



Ministerial Statement

By

The Hon. R. Patricia Gordon-Pamplin, JP, MP

Minister of Home Affairs

10th February, 2017

National Training Board Annual Report 2014-2016

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the National Training Board Annual Report 2014-2016.

In accordance with Section 11(1) of the National Training Board Act 1997 “the Board shall, within three months after the end of each financial year forward to the Minister a report on the activities of the Board during that financial year and on the Board’s policy and programme for future years.”

You will undoubtedly note that this Annual Report provides information on activities for two years 2014/15 and 2015/16. **Mr. Speaker**, I apologise for the delay in the production and tabling of the report and I can assure you that future reports will be produced within the time frame prescribed in the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, since the last Annual Report, some of the significant results recorded by the Department are, as follows:

- a) An upgrade to the Job Board website;

- b) Creation of and updates to Department Policies and Procedures to improve operational efficiency;
- c) Success stories showcasing some very talented young people;
- d) Information in respect to the Annual Summer Employment Program;
- e) Statistical information stemming from work activities in the Labour Relations Section;
- f) Insight into the Departments' collaborative partnerships with internal and external stakeholders; and
- g) Information highlighting the number of companies participating in the Tax Waiver Program.

Mr. Speaker, the Job Board remains a valuable tool to assist individuals with their search for suitable employment. In order to ensure that information stored on the system remains confidential, some security enhancements were made to protect the user. Further, adjustments were made to make the system more functional and to add broader reporting options for data gathering. Detailed job postings and information on work permit expiration dates are now available to users of the system.

Mr. Speaker, the Summer Employment Program continues to be a success. This is a 10-week programme for College or University students to gain job experience that aligns with their coursework. A stipend of \$5,000 is awarded to each student upon successful completion of the program. In 2014, 150 students participated in the programme and in 2015 the number decreased to 102 students. The decrease is as a result of budget constraints and sourcing students that met all of the requirements for eligibility.

Mr. Speaker, the Annual Report aptly showcases a number of success stories as testament to the 'return on investment'. Let's begin with Miss Jessica Andrade,

who is a graduate of Cedarbridge Academy and a current Apprentice in the Culinary Arts at the Fairmont Southampton Hotel. Miss Andrade has performed well in the kitchens of the Waterlot Inn, Newport Gastropub and Jasmine Lounge. She was eligible to write the Red Seal Internationally Recognized Certification after completing 5,400 hours of work. We are proud to share in her accomplishment of obtaining her certification which gives her global access to work opportunities.

Mr. John Crockwell, also a former student of Cedarbridge Academy, is a recent graduate of the Certificate in Plumbing Program at the Bermuda College. Currently working for Island Engineering Limited, Mr. Crockwell had some early life challenges through which he has persevered and he should be commended for his successes. He attributes some of that success to the assistance received from the Department of Workforce Development. The Department provided mentorship services and financial support towards tuition costs at the Bermuda College.

Mr. Ty-risque Berkeley experienced seamanship on board the Spirit of Bermuda and recently on the Picton Castle, a three-masted tall ship based in Nova Scotia. His ultimate goal is to attend Warsach Maritime Academy in Southampton, UK to become a Master Mariner. During his six month tenure with the Picton Castle he had the opportunity to visit the Azores, Morocco, the Canary Islands, Senegal and the Windward Islands.

Mr. Ricardo Graham-Ward, Trainee Civil Engineer with the Department of Public Works recently acquired his Masters' of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from University of Southampton, UK. His aspiration is to gain his Chartered status in the near future. Excited about the opportunity to work on the reclamation project in Dockyard, Mr. Graham-Ward encourages more young Bermudians to pursue post-secondary education and certifications to enhance their career opportunities. I also have the pleasure of informing **Honourable Members** that Mr. Graham-Ward was

one of the seven Bermudians selected by Aecon to participate in their internship programme. His internship with WSP Global and Quinn Dressel Associates will allow him to further his career in civil and structural engineering.

Mr. Jeneko Place received his Motorcycle Mechanic Technician Diploma from Motorcycle Mechanics Institute in Orlando, Florida. He currently works for Cycle Zone. His advice to all young people is to follow your dreams and make decisions that will benefit your well-being.

Mr. Speaker, the overseas funding program supports up to 20 new students each year. Funding activities are tabled at the rear of the Annual Report showing Number of Students sponsored over the course of the last several years. In addition to academic achievements and financial need – the Awards Committee of the National Training Board based their selections on the student’s area of study and current economic activity in Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, the Department continues to collaborate with industry partners to create opportunities for young aspiring Bermudians. In this issue of the Annual Report you will find that work continues in earnest with the Bermuda Hospitality Institute, the Construction Association of Bermuda, Financial Assistance and private businesses. There is a concerted effort to encourage businesses to invest in the development of Bermudians by using the Tax Waiver Incentive Program. In accordance with Section 23 of the Payroll Tax Act 1995, employers can apply to the Tax Commissioner’s Office for a payroll tax waiver. Employers must provide highlights of their training programs to develop Bermudians. The training must be accredited and approved by the Department before consideration is given for tax credit. In 2014 there were 9 organizations that received this credit compared to 7 in 2015.

Mr. Speaker, in 2014/15 there were six hundred sixty one (661) labour dispute inquires lodged with the Labour Relations Section of the Department, of which

four hundred forty five (445) were consultations and two hundred sixteen (216) were complaints... **Mr. Speaker**, during the year 2015/16 there were approximately six hundred forty one (641) labour dispute inquiries lodged with the Labour Relations Section of which four hundred fifty eight (458) were consultations and one hundred eighty three (183) were complaints. One hundred sixty (160) were complaints filed pursuant to the Employment Act 2000 and twenty three (23) were grievances reported pursuant to the Labour Relations Act 1975, Trade Union Act 1965 and/or the Labour Disputes Act 1992.

The majority of the Complaints filed and investigated by the Labour Relations Officers in 2015/16 related to terminations and wages at fifty eight percent (58%) and twenty percent (20%) respectively. The other twenty two percent (22%) consisted of complaints surrounding layoffs, redundancy, constructive dismissal, sick pay and vacation pay.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Training Board, the Department of Workforce Development and industry partners who work so closely with the government to ensure that training and development programs are successful. It is these efforts that will ensure that Bermudians gain access to opportunities that will suitably position them in the workforce. I would also like to thank in particular, the Labour Relations Section of the Department who work assiduously to ensure that the rights of workers are adequately protected.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker