



Bermuda Public Accountability Board (BPAB)
The Rosebank Building, 2nd floor
12 Bermudiana Road, Hamilton HM 11
Website: <http://bermudapab.com>

September 20, 2024

Annual Report to the Minister of Finance

Background

This Annual Report of the Bermuda Public Accountability Board (BPAB) has been prepared to provide information on the activities of BPAB during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024, as required by Section 14 of the Bermuda Public Accountability Act 2011 and subsequent amendments thereto (the Act). Section 15 of the Act requires that BPAB, as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year, provide to the Minister of Finance a copy of the annual report of the operations of BPAB as well as a copy of the annual financial statements of BPAB audited by the Auditor General. The Minister is then required under Section 15 to lay such statement of accounts before the Houses of the Legislature.

BPAB was established to provide an independent oversight of Bermuda Public Interest Entity (PIE) public accountants (Bermuda PIE public accountants), as defined by the Act and subsequent amendments thereto. The Act provided for a comprehensive and transparent system of oversight by establishing BPAB and granting it powers to carry out the independent supervision of Bermuda PIE public accountants, including registration and inspection activity, and, where deemed appropriate, investigation activity.

The auditing profession is overseen by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Bermuda (CPA Bermuda). In accordance with the Act, a Bermuda PIE public accountant must first be registered with CPA Bermuda in order to be eligible for registration with BPAB. There are nine public accounting firms in Bermuda registered with CPA Bermuda of which five are currently registered with BPAB as Bermuda PIE public accountants to be able to issue audit reports on financial statements of Bermuda PIEs.

The Act provides the definition of a Bermuda PIE. There were 76 Bermuda PIEs reported as audited by four Bermuda PIE public accountants based on the July 2024 reported PIE listing updates. These PIEs were largely comprised of Class E or Class 4 insurers and banks licensed by the Bermuda Monetary Authority as well as certain publicly listed entities whose common shares are listed and trading.

Further information about BPAB and its activities can be found on the website at www.bpab.bm.

Board of Directors

The Directors of BPAB are responsible for oversight of BPAB's activities and affairs. All key decisions of BPAB require approval of the majority of the Board of Directors.

The Board currently has a Chair, Executive Director and two other non-executive members. Three of the directors are accountants providing the Board with accounting and auditing expertise. All members are seasoned business professionals that help deliver prudent independence and oversight. The Act specifies



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that a Board member is initially appointed for a three-year term, with staggered and extended terms upon approval by the Minister of Finance.

The following are the current non-executive members of the Board of Directors appointed by the Minister of Finance:

- Michelle Seymour-Smith, Chair
- Andrew M. Marsh, and
- Natalie Chaves.

In addition, Wanda Mwaura continues to serve as the Executive Director and Secretary to the Board of BPAB managing the operational, strategic, and financial day-to-day operations of BPAB, including the administration, programs, and strategic planning of BPAB.

Compliance Committee of BPAB

In accordance with Section 30 of the Act, BPAB has appointed a Compliance Committee to supervise compliance with the provisions of the Act and related regulations and rules made under the Act, particularly with respect to inspection and investigation activities.

At March 31, 2024, the Committee consisted of two Directors of BPAB, one of whom chairs the committee, and two other professionals as follows:

- Michelle Seymour-Smith, Chair of the Compliance Committee and Director representative
- Natalie Chaves, Director representative
- Kiernan Bell, and
- Alison Morrison.

Ms. Bell retired from the committee effective May 31, 2024. The Board of Directors appointed Mr. Trevor Smith, an individual with extensive audit oversight and professional practice experience, to join the committee effective June 1, 2024.

Report on Registration Activity

BPAB renewed the annual registrations for five Bermuda PIE public accountants: Deloitte Ltd., Ernst & Young Ltd., Grant Thornton (Bermuda) Limited KPMG Audit Limited, and PricewaterhouseCoopers Ltd., during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024.

Report on Inspection Activity During the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2024

The procedures of BPAB, including those related to inspections, are set out in the Act and in the following subordinate legislation made pursuant to the Act: the Bermuda Public Accountability (General) Rules 2015 (the BPAB Rules), the Bermuda Public Accountability (General) Regulations 2015, and the Bermuda Public Accountability (Review Proceedings) Regulations 2015, collectively referred to hereinafter as the Act, Rules and Regulations.

Inspections to date have been an assessment of the compliance of the Bermuda PIE public accountant with the provisions of the Act, Rules and Regulations, with applicable professional standards and rules,



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as well as quality control policies of the Bermuda PIE public accountant, in connection with the issuance of audit reports on the general-purpose financial statements of Bermuda PIEs. Inspections are carried out to ensure compliance with the Act while investigations are carried out as considered necessary by the Compliance Committee.

The Compliance Committee of BPAB is responsible for ensuring that inspections of registered Bermuda PIE public accountants are conducted at least once every three years.

One Bermuda PIE public accountant firm was inspected during the year ended March 31, 2024. BPAB issued its final inspection report on December 12, 2023. Such report was not made public. Inspection reports in its entirety are not made public and portions of the inspection report are made public only if it relates to findings of weaknesses, deficiencies and recommendations, as provided in BPAB Rule 14(1), where the PIE public accountant failed to submit evidence or otherwise demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Committee that it has adequately addressed such weaknesses and deficiencies and implemented such recommendations.

Report on Investigation Activity

There were no investigation activities conducted by BPAB during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024 and to the date of this annual report. The only investigation conducted by BPAB since its inception was concluded in November 2020. A copy of the November 2020 Violation Event Notice continues to be posted on BPAB's website as of the date of this report.

Report on Other Activities

BPAB's application to become a member of the International Forum of Independent Audit Regulators (IFIAR) was put on hold in the prior year pending a review by BPAB of its regulations and practices. This review commenced during the year and is ongoing, including with respect to funding and scoping (which includes the Bermuda PIE definition). IFIAR is comprised of independent audit oversight regulators from around the world and its mission is to serve the public interest, including investors, by enhancing audit oversight globally.

During the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022, BPAB received a request from the United Kingdom's (UK's) Financial Reporting Council (FRC) for BPAB to complete a questionnaire and provide certain supporting documentation in order for the FRC to re-assess Bermuda for audit oversight equivalence. BPAB responded to this request and the assessment is ongoing with no formal assessment response from the FRC to date. It is expected that a re-assessment will take place after any changes to legislation and practices of BPAB that may take place in the near future.

As BPAB conducts a review of its legislation and practices, it is following a consultative process with the audit profession and other key stakeholders and will consider feedback received from past equivalency assessments, IFIAR reviews, and the Bermuda Government's Ministry of Finance. BPAB issued a consultation paper dated September 16, 2024 to seek feedback with respect to purpose, scoping and funding. Comments are due by November 30, 2024.



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Report on Financial Results for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2024

BPAB generated an annual surplus for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024 of \$21,834, compared to a budgeted annual deficit of \$57,094, primarily as a result of incurring fewer expenses than budgeted. BPAB budgeted for an annual deficit in order to reduce the level of accumulated surplus arising from historically incurring expenditures below the budgeted levels. The accumulated surplus as of March 31, 2024 was \$244,775.

The annual surplus was comprised of revenues of \$382,828, net of expenses of \$360,994.

Revenues were generated from government grants to fund operations, inspection fees recovered from the firms inspected, registration fees from five audit firms, and donated audit services by the Office of the Auditor General.

Expenses consisted of professional fees totaling \$340,855 and general administration expenses of \$20,139. These expenses related primarily to the normal course of operations of BPAB. Professional fees include employment costs, fees for services provided by directors and compliance committee members, inspection fees, consulting fees, and donated audit fees whereas general administration costs are largely comprised of office space rental expenses and other administration expenses. The inspection fees have no impact on the annual deficit or surplus as the inspection expenses are recovered from the firm inspected through inspection fees revenue. Professional fees for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024 include consulting fees related to review of BPAB’s legislation and practices with the objective to effect changes in the near future after a period of consultation.

The Statement of Operations and Accumulated Surplus for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024 is as follows:

REVENUES	
Government grants	\$300,000
Inspection fees	32,628
Registration fees	25,000
Donated audit services	25,200
	<u>\$382,828</u>
EXPENSES	
Professional fees	\$340,855
General administration	20,139
	<u>\$360,994</u>
ANNUAL SURPLUS	21,834
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>222,941</u>
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$244,775</u>



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The financial statements have been prepared by BPAB and audited by the Auditor General and are submitted to the Minister of Finance under a separate cover with an unqualified opinion for the year ended March 31, 2024.

Further information on BPAB and its activities can be found in the audited financial statements, on the website at www.bpab.bm, or by request by email to info@bermudapab.com.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of BPAB,

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Seymour-Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a blue rounded rectangular border.

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Michelle Seymour-Smith

Chair