



## **Cabinet Office**

### **Finance Committee Statement**

### **The Premier, the Hon. André M. Ebanks MP**

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**Monday, 17 November 2025 | House of Parliament**

#### **Introduction: The Cabinet Office- a Bridge to success.**

Mr. Chair, as the Premier, I have a distinct set of responsibilities and duties separate and apart from my role as Minister for Financial Services and Commerce. In my capacity as Premier, the Cabinet Office is the Portfolio assigned to support me in this constitutional role. They are the centralised point of collaboration across the executive branch of Government that bridges the civil service and the political arm, CIG and the relationship with the UK Government, CIG with other Overseas Territories, CIG and key International bodies, and most importantly, CIG and the Caymanian people we serve everyday.

The collaborative role that the Cabinet Office plays can be metaphorically likened to a bridge.

A bridge connects separate points to each other exemplifying the Cabinet Office's coordination function- joining together various parts of Government and indeed Cayman to the outside world.

Importantly Mr. Chair, bridges require maintenance and so this budget also recognises the need to continue to invest in the key tools, services and people within the Cabinet Office that we as a country have continued to rely upon and who answer the call quietly and faithfully.

#### **Cabinet Office Structure**

The Cabinet Office comprises 11 vital departments and units:

**The Office of the Premier** provides strategic, executive, and administrative support to the Premier and Government Caucus, maintaining neutrality as civil servants who capably support the government of the day.



**The Cabinet Secretariat** supports the Cabinet and National Security Council by preparing and disseminating Cabinet Agendas, Papers, Minutes and Decisions. It also issues Tax Exemption Certificates, expected to generate \$10 million in revenue this year, and provides secretarial support for the Appeals Tribunal and Refugee Protection Appeals Tribunal.

**The Department of Communications** delivers modern, inclusive, and informative communications through specialized units covering Public Relations, Gazettes, Internal Communications, Content and Production, and Strategic Communications. The Department manages Government's digital and traditional channels including CIGTV, Gov.ky, and social media platforms, ensuring all communications meet the six principles of being Accurate, Engaging, Timely, Shared, Transparent, and Approved.

**The Policy Coordination Unit** develops cross-ministerial policy and provides objective, politically neutral advice to Cabinet and the Premier. The unit ensures consistency and quality of Cabinet Papers through strategic analysis prior to submission.

**Hazard Management Cayman Islands (HMCI)** leads the National Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme, coordinating activities through the National Emergency Operations Centre. HMCI builds resilience through Preparedness training, Response coordination, Communications campaigns, and Recovery planning.

**The Cayman Islands National Weather Service** observes, understands, and predicts our weather and climate while fulfilling international obligations through valuable monitoring and research.

**Radio Cayman** provides high-quality educational, cultural, entertainment, and religious programming across all three Islands. As Radio Cayman celebrates 50 years of continuous service, we celebrate with them and thank them for their faithful service—particularly their integral role in emergency broadcasts during storms, hurricanes, and disasters.

**The Information Rights Unit**, though small, supports the entire public sector by leading on Freedom of Information and Data Protection. As champions for transparency, accountability, and ethical use of personal data, this unit helps Government earn the trust of the people we serve.



**Protocol Office** manages diplomatic visits, administers the Flag Scheme and honours system, organizes ceremonial events, and manages Heroes Square, among other responsibilities.

**Cayman Islands Government Office – United Kingdom (CIGO-UK)** serves as our official representation in the UK, facilitating opportunities for Government, people, and businesses. CIGO-UK has successfully navigated the transition from Conservative-led governments to the Labour Government while building relationships across the political spectrum. Most importantly, our All-Party Parliamentary Group has been re-established. Cayman's reputation remains strong and highly respected in both Westminster and Whitehall.

**The Strategic Innovation Unit** drives digital transformation within Cabinet Office, promoting digital efficiency, policy modernization, and service agility through centralized project management.

### **Contribution to National Outcomes**

Mr. Chair, Cabinet Office's remit is both local and global. Its work contributes significantly to **Broad Outcome 6: Efficient, Effective Public Services** and **Broad Outcome 7: Good Governance and Public Safety**.

### **Key Projects for 2026-2027**

#### **E-Cabinet (CBO 2)**

Within the next two years, Cabinet Office will replace outdated manual workflows with a secure, paperless digital platform to manage Cabinet and National Security Council processes.

Since our first Constitution in 1959, Cabinet Papers have been processed manually—a cumbersome, difficult-to-track system. As the Cayman Islands has grown, so has the governance structure and the astounding amount of paper generated weekly.



The e-Cabinet solution will:

- Improve public service delivery through technology
- Reduce costs and environmental impacts of printing volumes of papers for weekly Cabinet meetings
- Improve cross-Government communication and collaboration to streamline decision-making
- Ensure confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of Cabinet and National Security Council documents

Members of Parliament already benefit from increased efficiency and convenience through streamlined creation, sharing, reviewing, approving, and managing of Cabinet documents.

### **Re-platforming of Gov.ky (CBO 17)**

Mr. Chair, Oracle's announcement that it would end its web-based content management by December this year forced a major pivot. The Department of Communications has been leading the transition of GOV.ky—Government's primary digital ecosystem—to the Liferay platform.

Without this re-platforming, GOV.ky and approximately 60 other Government websites would have ceased to function entirely. A system failure of this magnitude would have risked losing public trust, exposed Government to legal and compliance issues, and interrupted essential communications.

But with challenges come opportunities. The new platform delivers improved accessibility, search optimization, and analytics capabilities. The estimated cost over two years is \$2.3 million, directly supporting Broad Outcome 6.

This project also establishes the foundation for the new Digital Delivery Unit within the Department of Communications, responsible for maintaining, governing, and expanding the GOV.ky ecosystem.

Thus far, we have:

- Migrated priority sites and prepared 36 core entities for transition
- Established governance, metadata standards, accessibility requirements, and new content models
- Conducted content audits, user testing, and technical onboarding for multiple ministries and agencies



The public will enjoy a fresh product with modernized navigation, improved search functions, and more timely content updates. This Herculean effort is projected to be delivered on time and under budget thanks to exceptional project management.

### **National Weather Service Enhancements (CBO 25)**

This budget includes \$1.4 million for completion and fit-out of the National Weather Service's new home, with an expected move-in date before June 2026—right in time for the next hurricane season. The building will allow better quality observations and warnings, especially for aviation, while resolving the hazardous situation of having hydrogen tanks and generators in the General Aviation Terminal.

The budget also includes \$200,000 to establish a Centralized Data Integration Platform, bringing together weather sensors in a strategic database accessible to key stakeholders, further enhancing public safety.

Other focus areas include:

- Installing four new Automatic Weather Observing Stations
- Creating a network of Storm Surge Sensors as part of our Early Warning System
- Launching a strategic partnership with the UK's Met Office to assess our current operations and develop a roadmap for the future
- A greatly enhanced Weather Service website with improved user experience—and Mr. Chair, I have challenged the team to develop an app for easier access to information, including views of the newly refurbished Kearney Gomez Doppler Radar.

I'm heartened that under Cabinet Office guidance, the radar has had no breakdowns or extensive downtime over the past two years other than scheduled maintenance. As hurricane season prayerfully draws to a close, the radar, which has reached the end of its lifespan, will be refurbished.

After a competitive procurement process, Leonardo, the company which originally installed the radar, has won the contract to refurbish and modernize it. This project commences this weekend, and the radar will be offline for six weeks to provide the country with much improved services, data, and accuracy. The new radar will cost \$622,000 and have an expected lifespan of 10 years.



Mr. Chair, given what we have witnessed with our beloved neighbours, we are wise to invest in our local weather service for better forecasts that help us manage daily activities and save lives and protect property during adverse weather conditions.

## **Conclusion**

So Mr. Chair, in the 2026/2027 budget year, the Cabinet Office will continue to build bridges of collaboration:

- across civil service, to ensure high quality policy advice, policy development and policy training and the effective communication of Government's plans and decisions across all channels to keep the public duly informed- and my utilization of a more effective and efficient E-Cabinet;
- also to ensure best practice and governance in areas such as FOI, Data Protection and the communities of practice in both the Communications and Policy professions;
- between political and civil service by supporting the team within the Office of the Premier, refine the process between Caucus and Cabinet, support joined up Government as exemplified in this budget and the NCFC coalition agreement and the public communication of a shared vision between each Ministry and Portfolio. The role of the Cabinet Office in supporting the principle of collective responsibility cannot be understated;
- between the Cayman Islands and the UK- through supporting the lines of communication between the Premier and the Governor on agreement of Cabinet Agendas and co-Chairing the National Hazard Management Executive and cooperation on matters of National Security. They also diplomatically guide the CIG's relationships across Whitehall and Westminster, coordinate our preparations for the Joint Ministerial Council, and circumnavigating the constitutional relationship between the Cayman Islands and the UK. This will also include the development of a new strategic partnership between the UK's Meteorological Office and Cayman Islands National Weather Service;



- between the Cayman Islands and other OTs and CARICOM Members- through training placements and direct support for other OTs, serving as a liaison between Caribbean OTs and other regional heads of Government, being an active member of the UK Overseas Territories Association, managing our Associate Membership of CARICOM, and coordinating regional disaster management support and hurricane relief efforts; and
- through enhanced public communications of our policies and priorities. This including our beloved Radio Cayman. This requires new avenues, channels and approaches to promote feedback from the community such as the Public Consultation Hub, support for community based Disaster Preparedness Management, and improved utilization of weather tools such as our soon to be refurbished Kearney Gomez Doppler Radar, as well as work on a special initiative to ensure that the protection and promotion of our Caymanian identity and heritage is at the heart of all of our work.

In closing, when the Cabinet Office builds strong bridges of collaboration, the entire Government stands firmly connected, empowering our people with better services, stronger protection, and greater long-term opportunities.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.