

Reporter

Volume 55, No.12

Sunday, March 20th, 2022

Price: \$1.00

Increase in Bus Fares Coming Next Week

By Michelle Sutherland

Commuters can expect an increase in bus fares as early as next week, Belize Bus Association (BBA) President Thomas Shaw confirmed with The Reporter on Thursday.

While admitting that the exact increase is yet unknown as it has to be reviewed Cabinet, Shaw promised that he will provide the public with an update by next Tuesday. Shaw, however, told The Reporter that he expects the increase to take effect in a week's time and is, therefore, warning commuters to budget and be prepared.

Following a meeting with Prime Minister



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BBA President Thomas Shaw says the increase necessary to keep bus operators in business.

Witness Protection for Better Justice

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Minister of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries Hon. Kareem Musa

By William Ysaguirre

The Government has implemented a witness protection program as part of an initiative to fast-track the delivery of justice in Belize, with three new laws passed in the House of Representatives in Belmopan on Tuesday, March 15.

Too often have criminal prosecutions,

especially murder trials, fallen apart when they go to Court due to witnesses' failure or refusal to testify, after they have been intimidated or killed by associates of the accused. The prosecutor has then been forced to enter a nolle prosequi.

Minister of Home

Affairs and New Growth Industries Hon. Kareem Musa introduced the Protection of Witnesses Bill this week. Once enacted, the law seeks to provide for the protection of witnesses in criminal proceedings. The aim is to enhance a witness' ability to give testimony in judicial proceedings and

to cooperate with law enforcement authorities, without fear of reprisals from the accused.

Additionally, the health protocols for prevention of COVID-19 transmission had already made it necessary to hold virtual court hearings via tele-conferencing with the judge in his cham

GOB presents Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

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Prime Minister John Briteño



Budget details disclosed by Prime Minister Johnny Briceño this week provide the most encouraging grounds for believing that Belize can and will work her way out of debt to become a prospering democracy.

Last year, despite the burden of a Covid epidemic dragging at our heels, the Belize economy rebounded with an unprecedented 12.5% growth, according to the International Monetary Fund.

“It is a progress report unmatched in our 41 years as an independent nation,” Prime Minister Briceño exulted in a 46-page budget presentation that promised fiscal reform and help for small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. Moreover, he promised to take measures that would in time bring down interest rates.

The domestic performance was so good that the prime minister congratulated Minister of Agriculture, Food Security, and Enterprise Hon. Abelardo Mai for the impressive growth. Bananas, citrus, sugar, and fisheries all showed robust growth with marine products such as conch and lobster leading the way.

Thanks to a breakthrough with Mexico cross-border trade, cattle and livestock, pigs and poultry did well.

The Prime Minister did not mention inflation in his budget speech, but earlier he made it clear that his government would take vigorous measures against merchants who tried to gouge consumers with inflated prices.

Domestic revenues from taxes and other incomes are expected to bring in \$1.22 billion during the fiscal year starting March 1, 2022, and Belize expects to have a small surplus on its domestic operations to apply to capital projects. Grants from various sources are expected to bring in \$35 million, down from the \$50 million of last year.

Tourism has rebounded and the Belize dollar is no longer facing pressures. The Belize Central Bank's reserves "registered an increase ... that exceeded \$140 million."

The Prime Minister indicated that the government would have to do something about wages and pensions. He noted that 62 cents out of every revenue dollar is used to pay wages, subsidies, and pensions to the tune of \$704 million. This pension program is patently unsustainable, he said, and so a new framework will be needed.

The Prime Minister paid special attention to an agency called the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which is a new foreign aid arm of the US Government involved in providing financial support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to reduce poverty in the hemisphere through growth.

Belize is one of two countries in line for grant funding which is expected to come on stream next year. “With a high degree of confidence”, the Prime Minister said, “I predict that Belize will benefit from massive new grant flows when these various programs come into gear.”

Increase in Bus Fares Coming Next Week

Cont'd from pg. 1 John Briceño on Tuesday, Shaw told The Reporter, “In terms of the bus situation, it is looking really good for us. [It is] not actually what we wanted; it could be better, but we understand that there is a global crisis around the world so in terms of the bus fares there will be some sort of adjustment to it.”

According to Shaw, at the meeting which was attended by the prime minister, representatives from the unions, the government, the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), and the Governor of the Central Bank among others, they collectively discussed the pressing issue of fuel costs and the impacts on business and consumers. While they all contributed to the discussion on how the increase in fuel will affect the various industries and steps that can be taken to mitigate the overall effect, Shaw said that it was collectively agreed that the bus industry is in need of immediate relief.

“Well, if no consideration is given to the BBA then the bus industry will just come to a halt; op-

erators cannot operate at a loss. So there is no ‘but,’ ‘if’ or ‘maybe.’ There has to be an increase in bus fares. If there isn't any relief at the pumps and no adjustment to the bus fares, then automatically the bus industry will have to close down.”

At that meeting, discussions also centered around the overall upgrade of the public transportation system, inclusive of getting relief on importing buses that are less than 10 years and extending bus operators' permits from 2 years to 10 years. This, according to Shaw, will assist bus operators tremendously when they go into the banks to get loans.

While Shaw said that he understands the strain that the price increase is going to put on commuters, he insists that it was something that should have been done years ago.

The agreement between the BBA and prime minister came about following consecutive days of meetings which went through the weekend. That is after the BBA had threatened to shut down the public transportation system if the government did not approve a price increase in fares. The BBA had

Witness Protection for Better Justice

Cont'd from pg. 1 members in Belize City, and the accused remaining at the Kolbe Foundation, and being present only on the television screen.

Now these arrangements have been made legal via an amendment to the Indictable Procedure Act, Chapter 96 of the Laws of Belize, which the Minister of Education, Culture, E-Governance, Science and Technology Hon. Francis Fonseca introduced at Tuesday's sitting.

Having previously served as Attorney General in the previous PUP administration, minister Fonseca was well-versed with the law's provi-

sions but saw need to expand the list of offences for trial without a jury in certain criminal cases.

The Act now also allows for hearings or trials before the court to be conducted virtually, and for additional crimes to be included in a count of an indictment. The order also allows for the Schedules to be amended and provides for other matters “connected therewith or incidental thereto”.

Minister Fonseca also introduced an amendment to the Inferior Courts Act, Chapter 94 of the Laws of Belize, to allow for the magistrates Courts to also conduct hearings or trials virtually, with all the necessary provisions.

Analysts: China's COVID resurgence tempered oil prices

By Javam Flowers

According to analysts speaking with CNBC News, China's massive spike in Covid and subsequent lockdowns have helped reduce oil prices from record highs reached a week ago.

Given that China remains the world's biggest oil importer, any demand reduction would impact global energy prices, as explained by international analysts.

In the initial week of the unsolicited invasion of Russia into Ukraine, crude oil prices saw an enormous hike, reaching over USD\$130 per barrel. However, over the past week, this hike has since significantly retracted partly due to “peace talks” between Russia and Ukraine.

Richard Gorry, managing director of JBC Energy Asia, explained that “The OPEC [Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries] in their monthly reports have not changed their demand forecast, which suggests that it is business as normal.”

He added, “I would tend to believe that that will probably change in the months ahead, because if we look at China, for example, right now, we have 45 million people under lockdown, like it was in 2020. And we know from history that this does have an impact on oil demand.”

Adding to the comments made by Gorry is Ray Attrill, head of foreign exchange strategy at National Australia Bank. In a release, he further adds that “[The decrease in oil

prices] more likely reflects a combination of some speculative froth being blown off, alongside fears of weaker China demand as more Chinese cities are put into lockdown amid record-high Covid case numbers.”

Notably, Beijing has since imposed sweeping lockdowns as it grapples with its worst COVID spike, which since the pandemic began and has since ordered the suspension of manufacturing in several cities.

THE REPORTER

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Human Resources Manager
P.O. Box 29, Tower Hill, Orange Walk
Or email
HR.Belize@asr-group.com



DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FORM AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS IS March 22, 2022

GOB presents Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

By Javam Flowers

Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño presented the proposed Budget of BZ\$1.361 billion for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 at this week's sitting of the House of Representatives.

As detailed by Briceño, there was a myriad of factors out of the Government's control that influenced how the Budget was assembled. Such factors included "inflation, interest rates, the cost of fuel and energy, climate change, the terms for trade and commerce, among others."

With regards to revenue and spending, he announced that there would be no "major tax revenue measure;" however, the lotteries sector should expect an "adjustment in collections" as this sector "is not fairly contributing." Additionally, the Government will maintain its current mandate to enforce that those taxes owed are collected aggressively.

Notably, as announced earlier this year, the new Budget restores the wage levels of the public officers and teachers, effective as of July 1st.

Briceño continued by divulging that "Recurrent Revenues" are projected at BZ\$1.122 billion, which is 7.5% (BZ\$86 million) higher than the forecasted outturn for this fiscal year. Both Tax and Non-Tax revenues are projected to rise while Capital Revenues will remain constant, and Grants will fall to BZ\$35 million, in line with our bilateral agreements. Boasting that "revenue growth is consistent with the IMF's 6.5 percent overall GDP growth forecast for 2022 and the Central Bank's slightly more modest 6 percent growth forecast."

With regards to expenditure, he explained that overall spending would rise compared to this year's projected outturn by 12% (BZ\$144 million). These increases will include the following major spending lines:

Wages and Pensions will rise by a combined 10% (approximately BZ\$49 million), most of which is attributable to the 10% wage restoration;

Subsidies and Transfers will increase by 25% (BZ\$37 million), which is indirect wage subsidies linked to the wage restoration;

Debt service will rise by (BZ\$24 million), as interest payments commence on the Blue Bonds; and

Capital Spending will increase by BZ\$30 million compared to this year's outturn of BZ\$243 million.

In summary, therefore, the new Budget targets a Primary Surplus of some 0.35% (BZ\$14 million) of GDP, along with an overall deficit of 2.49% (\$98.1 million) of GDP.

Furthermore, the Government proposes to retire BZ\$97.4 million in public debt during this budget cycle, the total financing of which requires BZ\$195.6 million. This sum will be fulfilled with BZ\$84 million from a portion of a \$150 million loan provided by the (Republic of China) Taiwan; BZ\$98 million disbursements from International Financial Institutions in support of the Nation's Capital II Program; and BZ\$13 million from the domestic system financed through the new issue of Government treasury securities.

Briceño further commented on Belize's 2021 national economic rebound, touting that it "may be as high as 12.5% according to the IMF, twice the rate of the Latin America and Caribbean regions. In fact, Belize is the fastest growing economy amongst all countries in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean."

Such a rebound could be, according to the Central Bank of Belize, attributed to (1) the timely reopening of the economy, (2) a strong vaccination campaign, and (3) a resurgence in agricultural production from weather-related shocks.

In his closing remarks, Briceño emphasized that "If Belize is to grow and develop, all of us must be committed to a strong Belizean economy and society, grounded in credible, practical plans and solutions to the social and economic challenges we face."

The Righters Write

Gender Equality – women and girls

Contributed by the Human Rights Commission

Gender equality is the theme of women's month 2022 and the call is to #BreakTheBias. But what is gender equality? How much do we really understand about gender equality?

Truly, there is so much that can be discussed about this topic starting with how it all began, where in our global history gender equality movements achieved advancement, where the struggle is today and what it even costs. Additionally, we can take an entire column to write about the benefits, including the millions of dollars that can be added to the global GDP when women play an identical role in labour markets to that of men. In this space, we hope only to start the conversation in an effort to better understand what gender equality is with a focus on women.

But first, put simply, gender equality is every person (no matter their gender age, socioeconomic status, place of birth, place of origin) having an equal voice, rights, opportunities and responsibilities. This includes economic participation and decision making throughout their lives. According to the United Nations, while the world has achieved progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment under the Millennium Development Goals, including equal access to primary education between girls and boys, "women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world."

So, in short, gender equality for women and girls means being able to live in a safe and equal society. They would have equal access to power, resources and opportunities; and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. But where do all the inequalities start? We say, it starts at home. Here is where children are exposed to gender roles. What is this? Gender roles, also known as sex roles, is the social role boys

and girls are expected to learn, such as behaviours and attitudes determined primarily by prevailing cultural norms. Growing up, boys and girls see gender inequalities at home and communities daily. Dad goes to work while mom stays at home caring for the children and the house, bearing the brunt of caregiving. It can be argued that it starts even before, at birth where gender disparities start out small. In almost every household, blue is thought to be the colour for boys and pink for girls. We see this in their clothes and the toys they are given to play with, all reflecting gender stereotypes – a topic all on its own.

As they grow, children continue to see and experience gender inequalities and these become more socially prominent. UNICEF reports that many girls receive less support in schools than boys, so much so that "worldwide nearly 1 in 4 girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are neither employed nor in education or training – compared to 1 in 10 boys". It adds that "the onset of adolescence can bring significant barriers to girls' well-being. Gender norms and discrimination heighten their risk of unwanted pregnancy, HIV and AIDS, and malnutrition. Especially in emergency settings and in places where menstruation remains taboo, girls are cut off from the information and supplies they need to stay healthy and safe. In its most insidious form, gender inequality turns violent. Some 1 in 20 girls between the ages of 15 and 19 – around 13 million – have experienced forced sex. In times of both peace and conflict, adolescent girls face the highest risk of gender-based violence."

It is important to note as well that boys also suffer from harmful gender norms. UNICEF states that "Social conceptions of masculinity can fuel child labour, gang violence, disengagement from school, and recruitment into armed groups."

Depending on where you live, the gender inequalities differ. In some countries, laws still exist that violate women and girls' basic human rights but the work continues to push for gender equality. Now, you may wonder why or how gender equality for women and girls can improve societies. The UN states that "Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable

economies and benefit societies and humanity at large." UNICEF adds that "Reducing inequality strengthens economies and builds stable, resilient societies that give all individuals – including boys and men – the opportunity to fulfil their potential." The discussion on how we can achieve this is, again, something we may need an entire column to explore.

The United Nations estimates that women could "increase their income globally by up to 76 percent if the employment participation

gap and the wage gap between women and men were closed. This is calculated to have a global value of \$17 trillion". Additionally, gender equality builds safer and healthier communities. Unequal societies have higher rates of anti-social behaviour and violence. And since our focus here is on women and girls, gender equality prevents violence against them. Thus, the best way to prevent violence against women is to promote gender equality. We also add that gender equality is important to sustainable

development. According to the UN, "gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world."

Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper's stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Institution: *Belize Water Services Limited*

Country: *Belize*

Project: *Independence to Seine Bight Transmission line*

Sector: *Water*

Abstract: *The general objective of this publication is to engage eligible construction companies to install a new potable water transmission pipeline from Independence Village to Seine Bight Village (Stann Creek District) as per design.*

Project Number: *22551171739/ BWS-55-1618*

New Deadline: *March 29, 2022*

The construction services ("the Services") include, but are not limited to, installation and commissioning of 3 miles of 10" PVC transmission line in the mainland and 3 miles of 10" HDPE transmission line through the lagoon:

- Identification of established Benchmarks and Setting out of new works;
- Excavation of trenches along the route, placement and compaction of embedment, backfill, and road base, and reinstatement of works
- Installation of pipeline and various assemblies, concrete anchors, and other components and
- Commissioning, including final connections, pressure (hydrostatic) testing, flushing, and disinfecting.

Belize Water Services Limited now invites eligible construction companies ("Bidders") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Companies should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Companies must qualify on two major work categories:

- Civil and ancillary works** including, but not limited to, construction and refurbishment of buildings, construction and refurbishment of roads and streets, major and minor roads chip and seal works, earthworks, fencing, concrete works, facility maintenance, retaining walls, drainage, security huts, shelters and canopies, railings, bins, signage, plastering, painting, etc.
- Water Supply Systems** including new and renewals of transmission, distribution mains and service connections; installation of pump stations; installation of headworks; water treatment plant works (including mechanical/electrical and civil); and construction and/or restoration of reservoirs.

Financial category of the project:

- Large contract** estimated more than \$1,000,000.

Financial resources of the company shall be BZ\$300,000 monthly.

Shortlisting of contractors will be based on the [Application pack – Expression of Interest for Independence to Seine Bight Transmission Line Tendering process](#) and is open to all eligible contractors as defined in the document.

The short list shall comprise of minimum of three (3) and maximum of eight (8) companies.

Companies may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

Interested parties should contact the Engineering procurement representative, via email to obtain Application Package and other information.

Expressions of interest and application package must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by e-mail) by **March 29, 2022**, no later than 3:00 P.M.

Belize Water Services Limited

Attn: *Engineering procurement*

7 Central American Boulevard

Belize City, Belize, C.A.

Tel: *+(501) 222-4757, Ext. 1713*

E-mail: engineeringprocurement@bws.com.bz

MCC grants Belize US\$750,000 for Poverty Alleviation

By William Ysaguirre

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) of the United States will provide grant funding for projects to alleviate poverty in Belize over the next seven to eight years, MCC's Chief Executive Officer Alice Albright announced in a press conference at the Radisson Fort George Hotel in Belize City on Thursday morning, March 17.

Albright led an MCC team to Belize on Tuesday, and met with Prime Minister John Briceño on Wednesday, March 16, when they signed an initial grant agreement for USD\$750,000 to help the Government set up a project implementation unit to identify development projects and project proposals which will drive economic growth.

Other members of the MCC team have been in the country a couple of weeks now, and they will remain while they do a comprehensive assessment of Belize's economic situation to identify key areas of need for the MCC to focus their investment. Unlike many other international funding agencies, the MCC will not dictate to Belize what priority areas they wish to fund but will let the Belizean people decide how and where development will take place. The MCC team will, therefore, be consulting with both private and public sectors, with civil societies and other interested parties to get a comprehensive overview of Belize's economic situation.

This assessment and consultation process towards a grant agreement to fund projects typically takes two to three years of analysis and planning, Albright explained, as it is a very rigorous process. The MCC experts will seek to identify the key factors which are limiting economic growth in Belize. This is to ensure that the funded projects meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries, the Belizean people, when they are actually implemented, which will be over



(l-r) Alice Albright, Leyla Moses-Ones, Jonathan Brooks, and CEO Osmond Martinez

a five-year period after the grant agreement or "compact" is signed.

Albright did not quote an exact figure for a grant, but MCC vice president Jonathan Brooks cited the example of El Salvador, where the MCC had identified the quality and access to education as a key factor to improve the economy and had granted USD\$56 million for that project. The MCC is particularly concerned about gender parity and empowering women, and in the case of Georgia - a former state of the Soviet Union, the MCC had implemented programs to improve access to university education and secondary education.

The percentage of people living below the poverty line in Belize has been gradually growing, as indicated in the four poverty surveys which have been conducted between 1995 to 2018, lamented Chief Executive Officer Osmond Martinez of the Ministry of Economic Development. The poverty rate was 52.3 percent in 2018, but the latest UNICEF study of child poverty this year shows that 60 percent of Belizean children are

living in poverty. The reduction of poverty was a declared goal of Plan Belize before the 2020 elections, and it is now the No.1 priority for the Briceño administration, he affirmed.

He thanked the MCC for investing in Belize's economic growth and promised that the private sector would be the main beneficiaries of the project funding, as it is the private sector that will drive economic growth. He admitted that Belize needs to develop its human capital through education, but that said government's goal is to create the enabling environment for entrepreneurs to start-up businesses which will create jobs by also facilitating access to low-cost financing.

Belize is one of only two countries which the MCC has identified for their support this year. The MCC had considered Belize in 2014, but at the time, Belize's economy was doing significantly better and was not deemed to need the MCC's help. The MCC has continued to monitor Belize's economic performance, and the low per capita income prompted the MCC to decide last December 2021 to invest in Belize.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) invites applicants for the functions of National Consultant for the Surveillance of NCDs and risk factors

Duty station: Belize City

Qualifications: *Essential:* A Bachelor's degree in one of the health, social or management sciences from a recognized university
Desirable: Postgraduate studies in public health or related field with emphasis on Epidemiology and Surveillance of NCDs and risk factors

Experience: *Essential:* At least 5 years national experience in the related field
Desirable: working experience in health services project management

Skills:

- Theoretical and practical expertise in all aspects related to surveillance, prevention, and control of Noncommunicable diseases, and the promotion of health, as well as a thorough knowledge of epidemiology, prevention, and control methods.
- Ability to analyze factors, trends, and forecast scenarios based on current surveillance systems and possesses the capability to develop and plan innovative and appropriate solutions for their improvement.
- Strong public health and strategic thinking background showing resourcefulness, initiative, leadership qualities and skills to deal with difficult situations and sensitive areas.
- Ability to plan and carry out technical cooperation initiatives on NCDs with emphasis on epidemiology and surveillance of NCDs and risk factors
- Knowledge of Global Strategies for the prevention and control of NCDs as well as regional, subregional, and national situation on NCDs.
- Knowledge of health services policies and administration within the framework of the model of family and community health.
- Knowledge and skills in the formulation of technical cooperation interventions and in the development of criteria and instruments for evaluating program interventions, including resource mobilization and grant management.
- Strong professional oral and writing skills, including the development of reports, oral presentations, and technical/persuasive documents for consideration at the highest levels of the Organization.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use a computer and utilize software programs such as Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, and Outlook. Other IT skills and knowledge of other software programs for Statistical Analysis, Data Exploratory Analysis and Project Management would be an asset.

Languages: Very good knowledge of English and working knowledge of Spanish

Deadline: Letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, and two current letters of recommendation should be sent to blzmail@paho.org or to P.O. Box 1834, Belize City no later than **March 18, 2022**.

For further details visit our website <https://www.paho.org/en/vacancies> An interview will be held for this position and only candidates under serious consideration will be contacted.

PAHO/WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or users of any form of tobacco.

STATUTORY NOTICE

TO CREDITORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act Chapter 197 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011 that all creditors having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of **EUSEBIA SOSA** deceased of No. 8 Hall's Layout, Corozal Town, Corozal District, Belize on the 28th day of March, 2020 in whose estate Grant of Administration No. 463/2021 has been granted to **NASIR TRINIDAD SOSA**, of 10th Avenue, Corozal Town, Corozal District, Belize should lodge such claims or demands with the said **NASIR TRINIDAD SOSA**, Administrator, c/o Barrow & Williams LLP, Attorneys-at-Law of No. 84 Albert Street, Belize City, Belize, on or before the expiration of three months from the first publication hereof AND NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at the expiration of the said three months the Executor shall proceed to distribute the assets of the said **EUSEBIA SOSA** deceased, amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard to all the claims and demands of which particulars are lodged and the Administrator shall not be liable for the assets of the deceased or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons whose claims or demands they shall not then have had notice.

DATED the 14th day of March, 2022

BARROW & WILLIAMS LLP
Attorneys-at-Law
for Nasir Trinidad Sosa

UDP Convention Unaffected by Herbert Panton's Death

By Michelle Sutherland



Hon. Tracy Panton

Despite the unfortunate death of UDP's stalwart Herbert Panton, two weeks ago, the UDP's convention, to elect a new leader, which was slated for March 27th, 2022, will not be postponed as had been anticipated.

That was confirmed this week by Tracy Panton, who is one of the candidates for the leadership race against the Hon. Moses Shyne Barrow. Panton, while agreeing that the loss of her husband will be a loss that she and her family will take years to recover from, admitted that

she sees no reason to back down from the challenge now.

In an interview with News, Five Panton indicated that when she threw her hat in the race for the leadership post she did so after careful consideration and prayer, coupled with the backing of her departed husband and the support of her daughters and family. For that matter, Panton said that she remains resolute that her husband would have wanted her to continue pushing forward despite the great and painful loss that they have endured.

"Leadership is about pushing beyond adversity. You don't cower away if you are a good leader when adversity strikes. In fact, that was the very last conversation that he and I had, that I must continue being the warrior woman that I was. [That I should] continue fighting for the party

and continue most importantly to fight for Belize. So I am resolute in my commitment."

Panton reiterated that she is more than ready to take on the leadership of the UDP, a role which she considers not only important for the party but for the country as a whole. According to Panton, the opposition needs to be robust and stable in order to hold the Briceño Administration to account and in order to present a viable alternative for good governance to the Belizean people.

We attempted to get a comment from the Hon. Shyne Barrow on how his campaign is coming along since he seems to be having a head start over Panton; however, we are yet to get a response from him. Both Panton's and Shyne's position at the helm of the UDP will be left up to 515 delegates to decide.

Two billion genetically modified mosquitoes approved to be released into the wild

By Javan Flowers

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has approved Oxitec's request to release two billion genetically modified mosquitoes in Florida and California to combat the transmission of harmful diseases such as dengue and Zika.

In a release, the UK-based company stated that "Oxitec's safe, sustainable and targeted biological pest control technology does not harm beneficial insects like bees and butterflies and is proven to control the disease-transmitting *Aedes aegypti* mosquito."

Furthermore, as detailed in the release, the program aims to reduce cases of diseases by eliminating the



offspring of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which spreads diseases through its bite.

Scientists at Oxitec facilitated the mass production of the genetically modified male *Aedes aegypti* eggs in a lab. These male mosquitoes will be released into the wild to "mate with females and pass along a gene that will kill the female offspring." Such a gene is intended to eliminate the female mosquito, which carries

diseases, while leaving the male mosquito and male offspring alive.

It is to note that numerous environmental groups in both California and Florida pointed out that the scientific data presented by Oxitec has not been peer-reviewed and that a release of genetically modified mosquitos of this magnitude would pose tremendous difficulty to undo if it were to affect ecosystems in an unintended manner.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) invites applicants for the functions of National Consultant to support the Strengthening Climate Resilient Health Systems Project

Duty station: Belize City

Qualifications: *Essential:* A Bachelor's degree in Environment Science or Public Health from a recognized university

Desirable: A Master's Degree in Environmental Studies, Climate, or related field

Experience: *Essential:* At least 5 years of national experience in public health, environmental health, climate change or related field

Desirable: Experience in development of H-NAP

Skills:

- Experience developing HNAPs and conducting impact assessments and sensitivity analyses
- Demonstrable current knowledge of climate health risks and adaptation policies and programs
- Knowledge about health systems' operations
- Experience in data collection and analysis
- Strong research, problem-solving and organizational skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively (in person or virtually) with other team players
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills and sensitivity to political and cultural issues
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Strong professional oral and writing skills, including the development of reports, oral presentations, and technical/persuasive documents for consideration at the highest levels of the Organization.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use a computer and utilize software programs such as Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, and Outlook. Other IT skills and knowledge of other software programs for Statistical Analysis, Data Exploratory Analysis and Project Management would be an asset.

Languages: Very good knowledge of English and working knowledge of Spanish

Deadline: Letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, and two current letters of recommendation should be sent to blzmail@paho.org or to P.O. Box 1834, Belize City no later than **March 25, 2022**

For further details visit our website <https://www.paho.org/en/vacancies> An interview will be held for this position and only candidates under serious consideration will be contacted.

PAHO/WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or users of any form of tobacco.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) invites applicants for the functions of National Consultant in the area of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Risk Factors under European Union grant

Duty station: Belize City

Qualifications: *Essential:* A Bachelor's degree in one of the health, social or management sciences from a recognized university

Desirable: Postgraduate studies in public health or related field with emphasis on Nutrition Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion

Experience: *Essential:* At least 5 years national experience in the related field.
Desirable: working experience in health services project management.

Skills:

- Theoretical and practical expertise in all aspects related to surveillance, prevention, and control of Noncommunicable diseases, and the promotion of health, as well as a thorough knowledge of epidemiology, prevention, and control methods.
- Ability to analyze factors, trends, and forecast scenarios based on current surveillance systems and possesses the capability to develop and plan innovative and appropriate solutions for their improvement.
- Strong public health and strategic thinking background showing resourcefulness, initiative, leadership qualities and skills to deal with difficult situations and sensitive areas.
- Ability to plan and carry out technical cooperation initiatives on NCDs with emphasis on health promotion, nutrition related chronic diseases, mental health disorders, substance abuse, violence and injuries, rehabilitation, aging and palliative care.
- Knowledge of Global Strategies for the prevention and control of NCDs as well as regional, subregional, and national situation on NCDs.
- Knowledge of health services policies and administration within the framework of the model of family and community health.
- Knowledge and skills in the formulation of technical cooperation interventions and in the development of criteria and instruments for evaluating program interventions, including resource mobilization and grant management.
- Strong professional oral and writing skills, including the development of reports, oral presentations, and technical/persuasive documents for consideration at the highest levels of the Organization.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively use a computer and utilize software programs such as Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, and Outlook. Other IT skills and knowledge of other software programs for Statistical Analysis, Data Exploratory Analysis and Project Management would be an asset.

Languages: Very good knowledge of English and working knowledge of Spanish

Deadline: Letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, and two current letters of recommendation should be sent to blzmail@paho.org or to P.O. Box 1834, Belize City no later than **March 18, 2022**.

DIAL

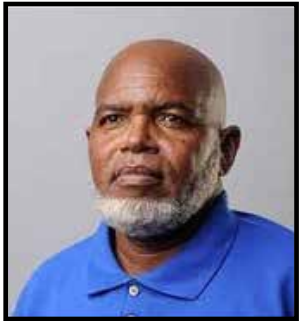
0-800-922-TIPS (8477)

WE PAY CASH FOR INFORMATION ON ANY UNSOLVED CRIMES

A Community Program Coordinated by the Rotary Club of Belize.

GRASSROOTS

Help out for Stevedores



By Hon. Gilroy Usher

“Take time to appreciate employees, and they will reciprocate in a thousand ways.” – Bob Nelson

As the logwood and mahogany cutters from yester years and scores of persons from other professions have done, stevedores

persons who load and unload cargo from ships, have been contributing to the development of this land from 1862 when Belize then British Honduras was declared as British colony.

The need to load and unload cargo from ships in Belize and all other countries will exist in perpetuity; we are therefore happy to know that

from 160 years ago in 1862, stevedores were among the first builders of the new Belize. We are also happy to know that they will continue their important work to build this nation in perpetuity.

Government decided to make the ex gratia payment of \$1.5 million to the stevedores, who

As a result of that decision by ASR, the stevedores suddenly suffered more than 50% cut in their monthly or yearly income.

have never flinched in using their energy and sweat to develop this country, to support them in their time of greatest financial need. That crucial support because necessary, when American Sugar Refinery (ASR) with the support of the Port of Belize (P.B.L) decided to export the vast majority of its sugar from the Big Creek

Port in the south instead of the Port of Belize for increased profits with absolutely no regard for how that decision would negatively impact the lives of the stevedores, who are mainly marginalized persons from the south side of Belize City including Port Loyola that this writer represents.

It must be noted that although PBL would lose tremendous revenue with less use of its port for export by American Sugar Refinery, PBL still supported the deal. They most likely saw backing it as an opportunity to drastically reduced the number of stevedores needed in pursuit of their main objective to severely weaken if not crush representation of the stevedores by Christian Workers Union, which has always been lobbying passionately for just benefits for its members.

As a result of that decision by ASR, the stevedores suddenly suffered more than 50% cut in their monthly or yearly income.

Due to that decision taken for larger profits and ulterior motives by two of the largest companies in the country, if a stevedore's yearly salary was \$24,000, it dropped to less than \$12,000 per year with absolutely no support from either of the two companies to assist the dedicated workers in making up for their last income.

As responsible leaders of this country, the administration couldn't sit by and simply observe advantage being taken of the stevedores despite protest from their union.

G.O.B presented the supplementary allocation bill of \$1.5 million for the stevedores to help them cushion the hardship they and their families are suffering as a result of the sudden huge decrease in their earnings and to also provide the stevedores with a little startup capital for those who would like to venture into an extra income generating business.

When it comes to using taxpayers' money for the best interest of the people, the initiative leaves the Opposition in total shame.

The \$1.5 million in ex-gratia payment will be shared equitably among over 180 stevedores. On the other hand in two of the scores corrupt land deals that occurred under the previous administration, Pitts and Vega were allowed to share \$1.6 million between themselves. Pitts and Vega each pocketed \$400,000.00 of taxpayers' money in the land hustle. In the corrupt land deal, more money was given to two wealthy, greedy, and corrupt individuals with assistance from some previous ministers than the amount to be shared among 180 stevedores. What a shame on the Red party!

More investment, more development results in greater opportunities and a better standard of living for all Belizeans. The administration, therefore, wants American Sugar Refinery, Port of Belize Ltd., and all other businesses to succeed in the country but with respect for the rights of the stevedores and all other employees in the Jewel.

This writer, therefore, invite all businesses, employees, and unions to work together with the government in building a country that every Belizean is proud to call home.

It is only by all of us working together that the need for further ex gratia payments from the public purse will no longer be necessary.

Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper's stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Institution: *Belize Water Services Limited*

Country: *Belize*

Project: *Seine Bight 500,000 US gallon Water Reservoir and site development*

Sector: *Plant*

Abstract: *The general objective of this publication is to engage eligible construction companies to build a two chamber 500,000 gallon reinforced concrete reservoir in the Seine Bight Village (Stann Creek District) as per design.*

Project Number: *285511191974/ BW-55-1858*

New Deadline: *March 29, 2022*

The construction services ("the Services") include, but are not limited to, construction of a 76ft x 76ft above ground reinforced concrete potable water reservoir:

- supply all construction materials and construct and commission new reinforced concrete ground water reservoir (500,000 US-gallon capacity), including installation of all pipework and fixtures and
- Construct Chemical, Dosing, and Pump rooms above reservoir including Plumbing and Electrical, Site fill, internal road, parking, site lights, drainage and perimeter fencing.

Belize Water Services Limited now invites eligible construction companies ("Bidders") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Companies should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Companies must qualify on three (3) major work categories:

- **Civil and ancillary works** including, but not limited to, construction and refurbishment of buildings, construction and refurbishment of roads and streets, major and minor roads chip and seal works, earthworks, fencing, concrete works, facility maintenance, retaining walls, drainage, security huts, shelters and canopies, railings, bins, signage, plastering, painting, etc.
- **Water Supply Systems** including new and renewals of transmission, distribution mains and service connections; installation of pump stations; installation of headworks; water treatment plant works (including mechanical/electrical and civil); and construction and/or restoration of reservoirs.
- **Commercial mechanical and electrical** works including electrical and mechanical installation for buildings and compounds

Financial category of the project:

- **Large contract** estimated more than \$1,000,000.

Financial resources of the company shall be BZ\$200,000 monthly.

Shortlisting of contractors will be based on the [Application pack – Expression of Interest for Seine Bight 500,000 US gallon Water Reservoir and site Development Tendering process](#) and is open to all eligible contractors as defined in the document.

The short list shall comprise of minimum of three (3) and maximum of eight (8) companies.

Companies may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

Interested parties should contact the Engineering procurement representative, via email to obtain Application Package and other information.

Expressions of interest and application package must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by e-mail) by **March 29, 2022**, no later than 3:00 P.M.

*Belize Water Services Limited
Attn: Engineering Procurement
7 Central American Boulevard
Belize City, Belize, C.A.
Tel: +(501) 222-4757, Ext. 1713*

E-mail: engineeringprocurement@bws.com.bz

Floralia Limited hoping for logic to prevail in the courts

By Michelle Sutherland



Floralia Ltd's Owner Marvin Vanzie hopefully that "logic" will prevail

Floralia Limited says that they are still awaiting word from the Department of Transport in relation to an injunction filed last week by the Belize Bus Association (BBA), which seeks to quash road service permits that were issued to the company to commence new runs from Independence Village to Belize.

According to the owner of Floralia Limited, Marvin Vanzie, the runs which were set to officially commence at the start of the week were postponed until next week, not because of any legal issue but because emotions on the ground were running at an all-time high. Vanzie said that after consulting with their legal team it was agreed that moving forward with the new schedule would have been too confrontational and so a pause was the best way to deescalate

the tension.

Vanzie told *The Reporter* that while he hopes that logic will prevail in the court, he is cognizant of the loopholes that can propel the results in favor of the other side. "My point is that you never know what can happen inside of the court," said Vanzie. "But outside of the

court, I can tell you that if all logic prevails, we did everything that we had to do to make sure that we did it legally. We didn't pull any strings or ask for any favors, all the documentations are there and that is why I feel confident that nothing will happen. I mean we are not hiding anything and so they will go

to court and find out that everything was done properly and that the whole procedure was normal."

In response to the BBA's allegations that Floralia's road service permits were awarded illegally and did not meet all the requisite criteria, Vanzie said that the allegations are untrue.

He told us that he had met all the requirements, filed all his documents, and kept following up with the Department of Transport for several months to get a response. He noted that his paperwork was reviewed and vetted by a board, who then agreed that the new company had met all the requirements and thus they would be awarded their road service permit to enter the competition.

Vanzie said that the decision was then gazetted and when it did not meet any pushback from the public, Floralia was finally cleared to commence their runs from Independence Village to Belize.

Vanzie also responded to the BBA's claim that Floralia was "piggybacking" major runs that bus operators had taken years to build. Vanzie referred to that as a "fake reality" and one that he wanted to dispel with the explana-

tion that runs are not "created" and that while his company does have the capacity to convince customers to use their service, they simply cannot manipulate an entire economy. He stressed that in the end it is left up to a customer's own free will to use their service of choice as well as their need to get to a particular destination for a particular time.

Vanzie said that he can safely say that the company's success at this point is based on hard work and determination by staff that has labored to create the best possible service to their paying customers as well as the company's resolution to provide reliable, comfortable, and clean buses to the public.

In closing, Vanzie reiterated that while Floralia awaits the outcome of the injunction that is before the courts, their old runs will continue uninterrupted.



INFOSEGURA



STATISTICAL OFFICER Belize Crime Observatory

Project: The Evidence Based Information Management for Citizen Security in Central America and the Dominican Republic (INFOSEGURA) Project

A **Statistical Officer** with strong background Statistics, Data Management and/or related fields, is needed to:

- 1) Enhance the collection, collation and management of multivariate crime statistics relevant to Belize, including regional and international statistics for comparative purposes;
- 2) Support interagency partners (principally the Belize Central Prison, the Belize Police Department and the National Forensic Science Service) to improve the capture, collation, management and reporting of crime statistics;
- 3) Contribute reliable and quality statistics and/or indicators to the National Statistical System and the Statistical Institute of Belize;
- 4) Strengthen the knowledge of the BCO and partner agencies on best practices for data and information management, to enhance statistical outputs, both for internal and external users;
- 5) Enhance institutional and interagency capacity for qualitative and quantitative analysis through bridging gaps in knowledge and skills on data and information management, analysis and reporting of crime statistics;

RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

- Monthly compilation of crime statistics, including collation of data from interagency partners;
- Generation of monthly reports and statistical knowledge products (including open data products) for the Belize Crime Observatory;
- Dissemination of up-to-date crime statistics via the BCO's online portals;
- Generation of in-depth, multivariate, quarterly analysis imprisonment report;

For more information, e-mail bco@nsc.gov.bz

ACCESS THE DETAILED
TERMS OF REFERENCE



SCAN ME

DEADLINE: 15 April 2022

BY ORDER OF CHARGE **NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SELL**

LAINMACULADA CREDIT UNION LIMITED, a Credit Union duly formed and registered in Belize under the Credit Union Act Chapter 314 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011 with registered office situated at **No. 5 Park Street, Orange Walk Town, Orange Walk District, Belize**, hereby gives notice of its intention to exercise its **Power of Sale as Chargee** under the virtue of Charges between those hereinafter named and the said **La Inmaculada Credit Union Ltd.** with said Charge is registered at the Land Registry. The Credit Union will at the expiration of **TWO MONTHS** from the date of the first publication of this notice to sell the properties described in the schedule hereto.

ALL offers to purchase the said property must be made in writing to **LA INMACULADA CREDIT UNION LIMITED**, from whom full particulars and conditions of sale may be obtained.

SCHEDULE

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-3217 situated in the **Ann Gabourel** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201608522 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Nery Leonardo Sosa & Josselin Jannethe Alvarado (Jointly)**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-122 situated in the **Trial Farm** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201108503 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Angelica Leslie**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-491 situated in the **Trial Farm** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201108507 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Angelica Leslie**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-1079 situated in the **San Jose Palmar** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate # 9845/2004 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Angelica Leslie**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Lot No.-184 attached to Plan No.-2146 Deed of Conveyance LTU-201501474 situated in the **St. Matthews Village, Cayo District**, and registered at the Lands and Surveys Department in Belmopan, as Lot No. 184 on Plan No. 2146 - **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the Deed of Conveyance of **Miriam Janet Quevedo for Abner Jonathan Quevedo**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.1802- situated in the **Ann Gabourel** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201910114 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Mark Glenford Meighan**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.- 2050 situated in the **Orange Walk Town** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201810171 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Roamir Edwardo Gonzalez**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land Parcel No.- 370/1 situated in the **Miller's Bight** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Lease Certificate LRS -201005197 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the leasehold of **Carlos Garcia for Julie Linda Garcia**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-212 situated in the **Guinea Grass** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201900303 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Edison Albert Johnson and Rosita Johnson (Jointly)**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-672 situated in the **Ann Gabourel** Registration Section, **Orange Walk District**, and held under Land Certificate # 3710/95 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Maria Elena Diaz for Leonardo Daniel Diaz**.

ALL THAT piece or parcel of land being Parcel No.-2949 situated in the **San Pedro** Registration Section, **Belize District**, and held under Land Certificate LRS-201511416 **TOGETHER** with all buildings and erections standing and being thereon, the freehold of **Leon Levi Anderson**.

NEAB Still Objecting to Legalization of Marijuana



By Michelle Sutherland

The National Evangelical Association of Belize (NEAB) has once more come out to place on record their disapproval of the proposed legalization of marijuana in Belize on the basis that the industry will open the door for additional influences and harm to the country, its people, and businesses.

NEAB, along with its associated churches countrywide, stated that they continue to be in "strong opposition" to the legalization. They say that the new Bill also has the government not only legalizing, but promoting the production, sale, and use of marijuana.

The Reporter spoke to one of NEAB's members, Pastor Louis Wade, who made reference to two incidents last week which made headlines and which involved children using drugs and being recorded. Wade said that all this was being done simultaneously while the Government was making plans to legalize marijuana, without putting the requisite safeguards in place for the protection of children. He

referred to a part of the legislation that seeks to make edibles legal, a move which he said can prove to be damaging to the younger population who are now closer to accessing these products through parents or loved ones at home.

"Since we have already seen all these social problems that exist already, we should be moving to reduce [as opposed to] moving to enhance. And if we do more to legalize, what we are saying is that nothing is wrong with this substance; therefore, we are encouraging the increase consumption and use thereof. And that is why the church cannot and will not endorse this move and that is why we are moving in the opposite direction. Our children should inherit a drug-free society and not a society where drugs are more readily available for them," said Wade.

In their press release, NEAB also noted the need to "shut the door rather than open it to marijuana dealers, many of whom also sell harder drugs. If this bill passes, we can expect increasing serious harm to come to our youth,

business, tourism, and international banking relations."

The release argued that the more profitable the marijuana business becomes the more drug cartels and their powerful militaries will be involved. They made reference to the increase in cartel crimes in neighboring Mexico and the impacts that it has had on tourism.

NEAB said that they will be the first to sound the alarm on the effects that they believe a move like this will cause on the country and even fear that once allowed will be nearly impossible to root back out.

They also pointed to the fact that being that other neighboring countries have not legalized Marijuana, Belize will now have the potential to become a major transshipment point for marijuana and other big-time drug runners.

In closing, NEAB claimed that the country already has great potential for recovery and prosperity without resorting to the inevitably demoralizing and corrupting marijuana business and instead should aim for a more healthy and beneficial course.



Belizeans appointed to the most Excellent Order of The British Empire



By Javan Flowers

Twelve Belizeans received appointments to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

Governor-General H.E. Froyla Tzalam conferred, on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II, appointments to The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire on the occasion of New Year Honours 2020 and 2021 to 12 Belizeans.

The appointments for Ordinary Officers of the British Empire (Civil Division) (O.B.E) include Dr. Marvin Manzanero, for contribution to public health and public service; Ms. Judith Marie Alpuche, for contribution to social work and public service; and Ms. Penelope Kay Casasola, for services to community and health education volunteerism.

Appointments for Ordinary Members of the British Empire (Civil Division) (M.B.E) include H.E. Lou-Anne Burns Martinez, for contribution to foreign service and public service; Mr. Chester Clyde Williams, for contribution to public security and public service; Ms. Elisa Nayeli Montalvo, for contribution to public service and the field of law; Brigadier General (Ret'd) Steven Ortega, for assistance to public security and public service; Ms. Yolanda Mapye Smith, for contribution to entrepreneurship and community service; Mr. Alex Chang, for contribution to entrepreneurial leadership and community; Mr. Elden Hyde, for contribution to Music; and Mr. Pedro A Salazar, for contribution to community activism.

The insignia for the late Ambassador Elozequi "Elito" Urbina, Sr., who was conferred M.B.E. for his contribution to education and political leadership, was received by his family.

Additionally, the Government of Belize Press Office noted that those absent for the ceremony were Ms. Faith Babb, who will be conferred O.B.E. for contributions to community, politics, and women's development; and Mr. Aurelio Garcia, who will be granted M.B.E. for community activism, will receive their honor at a later date.



INVITATION TO BID PROCUREMENT NOTICE

The **Ministry of Health & Wellness (MOHW)** hereby invites eligible and qualified bidders to submit sealed bids for **Pharmaceuticals & Related Medical Supplies** for the period **April 2022- March 2023**.

All interested bidders are asked to contact the secretary in the **Office of the Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Health & Wellness, Third Floor, East Block Building, Belmopan (Tel. 822-2325)** for the *Instruction to Bidders* and relevant documents. Eligible Bidders must be in accordance with Ministry of Health & Wellness requirements as indicated in the Instruction to Bidders. All bidders must be in possession of a valid MOHW License. A fee of **\$200.00** made payable to the **Government Treasury utilizing Fees for Bidding Documents - 18017/11617/130/24** is required for the acquisition of the Tender Package. The receipt must be presented to the secretary at the point of collecting the Package.

The Tender Package must be collected from the **Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) Secretary – Ministry of Health & Wellness, East Block, Belmopan on Monday March 21st, 2022 & Tuesday March 22nd, 2021 from 8:30AM to 3:30PM**. All tender submissions must be returned to the CEO Secretary - Ministry of Health & Wellness no later than **Wednesday April 20th, 2022 at 10AM**.

Late bids will be rejected.

Please be prepared to submit relevant samples immediately upon request.

Ref: GEN/186/01/21(57)

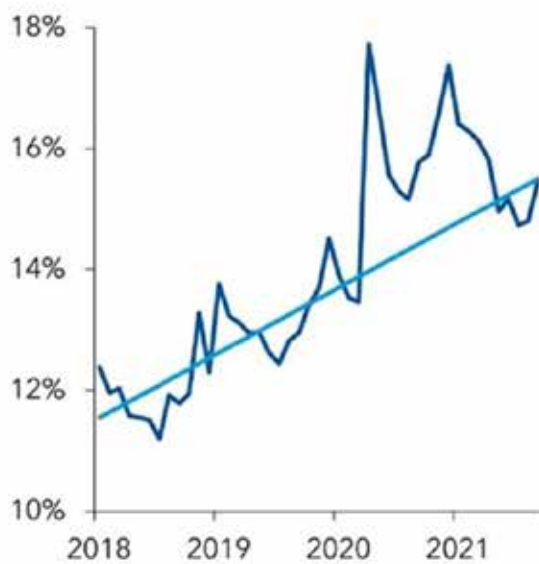
Pandemic's E-commerce Surge Proves Less Persistent, More Varied

By Joel Alcedo, Alberto Cavallo, Bricklin Dwyer, Prachi Mishra, and Antonio Spilimbergo

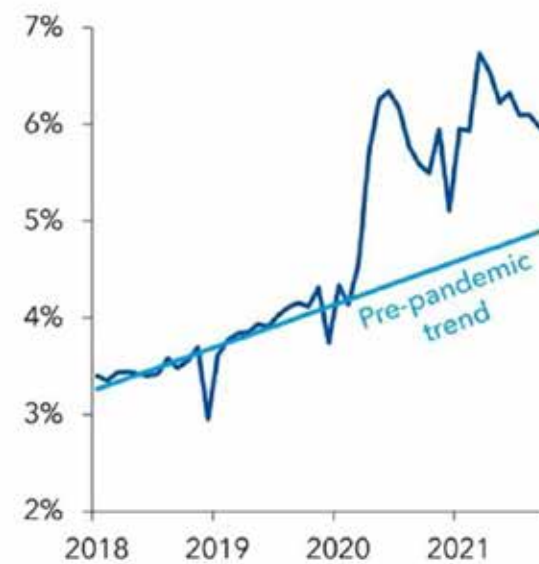
Online retail

The share of retail done online is settling back in line with pre-pandemic trends across various economies.

United States, retail online share



Brazil, retail online share



Source: Mastercard Economics Institute.

IMF

There's no doubt that e-commerce helped many navigate the pandemic, from online shopping to curbside pickup to food delivery. But as we slowly emerge from lockdowns and other restrictions, it's less clear how this shift to digital commerce may evolve across economies and industries.

This raises questions about how much digital consumption increased, whether the crisis widened the digital divide or spurred economies with little e-commerce to catch up, how permanent the shift to online sales will be, and what factors explain deviations between economies and sectors.

We investigated these questions in new research that uses a unique database of aggregated and anonymized transactions through the Mastercard network from across 47 countries from January 2018 to September 2021. We found that the share of online spending rose more in economies where e-commerce already played a large role—and that the increase is reversing as the pandemic recedes.

This research, a new partnership between Mastercard, the International Monetary Fund and Harvard Business School, shows how private-sector

data can help advance empirical economics and will be the first in a series of such studies.

Variation across economies

On average, the online share of total spending rose sharply from 10.3 percent in 2019 to 14.9 percent at the peak of the pandemic, but then fell to 12.2 percent in 2021.

Though the latest online share of spending is higher than before the pandemic started, it's only 0.6 percentage points above the growth trend for e-commerce had the crisis not happened. While most economies are now below those peak levels, there are still significant differences among countries.

The online share of spending is still above pre-pandemic trends in about half of economies, from large emerging economies such as Brazil and India to other middle-income countries like Bahrain and Jamaica. In all the others, including the United States and many advanced economies, the online shares are now either at or below the predicted pre-COVID trend levels. Those trends are estimated in each economy using a simple extrapolation of

e-commerce's path before the pandemic and reflects what would have been predicted in the absence of the crisis.

We find that e-commerce increased more in economies with a higher pre-COVID share of online transactions in total consumption, exacerbating the digital divide across economies. For example, Singapore, Canada and the United Kingdom had high shares to begin with, and their online penetration went up even more during the pandemic. On the other hand, countries like Brazil and Thailand had low online shares pre-COVID, and they experienced less of an acceleration.

How persistent was the effect on online sales? Strikingly, the latest data suggest that the spikes in online spending shares are gradually dissipating at the aggregate level.

The average online spending share at the peak of the crisis was 4.3 percentage points above the level that would have been predicted before it hit. This difference drops to only 0.3 point by the end of our sample period.

Pandemic restrictions, fiscal support

One explanation for the variation across economies, and in online share of spending, may be the difference across pandemic-related mobility restrictions. Not surprisingly, economies with stricter limits saw much higher online spending.

This was particularly true at the beginning of the crisis in the second quarter of 2020, when lockdowns severely curbed movement in most economies. However, as the pandemic continued, that correlation between restrictions and online spending weakened—consistent with the declining impact of lockdowns and other restrictions on economic activity over time.

In addition, fiscal support during the pandemic helped boost e-commerce penetration, likely by increasing consumption, which, in the presence of pandemic restrictions, could mostly be done online. Wealthier, more digitally mature economies also returned faster to pre-pandemic pace of online spending once the crisis receded.

Longer-lasting effects


One common narrative is that the pandemic accelerated digitalization, forcing consumers to learn how to shop online, and that this learning was here to stay. While our results support the quick uptake of e-commerce, the persistence of learning does not appear broad-based.

That said, we find significant variation by industry. The embrace of e-commerce appears to be particularly longer lasting in restaurants (more specifically in food delivery), health care (which includes telemedicine) and some categories of retail, including department stores, electronics, and clothing.

During the initial surge of the pandemic, there was a big demand for e-commerce relative to in-person commerce. Economies and sectors already familiar with some of the technologies were able to go online to a larger degree. While the pandemic forced consumers to learn quickly, our results suggest that early adopters further extended the use of e-commerce within their economies.

Further, there are two possible explanations for differences in the embrace of e-commerce across industries. First, this could reflect that mobility hasn't fully recovered, along with the in-person nature of some sectors such as dining. Second, digitalization in these same sectors wasn't particularly high before the pandemic, and those were the areas where COVID-19 propelled the shift the most.


The share of online spending rose and fell most dramatically in those economies and sectors where e-commerce was already thriving before the pandemic. Industries with lower levels of digital maturity—including retail, restaurants, and health care—have greater potential for e-commerce, particularly in less developed markets, making them potentially ripe for change.



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION BELIZE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Utilities Commission (PUC)



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION BELIZE

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) hereby serves notice that in accordance with the Water Industry Act, No. 1 of 2001, Sections 15 and 19, the Commission intends to modify the license granted by the PUC to the Belize Water Services Limited (BWS) on March 22, 2001.

In support of the Governments Policy and the Social Investment Funds programme in expanding potable water, the PUC intends to amend the BWS License to include the following villages as part of the Authorized Service areas:

Chan Pine Ridge Village – Orange Walk District

Gardenia and Biscayne Villages – Belize District

Sarawee Village - Stann Creek District

The PUC invites members of the public to submit written comments by April, 19th 2022 at the main office located at #4 Princess Margaret Drive, Marina Towers, 2nd Floor, Belize City, or via email to info@puc.bz.

The license granted to Belize Water Services Limited is available for viewing at the office of the Public Utilities Commission, #4 Princess Margaret Drive, Marina Towers, 2nd Floor, Belize City.



The **Port of Belize Limited** hereby gives notice to all those concerned that all cargo listed below that is not legally removed from the **Port of Belize Limited** by **Friday, March 25th, 2022** shall be sold at a **PUBLIC AUCTION SALE** on **Saturday, March 26th, 2022** at **9:00am sharp** at **Port of Belize Ltd. Facility**.



Vessel	ATA	BL NO	Break Bulk Cargo/ Warehouse Consignee Name	Drno	QTY	UNIT	Description
			IDELFONSI ACOSTA	160308			
			ROY THOMAS	6308019			
			RED CROSS	6874168			
VANQUISH 146	14/03/2020	SMLU6088777A	MAHOGANY BAY MANAGEMENT	1626869		PL	BATH TOWEL/BRUSH/PEN/FISHING LINE/HOOKS/LAMPS
ALEXIA 30	25/02/2014	POMBZ100845	COLSON BAY INVESTMENTS	698853	8	PL	KNOCK DOCK BOXES
CARIBE MARINER 342	7/6/2014	PEVBZ108321	WARREN MUDRY	724543	20	PL	APPLIANCE
CARIBE MARINER 342	7/6/2014	PEVBZ108321	WARREN MUDRY	724555	9	PL	GENERAL GOODS
CARIBE MARINER 506	22/04/2018	PEVBZ149944	BRUCE DAVIDSON	1036970	1	PL	STC KITCHEN CABINETS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 561	22/02/2020	PEVBZ172921	JUAN CARLOS VASQUEZ	1207841			USED PERSONAL GOODS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 354	14/09/2015	CBOG298809	JOSHUA BUETTNER	623737	1		PERSONAL EFFECTS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 359	19/10/2015	CBOG298894	JOSHUA BUETTNER	632614			PERSONAL EFFECTSS
VANQUISH 174	20/09/2021	PEVBZ188929	RAMIREZ AC & ELEC	1343049	2		SOLAR EQUIPMENT
BALTIMAR ZEPHYR 19	2/5/2015	CBOG298352	MELINDA DIAZ	588203	1		PERFUMERY PRODUCTS
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 555	15/12/2019	PEVBZ170775	BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEM	1191495			COMPUTER SUPPLIES
CARIBE NAVIGATOR 555	15/12/2019	PEVBZ170775	BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEM	1191495			COMPUTER SUPPLIES
CARIBE MARINER 397	18/07/2015	PEVBZ115232	FULTEC SYSTEM	814840			COMPUTER SUPPLIES
CARIBE MARINER 375	30/01/2015	PEVBZ111962	HYDE BELIZE EXPRESS	774016			PERSONAL ITEMS
CARIBE MARINER 562	29/12/2019	PEVBZ171258	RUSSELL LONGSWORTH	1194291	1	CTN	PERSONAL ITEMS
JAN CARIBE 447	18/10/2020	SMLU6326563A	ANDRE MAHLER	1715370	1	CTN	JANITORAL EQUIPMENTS
VANQUISH 159	21/06/2020	MIAJ258088	DENNIS JANTZEN	1229497	1	PL	SAID TO CONTAIN PRIMARY CELL BATTERIES
VANQUISH 156	31/05/2020	PEVBZ175526	CHANNEL BROADCASTING	1228645	1		STC REEL
CARIBE MARINER 564	28/01/2020	PEVBZ172046	FERNANDO GIACOMAN	1197202		CTN	GENERAL STORE MERCHANDISE
VANQUISH 6	14/05/2016		STEPHEN MOTT	A42230		CTN	HOUSEHOLD GOODS
PANJANG 3	8/3/2016	BZE1265	WINGSTOP	12867	4	CTN	PERSONAL EFFECTS
VEGA VIRGO 22	5/3/2013	CBOG296108	CITRUS COMPANY OF BELIZE	401696		BX	AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS
BALTIMAR ZEPHYR 15	31/03/2015	POMBZ10886	BZE BILTMORE PLAZA	791704	2	CTN	LAMP SHADES
			MSL LOGISTICS	936815		BX	
VANTAGE 65	13/01/2019	PEVBZ159036	BELIZE BREW CO. LTD.	1103999	1	PL	DIVERGAN-RS DRUMS
CORONA 19	18/12/2015	PEVBZ120502	BELIZE OCEAN CLUB LTD.	850246		BX	GENERAL GOODS
CARIBE MARINER 455	5/12/2016	CBOU12296405	GUERRA ENGINEERING	6616788	11	PC	HAZMAT
JAN CARIBE 434	12/7/2020	PEVBZ176407	JEFFREY DENNIS PIERCE	1232608	4	BX, PL	FURNITURE
VANTAGE 55	30/09/2018	SMLU5417177A	SUGAR FIX BAKERY	1486032	3	BX, PL	RESTURANT EQ SUPLIES
CRIBE MARINER 585	1/11/2020	PEVBZ179578	IONIE SLUSHER	1264936		BX	CLOTHING TV
JAN CARIBE 450	22/11/2020	PEVBZ180164	KEAGAN MOORE	1266236	11	PL	BELT PRIME
CARIBE MARINER 590	13/12/2020	PEVBZ180694	ROGER GABOUREL	1276472		PL	HOUSEHOLD GOODS



VACANCY: JOB OPPORTUNITY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons to fill the following post in the Operations Department. In the Port's continued effort to promote diversity, both females/males, are encouraged to apply for the available post.

ASSISTANT OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR

Reports to: Cargo Operations Manager

Summary of Responsibilities: The Assistant Operations Supervisor will report to the Cargo Operations Manager and will assist with the supervision of all container movement and operations personnel. He or she will be responsible for preparing vessel worked forms to Accounts Department for billing and statistical/Operational reports. Able to check reefer plugins, read and calculate charges. Learn newly implemented Octopi Terminal Operating System, *training to be provided*. Assist COM with preparing gang order for vessels and reefer cargo information. This post is fun and challenging, come prepared for a new venture.

Job Responsibilities:

Summary of Responsibilities: The Assistant Operations Supervisor will report to the Cargo Operations Manager (COM) and will assist with the supervision of all container movement and operations personnel. He or she will be responsible for preparing vessel worked forms to Accounts Department for billing and statistical/Operational reports. Able to check reefer plugins, read and calculate charges. Utilize newly implemented Octopi Terminal Operating System (TOS), inhouse training and opportunity for ongoing self-development to be provided.

Assist COM with preparing gang order for vessels, berth planning, staff scheduling and reefer cargo information.

Leadership Responsibilities:

- Attract, develop, grow and retain the best talents and fill the leadership pipeline.
- Organize, balance and schedule workloads within the department.
- Prioritize, delegate, and set performance objectives.
- Follow-up on performance, provide quality feedback, and objectively appraise differentiated performance levels.
- Empower and inspire staff to achieve high levels of motivation and employee engagement.
- Ensure zero harm, improve safe working processes.
- Provide timely reports for all accidents, incidents and disciplinary incidents.
- Understand Customer requirements and drive the department to achieve these on a consistent basis.
- Track and manage variable expenditure to avoid all cost waste and reduce costs to the bare minimum.
- Continuously lean, streamline, and improve processes.
- Leverage relevant technology to automate processes.
- Maintain high levels of data quality for data and information and reports provided to other functions.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Remain vigilant and immediately take action in the event any personnel, customers or visitors to the terminal are not wearing PPE and/or any unsafe acts are witnessed.
- Assist with supervising of the movement of inbound and outbound of all containers and break bulk/bulk cargoes.
- Assist with supervising of personnel working in the port compound, container yard and pier.
- Assist with the input, processing and verification of correct and complete upload of vessel and cargo information into the TOS in preparation of vessel arrival. Reconcile planned and executed work prior vessel departure. Provide relief at Gate-In and Gate-Out processes as required.
- Develop and implement a systematic yard plan to accommodate perform cargo flows into and out of the yard; modify as required to meet actual vessel cargo fluctuations.
- Plan, sequence, execute and monitor cargo discharge and load, into and out of the yard in an optimized manner.
- Generate and execute work queues for yard stacker operators; discharge and load; monitor execution.
- Assist with the preparation of gang order for vessels.
- Assist with the preparation and daily maintenance of the staff roster; aligning anticipated operations manning requirements with projected vessel movements, distributing regularly (daily if required).
- Assist with the preparation and daily maintenance and distribution of the Berth Plan.
- Provide relief at Gate-In and Gate-Out processes as required.
- Provide relief at Front-Desk release processes as required.
- Check and sign delivery orders for authenticity to load direct delivery containers.
- Assist with the supervising of the loading and unloading of containers and break-bulk vessels in compound/pierhead.
- Provide reports of vessels worked to Accounts Department for billing.
- Provide reports (work logs) of vessels worked for operations statistics.
- Check and prepare reefer cargo information. Check reefer plug-ins, reading and calculate charges.
- Develop and maintain operational data and operational reporting.

Innovation & Productivity Improvements

- Learn "Octopi" Terminal Operating System (TOS). Initial basic training is to be provided and an inquisitive mind is required to continually learn, adopt and implement new features released within the TOS software on an ongoing basis. Strive to realize both the TOS's and the organization's full potential.
- Proactively drive efficiency and productivity and provide suggestions and recommendations to the Supervisors for continuous improvements.
- Develop and maintain updated processes and procedures for all tasks so that work is 100% standardized.
- Actively seek opportunities to drive innovation and realize efficiencies in the standardized work.
- Ensure all general work areas in a clean, tidy and hazard free condition.
- Any other duties and functions, of a related nature that may be assigned from time to time by the Cargo Operations Manager.

Requirements:

- Demonstratable supervisory and leadership skills required
- Proactive in addressing safety issues, hazardous practices and operational emergencies
- Ability to challenge standard practice and drive operational improvements
- Ability to work independently
- Able to work flexible hours
- Strong mathematical and analytical skills, critical thinking
- Microsoft office proficiency required
- Computer literacy including familiarity with data base entry and reporting, TOS utilization.

Job qualifications/Requirements:

- Experience in Cargo & Container Operations, Production or similar would be an asset.
- Associates Degree or higher
- Math & English CXC passes would be an asset.
- Experience supervising a blue-collar team would be an asset.

Skills/Competencies:

- Ability to work independently
- Ability to work flexible working hours
- Math and analytical skills required.
- Supervisory and leadership skills required.
- Pro-activeness required.
- Microsoft office proficiency required.

Compensation Package: Will be commensurate (in accordance with the Company's Salary Structure).

To Apply:

Provide updated resume, cover letter (addressed to Human Resource Manager), copy of valid social security card, Valid police record, name and phone number of two (2) previous employers and a copy of COVID vaccination card.

Applications should be emailed to:

jobapplications@portofbelize.com

Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday, March 25th, 2022

No Excuses

A Good Country

CONTRIBUTED:

Retired Public Officer

The Right Honourable Said Musa, former Prime Minister of Belize once said; "Belize is a good country." Perhaps it was an understatement and he could have elaborated, but he was absolutely correct and 'dead on the money.' Belize ostensibly is a true tropical paradise, but it has a major problem: and that is its politics, which has also contaminated many of its people.

But the physical aspect of the country is amazingly superb. Its location, smug in Central America and washed by the beautiful and bounteous Caribbean Sea is ideal. Its climate is one in which there are no great extremes, e.g. Its temperature is constant within a relatively narrow range; it has the largest barrier reef in the entire Atlantic Ocean, second only to the great barrier reef of Australia. With such a reef it is home to a wide variety of living marine organisms. There are numerous fishing banks with large numbers of different species of fish; then there is lobster, shrimp, conch, crab, rich nourishing seaweeds, and seagrass to provide food for the marine herbivores, all of which becomes a food source for us.

There are the mangroves whose roots help to hold the soil together and prevent erosion plus it provides nursery and protection for young hatchlings - before they venture out into the deeper open waters. There are numerous marine birds that enhance the beauty of the marine environment. In addition to all this, the sea provides for recreation such as boating, i.e. sailing, steaming, sport and commercial fishing, swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, picnicking, and residing at the numerous cayes with their sandy beaches and the blue and turquoise waters and fresh sea breezes cooling down

the heat from the land. We still have quite a bit of forest which is so essential to life, and ours is a tropical forest that is so bountiful with its high degree of productivity. It allows for high production of rich pure oxygen in a clear unpolluted sky, and at the same time allows for carbon dioxide sequestration for its photosynthetic activity.

The forest also provides wood for building homes and is used in cooking. The advantage here is that trees that are cut can be replanted for sustainability. The forest is home to many game animals and wild birds which are used for food. It is to the credit of different governments to have and maintain forest reserves. Except for Guyana, the other Caribbean territories virtually lack forests of any significance. Our forest also provides watersheds for our water supply needs. There are numerous year-round rivers due to the topography of the land and the forest watersheds.

Water that is so essential for life is needed for drinking, cooking, washing, removal of waste, both body waste and sullage ie waste from bathing, cleaning, mopping, doing the dishes, etc. The rivers house, a variety of fish, turtles, freshwater crayfish all used to provide for food, transportation, navigation, and recreation viz: boating, swimming, and fishing. There are also many wetlands with a wide variety of birds species inhabiting them as well as many lagoons suited for recreation such as fishing and swimming etc.

Then they are many areas of the country that are rich in agricultural lands. This is expressed in the wide variety of fruits and vegetables available. This includes coconuts with their healthy refreshing water and the meat for coconut milk for cooking and sweet delicacies; the wide varieties of mangoes, plums, soursop, cashews (with their nuts), custard ap-

ples, avocado pears, citrus fruits, watermelons, cantaloupe, pineapples, berries, etc. Many vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, okra, green leafy vegetables of all sorts, cucumbers, beets, pumpkins, chochos, rice, corn beans of different types, legumes, ground tubers, roots etc. Then there are different animals used for meat: chickens, ducks, turkeys, pigs, cattle, sheep, goats, and so on. Added to all this is a relatively small population with its rich cultural diversity.

The result is incursions from the neighboring countries ex-

some 20% of Belize population made up of "aliens" its population is now about 400,000 people. Guatemala's about 17,000,000, El Salvador or about 7,000,000 Honduras about 10,000,000 and Nicaragua about 7,000,000 i.e. some 40,000,000 immediately around us. We are not counting Chinese, Asians, Africans, and Europeans.

With all our God-given resources our people don't seem to realize all that we have. They don't appreciate "the wealth untold." Instead, our people complain, beg,

In the old days, Belize was a calm pleasant society people were more mannerly, respectful, decent, and friendly. One would wish and hope that the people of Belize would realize the God-given gift of a wonderful country like Belize:

ploiting our resources. These incursions not only involve taking, clearing, and occupying our land, but are also causing our population to increase with the resultant illegal cutting down of our forests and exploiting our fish stocks. It is also causing an increasing demand on our social resources such as educational, medical, police, prison overcrowding, human social resource systems. The incursions are for the most part by poor immigrants, very many thousands of them who are seeking a better life (otherwise they would not come).

They all come to eke out a living from our little country. You don't get medical doctors, nurses, pharmacists, teachers, engineers, architects, surveyors coming in. Those who come are all poor people and from several countries, not just one: Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Except for El Salvador which is about the same size as Belize physically, the other is some five or six times the size of Belize with huge populations compared to Belize. With

seek handouts, encouraged and pushed by politicians. This is seen by how the politicians carry on in the House of Representatives. Each political party spends most of its time accusing each other of hustle and corruption.

The argument is not so much about who performs well for the people and country but rather on who is more corrupt, as they hurl insults at each other. The behavior of the nonpolitical senators in the Upper House is a lot more refreshing. Politicians' objective appears to be that of getting into "power" to hustle and in so doing contaminate society. Big businesses support and control politicians to get their own hustle and this passes down to the people from the higher ranks down to the people who seek to copy the trend. So each rank seeks to be a part of this hustle: e.g. within the public service, the police and quasi-government organizations.

Politicians make ludicrous outlandish promises and accept funding from those

who will ultimately demand and get back their investment "many sold" (their pound of flesh) when campaigning to win the votes of citizens. It is like the story of the politician who died and went to St. Peter at the pearly gates. But, there, St. Peter told him that he just cannot enter heaven, but must experience both heaven and hell then make his choice. So he was sent to hell first. He expected the heat of fire and brimstone and the screaming and whaling from people suffering. Instead when he got there, he was welcomed into a most beautiful place, lawns well-manicured no heat nor screaming. He was then taken to a luxurious Five Star air-conditioned hotel with a swimming pool. He was given the most scrumptious cuisine. He then saw many of his old friends beckoning to him and inviting him to play golf with them.

Afterward, he was treated to a most lovely and divine dinner of lobster, shrimp, baked potatoes, expensive wines - the works. He then went to the pool to swim where beautiful young ladies brought him his choice of the finest champagne and whiskey. After all this, he was back at the pearly gates, where St. Peter explained to him the conditions of heaven. There, people were in their white robes, singing hymns, praying and reading the Bible, reciting the rosary, and consuming nourishing milk and honey. So St.

Peter told him he can choose to spend eternity in heaven or hell.

Well, the wily politician chose hell and was sent back there to spend eternity. When he arrived, the searing heat was unbearable; there was hellfire and brimstone, people were crying and screaming as they were being tortured. He saw the devil and asked about the air-conditioned hotel, the scrumptious food, the golf course, the pool, and the fine expensive wines, whiskey, and champagne. The devil he had seen the day before replied: "Well you see, yesterday we were campaigning, today you voted." Shades of Belizean elections?

In the old days, Belize was a calm pleasant society people were more mannerly, respectful, decent, and friendly. One would wish and hope that the people of Belize would realize the God-given gift of a wonderful country like Belize: We should never cease to pray and thank the lord for this country, this tranquil haven of democracy; this country, this blessed choice: Our own "Belize by the sea".

Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper's stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.



Oración al Espíritu Santo

Espíritu Santo. Tú que me aclaras todo, que iluminas todo mis caminos para yo alcance mi ideal; tú que das el don divino de perdonar y olvidar el mal que me hacen y que en todos los instantes de mi vida estas conmigo, yo quiero en este corto diálogo agradecerte por todo y confirmar una vez más que nunca quiero separarme de ti, por mayor que sea la ilusión material! Deseo estar contigo y todos mis seres queridos por tu misericordia para estar conmigo y los míos. (La persona debiera rezar esta oración 3 días seguidos sin decir el pedido. Dentro de tres días será difícil que sea. Publicar en cuando se reciba la gracia.

Gracias Espíritu Santo.

R.M.L.

All about The People

The Status of the State



Neri Briceno

‘A small Belizean caye has been featured in international news this week. But, not as an eco-destination or playground for the rich and famous. This time it seems a piece of Belize is being touted as the world’s newest nation, complete with a flag, national anthem, national day, and even its own prince and Prime Minister.

The investors, a group called “Let’s Buy an Island,” say they completed the purchase of Coffee Caye through crowd

funding, right before the pandemic. The team led its first trip to the island in late 2021. Now, if all of this seems a bit far-fetched for you, the concept of a micro nation is not new.

Several have been established across the globe, although they are not officially recognized states. The investors are now calling Coffee Caye the Principality of Islandia. And while it appears to simply be a unique marketing strategy to attract capital, Islandia has already pulled in almost one hundred investors and two hundred and forty-nine people who consider themselves citizens. And they are reportedly aiming for five thousand citizens in the near future’. New 5 Belize, On-line newsprint, Belize C.A. March 11th,

2022 Any person that is a not a citizen of Belize is therefore a guest in the nation and are there pretty much at the pleasure of the people and the government of Belize.

As a citizen of any nation there are cer-

This is distasteful, disrespectful and just plain ignorant. The government must put a stop to this nonsense immediately. As hardworking, patriotic and proud Belizean we need to stop having people come within our borders and do whatever they want.

tain legal rights you are entitled to and also certain obligation that you have as being a part of that state. Depending on what type of governance system you live under, you may have the right to liberty, free speech, a fair judicial system and the right to defend your-

self in a court of law, safety, education, health care, freedom of religion or the freedom to pursuit your own happiness.

As a foreigner you may automatically enjoy these universal freedoms but, within the scope of the nation you re-

side or visit. For example, the extent of freedom of the press and personal free speech differ widely as compared between China and the United States. Then there is the aspect of cultural and local norms. The cultural dynamics of nations are completely different. They are forged by history, race, culture, population demographics, education, religion, standard of living and a myriad of other factors.

These form those unwritten rules of etiquette that must be respected if you are in someone else’s country. For example, it would be extremely disrespectful and impolite to ask for bacon as part of your breakfast menu if you are in an Islamic Muslim nation.

It is with an outright sense of resentment that I read the article about Coffee Caye in one of our local online news feeds. I appreciate that the media house carried it because it shows the audacity of some foreigners especially when they are spending a little bit of money in Belize.

While I completely understand what this project is trying to achieve, it flies in the face of Belizeans and the respect of Belize as a sovereign independent state. If there is one issue that as Belizeans we do not joke about, it’s our right to exist and the fact that we are a sovereign independent state.

After generations of dealing with a bully to the west and south and who until this day continue to have an unfounded territorial claim over our beloved nation, the last thing we need is for some entity, investment, project, group or just plain jokers coming up with some idea or scheme to create their own micronation.

This is distasteful, disrespectful and just plain ignorant. The government must put a stop to this nonsense immediately. As hardworking, patriotic and proud Belizean we need to stop having people come within our bor-


ders and do whatever they want. Things that they would not dream of doing in their own countries are readily put into practice here.

You simply do not go into a man’s house and do as you will. That is not allowed in a personal setting and must not be allowed at the level of the state. While it appears that the ‘investment’ is saying that they will abide by all the laws of Belize, just making that statement or coming up with the idea of creating your own nation should have never been on their mind, had they done their researched on the history of Belize.

GOB please put the wrath of God in these people and stop this madness. We cannot be so cash scrap and investment hungry that we allow people to come here and blatantly disrespect us as a nation and a people.

It’s all about the people!

Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper’s stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.



VACANCY - MARKETING OFFICER
FREETOWN BRANCH - BELIZE CITY

Interested applicants must possess the following skills and qualifications:

Education and Experience:

- Bachelor’s Degree in Marketing or Business Administration or other business-related fields with three years experience in Marketing or similar discipline.
- Associate’s Degree in Marketing or Business Administration or other business-related field with five years experience in Marketing or similar discipline.
- Experience in banking would be an asset.

Interpersonal Relations:

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Contribute positively to team building with the leaders, team members and customers.
- Pleasant manner and tone in communicating on the phone and in person.

Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies:

- Exercise good judgment, ingenuity and creativity.
- Possess ability to build and sustain quality internal and external customer relationships.
- Possess good analytical, time management and organizational skills.
- Function well under pressure and with proven success in handling several projects simultaneously with little supervision.
- Highly dedicated and motivated, while maintaining strict confidentiality.
- Speak fluent English (Spanish would be an asset).

General Responsibilities:

- Prepare, lead and assist in the implementation of marketing plans.
- Oversee design and distribution of marketing materials.
- Recommend new ideas for advertising and promotion of products and services.
- Attend and participate in events to create brand awareness and promote the Bank’s products and services.
- Monitor media coverage, perception and maintain effective media relations.
- Maintain internal communications and assist with training to educate staff about the Bank’s products and services.
- Any other duties assigned.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2022

Interested applicants may submit application letter, résumé, and two reference letters to:

Chief Human Resources Officer
Human Resources Department
Atlantic Bank Ltd.
Cor. Cleghorn Street / Freetown Road, P.O. Box 481, Belize City, Belize



RF&G LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.

Date: March 11, 2022

Kera Bowman of #4253 Croton Lane, St Martin de Porres, Belize City, Belizel District, Belize C.A. having made written declaration that Policy 5200000775 under RF&G Life Insurance Company Ltd has been lost and having made request to the Company for a duplicate of the Policy, notice is hereby given that unless objection is raised within one month of the date herein, the requested duplicate policy will be issued.



STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Consultancy Firm to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation Model and develop a Risk-based Compliance Management Model

Institution: The Ministry of Finance (MOF)
Country: Belize Project: Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)
Abstract: Consulting Services – Consultancy Firm to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation and develop a Risk-based Compliance Management Model.
Loan No.: 4839/OC-BL
Deadline: April 1st, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled “Strengthening of Tax Administration” (BL-L1031). Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS) and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the Belize Tax Administration.

The BTSD Strategic Plan clearly addresses the relevance of taxpayer segmentation and the risk management approach. It indicates that:

“It has become good practice for Tax Administrators across the world to implement Taxpayer Segmentation in revenue management to effectively analyze taxpayer data and to efficaciously implement different and specific surveillance and control mechanisms,” and that; “The deployment of a ‘Risk management approach’ is a modern and pertinent tactic that would aid in compliance. This approach gives a structured basis for strategic planning; focuses on the underlying drivers (not symptoms) of non-compliance; promotes diversity in the way major tax compliance risks are treated, rather than a ‘one size fits all’ approach; realizes better outcomes as it refers to efficiency and effectiveness of programs; coincides with international standards and is a strong basis for evidence-based evaluation.

Consequently, the BTSD will explore the introduction of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to properly respond to the risks identified on a timely basis, to minimize overall compliance burden for both the taxpayers and the tax administration. As an important aspect of the RMP, risk mitigating strategies will be proposed for application against potential and existing risks. The plan will highlight all areas of risks including risk-based assessments, risk-based audits, risk-based sector and taxpayer segmentation, compliance risks (registration, filing, reporting and payments) and international risks. Risk mitigation reduces the extent of exposure and ensures that the strategic objectives are achieved.”

The consulting services (“the services”) includes the contracting of a Consultancy Firm for a period of five (5) months to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation and develop a Risk-based compliance management model, including configuration of the model in the ITAS. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

1. To prepare an Action plan for the review and updating of the Taxpayer Segmentation Model and Risk Analysis Strategy
2. To Assess the status of BTSD taxpayer segmentation and the use of risk-based techniques in the BTSD and to analyze the BTSD taxpayer information to identify ways to segment the taxpayer population following different criteria (income, assets, number of employees, economic activities etc.), and other relevant indicators.
3. To review and update the current model for segmentation of BTSD taxpayers (companies and individuals) and to define a strategy for updating taxpayers’ segments and profiles in the ITAS periodically.
4. Profile all BTSD taxpayers following the model once the model is approved by BTSD management.
5. To propose a model for the risk-based compliance model, defining the risk-based indicators, the rules, the risk factors to be utilized, their relative relevance (high, medium, low), the sources of information to utilized, the mitigation measures, and the required operations to use them.
6. To include the information on taxpayer segmentation in the ITAS database, inclusive of defining (setting) the parameters and rules for its then configuration in the ITAS database.
7. To prepare a report on the risks identified as well as the relevant mitigation measures to be introduced.
8. To suggest additional information (internal and external) to improve its risk-based control system.
9. To deliver workshops to BTSD staff on the Taxpayer Segmentation Model and risk analysis strategy to be implemented.

The Consultancy Firm should have a minimum of five (5) years’ relevant working experience in similar assignment, helping tax administrations to implement risk-based taxpayer compliance programs with the application of taxpayer segmentation and information crosschecking. In addition, the Consultant firm should have a minimum five (5) years’ specific experience in the following areas:

- Tax administration,
- Taxpayer compliance control based on taxpayer segmentation, risk analysis and information crosschecking, and
- Training on risk-based taxpayer, taxpayer segmentation and information crosschecking.

As well as a minimum of three (3) years of previous experience in conducting assistance to countries in the areas of taxpayer segmentation, implementing risk-based compliance

controls, and information crosschecking. Furthermore, the Consulting firm should have knowledge and experience working in Belize, and or the Caribbean environment in a similar assignment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultancy Firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). *The term “consultant” means a legally established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.*

Expression of Interest package should contain:

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- (iv) Two references
- (v) Proof of nationality: Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

- (vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- (vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- (viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- (ix) Copy of Current Trade License

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: *Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank* (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition) and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **3:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 1st, 2022.**

Interested consulting firms are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz marked STAP- Consultancy Firm to review and update the current Taxpayer Segmentation and develop a Risk-based Compliance Management Model in the subject header, or submit on or before **3:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 1st, 2022** to the following address:

**Director General
 Belize Tax Service
 Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
 Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
 Mahogany Street, Belize City
 Tel: 501-222-5114**

For clarifications kindly contact:

**Procurement Officer
 Project Executing
 Unit Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
 Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
 Mahogany Street, Belize City
 Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz**

Belize plans to manage Water resources

By William Ysaguirre

Belizeans can no longer afford to take our ample freshwater resources for granted, as the recent drought of 2019 demonstrated, and farmers drawing on underground water for crop irrigation during a drought must consider that they are drawing on an aquifer that is also used by Mexico and Guatemala, Principal Hydrologist Tennielle Williams Hendy warned.

Williams explained the dynamics of managing Belize's water resources, when the Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining launched its \$1.8 million project to develop a National

Adaptation Plan for sustainable water management at the Best Western Biltmore Plaza Hotel in Belize City last Thursday afternoon, March 10.

The project aims to benefit the most vulnerable population: Belize's farmers, who lost millions of dollars in crop damages when rivers burst their banks and flooded their fields, and millions more in losses from failed harvests caused by droughts. Climate Change has not only altered rainfall patterns and thrown farmers' planting seasons out of kilter. It has also had multiple impacts on Belize's water resources, as sea level rise means the contamination of un-



Principal Hydrologist Tennielle Williams

derground freshwater aquifers with salt water, and the increasing salt level in the Belize River estuary is already making Belize Water Services plan to relocate the water intake for the water treatment plant at Double Run, which supplies Belize

City.

The project will work in partnership with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC) in Belmopan to develop a national climate adaptation plan to manage Belize's water resources in a sustain-

able manner, explained Ministry of Economic Development's Chief Executive Officer Osmond Martinez. The project will develop a learning framework for managing our water resources, along with a national monitoring and evaluation system for all Belize's rivers, lagoons and streams water resources. Local academia will be invited to collaborate in monitoring coastal sea levels and water resources to gather better information for improved decision making to adapt to climate change impacts. The project will also develop a concept note of the adaptation priorities of the water sector within the management plan.

Belize is not alone in its fight against the effects of Climate Change, as the Green Climate Fund offers help to developing nations to adapt and mitigate Climate Change impacts, explained Belize's GCF focal point Leroy Martinez.

Belize has access to \$10.8 billion to which the Fund has raised in pledges from 48 nations to conform to the Paris Agreement, when the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC established the Fund in 2010. The fund finances projects to reduce carbon emissions an also mitigation projects to improve resilience to Climate Change, and the public and private sector and civil organizations can also submit project proposals to get GCF funding.

Projects submitted by the private sector or civil societies must conform to national priorities, and must first be approved by the National Designated Authority—CEO Osmond Martinez, and the GCF focal point within the ministry—to be considered for GCF financing. The GCF may provide a grant or a loan on concessionary terms, or in the form of technical assistance.

The Caribbean Development Bank and 5 C's are regional entities already accredited to the GCF, as is the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT). The

Development Finance Corporation, the Social Investment Fund and the Ministry of Economic Development are also seeking GCF accreditation.

Hydrologist Tennielle Williams explained that persons planning to drill a well for water are required by law to first obtain a license from the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining. They have to determine the rate of water flow from the aquifer they tap into and whether it will meet their needs for the amount of water they plan to extract, and whether it will be sustainable for the groundwater to be replenished naturally by rainfall over time. The need for a water management plan has become urgent, as the best climate change projection indicate the rainfall will decrease progressively over all regions of the world. It may be hard to imagine now, but water will become more valuable than oil!

Belizeans must learn how to conserve water and to properly dispose of garbage to avoid contamination of the water supply. This means not dumping garbage down an empty well which has gone dry, as the waste may still leach harmful chemicals into the underground water supply. The plan will include a public education component to bring everyone in sync with the national goals. Belizeans must be prepared for the economic impact of natural disasters that are related to water.

Providing safe, potable water for everyone, particularly the rural population in the villages, is a complex problem and 5C's stand ready to help, affirmed Keith Nichols, the head of Project Development and Management Unit at 5C's. As an accredited entity of the GCF, 5C's is equipped to prepare projects for up to US\$50 million in GCF financing. In the case of other small islands where rainfall has been reduced, the center has helped with water desalination projects powered by solar, as desalination is expensive in terms of power consumption.



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES

Institution: Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing
Country: Belize
Project: Additional Financing for George Price Highway Rehabilitation Project
Sector: Infrastructure, Environment and Natural Disasters
Abstract: Individual Consulting Services – Social Specialist
Loan/Credit/Grant No.: 4616/OC-BL
Deadline: March 25th, 2022

The Government of Belize has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Additional Financial under the George Price Highway Rehabilitation Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include the contracting of a Social Specialist for one year who will be responsible for the design, implementation, and oversight of a social program for the technical cooperation and loan programs managed by the Program Management Unit.

The Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (GN-2350-15, January 2020) – Section V, 5.2 Selection of Individual Consultants based on Comparison of Qualifications of National Individual Consultants.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours:

Program Management Unit
 #1 Power Lane, Belmopan, Cayo
 Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
 Tel: 501-822-0100/1942
 Email: pmupcmow@gmail.com or gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by 10:00 am (local Belize time) on March 25th, 2022.

Attn: Mr. Rolando Chan
 Program Coordinator
 #1 Power Lane, Belmopan
 Cayo District, Belize
Tel: 501-822-0100/1942
E-mail: pmupcmow@gmail.com or gphrp.3344@midh.gov.bz



INVITATION TO BID

SEVENTH POWER PROJECT

CAYE CAULKER INTERCONNECTION

Submarine Cable for the Caye Caulker Interconnection to San Pedro, Ambergris Caye; under the Seventh Power Project

Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) has received financing from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) towards the cost of the Seventh Power Project and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this financing to eligible payments under a contract for which this invitation is issued. Payments by CDB will be made only at the request of BEL and upon approval by CDB, and will be subject in all respects to the terms and conditions of the Financing Agreement. The Financing Agreement prohibits withdrawal from the financing account for the purpose of any payment to persons or entities, or for any import of goods, if such payment or import, to the knowledge of CDB, is prohibited by a decision of the United Nations Security Council taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. No party other than BEL shall derive any rights from the Financing Agreement or have any claim to the proceeds of the Financing.

BEL now invites electronic bids from eligible bidders for the supply of 9.5 Miles of 34.5kV Submarine Cable for the Caye Caulker interconnection to San Pedro, Ambergris Caye under the Seventh Power Project. Works include but are not limited to the following:

- **Design, manufacture, testing, transport, delivery to the Employer in Belize of 34.5 kV submarine cable and the accessories.**

Consideration will be limited to firms or joint ventures of firms which are legally incorporated or otherwise organized in, and have their principal place of business in an eligible country and are either:

- (a) more than 50% beneficially-owned by citizen or citizens and/or bona fide resident or residents of an eligible country or by a body corporate or bodies corporate meeting these requirements; or
- (b) owned or controlled by the government of an eligible country provided that it is legally and financially autonomous and operated under the commercial law of an eligible country and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of the CDB Guidelines for Procurement (2006).

Procurement eligibility is extended to include all countries which are not CDB Member Countries.

Eligible bidders will be required to submit full qualification information with their bids establishing their eligibility to bid and qualification to perform the contract if the bid is accepted. Tender and qualification information are to be submitted in the English Language on the prescribed forms inserted in the Bid Documents. Submissions that do not provide the information required, or do not demonstrate the prospective bidder's ability to perform satisfactorily, will not qualify and will not be considered for further evaluation.

Qualification requirements include, inter alia:

A If the Bidder is a manufacturer:

(i) Financial Capability

The Bidder shall furnish documentary evidence that it meets the following financial requirement(s):

- (a) Average Annual Turnover: the Bidder shall have at least the Average Annual Turnover mentioned below over a period of best three years within last five years i.e. 5 years counting backward from the date of publication of ICB of at least \$8,000,000 USD.
Bidder will submit audited financial reports along with the bid or if not required by the law of the Bidder's country, other financial statements acceptable to the Employer, for the last five (5) years to substantiate average annual turnover.
- (b) Liquid Assets: the Bidder at the time of bid submission should provide documentary evidence of at least the amount of liquid asset or working capital or credit facility or their combination of \$8,000,000 USD.

(ii) Experience and Technical Capacity

The Bidder shall furnish documentary evidence to demonstrate that it meets the following experience requirement(s):

- (i) General Experience: the Bidder should have at least five (5) years of general experience in supplying electrical goods and related services (i.e. years counting backward from the date of ICB publication).
- (ii) Specific Experience: the Bidder will at-least have experience of supplying similar goods (i.e. Submarine Cable/Underground Cable) having similar value in at least three contracts, within the last five (5) years (i.e. years counting backward from the date of ICB publication).

(iii) Documentary Evidence

The Bidder shall furnish documentary evidence to demonstrate that the Goods it offers meet the following usage requirement:

- (i) The manufacturer should have at least five (5) years of relevant manufacturing experience (i.e. Submarine Cable/Underground Cable). The five year period will be counted backward from the date of ICB publication).
- (ii) The manufacturer should have the annual manufacturing capacity of double of the offered quantities under the bid.
- (iii) The manufacturer should have registration with the local Chamber of Commerce and Industries or similar entity within the manufacturer's country.

B If Bidder is not a manufacturer:

If a Bidder is not a manufacturer, but is offering the Goods on behalf of the Manufacturer under Manufacturer's Authorization Form (Section IV, Bidding Forms), the Manufacturer shall demonstrate the above qualifications (i), (ii), (iii) and the Bidder shall demonstrate that it has successfully completed at least 3 contracts of similar goods valuing at least \$4,000,000 USD in the past 5 years.

Bidding Documents may be obtained by eligible bidders from the first address below for a non-refundable fee of one hundred United States dollars (USD 100). Requests must be made by written application including email. Written applications must be clearly marked: "**Request for Bidding Documents for the Supply of 9.5 Miles of 34.5kV Submarine Cable for Seventh Power Project**", along with the name, address and contact information of the bidder for which Bidding Documents are being requested. Payment should be by wire transfer or bank draft made payable to: **Belize Electricity Limited**. Information to pay by wire transfer can be obtained from the first address below. Proof of payment is required before bidding documents are issued.

Documents will be promptly dispatched via registered email, but under no circumstance will BEL or their authorized agents be held responsible for late delivery or any other issue related to the issuance of the documents.

Electronic submissions in registered email with the subject title "**Bid for the Supply of 9.5 Miles of 34.5kV Submarine Cable for Seventh Power Project**", must be received at the third address below no later than **10:00 a.m. Belize time on Monday, April 18, 2022**. A virtual bid opening will take place at 11:00 a.m. Belize time on Monday, April 18, 2022 at the second address below in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend virtually.

BEL reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected prospective bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected prospective bidder(s) of the grounds for BEL's action. BEL will not defray any costs incurred by any bidder in the preparation of bids.

1. Address for Correspondence

Email: moris.alvarado@bel.com.bz

2. Address for Bid Opening

Magazine Road Conference Room
Belize Electricity Limited
Belize City, Belize
Central America

3. Address for Bid Submission

Email: bids@mittle@bel.com.bz



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Belize Water Services Limited invites applicants to fill the vacant post of Customer Service Manager in the Customer Service Department.

SUMMARY:

Manages, plans, organizes, integrates and evaluates the service activities and operations of assigned branch; ensures that at the branch level customer expectations are being met and exceeded by team, and performs related duties as assigned. Implement policies and procedures and the company mission, vision and core values is carried out effectively.

DEPARTMENT DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Administer a comprehensive complaint policy and procedures system guided by the Codes of Practice and Water Industry Act.
- Improve our efficiency - Reduce customer waiting time wherever possible and manage all customers' queries and complaints professionally.
- Build and maintain an excellent Customer experience whilst focusing on the company's mission, vision, and core values.
- Improve our customer base – whilst ensuring continuous reduction in the company's Account Receivable and at the same time retain and increase our customer base
- Empower our workforce – Provides coaching, guidance, and feedback that works to develop and retain a highly competent, team of customer-service oriented staff through selection, training and day-to-day management practices which support the Company's mission, vision and values
- Address and solve complaints and queries received in a way that is a win-win for both the customer and the company and provide the necessary follow-up to customers.
- Quality assurance through monitoring of policies and procedures and providing feedback to staff members.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - The incumbent may not perform all of the listed duties and/or may be required to perform additional or different duties from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.

- Plans, manages, controls, evaluates and administrative assistance to the Customer Service area at the branch offices countrywide.
- Assist the manager with the day-to-day management and reporting.
- Recommend and assist in the implementation of goals and objectives; establish schedules and methods for customer service; implement policies and procedures.
- Evaluate operations and activities of assigned responsibilities; recommend improvements and modifications; prepare various reports on operations and activities.
- Coordinate, analyze and implement strategies to ensure that all key accounts countrywide are properly monitored.
- Review and analyze meter reading, field service, and collections activities in relation to billing reports to assess unit production at the district level.
- Make adjustments as necessary with regard to billing problems; and communicate directly with customers to resolve difficult or complex service/billing issues for the district offices.
- Participate in the selection of staff; provide or coordinate staff training; work with employees to correct deficiencies; implement discipline procedures.
- Answer questions and provide information to the public; investigate complaints and recommend corrective action as necessary to resolve complaints.
- Conduct monthly district visit to branch offices to ensure that they are adhering to polices and processes.
- Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers and the public using the principles of good customer service.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS:

Candidates will need to show evidence of the following:

- written and spoken communication skills that allow you to inform, help and advice customers, and liaise with other professionals;
- listening skills, to understand exactly what customers require; problem-solving skills;
- confidence, patience, politeness, tact and diplomacy, when dealing with difficult situations;
- motivational skills and an ability to supervise and lead a team of customer service assistants;
- creative thinking, to be able to come up with new ideas to improve customer service standards;
- an ability to work well under pressure;
- organizational and planning skills to develop customer services policies;
- good personal presentation, especially when working with customers face to face

COMPETENCIES TO BE EVALUATED ON:

1. Technical and Functional Skills
2. Understanding of the Business
3. Ability to achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

EXPECTATIONS:

- Prepare, maintain, and submit monthly reports on operational and personnel matters.
- Maintain a schedule of month end reports outlining the date received and errors identified on the reports.
- Make recommendations to management concerning staff matters and improvement to procedures and policies.
- Communicates with other departments and management to resolve problems and expedite work.
- Train and instruct staff members, assist with hiring of staff members and make recommendation to discharge staff members whenever necessary.
- Required to have an excellent knowledge of the company's mission, vision, core values, Codes of Practice and the Water Industry Act and possess the ability to communicate such to employees and customers verbally and in writing whenever necessary.
- Ensures that adjustments are prepared for (over-estimated customers, wrong reading, high bill or others).
- Ensures that jobs in JTS are closed one day after work in completed in the field and all jobs are moved from created to pending status and pass to Operations Department.
- Keep record of the time refund of security deposit request is received from the district to process the payment.
- Ensure that DISN and Inactive meters are dealt with monthly.
- Ensure that all accounts are billed timely and efficiently conduct random (25%) check of all cycles to identify inconsistencies.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in Accounting or Business Management with at least 5 years' experience or Bachelor's degree with at least 10 years' experience in customer service activities or accounting duties and managerial responsibilities will be an asset.

Interested persons can send your application letter with your detailed resume **March 21, 2022** to:

Human Resources Manager
Belize Water Services Limited,
 P.O. Box 150, Central American Boulevard, Belize City, Belize
 Email : hr@bwsli.com.bz

BWS: Delivering water and more...



SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD

Bliss Parade | P.O. Box 18 | City of Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize
Corporate: 501.822.2163 | Customer Care: info@socialsecurity.org.bz

March 16, 2022

Social Security Board Announces Implementation of the Contribution and Benefit Increase

Social Security Board (SSB) introduces the final phase of the Contribution Reform. The final contribution and benefit increase, which falls under the 3-year phased approach, aims to improve and provide greater value to beneficiaries during time away from work if they become incapacitated or ill.

This is essential for the strengthening of the SSB program in order to provide sickness, maternity, disablement, invalidity, injury, death benefit and pensions to contributors, their families and survivors.

Under the final phase, employers and employees will see an increase of 1% in the Contribution Rate from 9% to 10% and \$480 to \$520 in the Wage Ceiling effective Monday, April 4, 2022. This translates to an increase in the maximum cash benefit of \$416 weekly for short term benefits and \$312 weekly or \$16,224 yearly for pensions.

The complete Contribution and Benefit Schedule available below.

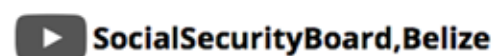
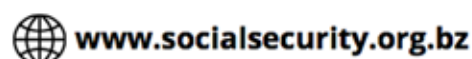
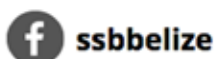
Contribution & Benefit Schedule

Effective: Monday, April 4, 2022

Weekly Earnings by Salary Range (Wage Band)	Weekly Insurable Earnings (Wage Ceiling)	Weekly Contributions (\$)			Rate of Contributions (%)			Max. Weekly Benefit		Max. Yearly Pension
		Employee	Employer	Total	Employee	Employer	Total	Short Term	Pensions	
UNDER \$70.00	\$55.00	\$1.03	\$4.47	\$5.50	1.88%	8.13%	10%	\$44.00	\$47.00	\$2,444.00
\$70.00 - \$109.99	\$90.00	\$1.69	\$7.31	\$9.00	1.88%	8.13%	10%	\$72.00	\$54.00	\$2,808.00
\$110.00 - \$139.99	\$130.00	\$2.44	\$10.56	\$13.00	1.88%	8.13%	10%	\$104.00	\$78.00	\$4,056.00
\$140.00 - \$179.99	\$160.00	\$3.94	\$12.06	\$16.00	2.46%	7.54%	10%	\$128.00	\$96.00	\$4,992.00
\$180.00 - \$219.99	\$200.00	\$5.94	\$14.06	\$20.00	2.97%	7.03%	10%	\$160.00	\$120.00	\$6,240.00
\$220.00 - \$259.99	\$240.00	\$7.94	\$16.06	\$24.00	3.31%	6.69%	10%	\$192.00	\$144.00	\$7,488.00
\$260.00 - \$299.99	\$280.00	\$9.94	\$18.06	\$28.00	3.55%	6.45%	10%	\$224.00	\$168.00	\$8,736.00
\$300.00 - \$339.99	\$320.00	\$11.94	\$20.06	\$32.00	3.73%	6.27%	10%	\$256.00	\$192.00	\$9,984.00
\$340.00 - \$379.99	\$360.00	\$13.98	\$22.02	\$36.00	3.88%	6.12%	10%	\$288.00	\$216.00	\$11,232.00
\$380.00 - \$419.99	\$400.00	\$16.15	\$23.85	\$40.00	4.04%	5.96%	10%	\$320.00	\$240.00	\$12,480.00
\$420.00 - \$459.99	\$440.00	\$18.45	\$25.55	\$44.00	4.19%	5.81%	10%	\$352.00	\$264.00	\$13,728.00
\$460.00 - \$499.99	\$480.00	\$20.86	\$27.14	\$48.00	4.35%	5.65%	10%	\$384.00	\$288.00	\$14,976.00
\$500.00 - OVER	\$520.00	\$23.40	\$28.60	\$52.00	4.50%	5.50%	10%	\$416.00	\$312.00	\$16,224.00
*(A) & (B)		\$0.00	\$2.60	\$2.60	Covers Employment Injury Benefit Only					

*(A) Applies to persons 60-64 years who have received or are receiving a Social Security Benefit and (B) all persons 65 years and older.

END.



Social Security Board: Safeguarding You, your Family, your Future!



DISCOVERY

Landscape

FUN FACTS!

The longest human necks!

In Western culture, a long neck can appear regal, feminine, and dainty. However, in other parts of the world, primarily a tribe called Padaung located in Myanmar and northern Thailand, it's a custom.

The women of the Padaung tribe in Myanmar and northern Thailand hold the record for having the longest necks in the world. The country that's famous for its islands and amazing street food also features women who bind their necks to make them appear longer!

It's been an age-old custom for young girls - even before puberty - to start wearing iron coils around their necks. They start with just a few, and more and more are added over the years to give the appearance of a long neck.

The women of the Padaung tribe hold the record for the longest neck in the world. As far as this world record goes, they really stick their necks out.

The longest recorded neck length is 15.75 inches long. Record-keepers base



this measurement on the distance between the earlobe and the collarbone. The average neck length of a Padaung woman is 10 inches, which is double the average length of a human neck.

Before we dig into whether or not you can make your neck longer, let's explore the phenomenon.

While it may seem that the neck itself is stretching, it's not. For a long time, experts thought that it was actually the distance between the vertebra that was stretching and lengthening. After researching the women with the long necks — complete with x-rays

— they found something different.

The neck itself isn't stretching, however, the collarbone and the ribs are pushed down. Therefore, this makes the longest neck in the world an optical illusion. It appears as though the neck itself is stretched, when in actuality the supporting structures of the collarbone and the ribs push down. This makes the appearance of a much longer neck.

Therefore, the women who have the longest necks actually have the most pushed down collarbones and rib cages, creating the image of a long neck. To

physically lengthen the neck would cause paralysis and death.

In other words, technically you could make your neck longer. This will involve wearing thick, heavy coils around your neck from a very young age. You'll then have to systematically add coils to slowly increase the length without causing too much pain. You'll have to sleep and bathe with said coils. When you do take them off occasionally, you risk passing out.

In conclusion, if you really want to have a longer neck, get started quickly because it's not something you can do overnight.



No Fly Zone!

The **penguin** is the only bird who can swim, but not fly.



No moonwalking!!



Penguins cannot walk backwards.

COLOR ME



Giant penguins once roamed the planet. The first bird actually called a penguin was the now-extinct Great Auk found in the North Atlantic. Tragically, early explorers and their contemporaries found Great Auks a little too tasty, and the birds were all killed off.

Fossil evidence shows that penguins evolved before the dinosaurs died out, and there are remains of giant, people-sized, prehistoric penguins.

The world's smallest penguin stands just over 30cm high.

You'll only find wild penguins in the Southern Hemisphere. All wild penguins live in the Southern Hemisphere, and although they are synonymous with the ice, only two species live on the continent of Antarctica. The Galapagos penguin

is the only penguin that ever naturally ventures into the Northern Hemisphere on especially long feeding trips.

Penguins' black and white 'tuxedo' helps them avoid predators. Most penguins have black backs and a white belly. This makes them harder to see from above because they blend in with the dark ocean beneath them. And looking from below, their white underside matches the bright sky overhead.

Penguins use some clever tricks to help them move faster. To move fast through the water, penguins use a technique called porpoising. To move quickly over the ice, they switch to tobogganning. Curiously, porpoises neither use toboggans nor do they use the word penguin as a verb.



The five (and more) human senses

There are five basic human senses: touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. The sensing organs associated with each sense send information to the brain to help us understand and perceive the world around us. However, there are in fact other human senses in addition to the basic five that you couldn't live without. These lesser-known senses include spatial awareness and balance. Here's how the human senses work.

TOUCH

Touch is thought to be the first sense that humans develop, according to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Touch consists of several distinct sensations communicated to the brain through specialized neurons in the skin. Pressure, temperature, light touch, vibration, pain and other sensations are all part of the touch sense and are all attributed to different receptors in the skin.

Touch isn't just a sense used to interact with the world; it also seems to be very important to a human's well-being. For example, touch has been found to convey compassion from one human to another, according to a study published by the University of California, Berkeley.

Touch can also influence how humans make decisions. Texture can be associated with abstract concepts, and touching something with a texture can influence the decisions a person makes, according to six studies by psychologists at Harvard University and Yale University, published in the June 24, 2010, issue of the journal *Science*.



SIGHT

Sight, or perceiving things through the eyes, is a complex process. First, light reflects off an object to the eye. The transparent outer layer of the eye called the cornea bends the light that passes through the hole of the pupil. The iris (which is the colored part of the eye) works like the shutter of a camera, retracting to shut out light or opening wider to let in more light.

"The cornea focuses most of the light. Then, it [the light] passes through the lens, which continues to focus the light," explained Dr. Mark Fromer, an ophthalmologist and retina specialist at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City.

The lens of the eye then bends the light and focuses it on the retina, which is full of nerve cells. These cells are shaped like rods and cones and are named for their shapes, according to the American Optometric Association. Cones translate light into colors, central vision and details. The rods translate light into peripheral vision and motion. Rods also give humans vision when there is limited light available, like at night. The information translated from the light is sent as electrical impulses to the brain through the optic nerve.

People without sight may compensate with enhanced hearing, taste, touch and smell, according to a March 2017 study published in the journal *PLOS One*. Their memory and language skills may be better than those born with sight, as well.

"Even in the case of being profoundly blind, the brain rewires itself in a manner to use the information at its disposal so that it can interact with the environment in a more effective manner," Dr. Lotfi Merabet, senior author on that 2017 study and the director of the Laboratory for Visual Neuroplasticity at Schepens Eye Research

Institute of Massachusetts Eye and Ear, said in a statement.

HEARING

This sense works via the complex labyrinth that is the human ear. Sound is funneled through the external ear and piped into the external auditory canal. Then, sound waves reach the tympanic membrane, or eardrum. This is a thin sheet of connective tissue that vibrates when sound waves strike it.

The vibrations travel to the middle ear. There, the auditory ossicles — three tiny bones called the malleus (hammer), incus (anvil) and stapes (stirrup) — vibrate. The stapes bone, in turn, pushes a structure called the oval window in and out, sending vibrations to the organ of Corti, according to the National Library of Medicine (NLM). This spiral organ is the receptor organ

for hearing. Tiny hair cells in the organ of Corti translate the vibrations into electrical impulses. The impulses then travel to the brain via sensory nerves.

People retain their sense of balance because the Eustachian tube, or pharyngotympanic tube, in the middle ear equalizes the air pressure in the middle ear with the air pressure in the atmosphere, according to the *International Journal of Audiology*. The vestibular complex, in the inner ear, is also important for balance, because it contains receptors that regulate a sense of equilibrium. The inner ear is connected to the vestibulocochlear nerve, which carries sound and equilibrium information to the brain.

Have you ever listened to a recording of your voice and thought it didn't sound like you? This is because some qualities of your voice sound different to those around you as you speak. For someone standing next to you, the sound of your voice will be detected as it is channelled through their ear canals, according to the BBC. The same will happen in your ears, but as the speech is being produced from within you, vibrations will also reach your eardrums via another route.

When your vocal cords make the noise, the vibrations travel up through your skull to reach your eardrums. As the waves move through bone, they stretch out more to become lower in pitch. Combined with the external sound waves, the outcome is a voice with a slightly different tone to what others hear.

SMELL

Humans may be able to smell over 1 trillion scents, according to the National Institutes of Health. They do this with the olfactory cleft, which

is found on the roof of the nasal cavity, next to the "smelling" part of the brain, the olfactory bulb and fossa. Nerve endings in the olfactory cleft transmit smells to the brain.

Dogs are known as great smellers, but research suggests that humans are just as good. Research published in the May 11, 2017, issue of the journal *Science* suggests that humans can discriminate among 1 trillion different odors; it was once believed that humans could take in only 10,000 different smells.

"The fact is the sense of smell is just as good in humans as in other mammals, like rodents and dogs," John McGann, a neuroscientist at Rutgers University-New Brunswick in New Jersey and the author of the new review, said in a statement. The Rutgers study backs up a previous study at the Rockefeller University in New York, whose findings were published in the March 2014 issue of the journal *Science*.

Humans have 400 smelling receptors, according to the Monell Chemical Senses Center. While this isn't as many as animals that are super smellers have, the much more complicated human brain makes up for the difference, McGann said.

In fact, poor smelling ability in people may be a symptom of a medical condition or aging. For example, the distorted or decreased ability to smell is a symptom of schizophrenia and depression, according to the journal *Schizophrenia Research*.

Old age can also lessen the ability to smell properly. More than 75% of people over the age of 80 years may have major olfactory impairment, according to a 2006 paper published by the National Institutes of Health.

TASTE

The gustatory sense is usually broken down into the perception of four different tastes: salty, sweet, sour and bitter. There is also a fifth taste, defined as umami or savory. There may be many other flavors that have not yet been discovered. Also, spicy is not a taste. It is actually a pain signal, according to the National Library of Medicine (NLM).

The sense of taste aided in human evolution, according to the NLM, because taste helped people test the food they ate. A bitter or sour taste indicated that a plant might be poisonous or rotten. Something salty or sweet, however, often meant the food was rich in nutrients.

Taste is sensed in the taste buds. Adults have 2,000 to 4,000 taste buds. Most of them are on the tongue, but they also line the back of the throat, the epiglottis, the nasal cavity and the esophagus. Sensory cells on the buds form capsules shaped like flower buds or oranges, according to the NLM. The tips of these capsules have pores that work like funnels with tiny taste hairs. Proteins on the hairs bind chemicals to the cells for tasting.

This magnified image shows oval-shaped taste buds on the tongue. (Image credit: Getty Images)

It is a myth that the tongue has specific zones for each flavor, according to NLM. The five tastes can be sensed on all parts of the tongue, although the sides are more sensitive than the middle. About half of the sensory cells in taste buds react to several of the five basic tastes. The cells differ in their level of sensitivity.

Each has a specific palette of tastes with a fixed

(Turn to page 23)

Newsprint Paper Price up by 23%

Grace Kennedy Limited, the only remaining importer of newsprint paper for Belize, has increased the price of its paper from \$1.157 a pound to \$1.4286 a pound, for a hike of 23.9 percent.

The increase has caught newspapers in Belize by surprise because it came without warning of any kind.

The hike, when General Sales Tax is added, takes

the new price of one pound of newsprint to \$1.61. Newsprint prices, like other manufactured commodities, have been expected to increase because of a contraction in demand. Paper factories have cut back on production, and also because of the war over Ukraine, which has impacted supply lines.

But the newsprint imported by Grace

Kennedy Limited comes overland from Mexico, so the 23 percent increase has come as a shock.

Newspapers that are already reeling from the 2-year accumulated effect of Covid, are now faced with rising costs which will almost certainly affect their ability to stay afloat.

Mr. Harry Lawrence, Publisher of the Reporter, this week appealed to the business community to do more to support independent newspapers by way of advertising to sustain and preserve this traditional voice of Democracy in Belize.

“Independent newspapers are needed in Belize more than ever,” Lawrence said, “to provide balance and informed commentary on current events.”

“If newspapers go down, we will all be losing a valuable tool for productive free speech in Belize,” Lawrence said.

The five (and more) human senses

(Con't from page 22) ranking, so some cells may be more sensitive to sweet, followed by bitter, sour and salty, while others have their own rankings. The full experience of a flavor is produced only after all of the information from the different parts of the tongue is combined.

The other half of the sensory cells are specialized to react to only one taste. It's their job to transmit information about the intensity—how salty or sweet something tastes.

Other factors help build the perception of taste in the brain. For example, the smell of the food greatly affects how the brain perceives the taste, according to the journal *Flavour*. Smells are sent to the mouth in a process called olfactory referral. This is why someone with a stuffy nose may have trouble tasting food properly. Texture, translated by the sense of touch, also contributes to taste.

Medically known as glossitis, a burnt tongue is classed as a first-degree burn but quickly heals in a few days, according to the Cleveland Clinic. But taste buds don't completely die when exposed to piping-hot foods.

When we scold the surface of our tongues we remove the top layer of cells, including the upper layers of our taste buds. However,

within the bundle of flavour-detecting cells are stem cells known as basal cells. Typically replacing the gustatory receptor cells every ten days or so, these regenerative cells morph into replacement receptors quickly, restoring your taste. According to the journal *Archives Italiennes de Biologie*, 10% of cells are new to taste buds each day.

THE SENSE OF SPACE

A patient may be asked to touch their nose, then the examiner's finger as part of a proprioception test. (Image credit: Getty Images)

In addition to the traditional big five, there is another sense that deals with how your brain understands where your body is in space. This sense is called proprioception.

Proprioception includes the sense of movement and position of our limbs and muscles. For example, proprioception enables a person to touch their finger to the tip of their nose, even with their eyes closed. It enables a person to climb steps without looking at each one. People with poor proprioception may be clumsy and uncoordinated.

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) found that people who have particularly poor proprioception through

mechanosensation—the ability to sense force, such as feeling when someone presses down on your skin—may have a mutated gene that is passed down from generation to generation. That comes from a September 2016 study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. “The patient's version of [the gene] PIEZO2 may not work, so their neurons cannot detect touch or limb movements,” Alexander Chesler, a principal investigator at the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health and the lead author of the study, said in a statement in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

ADDITIONAL SENSES & VARIATIONS

There are more subtle senses that most people never really perceive. For example, there are neuron sensors that sense movement to control balance and the tilt of the head. Specific kinesthetic receptors exist for detecting stretching in muscles and tendons, helping people to keep track of their limbs. Other receptors detect levels of oxygen in certain arteries of the bloodstream.

Sometimes, people don't even perceive senses the same way. People with synesthesia can see sounds as colors or associate certain sights with smells, for example.

San Pedro to get a modern Hospital

In his budget speech this week, Prime Minister Johnny Briceño disclosed that the Government of Taiwan is providing a grant of US\$ 16.6 million (\$33.2 million Bz) for the design and construction of a new hospital for Ambergris Caye.

Construction work is expected to begin this year. The new hospital will have 45 beds and will occupy 28,000 square feet of space. It is being

billed as a state-of-the-art facility to provide primary and secondary care.

This will be San Pedro's first full-service hospital. Until now the Island tourism powerhouse has subsisted on a full-time clinic known as the San Pedro Polyclinic and on doctors from Belize Medical Associates in Belize City who fly out regularly for consultative work and for diagnoses.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The U.S. Embassy Belmopan is seeking eligible and qualified applicants for the following position:

Position Name: Maintenance Mechanic (Generator Mechanic)

Vacancy number: Belmopan-2022-05-R

Closing date: April 1st, 2022

Interested applicants must submit their application via the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) system, a web-based system. To view and apply for this vacancy, visit the ERA site at: <https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/blz/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms>

Please visit the Embassy's website for instructions on how to apply via the ERA system: <https://bz.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>

Note 1: Resumes will not be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.

Note 2: Candidates must submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.

S U D O K U

Medium Puzzle

8						9		
		4				1		
		2	5			4	6	
1				9	6		3	2
		7						
				1				
			9	7	8	6		
			3					5
		8				7		

Sudoku rules are extremely easy: Fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear once in each row, column and 3x3 box. Tip: Use a soft erasable pencil. Start with the easy puzzles, then move on to the harder ones. Make small pencilmarks to show which numbers are allowed in empty squares. This will come handy when analyzing techniques are used. Never guess! Only make moves based on logical deductions. There is only one unique solution for each puzzle.

Answer to Puzzle

8	6	7	5	2	1	8	9	4
3	9	7	5	2	1	8	6	4
5	8	2	4	9	3	1	7	6
4	1	9	8	7	6	3	5	2
9	7	5	2	1	4	6	8	3
6	4	1	3	5	8	7	2	9
2	3	8	9	6	7	5	4	1
8	9	4	6	3	5	2	1	7
7	2	3	1	8	9	4	6	5
1	5	9	7	4	2	6	3	8



GOURMET EXPERIENCE



LIGHT ROAST



DARK ROAST



DARK ROAST



DARK ROAST

NOW IN BELIZE!

AVAILABLE COUNTRYWIDE



Belize Water Services Limited

PRESS RELEASE

March 17, 2022 For Immediate Release

Update on Status of San Pedro Water System

Belize Water Services apologises to customers in San Pedro for the ongoing low water pressure and outages in the entire San Pedro water distribution system.

Unfortunately, on Friday February 25, 2022, there was a major mechanical malfunction at the Water Treatment Plant, whereby one of three drive trains became non-operational due to a damaged gearbox. This 1,000lb gearbox had to be expedited to the US for repairs. We are pleased to report that the repaired gearbox has arrived back in the country and has been rushed out to San Pedro for installation. However, due to the depleted storage, the company will need to continue with reduced water pressure and planned late night interruptions for several days in order to maintain minimum storage levels to allow supply during peak hours.

BWS assures the public that this situation will be resolved well before the upcoming Easter Holidays, when the demand increases even more.

At this point, BWS kindly requests residents and businesses on the islands, especially the hotels, to conserve water during this period. A little conservation by each will be of great assistance to all.

BWS reiterates our apologies for any inconvenience these reduced pressures and planned interruptions are causing to residents and visitors in San Pedro. We extend our appreciation to consumers in San Pedro for their patience and understanding exhibited during this period.

###

Customers are encouraged to report any water supply issues via BWS Toll Free at 0-800-CALL-BWS (0-800-2255-297) or WhatsApp 614-BWSL(614-2975).

BWS: Delivering Water and More ...

For more information regarding this or any other BWS Release, please contact: Corporate Communications at Tel: 222-4757 Ext. 1405 or 1408 or via e-mail at pr@bws.com.bz

Weh Wi Ga Fi Seh

Vairos di eez dong,
bot kip op yu helt.

Maach 21 di Kohn Rong: Kip Haat

Maach 21 wahn mek chree monts sins Kriol kolcha laydi Mis Myrna gaahn bak da Faada Gaad. Di Nashanal Kriol Kongsl, langsaid di Bileez Hischri Asoasiyayshan, kantinyu di aana di layt Myrna Manzanares evri mont aanlain pah di 21, di day Mis Myrna mi wayk op ded. Maybi yoo waahn shyaa sohnting yoo mi noa bowt Mis Myrna Kriol werk er ada werk. If yu waahn jain een er jos fi lisn, yu ku eemayl nkcbelize@gmail.com fi moa infamayshan ahn di ZOOM Meeting link an ID. Wan ting Mis Myrna mi laik du da rait, ahn shee doz inkorij mi fi rait tu. Tudeh, mee di shyaa wahn lee poayem weh mee, Silvaana, mi rait wen Ah mi deh eena kwaranteen. Ah waahn shyaa it sayk a soh moch ting di hapn: vairos, now war... neks da wat?

Kip Haat

Sohnbadi sohnweh
Skreem eena payn.
Sohnbadi sohnweh
Goh krayzi bad.
Adarels plays nobadi
Showt owt wid hapinis.
Adarels plays nobadi
Feel free free.
Bot sohnhow sohnday
Noh mata wat
Di rayn weh bos chroo di klowd
Wahn wash weh di payn.
Sohnhow sohnday
Di son weh shain dong
Wahn gi dehn krayzi wan
Wahn saaf ahn genkl toch.
Kip haat, kip haat
Di rikovri di staat.
Tudeh day—da disya pandemik
Tumaaro ih weel ahn ton—nvoov lik.

Stay Strong

Someone somewhere
Screams in pain.
Someone somewhere
Goes insane.
Elsewhere no one
Shouts with glee.
Elsewhere no one
Feels really free.
But somehow someday
Come what may
Cloudbursts of rain
Will wash away pain.
Somehow someday
Sunshine's rays
Will caress di crazed.
Stay strong, stay strong
Di recovery di staat.
Today's pandemics
Are tomorrow's transgenics

Silvaana Udz, Ed.D. da fahn Bileez. If yu waahn tel shee bowt sohnting speshal fu put eena dis Kriol aatiki, eemayl: sudz142@gmail.com Vizit: www.nationalkriolcouncil.org



CONTRACT AWARD INFORMATION – CONSULTANCY SERVICES



THIRD WATER (SOUTH AMBERGRIS CAYE WATER AND SEWERAGE EXPANSION) PROJECT – BELIZE DEVELOPING A GENDER POLICY AND OPERATIONAL STRATEGY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

1. Summary of Scores:

Names of Shortlisted Consultants	Country	Technical Proposal Scores						Financial Proposal Prices		Final Rank
		Specific Experience (10%)	Methodology, Work Plan, Organization and Staffing (35%)	Key Experts (45%)	Knowledge Transfer (5%)	National Experts Participation (5%)	Total (100%)	Submitted Price (USD)	Evaluated Price (USD)	
Shidaa Sustainable Development Solutions Ltd.	Trinidad	8.3	31.1	35.6	4.4	4.1	83.5	\$88,872.00	\$80,786.50	1
PricewaterhouseCoopers	Jamaica	8.6	31.9	34.1	4.3	2.2	81.1	Financial proposal was not opened	Financial proposal was not opened	Not Applicable
Caribbean Policy Development Centre	Barbados	Did not submit proposal								
Niagra College Canada	Canada	Did not submit proposal								

2. Name of Successful Consultant: Shidaa Sustainable Development Solutions Limited

3. Final Awarded Price: USD 80,786.50

4. Commencement Date of Contract: March 1st, 2022

5. Duration of Contract: Ten (10) months

6. Summary Scope of Contract: The consultancy services will develop a Gender Policy and Operational strategy for Human Resource Management in BWS by executing an institutional analysis of current human resource practices with regard to adherence to gender equality; conduct a gender sensitization workshop with BWS staff; develop a GPOS; and carry out Training of Trainers. The service will encompass all investigative work, analyses and strategic direction to realize the objectives stated above. The consultant will use participatory and consultative methodologies in working closely with BWS and will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which should facilitate the monitoring of the results of the consultancy.

Note: Selection Method: Quality-Based Selection (QBS)
Minimum Technical Proposal Score required to open Financial Proposal: 80



STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) Enforcement Collection Model based on risk criteria

Institution: The Ministry of Finance (MOF)
Country: Belize
Project: Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)
Abstract: Consulting Services – Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) Enforcement Collection Model based on risk criteria
Loan No.: 4839/OC-BL
Deadline: April 8th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled “Strengthening of Tax Administration” (BL-L1031). Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS) and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the Belize Tax Administration.

The authorities’ concerns on the growth of the arrears balance are reflected in the BTSD strategic plan; “The stock of debt has been steadily increasing throughout the years, with the largest increase recorded between 2017 and 2018. The respective annual increases from 2016 to 2018 were 4%, 7% and 23%. There is a need to institute a mechanism to facilitate monitoring and timely enforcement actions to collect and recover revenues.”

The consulting services (“the services”) includes the contracting of a Consultancy Firm for a period of five (5) months. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

1. To assess the current situation of BTSD enforcement collection and review the organization and resources of the collection area as well as their skills
2. To assess the potential sources for information on taxpayer transactions and assets that could be used as arrears payments (Customs, social security, immovable property registration department, Bank accounts, City Council’s Traffic Departments, etc.)
3. Propose a strategy for enforcement collections and prioritization based on risk analysis, define risk parameters and relevant mitigation measures as well as special procedures according to taxpayer segments
4. Establish a system of payment by instalment via Internet, with parameters defined by BTSD with payments through automatic debit in the taxpayer bank account and to freeze delinquent taxpayers’ bank accounts via Internet
5. Establish rules for writing off uncollectable debts and modify ITAS to incorporate them
6. Update the BTSD Enforcement Collection manual defining the procedures to select the debts to be enforced, the task to collect the debt, the identification, and procedures to put a lien on debtors’ properties, the rules, and procedures for agreements for payment by instalment, etc.
7. Propose performance indicators for monitoring the enforcement collection
8. Deliver workshops and train the collection staff in the new procedures
9. Implement the new procedures
10. Conduct Pilot with the designated BTSD staff to plan, execute and report on randomly selected taxpayers.

The Consultancy Firm should have a minimum of five (5) years’ relevant working experience in the following areas:

- Organizational development and design;
- Enforced arrears collections;
- Tax administration training

As well as minimum of five (5) years relevant assistance to tax administrations, particularly in the arrears collection areas. In addition, the Consultant firm should have at least three (3) years of previous experience specifically in conducting programs on arrears collection with the use of risk analysis techniques or similar programs and consultancies between the calendar years 2015 to 2020, as well as experience in Belize, and Caribbean environment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultancy Firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). The term “consultant” means a legally established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.

Expression of Interest package should contain:

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.

- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- (iv) Two references
- (v) Proof of nationality: Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

- (vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- (vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- (viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- (ix) Copy of Current Trade License

The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is US \$133,555.00.

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: *Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank* (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition) and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by 4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 8th, 2022.

Interested eligible Consultants are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz marked **STAP- Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) Enforcement Collection Model based on risk criteria** in the subject header, or submit on or before 4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) Friday April 8th, 2022 to the following address:

Director General
Belize Tax Service S
trenghening of Tax Administration Project
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
Mahogany Street, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-5114

For clarifications kindly contact:

Procurement Officer
Project Executing Unit
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
Mahogany Street, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz



STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Consulting Services for Consulting firm to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model, making use of the wider range examination and risk-based techniques (to include analytical tools for audit)

Institution: The Ministry of Finance (MOF)

Country: Belize

Project: Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)

Abstract: Consulting Services for Consulting Firm to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model, making use of the wider range examination and risk-based techniques (to include analytical tools for audit).

Loan No.: 4839/OC-BL

Deadline: April 8th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled "Strengthening of Tax Administration" (BL-L1031). The main beneficiaries of the Project are: (a) the Government, which will have more revenues to implement its public policies; (b) taxpayers, who will have more support and a digital environment to fulfil their tax obligations; and (c) the population, from the government policies implemented. Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS) and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the Belize Tax Administration.

The BTSD management has identified the need for a modern audit approach based on risk analysis. The BTSD Strategic Plan states that:

"BTSD will explore the introduction of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to properly respond to the risks identified on a timely basis, to minimize overall compliance burden for both the taxpayers and the tax administration. As an important aspect of the RMP, risk mitigating strategies will be proposed for application against potential and existing risks. The plan will highlight all areas of risks including risk-based assessments, risk-based audits, risk-based sector and taxpayer segmentation, compliance risks (registration, filing, reporting and payments) and international risks. Risk mitigation reduces the extent of exposure and ensures that the strategic objectives are achieved."

The consulting services ("the services") includes the contracting of a consulting firm for a period of ten (10) months to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model, making use of the range examination and risk-based techniques (to include analytic tools for audit). The main activities of the consultancy include:

1. To assess the status of BTSD taxpayer audit strategies and operations for all tax type.
2. To review the Audit Division organization and resources, as well as the staff skills.
3. To suggest the strategy for centralization/decentralization of the audit.
4. To propose a new organization area (if required).
5. To propose the staff composition by area and by location.
6. To propose the different audit programs taking into consideration taxpayer segments and different audit locations (central, districts).
7. To propose a system of massive audit based on IT verification of returns against risk factors and third-party information. The selected cases should be resolved very quickly (4 cases a day) as they are based on firm verification.
8. To propose modern analytical tools for tax auditing suitable for Belize's environment by conducting a SWOT analysis to support the audit work.
9. Once the proposal of the modern analytical tools is approved, the consulting firm will procure the Analytical tools software for auditing with 50 licenses with subscription for 3 years, implement, and train auditors in its utilization for adoption.
10. To execute onsite Pilot audit (for at least one month in duration) with the audit team to plan, execute and report on randomly selected taxpayers.
11. To develop training materials and manuals in hard copies and digital copies in Microsoft Word format.

The consulting firm should have a minimum of five (5) years' experience in similar assignment. In addition, the consulting firm should have a minimum of three (3) years specific experience in the following areas (* are must):

- Tax administration taxpayer audit and risk analysis. (*)
- Conducting design of modern taxpayer audit programs. (*)
- Conducting design of risk-based audit programs. (*)
- Training tax administration staff in audit techniques (*)
- Using modern audit analytic tools. (*)
- Developing programs for organizational strengthening for tax administration.
- Developing modern taxpayer audit programs.
- Conducting design of modern information crosschecking programs.
- Business Strategy (supporting business and organization goals).

The firm should prove ability to identify strategic issues, opportunity and risks. As well as have knowledge and experience working in Belize and or the Caribbean environment in a similar assignment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an

Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). The term "consultant" means a legally-established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.

Expression of Interest package should contain:

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (This includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- (iv) Two references
- (v) Proof of nationality: Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

- (vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- (vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- (viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- (ix) Copy of Current Trade License

The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is **US\$ 451,328.00.**

Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the **Inter-American Development Bank: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition)** and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday, April 8th, 2022.**

Interested consulting firms are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz marked **STAP- Consulting Firm to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model** in the subject header, or submit on or before **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday, April 8th, 2022** to the following address:

Director General
Belize Tax Service S
trenghening of Tax Administration Project
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
Mahogany Street, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-5114

For clarifications kindly contact:

Procurement Officer
Project Executing Unit
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
Mahogany Street, Belize City
Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz



STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement a Taxpayer Account Model to allow for fast taxpayer centric overview

Institution: The Ministry of Finance (MOF)

Country: Belize

Project: Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)

Abstract: Consulting Services – Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement a Taxpayer Account Model to allow for fast taxpayer centric overview

Loan No.: 4839/OC-BL

Deadline: April 8th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled “**Strengthening of Tax Administration**” (BL-L1031). Through this project, the **Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD)** has procured a **Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS))** and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the **Belize Tax Administration**.

The consulting services (“**the services**”) includes the contracting of a Consultancy Firm for a period of **six (6) months**. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

1. To assess the current situation of BTSD taxpayer account in Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS).
2. Develop a model for a new taxpayer account in ITAS. The model should specify the entities dealing with the taxpayer account, the information that flows to and from the account, and the transactions that will be allowed with the taxpayer account (e.g., debt from tax returns, debts from refunds, debts from adjustments, debts from audits, debts from payment by instalment agreements, credits from regular payment, credits for adjustments in appeals cases, credit from payments of payment by instalment agreements, etc.). The account will be organized by Taxpayer Identification Numbers (TIN), tax type and period
3. Define the procedures for taxpayer access to his account via Internet
4. Define which transactions taxpayers would be allowed to perform through the Internet
5. Define the changes to be made in ITAS for the introduction of the new model
6. Prepare the taxpayer account manual
7. Implement the new taxpayer centric current account
8. Train BTS staff in the new taxpayer account design and operation

The Consultancy Firm should have a minimum of five (5) years’ relevant working experience in the following areas:

- **Designing modern taxpayer account**
- **Preparing taxpayer account procedures and manuals**
- **Training enforcement agents in taxpayer account;**

As well as minimum of five (5) relevant working experience in enforcement of arrears payment and design of modern taxpayer current account. In addition, the Consulting firm should have at least three (3) years of previous experience conducting consultancies to countries implementing modern taxpayer accounts.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultancy Firms (“**Consultants**”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (**description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.**).

Expression of Interest package should contain:

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years.
Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of

contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).

(iv) Two references

(v) Proof of nationality: Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

(vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry

(vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board

(viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service

(ix) Copy of Current Trade License

The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is **US \$133,555.00**.

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: ***Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition)*** and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 8th, 2022.**

Interested eligible Consultants are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to **Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz** marked **STAP-Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement a Taxpayer Account Model to allow for fast taxpayer centric overview** in the subject header, or submit on or before **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 8th, 2022** to the following address:

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Charles Bartlett Hyde Building
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Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz**