



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by:

The Hon. Jason P. Hayward, JP, MP
The Minister of Labour

18th February 2022

Department of Immigration Automation Update

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to provide an update on the Automation Project already underway in the Department of Immigration. We are extremely excited about these advances which will benefit both the Department, businesses and the general public.

Mr. Speaker,

Automation of Immigration Forms

In the Speech from the Throne of November 2021, the Government endeavored to digitize the immigration application process. As a result, the Department turned its efforts to aggressively advancing the automation project and in early 2021, selected Microsoft Dynamics as its chosen platform to implement an end-to-end electronic, web-based IT System.

This IT solution will allow the Department to perform the following functions currently done in different systems, including:

- mail login,

- work permit processing,
- and data warehousing.

The combined solution is intended to drive efficiency and reduce the annual cost for software and associated maintenance costs. The software eliminates the manual processing of paper files.

Mr. Speaker,

The objective of the Automation Project is to transition as much as possible, away from paper-based processes. Due to the cost and complexity of automation of the processes, the Department is implementing the project in phases. The functionality in the early phases will be basic in nature with further enhancements being released later.

This current phase of the project includes, but is not limited to:

1. submission of applications;
2. payment of application fees via a payment gateway;
3. electronic workflow;
4. vetting and validation;
5. status updates with log-in ability;
6. approval by the Minister or by Immigration senior leadership;
7. production and disbursement of final immigration documents;
and
8. ability for the Department to run reports.

Substantial work will be done in future phases to review other immigration IT Systems to make the appropriate enhancements. This work will be released over time.

Mr. Speaker,

This project is in alignment with the Immigration Reform Initiatives articulated by the Ministry of Labor. The benefits of the Automation Project are to:

1. Eliminate paper from the application in-take process and reduce the volume of data entry required to move an application through the various phases in the process;
2. Reduce the turnaround time required to complete all the work on an application and present the customer with a response of the decision made;
3. Provide a dashboard to management and staff to analyze operations and performance;
4. Improve the communication with customers and stakeholders in terms of frequency and time delivered;
5. Improve the standard operating procedures along with providing a clear audit trail and improved quality assurance;
6. Eliminate the submission of incomplete applications and reduce the rework associated with this; and
7. Reduce the hassle and travel involved in the submission of applications by Customers.

Mr. Speaker,

A new re-engineered model of operation is required for us to bring the operations of the Department into the 21st Century. Like businesses that are expected to think and do things differently, the Department must do things differently.

The Department of Immigration has undergone a rigorous process review and is several years into its efforts to re-engineer outdated processes and procedures. These include extensive process mapping and analysis of key application processes such as Work Permit, Bermuda Status and

Naturalization, Permanent Residency Certificate, Bermuda Passports, and the electronic payment of application fees.

One significant difference is that we will no longer issue hard copy paper certificates, letters, and work permit documents. Currently individuals receive hard copy immigration documents, employees receive work permit cards, and employers receive hard copy work permits. Moving forward, all documentation will be sent electronically and will be accessible on your computers and mobile devices in a digitally secure format. Should you choose to print a hard copy for your records, you will be able to do so.

This is a significant change and the Department will begin to communicate these changes to the general public in the coming weeks. We expect to launch Phase 1 of the Automation System during the month of March 2022.

Thank You, Mr. Speaker

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