



ANNUAL REPORT

2019

FOREWARD

Greetings!

I am pleased to prepare the first Board Report to the Tourism Development Corporation Board of Directors in order to acquaint Members with all of the necessary information with respect to the TDC's activities, projects, staffing and financial position.

This report will focus only on information that is of great use to the Board of Directors. In some instances the report will only provide a summary of activities and positioning, if necessary more details can be provided.

Kindest regards.



Janet E. Johnson,
Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director



OUR MANDATE

The Tourism Development Corporation (“TDC”) operates as a statutory body under the portfolio of the Minister with responsibility for Tourism, with the mandate to undertake certain activities to stimulate increased levels of investment and product development in the domestic tourism sector, particularly in the Family Islands, including

- a. facilitating the development of new tourism attractions, activities, products and infrastructure, such as may diversify and refresh the product offering and directly provide for increased employment and entrepreneurship;
- b. facilitating more Bahamian investment in the tourism sector, through entrepreneurial development, the identification of self-employment opportunities, and the expansion of private sector activity through the development of linkages; and
- c. encouraging the effective operation of local businesses and their participation in the tourism industry, through the reduction of leakages, improved standards, financial and technical assistance, and better use of technology, modernised management, and innovation.

The TDC operates in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism & Aviation and in line with the Ministry’s plans for the integrated promotion and development of the tourism industry in a holistic, whole of destination, approach to improving tourism product diversity and quality. The ultimate aim being to improve competitiveness and amplify the uniqueness of the destination, to substantially increase customer interest, stopover figures, and visitor spend; thereby, maximise the returns from the tourism industry and increase its benefit to Bahamians. The TDC would therefore assist the Ministry’s efforts, by focusing on activities that may be usefully addressed by a small, nimble, business-oriented body, working closely with all key stakeholders in the industry

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION STRUCTURE

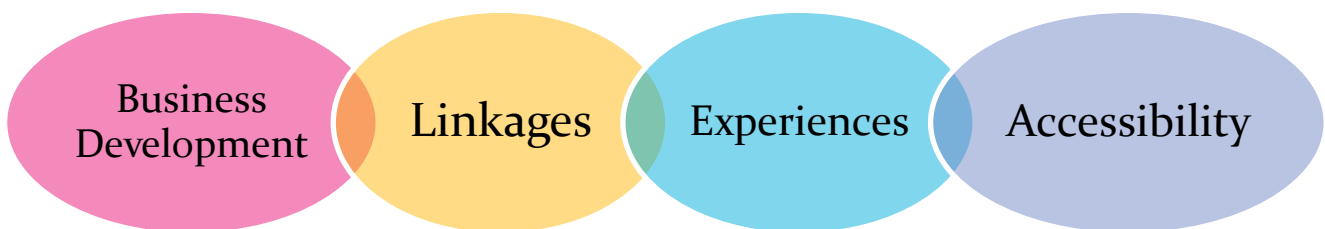
The Tourism Development Corporation is headed by a Chairman and supported by a full complement of Directors. Chairman Michael Scott appointed the minimum number of directors required to stand up the Board, the full complement will be appointed in the coming year. The following were invited to serve as TDC Directors:

- Chairman: Michael Scott
- CEO/Executive Director: Janet Johnson
- Secretary/Treasurer: Lindsey Cancino
- Independent: Cleora Farquharson
- Non-Independent: Anthony Ferguson

Day-to-day operations are overseen by the CEO/ED supported by a team of associates. It has been quite the challenge to get the staff that TDC needs.

The TDC currently operates four Department lines. The TDC operations manual which will provide more detailed information will be provided in the coming weeks.

TDC BUSINESS LINES

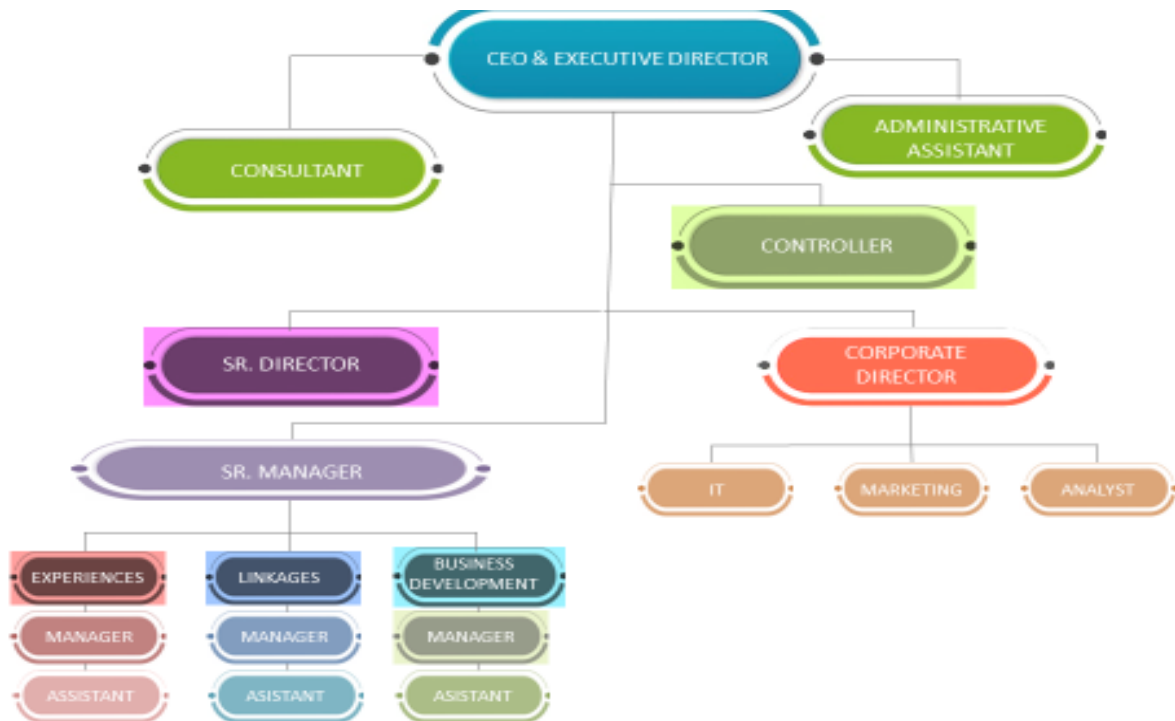


We presently have five staffers. Four from MOTA and one from private sector and they are:

Name	Title/ Position
Craig Mortimer	Manager, Tours & Attractions
Kendenique Moss	Manager, Communications
Rhonda Ingraham	Manager, Linkages
Deanya Coakley	Analyst
Schano Pierre-McKenzie	Analyst

TDC needs experienced staff/consultants with skills such as knowledge of Grant writing and more of a private sector mindset. We implore the Board to assist in this regard.

The organizational chart outlined below is the TDC wish list for staffing needs.



. Accessibility Tourism

Accessible Tourism for All means access to information, access to local transport, access to accommodation and the possibility to visit and participate in cultural or sporting events; and the possibility to go into the sea just like everyone else. This does not only mean access for people with disabilities, but also access for people with temporary handicaps, families with young children and the increasing aging Baby Boomer population

American adults with disabilities or reduced mobility currently spend an average of \$13.6 billion a year on travel. Creating accessible ship terminals, accessible ground transportation, and accessible tourist destinations is not charity. It is just good business

Unfortunately, in The Bahamas there is a significant lack of industry awareness of organizational benefits that flow from accessible product supply in tourism. The industry needs to gain an overall understanding about the type of issues that tourists with accessible needs face in order to provide a better product and service.

American adults with disabilities or reduced mobility number some 56 million persons, currently spend an average of \$13.6 billion a year on travel. Creating accessible ship terminals, accessible ground transportation, and accessible tourist destinations is not charity. It is just good business.

TDC will seek to;

- See that The Bahamas is promoted as a destination of choice by ensuring that its products and services are” accessible by all”
- Create a *Totally Accessible Bahamas* (TAB) Desk to show our commitment to this lucrative emerging market and ensure sensitivity training for the individuals who will run it
- Continue to develop policies and or legislation that are in keeping with *International Standards Organization* (ISO) for accessible tourism through BBSQ
- Encourage products/attractions that are designed for those with disabilities
- Ensure that all domestic tourism projects are properly accessible to persons with disabilities

- Help to influence the fact that all digital promotions depict The Bahamas' commitment to fostering a culture that promotes accessible Tourism
- In conjunction with Hotel Licensing, develop a database with a view to promoting establishments, attractions and businesses that are accessible to the physically challenged
- Implement training programmes to sensitize individuals employed in the Tourism sector
- Facilitate the campaign to promote compliance in hotels, public buildings and public spaces
- Create awareness of the business opportunities available in Accessibility Tourism

3.2 Business Development

The TDC will provide encouragement and support to Entrepreneur's in the pursuit of their dream to create innovative and authentic experiences for tourists to enjoy while visiting The Bahamas.

This inures to the benefit of the entrepreneur because TDC is able to influence the rules and regulations that govern each industry in a holistic way, so that the entrepreneur knows what the terms and conditions of engagement are at the outset. There have been incidents of late that require that we take an urgent look at the existing rules and regulations and factor in the visitor, across the board.

The TDC will work in partnership with agencies that have been established by the Government to provide relevant services for the entrepreneur.

The following outlines some of the programmes that the Corporation will seek to institute to fulfill its mandate:

- Business Consultation
- Business Plan Review
- Financing & Funding Guidance
- Facilitating Meetings
- Marketing, Promotion & Export

- Site Visits
- Guidance on Licenses, Permits, Registrations & Regulations
- Networking, Seminars, & Networking Opportunities
- Internal & External Training Seminars
- Access to Professionals

3.3 Experiences - Tours & Attractions

The Bahamas's products must keep pace with changing tastes and global competition. Competitive destinations are investing in memorable, new attractions and so must we. Long-term, focused investments and innovation will allow us to capitalize on the full extent of our inherent advantages. This will lead to the high-quality, unique and the enriching experiences today's travelers seek.

While the Bahamas has numerous tours, events and festivals in order to attract new visitors and locals alike, more must be created. The TDC will seek to identify new opportunities and products for the tourists coming to The Bahamas. Additionally, an audit of current tours will be conducted with a view to refreshing, redesigning and repackaging them to spur interest and economic activity in The Bahamas.

It is envisioned that all Tours and Tour Operators will have to be licensed by the TDC.

3.4 Linkages

As the primary driver of our economy, Tourism annually earns \$2 billion. However, there is a huge trade imbalance and all of that money and more goes right back out to purchase imported goods. Each year we spend a staggering \$5 billion on imports.

The integration of business development as a driving force in domestic tourism is important to our overall national development. Our inclusive growth is predicated

on an understanding of the demand by the tourism sector for goods and services used in its operations.

It bridges the gap between what existed between the tourism sector and the other local industries by providing information as to the products and services that can be supplied to the tourism industry by our local agriculture, agro-processing, manufacturing and services sectors.

It presents significant prospects for meaningful integration across sectors and can go a long way in providing a more reliable basis on which we can not only quantify the demand of goods and services from the tourism sector but get a better understanding of the role various sectors in our economy can play in satisfying that demand.

The role of the TDC is to help to reduce our import bill. We are charged with creating greater linkages between local producers of products and services in the tourism sector and ensure that most of the fruit and vegetables are procured locally. Additionally, we must seek to ensure that artwork, amenities and accessories are of a consistently high standard and incorporated into the décor of our hotels and restaurants. This will put more of our people to work and secure the growth we so desperately need.

In addition to staging various cultural markets to promote our suppliers, a major initiative that tourism linkages will be undertaking is a demand study where we will take a look at the tourism entities and the goods and services our suppliers provide and see how we can further identify more potential linkages. We will also harness partners in areas such as design and pricing; aesthetics; functionality; quality or packaging and labeling.

People-to-People, Peer-to-Peer Systems & Community Based Tourism

- Tourism's motto: *making it increasingly easier to create, sell and deliver satisfying vacations ... satisfying FIRST to the people who reside in The Bahamas ...*
- The P2P programme is the forerunner to CBT. This MOTA legacy programme that was started in 1974 is now on the mature curve and in dire need of refreshing. Years ago when attempts were made to introduce a commercial component volunteers would not hear of it,

so committed to the purity of the cultural exchange that was so valuable, were they.

- CBT (P2P 2.0) will expand upon the international spirit of goodwill that P2P volunteers and home hospitality entrepreneurs participating in the *peer-to-peer systems* such as Airbnb by formalizing the tourism activities and creating a more memorable and authentic experience. In the case of many, especially those in the Carmichael Road area, this is CBT at its best.
- Many of the visitors are people overnighing for a few nights in Nassau before going onto the Family Islands and the hosts are providing “free” round trip transportation to the LPIA; in a lot of cases the hosts are preparing meals for their guests, guests are treating their hosts to final night dinners at their expense and hosts are receiving gifts from afar from their guests when they return to their homes which is the best testament of success of all
- So CBT is growing organically and flourishing nicely; all TDC needs to do is to ensure that it is growing in a way that adds positively to the reputation of The Bahamas. From an economic point of view, the money is arriving in The Bahamas, not in the bank of some foreign second-home owner overseas; the meals and transportation are being provided by local vendors and people are being directly exposed to Tourism in a way that was almost impossible before. This is the distribution of income that was always desired
- CBT is therefore something to be managed and nurtured while taking best practices from elsewhere including the Far East and TDC will engage with these home hospitality entrepreneurs to offer the best community tourism product in the region

TDC Seal of Approval

Provision is made in the TDC Bill 2019 for the Seal of Approval. We will be conducting a thorough audit of the tours and those who meet the criteria and maintain the standards will be invited to apply for the Seal. Working through

MOTA and the TDC Technical Committees – Cruise and Local Govt. – we will be promoting the value of the Seal and the fact that visitors will be looking for businesses displaying the decal on their storefront on website and on their products as a sign of excellence.

CONCLUSION

The past year has been exciting one and a real learning experience on so many fronts. We have extended ourselves, tried to meet every challenged head on and multi-tasked to the hilt. Starting a new Government agency from scratch with limited resources is not easy but we have made great strides and continue to soldier on.

Networking with the other Government agencies and finding our footing has been an interesting journey. It has stretched us and we have networked extensively and it has paid dividends. Once TDC has its statutory legs, it will fulfill the vision that Minister D’Augliar had at the beginning, to serve as a private sector driven, creative and nimble operation that is able to respond in real-time, to muster corporate partners and to support the Ministry of Tourism & Aviation’s strategic plan.



