

FOI discussions advance

In the Caymanian Compass
20th June, 2006

Preparatory work for the Freedom of Information Law is now advanced to the stage of a working-group's examination of comments and recommendations by the general public, private and government corporations as well as a Commonwealth watchdog agency.

Since Leader of Government Business Kurt Tibbetts tabled the draft FOI bill in the Legislative Assembly last November, an extensive public awareness and consultation campaign was launched, said a GIS press release. An external consultant was retained to provide international best practice advice and assisted with the preliminary training of information officers; discussions at various district meetings in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac; and other media events.

The working group, which began meeting twice weekly in May, is examining feedback received during the public consultation process which ended on 28 April. The public will however, also be given an opportunity to appear before, or submit written reports, for consideration by a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly. To make arrangements for this, persons may contact the Cabinet Office, Government Administration Building.

Persons wishing to review the FOI Bill can log on to www.foi.gov.ky The public consultation feedback, along with the report of the working group, which will include advice relating to implementation issues, is currently scheduled to be forwarded to Cabinet next month, following which, it will be considered by the Select Committee of the House.

The working group is comprised of the following representatives: Tim Hubbell and Sam Rose from the Cabinet Office; Bilika Simamba from the Legislative Drafting Department; Jan Liebaers of the Cayman Islands National Archive; Scott Swing from the Office of the Complaints Commissioner; George Alleyne from Government Information Services; and Haroon Pandohie from the Planning Department.

So far, along with the numerous comments and questions fielded from members of the public, including feedback from the district meetings, the working party will be reviewing submissions by the Information and Communications Technology Authority, the Cayman Islands National Archive, the Office of the Complaints Commissioner, Postal Services, Cable and Wireless, the Civil Aviation Authority, external consultant, as well as the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. CHRI is a non-governmental organisation operating out of India that promotes human rights internationally through instruments such as freedom of information legislation.

See also: <http://www.caycompass.com/cgi-bin/CFPnews.cgi?ID=1014150>
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