

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING UNIT

Y2K CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

A REQUIREMENT OF THE Y2K TASK FORCE

YEAR 2000

A PLAN FOR ALTERNATIVE OPERATIONS

**DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
GOVERNMENT OF THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS**

Foreword

This plan is intended to guide the operations of the Development Planning Unit in case the Y2K computer problem disrupts our normal operations. Our department is information intensive and we are computerize extensively in our day-to-day operations. We depend on all departments, enterprises and ministries of government for data. Similarly in the execution of our duties we require information about all enterprises and socio-economic activities in the BVI. Finally, connections to international agencies, foreign governments and global corporations are the life blood of our operations. We must remain connected with the Rest of the World.

The plan, though very modest is available on website www.dup.org and you may obtain further information on the BVI Y2000 preparedness and mitigation by visiting www.y2kbvi.vg.

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Background

The Y2000 problem is a technical problem with computer software which holds the potential to become to the most pronounced business disaster in the third millennium of western history. The technical problem arises because most computer systems and computer chips imbedded in computers were not designed to read the year 2000. Given the need to save memory in the old computers, the year was on written in two digits, "xx" meaning that the years 1900 and 2000 would be "00" and computers would have a problem distinguishing between them. As a consequence of this particular practice in software programming, upon the changeover to the year 2000, these systems may fail or not function properly. Computer programmes and businesses world-wide have been working extraordinarily hard to rectify this problem.

The Government of the British Virgin Islands, like many Governments around the world, has organized an extensive effort to mitigate against the Y2000 problem, to prepare the entire British Virgin Islands for this event. The Government of the British Virgin Islands has committed more than \$1.0million or 7/10 of a percent of its 1999 collection of revenue. With all this spending and the establishment of a world-class, functioning Y2K Task Force, Government of the British Virgin Islands cannot guarantee that its operations will not be impacted by the changeover to 2000. We have endeavoured to identify and correct any flaws in existing systems and processing and believe that most Development Planning Unit (DPU) operations will not be impacted the date change to 2000. As mentioned earlier, we cannot guarantee our clients that all systems will operate. As well, all villages, town and ministries and NGOs in the British Virgin Islands will not escape from the above problems, either generated in the British Virgin Islands or from external sources. We live in the Information Age of inter-linked global networking bolstered by the INTERNET, and as such the problem of a major provided of service or information will impact on any or all of our systems in the British Virgin Islands. We are not immune as our food, drink, clothing and services can be impacted without our knowledge.

I urge you to prepare for any impact and without to encourage anyone you know to prepare for the date changeover.

Departmental Operations Information

The Development Planning Unit (DPU) serves as the focal point for the coordination of development policies, national statistics, economic analysis, project cycle management and manpower planning. With these tasks, the DPU is operationally involved in macro and micro economic analysis, projects development and labour market information analysis.

In connection with execution of the above-named tasks, we are primarily involved in the management of vast streams of information from several private and public sources on a daily basis. Information management includes data collection, data handling, data sorting, data entry, data processing and manipulation and statistics dissemination. We process and store data on every individual living in and visiting the country via our tourist statistics programme and our national censuses and surveys. Further, we collect and process data on all businesses and economic activity in territory including employment, banking, taxes, income, expenditure, sales, etc. Further yet, we collect, process and disseminate information on social and environmental activities of all visitors to and residents in the British Virgin Islands including data on health, education, welfare, crime, social security, women, children, marginalized groups and poverty.

As the main repository for decision and policy support information for the Government of the British Virgin Islands, the DPU primary activity is the collection, handling, processing and dissemination of data. In this connection, our operations are highly dependent upon our ability to physically and electronically gather vast amount of data, physically store large quantities of paper, process manually and electronically the data gathered and disseminate on a timely basis the statistics necessary to support private and public sectors decision-making.

It must also be remembered that our responsibilities include project development, implementation and monitoring in addition to development policy coordination and development. Again these activities require huge amounts of a rapid cross comparison of various data variables. All these activities such as the need for a high degree of automation of collection, handling, processing and storage of information exposure as to the vulnerability of other computer systems. This need reflects our dependence on computerization in a connected way. Every staff is connected to the Local Area Network (LAN) of some 25 Pentium II personal computer anchored by a Netfinity 3000 Server.

In addition to our domestic operations of data processing and dissemination, all professional staff is required conduct research over the INTERNET. In addition about 20% of all correspondence from overseas come via e-mail. E-mail has been critical to our operations in dealing with consultants and international donor agencies- E-mail, for example, has reduced the cost of communications with the airport development consultants by 90%. All staff members have personalized e-mail accounts for the professional duties at the DPU; hence, it is relied upon very heavily for our day-to-day operations.

Computers are the major tool of operations in the DPU for data processing, data storage, research and communications. Without computer our operation will have to be severely downgraded and more manpower will have to be hired to maintain a 50% level of output that we currently deliver.

Planning Assumptions

As noted from the previous section on “Departmental Operations Information,” the Development Planning Unit is heavily dependent upon computerization, information from domestic and foreign sources and e-mail communications. Like the major activities of our economy such as tourism and financial services, our operations are susceptible to the forces of globalization on a daily basis. Even though our computers are operational after the turn to the year 2000, our operations could be hampered severely if the computers with which we try to communicate are not fully or accurately operational. However, we have considered all these possibilities and we are prepared to operate in a downgraded mode.

It is realized that we cannot accurately predict or control all the impacts on our operations which might arise as a result of the Year 2000 changeover. We must be prepared to deal effectively with any situation which results. For Year 2000 planning, the following assumptions will be used by the Development Planning Unit and maybe modified as more reliable assessments are completed:

1. While this might not happen in the BVI, major public services maybe disrupted for several days during January 2000. These disruptions could include electric power, gas, water, sewerage and telecommunications.
2. Throughout the impact period, adverse weather conditions maybe present, in Europe and North America, including extreme cold, heavy snow and ice.
3. Assistance to fix national and external systems might not be readily available impacting on BVI systems.
4. Planning BVI business might not be Year 2000 ready and this might result in unavailability of data or services from those sources.
5. Year 2000 problems might continue well into 2000 on an adhoc or sporadic basis.
6. Very limited amounts of financial resources will be available to procure additional human resources.
7. Most internal domestic communications will remain uninterrupted or will at lease be functioning at the 95% level as far as computerization is concerned.

Contingency Plan Organization and Responsibilities

The Development Planning Unit is prepared for and will respond to problems arising from the Y2000 changeover using our normal command structure. The Statistician III will take responsibility for the day-to-day downgraded operations of the Social and Economic Statistics workgroups with all the normal staff being available to him. Under these sections, trade, tourism, banking, national accounts, balance of payments, prices, government finance, health, education, welfare, crime, poverty and population statistics will be processed manually.

Essentially the Plan of Action for the Social Statistics Workgroups and the Economic Statistics Workgroup is to resort to manual operations in the following manner:

- Step 1. Social and Economic data will be manually coded on specially designed forms.
- Step 2. All data will then be sorted repeatedly until it is sorted by the target variables.
- Step 3. Further sorting will then take place until all data is sorted by the outcome variables.
- Step 4. Mathematical calculations will be done manually or using hand held calculators.
- Step 5. Tables will then be constructed manually.

For all processing involving computerization in the databases above-mentioned, the report writing, production and distribution will not be impacted by the Y2000 problem. Statistical data processing such as for money and banking and price depends on the Y2K Problem status of the commercial banks and other related organizations.

The operations of the Economic Analysis Workgroups will also become manual but will be heavily dependent upon the results of work from the Surveys and the Projects and Investments workgroups. Data needed for economic analysis is normally provided by these two groups. The manual operations of this group will be under the command of the Director of Planning. The operations will proceed along the following lines:

- Step 1. Available data will be processed manually using hand held calculators for summations, divisions and other calculations.
- Step 2. Re-calculated and re-processed data will be hand-written and re-presented or re-casted as needed for economic analysis.
- Step 3. New variable values and statistics will be compared against existing ones for analytical purposes.

Step 4. Results of comparative analysis will be hand-written.

Step 5. Data and data analysis will be stored manually on official files and stored in office filing cabinets.

If the computers are not available to store and process data, all hand-written documents will be further summarized and circulated to a much smaller than normal list of public sector officials. The private sector will be impacted unfavourably by the downgraded operations of this section as the Quarterly Bulletin of Economic Indicators, the Recent Economic Development and the Social and Economic Reviews will be delayed.

The Administration and Departmental Services workgroup will also be required to operate in downgraded mode for most computerized operations such as accounting, personnel records, correspondence and communications inventory management, etc. The Director of Planning is in command of this area and he is assisted by the Senior Executive Officer. The following steps will highlight operations here.

Step 1. All records will be collected and entered manually.

Step 2. All records will be updated manually.

Step 3. All report will be hand-written and placed in departmental files.

Step 4. All departmental financial transactions will be done manually in the "Departmental Vote Books" which are being phased out.

Step 5. All manual record entries will be recorded manually in a specially created logbook.

The Projects Development and Investment workgroups will come under the direct command of the Director of Planning and operate in a downgraded mode if computer access is not available to main the Project Data Bank (PDB). The following steps will ensure continued operations:

Step 1. Preparations of project dossiers will continue using manual calculations.

Step 2. Project monitoring of financial and physical progress will be done by physically by inspecting projects and project management records on site and at the Treasury Department.

Step 3. Project Cycle Management (PCM) reports will be hand-written and distributed manually.

Operation of this workgroup is dependent upon information from consultants, client ministries, the Public Works Department and the Treasury Department. Without computers to transmit data files and to handle accounting procedure, the output of this workgroup will be severely compromised and delayed.

The Survey workgroup will not immediately be impacted by the loss of computerization: However, if delays run well into the Year 2000, a number of delays are anticipated in planned surveys. The following steps will ensure continued operations in this area.

Step 1. Plans for the 2001 Census and other business surveys will continue manually without computer software or on-line research.

Step 2. Surveys planned and designed will continue with the field work (collection and entry of data) being done manually.

Step 3. Surveys data will be sorted, entered and processed manually producing tables necessary for analysis.

Step 4. Analysis will be handwritten, stored in office files and copies distributed manually.

Again in the absence of computers for data processing, word processing and on-line research, the output of this work will be delayed and some of the quality compromised.

In general the loss of computerization will negatively impact upon the timeliness of work and responsiveness to customers requests.

Drills and Exercises

Although we have not had any organized drills or exercises, conventional systems failure and the pre-automation period of statistics compilation have taught how to operate without computers.

During the past few years we have experienced a number of LAN breakdowns lasting up to four days requiring us to resort to manual operations. We are also in a position to execute some operations such as tourism, trade and prices statistics in a Downgraded mode simply because senior staff members are experienced in manual compilation.

Almost all major statistical operations including processing and calculation of indicators have been done manually in the past. At this time, there is no reason why this cannot be done again since all present staff have gone through these drills and exercises for other reasons.

We have designed the forms for manual operations but we are yet to reproduce them given that our photocopier is not date sensitive. There is no need for training in the statistical functions. As well, functions such as economic analysis and project cycle management are automated processes which are easily manually replicated; hence, there is no need for drills and exercises. Functions such as graphic arts, word processing, desktop publishing and spreadsheet analysis can hardly be done except on computers; consequently, it is not necessary to conduct drills and exercises in these areas.

Personnel records and performance management systems are all automated but we have had exercises in manual compilation. The relevant forms are already designed and some are being used to capture performance and punctuality data. In this connection there is no need for further drills and exercises.

Public Education About our Plan

We intend to let our clients, colleagues and customers know about our plan and the possibility that circumstances concerning Y2K could affect our normal operations causing us to operate in a downgraded mode. Operations in a downgraded mode would result in a decreased level of service in all our outputs.

Our programme of educating the public will include brochures, television and radio programme appearances, publication of our plan on our website, letters and telephone calls to those whom we serve and information or new releases to the media.

In our programme of public education, we will be quite honest and open with all whom we serve, the general public and the media. We will ask their patience, seek their support and reassure them of our ability to prepare and compile statistics manually other key areas could be project cycle management and economic analysis. If we have no working computers and/or calculators, economic analysis and project cycle management not impacting on investment levels will be almost an impossible challenge.

Caution will be exercised so as not to have the public believe that major problems will result in loss of computerization. This might hold the potential to be true, but we will avoid unduly scaring all those people who we serve although we intend to place our plan on our website.