

# **The Met Office in Barbados - A Proposed restructuring ... 2011-11-27 (Draft)**

*This is an on-going document, until finalised – compiled and proposed by David G. Brooks.*

**The Met Office (MO) should be removed from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and put under the Ministry of Defence & Security (MoDS),** which normally is part of the Prime Minister's (PM's) portfolio. There should still be direct liaison with The Ministry of Agriculture, The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) and of course general communications with other related ministries as deemed necessary.

Either the Minister of Defence & Security (i.e. PM) will take charge of the overseeing of the Met Office directly, or maybe more practically this charge could be given to a Minister of State within the Prime Minister's Office, but the ultimate responsibility and accountability lies with the Minister of Defence & Security – i.e. the PM (normally, as mentioned).

The reason for this proposed change is that while the weather has a direct impact of agriculture and fisheries on a period basis, which is important and thus the recommended and continued direct liaison with the MoA, it (the weather) has much farther reaching consequences to the society in general, which if impacted in a major way would require action from the Defence & Security departments of Government. Subsequently, there would be financial and economical fallout too, so it makes sense to put the Met Office in this forefront aspect so that it may be allowed the opportunity for an increased budget which could mitigate against serious financial problems down the line should disaster occur.

Next the Met Office should be overseen by a Council (MOC), not unlike a board of Directors, but more like a Guidance/Advisory/Governance Council that would consist of representatives from a diverse group of persons from related or concerned organisations (private, public, NGO, etc.) that make up an overall representation of the WHOLE society, community and citizens of Barbados, as may be possible.

## **The Met Office Council's (MOC) role, responsibility and mandate will be to ...**

To provide advice and assistance to the Minister in charge for:

- Setting objectives and policy within in the Met Office, including its responsibilities to the Public;
- Approving strategy and plans for achieving these objectives;
- Public Relations and basic education for the public on weather issues and data;
- Raise external awareness of the Met Office, their work, and to build beneficial external relationships;
- Provision for on-demand weather press/media production, with emphasis on Audio/Video settings;
- Create and maintain an Internet presence at ALL times, with up-to-date information, imagery, etc.
- Keep abreast with changes in technology or at least an annual general review, well prior to June;
- Review of Met Office annual performance including interim reviews as deemed necessary;
- Be able to call Internal Enquiries as deemed necessary;
- Be PROACTIVE in all of the above endeavours and any other relevant issues on the public's behalf.

## MOC Structure

**Chaired by the Minister in charge**, the MOC will consist of:

(A Deputy Chairman will be chosen from the members below, but shall exclude any MO or CIMH personnel)

- Permanent Secretary (or a Senior Designate) from the Ministry of Finance
- Director of the Met Office (or his/her Deputy)
- One Senior Met Office Forecaster
- Director (or a Senior Designate) of the Department of Emergency Management (DEM)
- The Principal (or a Senior Designate) of the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology
- Seaport/Harbour Representative
- Airport/Aviation Representative
- Barbados Chamber of Commerce Representative
- Minimum of two (2) persons; maximum of four (4) persons appointed by the Minister in charge, after consultation with and/or chosen from (but not limited to) the:
  - Local Fishing/Boating (Domestic, Commercial & Game Fishing) communities;
  - Local Farming or Livestock community;
  - Local Insurance Corporate community;
  - Local community that has experienced in Information Technology and especially an aptitude for weather observation and the technology associated with it.
- Utility Services Representatives\* (Invited, as needed for direct input and consultation) – Electrical Power (BL&P); Water (BWA), Natural Gas (NPC), Communications (C&W/LIME, Digicel, TeleBarbados, etc.) – Note most of these and others will be covered under DEM, including civilian assistance and communications.
- Other invited guest(s) as may be deemed necessary and/or providing beneficial advise or recommendations, as per the MOC's mandate or prudently otherwise. Occasional Caribbean Meteorology Organisation (CMO) and/or World Meteorology Organisation (WMO) representative would also be welcome.

*\*Any such Utility (Guest) Reps. **must** be included in any meeting just prior to the commencement of the Hurricane Season (Jun.-Nov.), which would normally be the Second Quarter (Q2) meeting of the MOC, if that is not possible then a special pre-season (i.e. pre-June) meeting must be convened to hear their concerns and/or recommendations. It is also strongly recommended that they be included in a post-season meeting (Q4).*

Recommended Quorum for the MOC should be at least seven (7) council members.

Recommended Minimum Meetings per year should be six (6), with one scheduled each quarter, with the two (2) additional meetings, one (1) just before the Hurricane Season and one (1) just after. However, additional meetings are recommended in times of need.

All Council Members should have free and full access, with necessary permits/passes, at any time to the MO facilities at Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA) and to the Doppler radar site at Castle Grant in St. Joseph. This will ensure full transparency.