

Executive summary of internal and external communication plan

Freedom of Information is still very abstract to people at the moment, and with the next 18 months geared towards the implementation of the Freedom of Information Law, it is important to put a face to the Unit and the Law making it more tangible. Openness is a fairly new value for public servants and still needs to be integrated, and will therefore require deliberate actions geared towards cultural change in government.

In essence two different communication campaigns are needed. **One internally for the public sector and one to continue to ensure the public are aware of implementation and can play a part in it at key events such as celebrating International Right to Know day.**

The FOI Unit's energies are currently centered on training, and records management systems. While some departments warrant the employment of a dedicated information officer, most departments will look to existing staff to help effect the law. Thus, the way in which civil servants will perceive the law and its added 'burden', will be key to the success of the law.

Therefore the first communication plan with focus on internal communication with limited publicity geared towards the general public. It is built around simple and cost-effective strategies to internalize the idea of Freedom of Information. These strategies should build a culture of openness and should make civil servants proud of being part of such a process of openness. Attaching positive ideas to the law is very important. The civil servants should see themselves as agents of change and not just people affected by change.

The key objectives of the communication plan can be broken down into the following:

- To raise awareness of the Freedom of Information Law and its implementation
- To build support for the implementation of the Freedom of Information Law
- To create a culture of openness in the civil service

Core values to be communicated are a sense of service to the public, the importance of freedom of information to democracy and professional excellence. This can be done through using the following messages in training sessions and other points of contact:

- Public servants are stewards of government information on behalf of the people.
- Providing information to the people is an integral part of the role of civil servants.
- Public servants create records of the government, most of which could be made available to the people.
- Civil servants are citizens too, and it is their interest to promote and embrace the changes.

Strategies for this plan include:

- Introducing Sunshine Week to Cayman with a visiting FOI expert
- Meetings with civil servants and civil society

- Workshop with chief officers
- A monthly newsletter
- Using the website: www.foi.gov.ky to keep people informed
- Adding value to the training materials that are developed
- Developing incentives/ a merit programme

A second communication plan will be developed once an Information Commissioner has been appointed. (The Information Commissioner has in fact in his remit public education about the FOI law.) This subsequent plan will be geared towards the public - informing and educating them on the scope and use of the law.

For the public it will be important to know how the law benefits them, and key objectives for this campaign, can be summarized as follows:

- Explaining the basics of the law
- Creating awareness of the value of FOI for civil society
- Education the public on how to use the law to access the information they want.

Strategies:

- Radio and television appearances by the Information Commissioner
- Using media events to get the message out, eg Sunshine Week
- Information leaflets explaining the process
- Other media tactics as needed