GLOBAL RESEARCH

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Public Perceptions Research Report

March 2017

Information Commissioner's Office

METHOD

Global Research & Strategy Group Ltd. used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) to interview a representative sample of 401 Bermuda residents aged 18 years and over.

All interviews were conducted in February-March 2017.

The data were weighted to be representative of Bermuda's population on the following factors: gender, age, parish and education.

The results are compared to those of a benchmark survey conducted with 400 Bermuda residents in March 2016.

The aim of the research was to provide insights into the following areas:

- Public awareness of PATI and the Information Commissioner's Office
- Public awareness of the rights that PATI gives everyone regarding access to information held by Bermuda authorities
- Public understanding of the term "Bermuda Public authority"
- Whether residents have requested information from Bermuda public authorities
- Whether residents would like to make such requests in the future
- Whether residents believe in PATI and that it will be respected by public authorities

The results will assist the Information Commissioner's Office in understanding the marketing and public education needed to ensure that the public are aware of, and understand the importance and role of PATI.

KEY FINDINGS

Public Requests: Past & Future

- 22% had asked for a copy of recorded information that a public authority holds.
- The most popular places that residents recalled requesting information from included the Registrar General, Bermuda Archives and Bermuda Police Service.
- Satisfaction with the response received from a public authority increased significantly by 11 points (from 79% in 2016 to 90% in 2017).
- 13% were likely to ask for information from a Bermuda public authority next year.

Public Awareness

- Residents were significantly more likely to have heard of the PATI Act (80% vs. 72% in 2016).
    - Residents aged 45-54 years (88%) and 55-64 years (89%) were more likely to have heard about the PATI Act, while younger residents aged 18-24 years (61%) and 25-34 years (68%) were less likely to have heard about it.
- Residents were also more likely to have heard about the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda (42% vs. 37% in 2016).
    - Residents aged 55-64 years were more likely to have heard about the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda (52%), while residents 18-24 years were less likely to have heard about it (24%).

Function of Information Commissioner's Office of Bermuda

- Residents were most likely to believe that the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office ensures that public authorities comply with the PATI Act (41% vs. 46% in 2016).
    - Residents aged 18-24 years (30%), 25-34 years (33%) and 65 years and over (33%) were less likely to be believe this.
- Residents were least likely to believe that the Information Commissioner's Office deals with requests to amend a personal record held by public authorities (15% vs. 21% in 2016).

Confidence in PATI

- Residents continued to believe that the PATI Act would be useful to them (54% vs. 53% in 2016).
- Residents were significantly less likely to believe that public authorities will become more open and accountable as a results of the PATI Act (59% vs. 76% in 2016) and that members of the public would have more confidence in the decisions made by public authorities (55% vs. 62% in 2016).

<u>Conclusions/Next Step</u>

- Awareness of the PATI Act and Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda increased this year.
- Satisfaction with the responses received from public authorities improved significant.
- Awareness of the functions of the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda and confidence in the effectiveness of the PATI Act declined.

❖ *The Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda should aim to increase public confidence in the effectiveness of the PATI Act.*

❖ *Increased education and awareness of the functions of the Office and the PATI Act will assist residents with understanding how these resources benefit them.*

DETAILED FINDINGS

Q1: Which of the following organizations that I am going to read out to you would you say is a public authority?

Residents continued to believe that the Bermuda Police Service was a public authority (86% vs 90% in 2016), followed by H.M. Customs (78% vs. 74% in 2016) and the Ministry of Education Headquarters (60% vs. 64% in 2016).

	2016	2017
Sample	400	401
Bermuda Police Service	90%	86%
H.M. Customs	74%	78%
Ministry of Education Headquarters	64%	60%
Corporation of Hamilton	56%	46%
The Bermuda Archives	41%	44%
West End Development Corporation	41%	31%
Devonshire Parish Council	37%	27%
Bermuda National Trust	20%	20%
BELCO	14%	8%
Bermuda Red Cross	13%	8%
None of the above	2%	3%

- Residents aged 55-64 years were less likely than average to believe that Bermuda Police Service was a public authority (79%).
- Residents aged 18-24 years were less likely than average to believe that H.M. Customs was a public authority (70%).
- Residents aged 25-34 years were less likely than average to believe that Ministry of Education Headquarters was a public authority (50%).

Q2: Can you think of any other organizations that are public authorities?

The top three organizations that residents also believed were public authorities were Bermuda Government/Government Departments, Bermuda Fire Service and Bermuda Hospitals Board/KEMH.

	2017
Total responses	274
Bermuda Government/Government Departments	75
Bermuda Fire Service	31
Bermuda Hospital Board/KEMH	19
Bermuda Regiment	17
Bermuda Monetary Authority	12
Department of Immigration	12
Bermuda Library/National library	10
Bermuda Land Development Corporation	10
Prisons/Dept. of Corrections	10
Registry General	10
Corporation of St. George's	10
Bermuda Tourism Authority	8
Bermuda Courts/Supreme Court	8
Bermuda Housing Corporation	6
Bermuda Transport Control	5
Postal services	4
PATI Commission	4
Parish Councils	4
Bermuda College	3
Bermuda Regulatory Authority	3
Premier/Governor	3
Road Safety Council	2
Liquor License Authority	1
Charities Commission	1
Bermuda Weather Service	1
ACBDA	1
Salvation Army	1
St. John's Ambulance	1
Bermuda Arts Council	1
Airport Authority	1

Q3: Have you ever asked for a copy of recorded information that a public authority holds (by information I do not mean things such as phoning a hospital for visiting hours or checking the availability of a book from your local library, but copies from the records or documents that a public authority might hold)?

22% had asked for a copy of recorded information that a public authority holds.

	2017
Sample	401
Yes	22%
No	77%
Don't Know	1%

- Residents aged 18-24 years were less likely to have requested a copy of recorded information from a public authority (15%), while residents aged 55-64 years were more likely to have done so (32%).

Q4: Can you please name the public authority(ies) that you requested information from?

The most popular places that residents recalled requesting information from included the Registrar General, Bermuda Archives and Bermuda Police Service.

	2017
Total responses	92
Registrar General	26
Bermuda Archives	15
Bermuda Police Service	14
Department of Planning	5
Courts/Justice/Supreme Courts	4
Department of Immigration	3
Bermuda Library	4
Registrar of Companies	4
KEMH/Urgent Care/Bermuda Hospitals Board	3
Parliamentary Registrar	1
Ministry of Education	1
Ministry of Finance	1
Accountant General	1
Department of Youth and Sports	1
Bermuda Child and Family Services	1
HM Customs	1
Department of Statistics	1
Bermuda Passports	1
Corporation of Hamilton	1
TCD	1
Bermuda Auditor's Generals Office	1
Community and Cultural Affairs	1
Marine and Ports	1

Q5: Thinking about your most recent request, which of the following best describes the response that you received?

Satisfaction with the response received from a public authority increased significantly by 11 points (from 79% in 2016 to 90%).

Residents were most satisfied with the response received from Bermuda Library (100%). They were least satisfied with the response received from Department of Immigration (67%).

	2016	2017
Sample	400	401
Top 2	**79%**	**90%**
Very positive, I got information I asked for promptly	33%	49%
Satisfactory, I was given the information but it took some time	46%	41%
Unsatisfactory, they replied but I didn't get the information I requested	18%	7%
Poor, they didn't reply to my request	3%	2%
None of the above	0%	1%

Q6: Have you ever heard of the PATI Act?

Residents were more significantly more likely to have heard of the PATI Act (80% vs. 72%).

	2016	2017
Sample	400	401
Top 2	**72%**	**80%**
Yes, definitely	56%	65%
Yes, I think so	16%	15%
No, don't think so	13%	12%
No definitely not	15%	6%
Unsure	1%	1%

- Residents aged 45-54 years (88%) and 55-64 years (89%) were more likely to have heard about the PATI Act, younger residents aged 18-24 years (61%) and 25-34 years (68%) were less likely to have heard about it.

Q7: The PATI Act came into effect in April 2015. To the best of your knowledge, what rights do you think the Act entitles you to?

Residents were most likely to believe that the PATI Act entitled them to documents of a public nature/public records.

	2017
Total responses	401
Access to any documents of a public nature/public records	188
Allows people to request information/certain documents/census	87
Information about Government and Government funded organisations	26
Provides access to any information in my name	7
Freedom of information	5
General questions requested about businesses (financial information, planning)	5
Transparency of operations and accountability	4
Access to information about what is happening in Bermuda	4
See how much is being collected and spent	3
Requesting information about public bodies	2
Information regarding safety and well-being of individuals	1
The ability to investigate actions of public entities	1
Don't Know/Unsure	68

Q8: How likely are you to ask for information from a Bermuda public authority next year?

13% were likely to ask for information from a Bermuda public authority next year (vs. 22% in 2016).

	2016	2017
	400	401
Top 2	**22%**	**13%**
Very likely	7%	3%
Quite likely	15%	10%
Neither / Nor	12%	22%
Quite unlikely	36%	42%
Definitely unlikely	19%	11%
Unsure	11%	11%

- Residents aged 45-54 years (20%) were more likely to intend to ask for information from a Bermuda public authority next year.

Q9: Have you ever heard of the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda?

Residents were more likely to have heard about the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda (42% vs. 37% in 2016).

	2016	2017
	400	401
Top 2	**37%**	**42%**
Yes, definitely	24%	22%
Yes, I think so	13%	20%
No, I don't think so	34%	36%
No, definitely not	27%	20%
Unsure	2%	2%

- Residents aged 55-64 years were more likely to have heard about the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda (52%), while residents 18-24 years were less likely to have heard about it (24%).

Q10: Where do you recall seeing/hearing about the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda?

The most popular places where residents recalled hearing about the Information Commissioner's Offices for Bermuda were The Royal Gazette or in the news.

	Base
Unweighted (Total responses)	187
Royal Gazette	67
News	32
Colleague/work/family	16
Online	14
Media	9
Radio	8
Corner of Parliament and Reid	8
Government	6
Television	5
Bernews	5
PATI website/PATI Act	4
Email (from ICO or Bermuda Government)	3
College/school	2
ZBM	2
Chamber of Commerce	1
House of Assembly	1
Alaska Hall	1
Information session	1
Fundraiser	1
Town hall meeting	1

Q11: I am going to read out a list of duties that may be carried out by the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office. How aware would you say that you are that these duties are in fact carried out by the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office?

Residents were more likely to believe that the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office ensures that public authorities comply with the PATI Act (41% vs. 46% in 2016). Residents aged 18-24 years (30%), 25-34 years (33%) and 65 years and over (33%) were less likely to be believe this.

Residents were least likely to believe that the Information Commissioner's Office deals with requests to amend a personal record held by public authorities (15% vs. 21% in 2016). Residents aged 65 years and over (10%) were less likely to be believe this.

Percent Aware	2016	2017
	400	401
Making sure that public authorities comply with the PATI Act.	46%	41%
Investigating complaints when people don't get the information they request from public authorities.	43%	37%
Telling people about their right to get copies of information held by Bermuda public authorities.	50%	36%
Providing information about public services.	38%	35%
Issuing legally binding decisions to public authorities concerning the release of information.	28%	30%
Hearing appeals when people do not receive requested information from public authorities.	32%	29%
Dealing with requests to amend a personal record held by public authorities.	21%	15%

Q12: I am going to read out some statements about the PATI Act and ask you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Even if you aren't aware of this Act, it's your impression that I am interested in. As a result of the PATI Act…?

Residents continued to believe that the PATI Act would be useful to them (54% vs. 53% in 2016).

Residents were significantly less likely to believe that public authorities will become more open and accountable as a results of the PATI Act (59% vs. 76% in 2016) and that members of the public would have more confidence in the decisions made by public authorities (55% vs. 62% in 2016).

Percent Agree (strongly + slightly combined)	2016	2017
	400	401
Public authorities will become more open and accountable.	76%	59%
This act will be useful to me.	53%	54%
Members of the public will have more confidence in the decisions made by public authorities.	62%	55%
Public authorities will find a way round the Act and won't provide any information they don't want to.	52%	54%
No one will bother to use the rights provided by the act.	25%	21%

Q13: The PATI Act gives Bermudians and Bermuda residents a right to access records held by public authorities. How important is this right to you?

Residents were more likely to view the rights given by the PATI Act as important to them (86% vs. 79% in 2016).

	2016	2017
Sample	400	401
Top 2	**79%**	**86%**
Very important	48%	48%
Somewhat important	31%	38%
Neither / nor	9%	7%
Somewhat unimportant	4%	2%
Not at all important	5%	3%
Don't Know	4%	2%

Q14: Which of the following best describes your opinion of the PATI Act?

Residents continued to view the PATI Act as a very important public investment (80% vs. 77% in 2016).

	2016	2017
	400	401
I believe that creating and enforcing the PATI Act is a very important public investment.	77%	80%
The PATI Act is not important and the public funds required for creating and enforcing PATI should be spent elsewhere.	5%	3%
Don't Know	19%	17%

- Residents aged 55-64 years (86%) were more likely to believe in the importance of the investment.
- Residents aged 25-34 years (74%) were less likely to believe in it.