value to the achievement of the common goals.	1

Functional Capacity

This index measures the system's capacity to positively influence the behavior of public employees. It includes professional qualifications, the

quality of incentives for good performance, and pay flexibility.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Functional capacity	5	The technical level of the workforce is commensurate with a knowledge-based society. Skilled labor represents a significant proportion of the workforce.	0
	7	Job descriptions conform to managerial criteria rather than to legal considerations or collective agreements. The legal framework and the employment agreements are limited to establishing a broad framework in which work is organized in accordance with organizational needs.	0
	9	Job profiles include the selection of competencies that in each case are considered key for the success of the job holder's performance.	0
	12	Staff selection is based on competency profiles for the potential job holders.	1
	13	The mechanisms for functional and geographic mobility respond flexibly to the demands of personnel redeployment	0
	15	There is the possibility of terminating the employment relationship due to objectively verified technical, economic, or organizational reasons that justify workforce reductions.	2
	16	Management normally defines guidelines and standards regarding expected personnel performance in accordance with the organization's priorities and strategy. Consequently, employees are aware of the aspects of their performance for which they will be specifically evaluated.	0
	17	Throughout the management cycle, management monitors, observes, and supports improvements in employee performance, provides resources, and removes obstacles wherever necessary.	0
	18	Employees' performance is evaluated by the organization and compared to the expected performance standards.	0
	19	The pay structure, including cash and non-cash components, is adequate for attracting, motivating, and retaining suitable people with the necessary competencies for the positions that the organization requires.	1
	21	The compensation mechanisms encourage people to make more effort and stimulate individual or group performance, learning, and competency development.	1
	23	The promotion criteria and mechanisms link promotion to performance as well as to competency potential and development.	0
	24	There are alternatives to positions that are strictly hierarchical, such as "horizontal" career progress or remaining in the same position, based on recognition of professional excellence without necessarily increasing the formal authority of those affected.	0
	25	Training supports the development of collective learning, thereby building organizational capacity to tackle problems and provide effective responses.	0

Integrative Capacity

This index measures the effectiveness of the civil service system in harmonizing the expectations

and interests of the different actors, increasing the sense of belonging, and reducing conflict.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Integrative capacity	28	The organization makes efforts to learn about its work climate, using reliable instruments for periodic evaluation.	0
	29	The organization has specific communication instruments that serve to reinforce the sense of belonging and the commitment of employees to the overall organizational project.	1
	30	Labor relations are preferably and habitually oriented toward agreement and consensus building rather than confrontation and denigration of adversaries.	4
	31	The degree of labor conflict is not excessive in terms of either the number of conflicts, their effects, or the forcefulness of the means employed.	3

Management Capabilities

This index covers the spectrum from Transactional Management to Transformational Leadership. Transactional managers are concerned with the status quo and day-to-day progress toward goals. Transformational leaders operate at a more

strategic level as they work to enhance the motivation and engagement of followers by directing their behavior toward a shared vision. The lower the score, the more transactional the nature of the current approach to management.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Management capabilities	32	Managers take responsibility and appropriately exercise their responsibilities as managers of the personnel within their sphere of formal authority.	0
	36	Senior civil servants go beyond managing day-to-day operations and craft strategies for taking the Civil Service to the next level of performance and success.	0
	38	Senior civil servants collaborate across ministries and sectors to secure coherence in policies and programs.	1

Diversity Management

This index provides information on the extent to which workers' access to employment and/or advancement opportunities in the Civil Service

may be curtailed due to differences associated with race, ethnicity, language, gender, disability, and others.

INDEX	NO.	CRITICAL POINT	SCORE
Diversity management	34	Men, women, minorities, and people from historically marginalized groups are treated fairly in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities.	0
	37	Decisions related to hiring, promotion, compensation, discipline, and termination are free from institutional biases associated with variables such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, or place of origin.	1

Recommendations

The seven quality indices, along with the associated critical points and high-level recommendations, are presented in the following subsections.

Efficiency

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
3	In general, there are neither significant staff shortages nor overages.	<p>The efficiency index reflects the degree of optimization of the organization's investment in its human capital. The Bahamas' wage bill expressed as a percentage of both revenue and expenditures is above the average in Latin America and the Caribbean and is associated with significant gaps in this quality index. The primary areas for improvement relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Shortages and Overages – A comprehensive manpower audit should be conducted with a view to ascertaining what currently exists as well as what is required to deliver on the government's stated priority objectives. • Overall Cost of the Civil Service – The elimination of any remaining instances of officers continuing to receive payments though no longer engaged in active service as well as the timely resolution of disciplinary cases involving interdicted officers should be prioritized to reduce inefficiencies within the wage bill. • Pay Levels – A clearly articulated compensation policy in tandem with a job evaluation exercise should be utilized to inform a simplified salary scale to secure both internal and external equity. • Training Evaluation – Existing training evaluation forms need to be revamped in order to secure meaningful information about the efficacy of training and development interventions. • Succession Planning – The phenomenon of the hollow middle requires priority attention including the development of a comprehensive succession planning program with emphasis on key administrative and technical functions.
4	The overall cost of civil service staff is maintained within reasonable parameters that are compatible with the country's economic situation.	
20	Pay levels, including cash and non-cash benefits, are not excessive compared with labor market costs for any similar sector or grade.	
27	Training is subject to evaluation, which extends to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, the cost-results relationship, and the impact on the performance of employees in the workplace.	
35	Management proactively identifies mission-critical positions and builds capacity to fill those positions as incumbents transition out.	

Merit

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
10	Hiring to fill vacancies is open, by right and in fact, to all candidates possessing the required qualifications. These are established according to suitability and technical considerations, not arbitrarily	The merit index reflects the extent to which the organization has well established policies designed to safeguard employees against arbitrary actions and favoritism in managerial decision making.
11	The necessary safeguard mechanisms and procedures are in place against arbitrariness, politicization, patronage, and clientelism throughout the entire hiring process.	Measures that could be taken to improve the merit index include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and Selection – A comprehensive job evaluation exercise is recommended in order to identify appropriate qualifications and competencies. The results of that exercise would help to ensure that the PSC has a transparent, valid and reliable basis for appointing officers to fill vacancies.
14	Dismissals or terminations of employment that affect professional positions are not motivated by a change in the government's political leanings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacancy Notices – While the PSC has the legitimate authority to determine whether vacancy notices are published, consideration should be given to the impact that the failure to publish has on public perception – including concerns related to politicization.

Structural Consistency

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
1	Staff planning needs usually result from the organization's priorities and strategic orientation. The degree to which they are adjusted to one another tends to be high	This indicator reflects the level of strategic coherence, management and process consistency existing in the organization's HRM systems. The clear articulation and promulgation of the Government's national development priorities is an essential first step to improving this particular quality index. Subsequent interventions should focus on:
2	The HRIS enable a reasonable awareness of the quantitative and qualitative resources available, now and in the future, in the different organizational areas and units.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Planning – Once the national development priorities and have identified and cascaded down to sectoral and ministerial plans with associated outcome measures, the Government will be better positioned to identify the quantity and quality of human capital required to deliver the development agenda.
6	The staffing policies, decisions, and practices in each area of HRM arise from intentions that are determined during the planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRIS – Access to timely and accurate data is essential to effective decision making and management. An effective HRIS would enable the government to eliminate existing errors and inefficiencies associated with the failure to effectively track employees and to terminate payments in a timely manner when the need to do so arises. <p>The current practice of deploying only the payroll component of JDE should be discontinued. A multi-disciplinary team should be established to spearhead the procurement and roll out a fully functional HRIS.</p>
8	Grading arrangements and job hierarchies result from rational criteria, which are adapted to each organizational environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of HRM Policies – A comprehensive learning and development strategy should be created to address existing knowledge and skills gaps. The strategy should also include provisions for the monitoring and evaluation of all training and development initiatives to ensure that they are fit for purpose and produce the desired impact as reflected in the outcomes identified in the national development plan.
22	Compensation policy is set according to previously established criteria and consistent with the organization's structural design parameters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSC Strategic Plan – It is recommended that the PSC's 2015–2018 strategic plan be fully funded and executed, especially those areas that relate to the development of human capital through training and succession planning initiatives and the design and promulgation of performance standards.
26	Investment in training is made via plans that are based on a needs assessment and designed to support the organization's stated priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation Policy – The current salary scales should be reviewed, streamlined, and rationalized.
32	Managers take responsibility and appropriately exercise their responsibilities as managers of the personnel within their sphere of formal authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of HRM Function – The coordination and cooperation between the PSC and the MPS and between the MPS and line ministries should be formalized. One possible mechanism for accomplishing this is service level agreements with attendant accountability measures.
33	The central civil service agency responsible for the system is viewed by the rest of the organization as a department that adds value to the achievement of the common goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent Management – Leaders at all levels need to embrace their responsibility for effectively managing their direct reports and to be held accountable for it. The longstanding lack of compliance with the requirement to complete performance appraisals should be replaced with a comprehensive performance management system with the use of performance coaching and mentoring featuring prominently along with a succession planning program.

Functional Capacity

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5	The technical level of the workforce is commensurate with a knowledge-based society. Skilled labor represents a significant proportion of the workforce.	<p>This index captures the degree of provision, development, and encouragement of relevant competencies in the organization along with the effectiveness of existing performance incentives and overall flexibility/adaptability in the face of changing organizational priorities.</p> <p>Concerted effort is required to address significant gaps in instrumentality related to this quality index. Required interventions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Descriptions – These should be standardized throughout the service and should reflect the competencies and qualifications required for successful performance in each job function. • Performance Standards – Pursuant to the creation of competency-based job descriptions, performance standards aligned with national and ministerial level development objectives should be developed and promulgated. • Performance Management – A comprehensive performance management system including accountability measures should be designed. • Assessments – The use of assessments as initiated by the PSC should be continued and the results utilized along with the outputs from the new performance management system to inform the government’s training and development agenda. • Pay Structure – The results of the previously referenced job evaluation system should inform the creation of a simplified and equitable salary scale. The new system should include provisions for performance-based compensation.
7	Job descriptions conform to managerial criteria rather than to legal considerations or collective agreements. The legal framework and the employment agreements are limited to establishing a broad framework in which work is organized in accordance with organizational needs.	
9	Job profiles include the selection of competencies that in each case are considered key for the success of the job holder’s performance.	
12	Staff selection is based on competency profiles for the potential job holders.	
13	The mechanisms for functional and geographic mobility respond flexibly to the demands of personnel redeployment	
15	There is the possibility of terminating the employment relationship due to objectively verified technical, economic, or organizational reasons that justify workforce reductions.	
16	Management normally defines guidelines and standards regarding expected personnel performance in accordance with the organization’s priorities and strategy. Consequently, employees are aware of the aspects of their performance for which they will be evaluated.	
17	Throughout the management cycle, management monitors, observes, and supports improvements in employee performance, provides resources, and removes obstacles wherever necessary.	
18	Employees’ performance is evaluated by the organization and compared to the expected performance standards.	
19	The compensation structure, including cash and non-cash components, is adequate for attracting, motivating, and retaining suitable people with the necessary competencies for the positions that they organization requires.	
21	The compensation mechanisms encourage people to make more effort and stimulate individual or group performance, learning, and competency development.	
23	The promotion criteria and mechanisms link promotion to performance as well as to competency potential and development.	
24	There are alternatives to positions that are strictly hierarchical, such as “horizontal” career progress or remaining in the same position, based on recognition of professional excellence without necessarily increasing the formal authority of those affected	
25	Training supports the development of collective learning, thereby building organizational capacity to tackle problems and provide effective responses.	

Integrative Capacity

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
28	The organization makes efforts to learn about its work climate, using reliable instruments for periodic evaluation.	Integrative Capacity measures the extent to which management, employees, and other key stakeholders experience a sense of belonging and the absence of conflict.
29	The organization has specific communication instruments that serve to reinforce the sense of belonging and the commitment of employees to the overall organizational project.	Possible interventions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Engagement - A requirement for departmental and ministerial staff meetings should be institutionalized along with employee newsletters and other communication tools including newsletters, blogs and other channels geared towards securing inclusivity. The EAP that is currently being piloted should be examined with a view to expanding it to other ministries.
30	Labor relations are preferably and habitually oriented toward agreement and consensus building rather than confrontation and denigration of adversaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sick Buildings – This matter should be addressed as a matter of urgency, and measures should be put in place to expedite the identification and resolution of similar issues related to occupational health and safety.
31	The degree of labor conflict is not excessive in terms of either the number of conflicts, their effects, or the forcefulness of the means employed.	

Management Capabilities

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
32	Managers take responsibility and appropriately exercise their responsibilities as managers of the personnel within their sphere of formal authority.	This index covers the spectrum from Transactional Management to Transformational Leadership. Transactional managers are concerned about the status quo and day-to-day progress toward goals. Transformational leaders operate at a more strategic level as they work to enhance the motivation and engagement of followers by directing their behavior toward a shared vision.
36	Senior civil servants go beyond managing day-to-day operations and craft strategies for taking the Civil Service to the next level of performance and success.	Specific interventions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Management - An integral component of the previously mentioned New Performance Management system should be a mechanism designed to ensure that managers deliver on their responsibilities related to talent management and development.
38	Senior civil servants collaborate across ministries and sectors to secure coherence in policies and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Management and Alignment – The Cabinet Secretaries' directive that all ministries prepare strategic plan should be fully enforced with the express understanding that all such plans should be aligned with national development priorities and that performance outcomes be cascaded down to the level of departments and individual employees. Cross-sectoral alignment should also be secured and responsibility for monitoring and evaluation assigned to an agency vested with the delegated authority to secure accountability. • Stakeholder Engagement - A mechanism for securing the input of internal and external stakeholders should be institutionalized to help inform policy formulation and program design and secure timely feedback on the implementation of government policies and programs.

Diversity Management

#	CRITICAL POINTS	COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
34	Men, women, minorities, and persons from historically marginalized groups are treated fairly in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities.	<p>This index provides information on the extent to which workers' access to employment and/or advancement opportunities in the Civil Service may be curtailed due to differences associated with race, ethnicity, language, gender, disability, and others.</p> <p>Given concerns expressed about the differential treatment of employees outside of Nassau, the government may wish to consider how to bring greater transparency to decisions related to hiring and promotions and the distribution of other benefits.</p>

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1. **Ministry of Public Service and National Insurance:** Lisa Hall , DPS; Paulamae Russel, Finance and Accounting Officer I; Alexander Carey, FAS; Nicola Andrews, FAS; Michelle Hanlan, Fas; Chloe Whyms, FAS; Nicola Watson, Chief Training Officer; Iva Brown, Senior Assistant Secretary; Dawnelle Brown, Personal Assistant II; Deirdre Dumont, Personal Assistant II; Debra Foulkes, Office Manager III; Kenya Laing, Assistant Secretary; Qwen Spence, Assistant Registry Supervisor; Anasika Delson, Senior Executive Officer; Juliann Morency, Janitress
2. **Camille Johnson, Secretary to the Cabinet**
3. **Elise Delancy, PS Ministry of Public Service and National Insurance**
4. **External Stakeholders Workshop:** Emmanuel O. Komolafe, Bahamas Chamber of Commerce & Employers Confederation; Nakessa Beneby, Central Bank of The Bahamas; Dr. Carolyn Rolle, University of The Bahamas; Yvette Pintard-Newry, University of The Bahamas; Kathryn Campbell, Bahamas Information Services; Llonella Gilbert, Bahamas Information Services; Edison L. Sumner, Bahamas Chamber of Commerce & Employers Confederation
5. **Bahamas Public Services Union:** Kingsley Ferguson, President; Cindira Bain, General Secretary
6. **Robert Farquharson, Director Department of Labor**
7. **Justice Milton Evans, Chairman Bahamas Public Service Board of Appeal**
8. **Public Service Commission:** Rev. Dr. James Moultrie, Chairman; Ruth Millar, Member; Barbara Barnes, Member; Theresa Deleveaux, Member; Samita Ferguson, Member; Velda Duncombe, Acting Secretary; Sigrid Bain, SAS
9. **Meeting of Permanent Secretaries:** Mr. David Davis – Ministry of Financial Services, Trade & Industry and Immigration; Mrs. Lorraine Armbrister, Ministry of Transport and Local Government; Mrs. Nicole Campbell – Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture; Mr. Carl Smith – Ministry of National Security; Mr. Marco Rolle – Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs; Ms Rena Glinton – Ministry of Health; Ms Sherrylee Smith – Ministry of Financial Services, Trade and Industry & Immigration; Mr. Jack Thompson – Office of The Prime Minister; Mrs. Phedra Rahming – Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources; Mr. Charles Albury – Ministry of Tourism and Aviation; Mrs. Donella Bodie – Ministry of Education; Mrs. Cora Bain-Colebrooke (Ag) – Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development; Miss Cecilia Strachan (Ag) – Ministry of Labor; Ms Janice Miller (Ag) – Ministry of Environment and Housing; Mr. Harcourt Brown (Ag) – Office of The Prime Minister, Grand Bahama
10. **Internal Stakeholder Workshop:** Miller, S – Ministry of Agriculture; Spence, G – MPS; Brown, Iva – MPS; Stuart, Chloe – MPS; Grant, Dale – Lands and Surveys; Curry, Lakethra – Bahamas Immigration; Simmons, Tracey – Department of Local Government; Johnson, Beatrice – Bahamas Immigration; Hepburn, Denise – Department of Meteorology; Laing, Kenya – MPS; Rolle, Karen – Financial Services, Trade and Industry; John, Carol – OPM; Dumont, Deirdre – MPS; Rolle, Yvonne – Attorney General; Hall, Lisa

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