



Government of Bermuda

## **Ministerial Statement**

To The Senate

By

**Senator Jason Hayward**

Junior Minister of Education and Workforce Development

### **Bermuda's National Workforce Development Plan: Employer and Industry Engagement**

Wednesday, August 15, 2018

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**Madame President,**

It gives me great pleasure to share with the Senate in further detail, the Report entitled, "*Bermuda National Workforce Development Plan: Strategic and Operational Plans*". My Honourable Colleagues will be aware that the National Workforce Development Plan was presented in the Senate 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

**Madame President,**

We will recall that Government's 2017 Election Platform committed to "Create a National Workforce Development Plan in collaboration with key stakeholders, to ensure that Bermudians are properly prepared for current and future job opportunities". The creation of a National Workforce Development Plan was also announced as one of the Government's 2017 Throne Speech initiatives.

Furthermore, the Government believes that upgrading the skills of Bermuda's labour force through a solid workforce development plan is critical to our long-term prospect for broad-based and inclusive economic growth.

**Madame President,**

Accordingly, the plan is comprised of six high level strategic priorities. These priorities include:

- (1) Employer and Industry Engagement;
- (2) Alignment of the Workforce Development System;

- (3) Creation of Career Pathways;
- (4) Development of Youth Workforce Programmes;
- (5) Universal Access to Education, Training and Career Services;  
and,
- (6) Government Resources and Funding.

The National Workforce Development Plan prioritises employer and industry engagement within the Workforce Development System to gain a better understanding of employers' talent needs. In fact, the Workforce Development System must be employer driven. In other words, employers must be embraced as partners within the Workforce Development system. The Plan identifies that there must be increased interaction with industry stakeholders and organizations within the Workforce Development System at all levels in order to better understand:

- What skills employers are looking for;
- Which occupational areas are growing in the future;
- Which industries are hiring;
- What education level and training are needed for specific occupations; and
- What are the barriers to Bermudians getting jobs

**Madame President,**

Engaging employers and industry as partners within the Workforce Development System is fundamental to building a skilled and qualified pipeline for Bermuda's Workforce. As a result of increased employer and industry engagement, the Workforce Development System will understand the factors that impact recruitment of Bermudians. Further, industry-sector partnerships will lead to increased resources for work-based learning, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, internships, work experience and professional development within the workplace.

**Madame President,**

It is envisioned that employer engagement may take various forms, with specific areas of focus including:

- 1) The Creation of a Workforce Development Board;
- 2) Liaison with the Department of Workforce Development;
- 3) Opportunities for Experiential Learning with the Ministry of Education;
- 4) Establishment or Expansion of Occupational Advisory Committees ; and

## 5) General Areas for Economic Development

The Workforce Development Board will lead efforts to engage a diverse range of employers and industry entities in Bermuda. Creation of a Workforce Development Board will:

- Promote business representation on the Workforce Development Board and Occupational Advisory Committees (particularly representatives with policymaking and hiring authority for existing and emerging industries;
- Develop effective linkages to support employer utilization of the Workforce Development System and to support local workforce investment activities;
- Ensure that workforce investment activities meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in Bermuda
- Develop and implement proven strategies for meeting the employment and skill needs of workers and employers

### **Madame President,**

Furthermore, the newly created Workforce Development Board shall be comprised of no less than fifty percent (50%) employer and industry representatives. Therefore, legislative changes will be required to transition the current National Training Board into the National Workforce Development Board.

Additionally, the Department of Workforce Development would benefit from the knowledge and insight of the business community. Professional staff should be tasked with building relationships with employers, becoming active in professional business organizations, and fluent in the needs of the business community. For this reason, the creation of an Employer Liaison Officer post within the Department of Workforce Development is recommended.

With reference to the Ministry of Education, experiential learning opportunities are necessary for students and faculty. These opportunities include but are not limited to job shadowing, internships, cooperative education, apprenticeships, employer engagement in curriculum delivery, and professional development for faculty and guidance counselors.

**Madame President,**

Occupational Advisory Committees will be utilized to provide critical information pertaining to in-demand jobs and skill set requirements, as well as reviewing industry specific training and opportunities to insert experiential learning. Thus, formal and intentional interaction between Occupational Advisory Committees, the Department of Workforce Development, Bermuda College and school Officials is recommended.

Lastly, it is recommended that workforce development professionals be included in stakeholder meetings pertaining to current and future economic development projects that will generate large scale employment. Moreover, contracts and/or Memorandums of Understanding should automatically include appropriate career path training for Bermudians (i.e. apprenticeships), as recommended by workforce development professionals.

**Madame President,**

In closing, let me say that the National Workforce Development Plan will essentially lay the foundation for a 21st Century Workforce Development System in Bermuda. It is critically important to have a Workforce Development System for which the primary aim is to connect people with jobs. This Plan will provide the opportunities to prepare Bermudians with the requisite skills to enter the job market and introduce our young people to the world of work.

The general public can obtain a copy of the National Workforce Development Plan from the Department's website at [www.dwd.bm](http://www.dwd.bm).

Thank you Madame President.