



Border Force
Turks and Caicos Islands



...trade and travel
...use of technology, intelligence,
...professionalised workforce.

BORDER FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2027



**SAFEGUARDING OUR BORDERS
AND THE NATION'S PROSPERITY**





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FOREWORD

As the Turks and Caicos Islands Border Force embarks on a new chapter, we recognise our critical responsibility in securing our borders and protecting our nation's prosperity. This forward-looking strategic plan will guide us in addressing the evolving threats that challenge the security and integrity of our islands. With the establishment of the Border Force, we have the opportunity to redesign our operations to better facilitate trade and travel, all while ensuring the safety of our communities and upholding our laws.

Our transformation introduces a new operational structure with local decision-making and accountability at its core, supported by well-defined guidelines. At the heart of this transformation is a workforce equipped with accredited training, capable of meeting the expectations placed upon us by the people we serve. As we integrate cutting-edge technology and intelligence into our operations, we are committed to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and integrity.

Every day, our dedicated team works to safeguard the borders of the Turks and Caicos Islands, ensuring the lawful movement of people and goods while identifying and deterring those who pose a threat to our nation. This strategic plan serves as our roadmap for the coming years, outlining the goals and initiatives that will shape our future. It reflects our unwavering commitment to continuous improvement and sets the foundation for how we will tackle the challenges ahead.

Over the next three years, the Border Force will build on the strengths of our legacy agencies while forging ahead with renewed focus and purpose. This strategy provides the robust guidance we need to protect our borders, enhance national security, and support the economic stability of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Together, we stand ready to meet the demands of the future with dedication, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to our mission.



Emilio Seymour,
Director General





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) economic landscape, driven by tourism demands robust border control to safeguard its prosperity. In response to escalating threats, including illegal migration and the need to balance security with facilitating legitimate trade and travel, the TCI Border Force strategic plan has been developed.

This strategic plan outlines a multifaceted approach to enhancing border security, reducing the unlawful population, streamlining legitimate trade and travel, promoting fairness and accountability, and modernizing service delivery. Central to this strategy is a commitment to leveraging technology, strengthening international cooperation, and fostering a culture of excellence within the organization.

The TCI Government has allocated substantial funding for the plan's implementation, encompassing capital investments in technology, recurring costs for maintenance and training, and contingency funds to address potential border surges. The Kotter 8-Step Change Model will guide implementation to ensure a smooth transition from the legacy Customs and Immigration Departments to a unified Border Force.

Recognizing potential risks such as changes in government policy, project delays, and evolving criminal tactics, the plan incorporates mitigation strategies to safeguard its effectiveness. Performance measures and target dates have been established for each strategic priority to monitor progress and ensure the achievement of objectives. Regular evaluation and feedback will be utilized to refine the plan and adapt to changing circumstances.



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STRATEGY SUMMARY

The Turks and Caicos Islands Border Force strategic plan focuses on five key priorities:



ENHANCE BORDER SECURITY: Implement advanced surveillance technology, increase patrols and inspections, strengthen international cooperation, combat money laundering and terrorism financing, and invest in training and development.



REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE UNLAWFUL POPULATION: Introduce new technology, restructure resources, conduct targeted enforcement activities, and implement a public education campaign.



FACILITATE LEGITIMATE TRADE AND TRAVEL: Enhance digital systems, improve customer experience, promote transparency and efficiency, and combat money laundering and terrorism financing.



PROMOTE FAIRNESS, INTEGRITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY: Implement oversight mechanisms, develop data protection policies, and foster a culture of integrity.



MODERNIZE AND PROFESSIONALIZE SERVICE DELIVERY: Establish a dedicated Services Unit, build capacity and training, standardize operating procedures, and enhance public relations.



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CORE VALUES

To achieve operational excellence, every member of the Border Force must align with the core values that form the foundation of our organisation. These guiding principles shape our decisions and define the culture of the Border Force.

INTEGRITY: We commit to act ethically and professionally while maintaining impartiality, fairness, and consistency

PROFESSIONALISM: Our skilled and trained people will perform their duties in a respectful, responsible and reliable manner

SERVICE EXCELLENCE: We commit to delivering world-class customer service to our local and international stakeholders

ACCOUNTABILITY: We are individually and collectively accountable for our actions, with transparency around our efforts and outcomes.

EMPOWERMENT: We foster an inclusive environment where diverse voices and perspectives are valued

LEADERSHIP: Our leadership is considered, dynamic and passionate, fitting our role in protecting our nation's borders.



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IMPORTANCE OF BORDER FORCE



TRAVELLER DATA

Nearly **2 million** passengers arrive in the Turks and Caicos Islands annually



TRADE DATA

TCI has an average total trade worth over **\$400 million**



Revenue Data

An average of over **\$150 million** of customs duty collected from imports and exports annually
Over **\$1 million** in immigration products and services



SECURITY AND BIOSECURITY DATA

Border Force annually seizes an average of three firearms, sixty-five rounds of ammunition, and three hundred cases of Class A and B drugs. Border Force collects over **\$400,000** in penalties for undeclared duty annually.

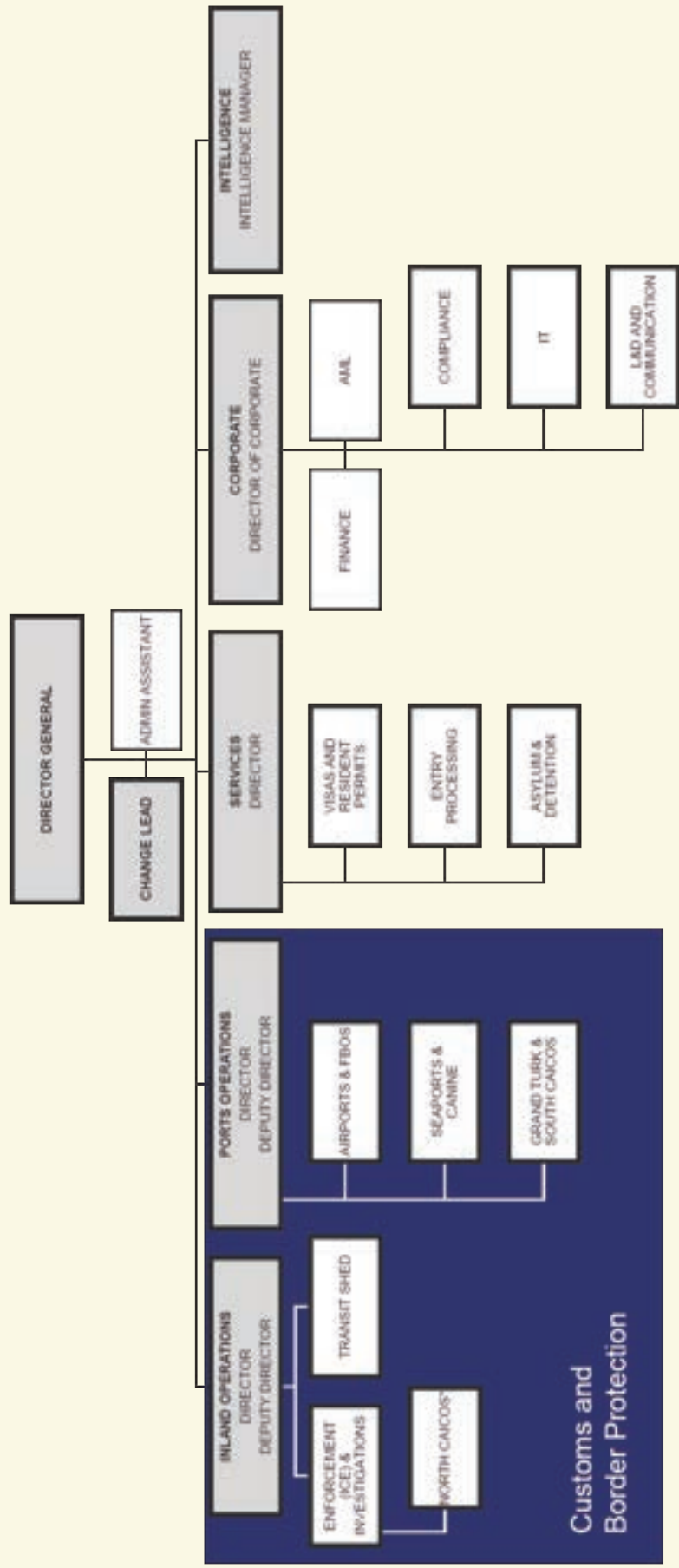


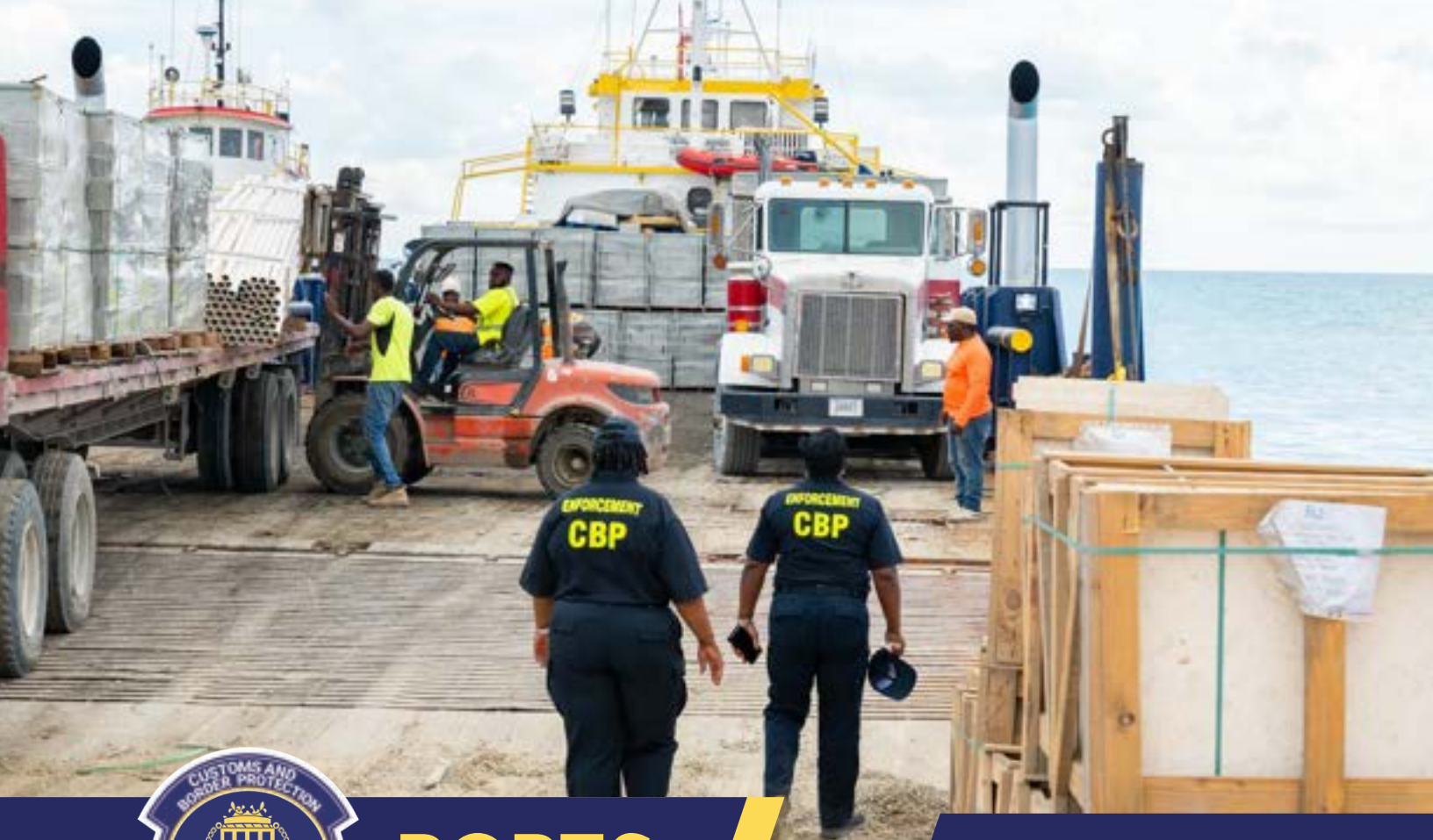
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ORGANISATION AND LEADERSHIP

ORGANISATION

Border Force has 4 major divisions; Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Services, Corporate and Intelligence. The Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the largest component of the TCIBF, comprised of two primary branches: Ports Operations and Inland Operations.





PORTS

The Ports Branch of the Turks and Caicos Islands Border Force is responsible for safeguarding the nation's borders by managing the entry and exit of goods and travellers through all airports and seaports. Its diverse functions ensure that both trade and tourism are facilitated smoothly while maintaining the highest security standards.

The branch oversees customs and immigration procedures at all air and sea entry points, and all operations in Grand Turk and South Caicos. Officers inspect incoming and outgoing passengers to verify travel documents, screen for prohibited items, and ensure compliance with customs and immigration laws.

Border Force officers inspect goods entering and leaving the country to ensure proper declaration, payment of duties and taxes, and adherence to restrictions on prohibited or restricted items. They use advanced technology, such as X-ray scanners, to streamline the process for legitimate trade while identifying suspicious items for further investigation.

Specially trained dogs are used to detect illegal substances such as narcotics, explosives, and smuggled goods. These dogs are deployed during the inspection of luggage, cargo, and passenger vehicles to provide an additional layer of detection that complements other security measures. The canine unit's effectiveness in identifying concealed contraband helps prevent illegal trafficking and reinforces the branch's capacity to protect the islands from harmful activities.

Officers board vessels and aircraft to inspect cargo, crew, and documentation to ensure compliance with customs and immigration regulations. This includes cargo ships, private yachts, and flights. Inspections may include verifying the legality of the crew's presence, ensuring all goods on board are properly declared, and preventing unauthorised personnel from disembarking. By conducting these inspections, the Ports Branch plays a critical role in preventing human trafficking, smuggling, and other illegal activities that could undermine border security.



INLAND



The Inland branch enforces customs and immigration laws across the Turks and Caicos Islands. It inspects individuals suspected of violating these laws, including those entering or remaining illegally. The branch also examines imported goods to ensure compliance with customs requirements and local industry protection.

The Investigations unit investigates serious violations like smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal imports. It works with other law enforcement agencies to identify and prosecute offenders. This unit safeguards the islands from

organised crime and ensures adherence to legal processes.

The branch manages customs operations at transit sheds, where goods are temporarily stored. Border Force officers scrutinise shipments for correct duties and to prevent contraband or unauthorised goods from entering. By overseeing these operations and extending enforcement to the outer islands, especially North Caicos, the Inland branch plays a vital role in detecting and preventing unauthorised movement of people and goods, protecting national security while facilitating legitimate trade and commerce.



SERVICES

The Services Branch plays a crucial role in managing the administrative aspects of immigration and customs in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Visas and Resident Permits Unit processes and decides on all entry applications, such as visas and residency permits. This unit ensures that applicants meet the legal criteria, assessing factors like background checks, purpose of visit, and financial means. This function is critical in accommodating legitimate travellers, tourists, and skilled workers while preventing the entry of individuals who may pose security risks or violate immigration laws.

The Entry Processing Unit oversees the customs declaration process, ensuring proper duty and fee collection on imported goods. This unit verifies that goods are declared accurately and that no prohibited items enter the islands. Customs officers

assess the value of goods, apply tariffs, and ensure strict adherence to customs laws. Efficient goods processing supports legitimate trade, provides government revenue, and helps prevent smuggling and importing illegal goods.

The Asylum Function manages asylum and refugee applications, a key humanitarian responsibility. This function involves processing claims from individuals seeking protection from persecution in their home countries.

The Detention Centre houses individuals detained for immigration offences. This facility ensures humane conditions while legal status is resolved. It is an essential part of immigration control, managing those who may be unlawfully present or pose a security risk while protecting their rights under law.



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CORPORATE

The Corporate branch of the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) Border Force is crucial for its operational efficiency. It manages various functions that ensure smooth border enforcement and support the organisation's long-term goals. These functions include Finance, Strategic Planning, Anti-Money Laundering (AML), Compliance and Assurance, IT, Learning and Development (L&D), and Communications.

The Finance function manages the organization's finances, ensuring funds are allocated effectively and operations are financially sustainable. Strategic Planning sets long-term goals and objectives, identifying risks and opportunities to keep the Border Force aligned with national security priorities. The AML function prevents financial crimes by conducting thorough checks on financial transactions. Compliance and Assurance ensure all activities comply with regulations, maintaining the Border Force's integrity and accountability.



IT provides the necessary technological infrastructure for efficient border management, including secure communication systems, data management, and cybersecurity. L&D ensures the Border Force workforce is skilled and knowledgeable through training and development programs. Communications manages both internal and external communication, ensuring transparency and public awareness.



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INTELLIGENCE

The Intelligence Branch drives informed decision-making within the TCI Border Force by actively collecting and analyzing data on potential national security threats. It enables proactive responses to suspected illegal activities like smuggling, human trafficking, and other border-related crimes. By sharing critical intelligence with other branches, it boosts operational effectiveness and supports targeted interventions. The Intelligence Branch safeguards the islands by identifying emerging risks while ensuring legitimate trade and travel continue smoothly by concentrating resources on high-risk areas.



EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



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EMILIO SEYMOUR
Director General

The Turks and Caicos Islands Border Force (TCIBF) is led by Director General Emilio Seymour. With a wealth of experience in public service, immigration and border management, and business operations, Mr. Seymour provides strategic leadership and oversees the organisation's operations. He has also undergone extensive training in leadership, public policy, and anti-money laundering. Mr. Seymour leads a dedicated team of 180 employees, working tirelessly to ensure the TCIBF fulfils its mission and objectives.



LATOYA MITCHELL
Director of Ports

Latoya Mitchell is a seasoned immigration professional with almost two decades of experience in strategic leadership in civil service. As the Acting Director of Ports, she is responsible for overseeing the efficient and secure operations of customs and immigration procedures at all air and seaports of entry in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Her expertise lies in optimising operational processes, and maintaining the highest standards of security to facilitate the smooth movement of goods and travellers.



LINDA MALCOLM
Director of Services

Linda Malcolm is a highly experienced and dedicated Civil Servant with a 35-year career in customs and border management. As the Director of Services, she is responsible for overseeing the effective administration of immigration and customs operations, ensuring efficient application processing, and providing essential services such as asylum and detention management. Her extensive experience and commitment to public service have contributed significantly to the smooth functioning of the Border Force Services branch.



MYRLCHINA LEWIS
Director of Corporate

Myrlchina Lewis is a seasoned financial expert with experience in tax administration and customs and border security. As the Director of Corporate, she is responsible for providing strategic leadership and ensuring the operational efficiency of the Corporate branch, aligning its functions with the broader objectives of the Turks and Caicos Islands Border Force. Her expertise in financial management and regulatory compliance contributes to the overall effectiveness and success of the organisation.



SHARLENE RICHARDS
Director of Inland

Sharlene Richards is a qualified attorney with expertise in immigration management and law enforcement. As the Director of Inland, she plays a pivotal role in enforcing immigration and customs laws throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands. Her focus is on the detection and prevention of critical violations, including smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal imports. Director Richards is dedicated to ensuring thorough inspections of individuals and imported goods to uphold national security while promoting legitimate trade and commerce.



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OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Threat Assessment

The threats to the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) borders have grown significantly in recent years and revolutionising how the borders operate will put the TCI in a better position to respond to threats and challenges while facilitating legitimate trade, visitors and residents.

Economic Landscape

The Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) has evolved from its historical roots in salt production and fishing to a tourism-driven economy, establishing the islands as a highly sought-after destination. In the Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) space, TCI Border Force is the newest player in this transformation. It plays a crucial role in safeguarding the nation's economic health, primarily by facilitating legitimate trade and travel through its modernised ports of entry. Ensuring efficiency at these ports of entry is essential in maintaining the flow of visitors, which contributes to the robust tourism sector.

Geographically, TCI's location makes it an important stop for travellers headed to North America, reinforcing the need for strong border control and security to mitigate illegal activities. Regional and international partnerships have bolstered border force operations to strengthen border security, protect the USD-based economy from illicit activities, and improve enforcement mechanisms to mitigate detention and removal costs.

Revenue-driving projects, such as introducing the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), further highlight the proactive measures TCI is taking to streamline travel and protect its tourist economy. Updating tariff codes to align with international standards will ensure seamless trade and enhance the country's competitiveness on the global stage, all while improving the standard of living for its citizens.



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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Priorities and Objectives

PRIORITY 1: ENHANCE BORDER SECURITY

OBJECTIVE:

Strengthen border security measures to mitigate illegal activities and protect our nation's prosperity.



Key Activities:

1. Deploy new surveillance infrastructure, such as drones and automated monitoring systems
2. Conduct more frequent and rigorous inspections to deter illegal activities and identify potential threats.
3. Collaborate with international partners to share intelligence and best practices.
4. Investigate and prosecute human trafficking and human smuggling offences.
5. Provide training programs for employees to enhance their skills and knowledge in detecting, preventing, and mitigating illegal activities.
6. Improve international partnerships to enhance border security and counter transnational crime through information sharing and participating in coordinated operations.



PRIORITY 2: REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE UNLAWFUL POPULATION

OBJECTIVE:

Implement measures that effectively reduce the number of persons operating illegally in the TCI.

Key Activities:

1. Consolidate customs and immigration resources and integrate operational procedures to establish more efficient and effective systems that reduce duplication of efforts and optimise resource allocation.
2. Implement proactive and intelligence-driven enforcement strategies to deter and disrupt unlawful immigration activities
3. Implement a community engagement program to enhance public awareness and inform undocumented individuals about the benefits and processes of legal immigration.



PRIORITY 3: FACILITATE LEGITIMATE TRADE AND TRAVEL

OBJECTIVE:

Enhance operational efficiency that supports legitimate trade and travel

Key Activities:

1. Implement modernised detection technology including biometrics for non-citizens and border crossing automation.
2. Develop clear guidelines and provide training to ensure staff understand and adhere to new processes.
3. Provide training and technical ability to detect trade-based money laundering offences.



PRIORITY 4: PROMOTE FAIRNESS, INTEGRITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

OBJECTIVE:

Enhance Border Force's capacity to foster public trust and confidence in our national security efforts.

Key Activities:

1. Conduct regular risk assessments, assurance exercises and internal audits to monitor compliance.
2. Develop and implement internal discipline processes to promote timely and consistent corrective measures in response to identified misconduct.
3. Develop and implement clear policies for handling personal and sensitive data.
4. Foster a climate of open, frequent, and reliable communication by establishing clear channels for information exchange.



PRIORITY 5: MODERNISE AND PROFESSIONALISE SERVICE DELIVERY

OBJECTIVE:

Modernise operations and enhance professional capabilities to deliver more effective and efficient services to the public.

Key Activities:

1. Create a dedicated department to deliver quality Border Force services.
2. Implement a comprehensive training plan to enhance the skills of Border Force personnel.
3. Conduct a thorough review of existing processes to identify opportunities for streamlining, automation, and standardisation.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS



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BORDER FORCE RECURRING OPERATING BUDGET:

The Turks and Caicos Islands Government (TCIG) appropriated \$19.2 million for Border Force personnel and recurrent operating expenditure, including:

- \$10.4 million in personnel emoluments, covering existing staff and the addition of an IT Officer, a Communications Officer, 3 Senior Officers, and 8 Enforcement Officers.
- \$7.2 million in recurring funds designated for Detention and Repatriation expenses, including \$2.5 million allocated for secondary detention and holding facilities to manage potential surges at the border during the implementation phase.
- \$1.6 million in recurring expenditures, covering insurance for all personnel, continued learning and development programs, and daily operating costs for the department



CAPITAL INVESTMENT:

The Turks and Caicos Islands Government (TCIG) committed \$12.8 million in capital investment for the phased implementation of TCI Digital Borders, which includes investments in technologies, such as:

1. End to end system
2. Biometrics
3. Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA)
4. eGates

FUTURE OPERATING COSTS:

TCIG committed \$1 million in recurring costs for maintaining the new digital border systems

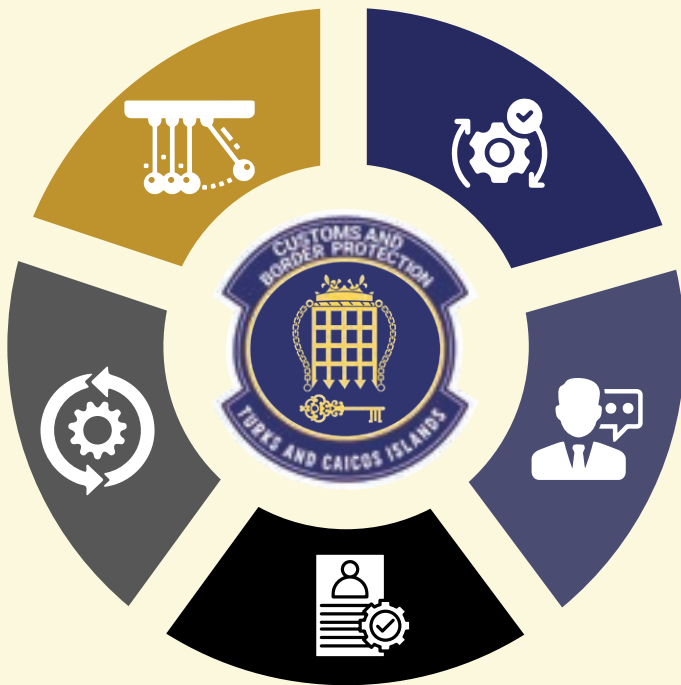




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MANAGING THE CHANGE

To ensure a successful implementation of the Border Force strategic plan, we will adopt the principles of Kotter's 8-Step Change Model. While this model provides a structured framework, our focus will be on the core principles that guide successful transformation.



Having established a sense of urgency and formed a steering group in the initial phase, we will now concentrate on the implementation and sustaining phases of change. Our approach will be guided by the following key principles:

01 ALIGNMENT AND EXECUTION:

We will identify the specific needs and actions required to implement leadership's decisions and directives. This will involve detailed planning for technical, management, budget, and facility changes, working closely with existing employee project teams.

02 TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION:

We will proactively communicate the reasons behind significant changes, linking them to our desired organisational improvements. This will foster understanding and support among our workforce.

03 EMPLOYEE PREPARATION:

We will prepare affected employees, teams, and stakeholders for the changes that will impact their daily work. This includes providing clear information and support to facilitate a smooth transition.

04 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:

We will establish mechanisms for monitoring progress and promoting ongoing improvement beyond the initial implementation phase. This will ensure that our changes are sustainable and adaptable to evolving needs.

05 SUSTAINING MOMENTUM:

We will actively involve our employees in the change process, updating processes, documenting decisions, and providing recommendations for future improvements. This will help to sustain momentum and prepare for the next phase of our transformation.

RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT

To effectively safeguard our borders, we recognise their vulnerability to global uncertainties, the local economic and political landscape, and the influence of international criminal organisations. These factors present significant challenges to border protection, trade and travel facilitation, and revenue collection. By understanding these risks and deciding on mitigating actions, we can enhance our strategies and ensure the security and efficiency of our operations.

IDENTIFIED RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Change in Government's Strategic Direction:

- **Risk:** A government-priority shift could impact the plan's implementation.
- **Mitigation:** Maintain close cooperation with government ministries and ensure the plan is flexible enough to align with changing objectives.

Delays in Project Completion:

- **Risk:** Delays in key projects could affect overall performance.
- **Mitigation:** Implement effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure timely completion.

Lack of Adaptability to Organisational and Cultural Change:

- **Risk:** Resistance to change could hinder the transition.
- **Mitigation:** Engage senior managers with staff to explain the benefits of change and create an inclusive environment.

Sophisticated Schemes by Criminal Elements:

- **Risk:** Advanced schemes to evade border controls.
- **Mitigation:** Improve staff skills and professionalism and deploy sophisticated risk management techniques.





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MONITORING AND ENSURING SUCCESS

To ensure the effectiveness of our border security and economic prosperity, Border Force will implement a rigorous performance monitoring system aligned with our strategic objectives. This system will track key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure our progress and identify areas for improvement.



Key Elements of Our Performance Monitoring System:

- We will establish consistent data collection methods across all Border Force units to ensure data accuracy and integrity.
- Leadership teams will conduct regular reviews of strategic objective progress to address challenges proactively and keep initiatives on track.
- We will focus on measuring both the tangible outputs of our operations and the broader outcomes or long-term effects on border security and economic prosperity.
- Senior leaders will champion specific strategic objectives and oversee their implementation.
- Detailed plans with timelines will be developed annually to guide key activities and strategic goals.
- Leadership will monitor implementation progress closely and intervene as needed to ensure success.

PRIORITY 1: ENHANCE BORDER SECURITY

Output

- Number of border examinations conducted.
- Volume of intelligence-led operations carried out.
- Amount of illicit goods (drugs, firearms, etc.) seized.
- Number of high-risk travellers or individuals intercepted.

Outcomes:

- Reduction in the number of unauthorised border crossings.
- Improved detection and prevention of smuggling or trafficking networks.
- Decrease in criminal activities related to border breaches.
- Increased public confidence in border security (measured via surveys).

PRIORITY 2: REDUCE THE SIZE OF UNLAWFUL POPULATION

Output

- Number of enforcement operations targeting illegal immigrants.
- Number of individuals identified as overstayers or unlawful residents.
- Volume of deportation or voluntary return cases processed.
- Investigations conducted into businesses employing illegal workers.

Outcomes:

- Increase in the number of voluntary returns or deportations.
- Improved compliance with immigration rules among employers.
- Increased community reporting of unlawful individuals.

PRIORITY 3: FACILITATE LEGITIMATE TRADE AND TRAVEL

Output

- Number of cargo inspections or clearances performed.
- Processing times for goods and passengers through customs.
- Number of risk-based assessments performed (to target only high-risk goods/travellers).
- Traveller satisfaction rates captured through surveys or feedback.

Outcomes:

- Reduced delays in processing legitimate goods and travellers.
- Increased revenue from duties and fees due to improved trade facilitation.
- Improvement in customer satisfaction with trade and travel processes.

PRIORITY 4: PROMOTE FAIRNESS, INTEGRITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Output

- Number of staff trained in ethics, integrity, and accountability practices.
- Number of assurance checks.
- Volume of public complaints and feedback analysed and addressed.
- Number of public engagements conducted.

Outcomes:

- Reduced incidents of staff misconduct or corruption.
- Increased public trust in Border Force's fairness and integrity (measured via surveys).
- Improved handling and resolution of public complaints or grievances.

PRIORITY 5: MODERNIZE AND PROFESSIONALIZE SERVICE DELIVERY

Output

- Number of new technologies or systems implemented (e.g., biometric system).
- Number of staff trained on modern tools and technology.
- Digitalization of key processes (e.g., online visa applications, automated customs processing).

Outcomes:

- Improved staff performance due to professional development (measured via performance appraisals).
- Reduction in operational costs through automation and digitalisation.
- Higher levels of customer satisfaction due to faster and more accurate service.





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