GLOBAL RESEARCH

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Public Perceptions

Research Report

February 2019

Information Commissioner's Office

METHOD

Global Research & Strategy Group Ltd. used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) to interview a representative sample of 405 Bermuda residents aged 18 years and over.

The reported data was collected in a stand-alone survey.

All interviews were conducted from February 20th – 25th 2019.

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

The margin of error for the study is +/- 5% at the 95% confidence level.

The results are compared to benchmark surveys conducted in March 2016, March 2017 and March 2018.

Any questions on the methodology of this research study should be directed to Dr. Leslie Steede, Director of Research for Global Research at leslie@globalresearch.bm or 441-707-3228.

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

- 21% had asked for a copy of recorded information that a public authority holds (vs. 19% in 2018).
- Residents were more likely to recall requesting information from the Bermuda Police Service and the Registrar General.
- 86% were satisfied with the response received from a public authority (vs. 87% in 2018).
- 14% were likely to ask for information from a public authority next year (vs. 15% in 2018).

Public Awareness

- 82% had heard of the PATI Act, an increase of 5 points over 2018 (77%).
    - Residents aged 55 years and over were more likely to have heard of the PATI Act, while younger residents aged 18-34 years were less likely to have heard of it.
- 44% had heard of the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda, an increase of 7 points over 2018 (37%).
    - Residents aged 25-34 years were less likely to have heard of it.

Function of Information Commissioner's Office of Bermuda

- Compared to 2018, awareness of the duties of the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office increased across the board. The largest increases in awareness were in the following areas:
    - Telling people about their right to get copies of information held by Bermuda public authorities (43% vs. 33% for 2018).
    - Making sure that public authorities comply with the PATI Act (42% vs. 34% for 2018).
    - Investigating complaints when people don't get the information they request from public authorities (40% vs. 32% for 2018).
- Residents were least likely to believe that the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office dealt with requests to amend a personal record held by public authorities (19% in 2018).

Confidence in PATI

- Residents continued to believe that the PATI Act was important to them (88% vs. 87% in 2018, 86% in 2017).
- Compared to 2018, residents were equally likely to believe that:
    - Public authorities will become more open and accountable (66% vs. 67% in 2018).
    - Members of the public will have more confidence in the decisions made by public authorities (59% vs. 60% in 2018).
- Fifty nine percent (59%) believed that the Act would be useful to them (vs. 56% in 2018).

Conclusions/Next Steps

- Awareness of the PATI Act and the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda increased significantly this year, and awareness of the duties of the Information Commissioner's Office increased across the board. However, younger residents were less likely to be aware of the PATI Act or Information Commissioner's Office.
- Residents continued to be satisfied with the responses they received from public authorities and confidence in the PATI Act remained high.

❖ *The Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda's efforts to increase awareness have been successful and they should continue their efforts, especially among younger residents aged 18-34 years.*

❖ *Increased education and awareness of the functions of the Office and the PATI Act will assist residents with understanding how these resources can 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 (89% vs 88% in 2018), followed by H.M. Customs (77%) and the Ministry of Education Headquarters (60% vs. 57% in 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Bermuda Police Service	90%	86%	88%	89%
H.M. Customs	74%	78%	77%	77%
Ministry of Education Headquarters	64%	60%	57%	60%
Corporation of Hamilton	56%	46%	46%	48%
West End Development Corporation	41%	31%	30%	34%
The Bermuda Archives	41%	44%	37%	32%
Devonshire Parish Council	37%	27%	27%	29%
Bermuda National Trust	20%	20%	23%	22%
Bermuda Red Cross	13%	8%	15%	16%
BELCO	14%	8%	10%	8%
None of the above	2%	3%	2%	2%

- Residents aged 35-54 years were less likely to believe that H.M. Customs was a public authority.
- Residents aged 18-34 years were less likely to believe that Ministry of Education Headquarters was a public authority.

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 Royal Bermuda Regiment.

Total Responses	304		
Bermuda Government/Government Departments	35	Chamber of Commerce	4
Bermuda Fire Service	34	Regulatory Authority	4
Royal Bermuda Regiment	24	Bermuda Casino Gaming Commission	3
Bermuda Tourism Authority	16	Social Insurance	3
Bermuda Hospital Board/KEMH	15	Ministry of National Security/Ministry of Home Affairs	3
Corporation of St. George's	15	Department of Planning	3
Bermuda Monetary Authority	12	PATI Office	3
Department of Immigration	12	Registrar General	2
Bermuda Courts/Supreme Court/Judicial system	11	Registrar of Companies	2
Bermuda Transport Control/Aviation/Ships	10	Public Works	2
BLDC	10	Ministry of Youth and Sports	2
Bermuda Health Council	8	Ministry of Works and Engineering	2
Parish Councils	8	Department of Statistics	2
Ministry of Finance	7	Family Centre	1
Prisons/Dept. of Corrections	7	Department of Social Services	1
Ministry of Health and Seniors	6	Centre on Philanthropy	1
Ministry of Education/Schools	5	Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre	1
Marine and Ports	5	Human Rights Commission	1
Bermuda Airport Authority	4	Rent Control	1
Postal Services	4	Ministry of Environment	1
Bermuda Library/National Library	4	LCCA/PALS	1
Bermuda Housing Corporation	4	Department of Parks	1
BEDC	4		

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)?

Twenty one percent (21%) had asked for a copy of recorded information that a public authority holds (vs. 19% in 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Yes	10%	22%	19%	21%
No	88%	77%	78%	77%
Don't Know	2%	1%	4%	2%

- Residents aged 25-34 years and 65 years and over were less likely to have requested recorded information from a public authority.

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 Bermuda Police Service and the Register General.

Total Responses	85
Bermuda Police Service	21
Registrar General	11
Bermuda Archives	7
KEMH/Urgent Care/Bermuda Hospitals Board	6
Bermuda Government	6
Department of Immigration	5
Courts/Justice/Supreme Courts	5
Registrar of Companies	5
Ministry of Education	2
Land Registry/Land Tax	2
Information Commissioner's Office	2
Department of Planning	2
Pension Department	2
Tax Commissioner	1
Bermuda Library	1
Social Insurance	1
Refused	6

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

Eighty six percent (86%) were satisfied with the response received from a public authority (vs. 87% in 2018).

Residents were least satisfied with the response received from the Ministry of Education and Department of Immigration.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Bermuda Archives	Bermuda Govern-ment	Bermuda Police Service
Sample	*39*	*92*	*75*	*85*	*7*	*6*	*21*
Top 2	79%	90%	87%	86%	100%	100%	85%
Very positive, I got information I asked for promptly	33%	49%	45%	41%	43%	17%	30%
Satisfactory, I was given the information but it took some time	46%	41%	42%	45%	57%	83%	55%
Unsatisfactory, they replied but I didn't get the information I requested	18%	7%	8%	8%	0%	0%	5%
Poor, they didn't reply to my request	3%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	5%
None of the above	0%	1%	5%	4%	0%	0%	5%

	Courts/ Justice/ Supreme Courts	Depart-ment of Immigra-tion	KEMH/ Urgent Care/ Bermuda Hospitals Board	Ministry of Education	Registrar General	Registrar of Compan-ies	Other
Sample	*5*	*5*	*6*	*2*	*11*	*5*	*17*
Top 2	100%	60%	100%	50%	91%	100%	66%
Very positive, I got information I asked for promptly	80%	0%	67%	50%	64%	67%	22%
Satisfactory, I was given the information but it took some time	20%	60%	33%	0%	27%	33%	44%
Unsatisfactory, they replied but I didn't get the information I requested	0%	40%	0%	50%	9%	0%	17%
Poor, they didn't reply to my request	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%
None of the above	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%

*Note – The Other column includes the combined results of public authorities that were mentioned once.

Q6: Have you ever heard of the PATI Act?

Eighty two percent (82%) had heard of the PATI Act (vs. 77% in 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Top 2	72%	80%	77%	82%
Yes, definitely	56%	65%	58%	65%
Yes, I think so	16%	15%	19%	17%
No, don't think so	13%	12%	14%	13%
No definitely not	15%	6%	6%	4%
Unsure	1%	1%	3%	1%

- Residents aged 55 years and over were more likely to have heard of the PATI Act, while younger residents aged 18-34 years were less likely to have heard of 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.

Total Responses	414
Access to any documents of a public nature/public records (information that is not confidential)	125
Allows people to request information/certain documents/public information/ information authorities have collected	83
Information about Government and Government funded organisations	56
Provides access to any information in my name	22
General questions requested about businesses (financial information, planning)	13
Disclosure of private information after making a request	12
Transparency of operations and accountability	7
See how much is being collected and spent by Government	6
The ability to investigate actions of public entities	5
Court cases/Access to government rulings	5
Information regarding safety and well-being of individuals	4
Your rights	3
Freedom of information	3
Access to information about what is happening in Bermuda	2
Protects your information	2
Housing Statistics	1
Human Rights	1
Don't Know/Unsure	64

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

Fourteen percent (14%) were likely to ask for information from a Bermuda public authority next year (vs. 15% in 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Top 2	22%	13%	15%	14%
Very likely	7%	3%	2%	5%
Quite likely	15%	10%	13%	9%
Neither / Nor	12%	22%	22%	22%
Quite unlikely	36%	42%	39%	40%
Definitely unlikely	19%	11%	11%	11%
Unsure	11%	11%	13%	13%

- Residents aged 55 years and over were more likely to ask for information from a public authority next year, while residents aged 18-24 years were less likely.

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

Forty four percent (44%) had heard of the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda (vs. 37% in 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Top 2	37%	42%	37%	44%
Yes, definitely	24%	22%	18%	26%
Yes, I think so	13%	20%	19%	18%
No, I don't think so	34%	36%	43%	39%
No, definitely not	27%	20%	16%	15%
Unsure	2%	2%	3%	3%

- Residents aged 25-34 years were less likely to have heard of the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda.

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

The News/Newspapers/The Royal Gazette was the most popular place that residents recalled hearing about the Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda.

Total Responses	177
News/Newspapers/The Royal Gazette	105
At work	14
Online/Social Media	7
PATI website/PATI Act/Presentation	6
Colleague at home or work, a family member, a friend	5
Media (did not specify)	5
Email (from ICO or Bermuda Government)	5
Gossip/People talking about it	4
Government/gov.bm	4
Television	4
Bernews	3
ZBM	3
Radio	2
Office sign/Physical office	2
Youth Parliament	2
Corner of Parliament and Reid	1
House of Assembly	1
Recipient of PATI requests	1
TEDx	1
Public notices	1
BBC news	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?

Compared to 2018, awareness of the duties of the Bermuda Information Commissioner's Office increased across the board. The largest increases in awareness were in the following areas:

- Telling people about their right to get copies of information held by Bermuda public authorities (43% vs. 33% for 2018).
- Making sure that public authorities comply with the PATI Act (42% vs. 34% for 2018).
- Investigating complaints when people don't get the information they request from public authorities (40% vs. 32% for 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Telling people about their right to get copies of information held by Bermuda public authorities.	50%	36%	33%	43%
Making sure that public authorities comply with the PATI Act.	46%	41%	34%	42%
Investigating complaints when people don't get the information they request from public authorities.	43%	37%	32%	40%
Providing information about public services.	38%	35%	33%	37%
Hearing appeals when people do not receive requested information from public authorities.	32%	29%	27%	34%
Issuing legally binding decisions to public authorities concerning the release of information.	28%	30%	24%	29%
Dealing with requests to amend a personal record held by public authorities.	21%	15%	15%	19%

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…?

Compared to 2018, residents were equally likely to believe that:

- Public authorities will become more open and accountable (66% vs. 67% in 2018).
- Members of the public will have more confidence in the decisions made by public authorities (59% vs. 60% in 2018).

Fifty nine percent (59%) believed that the Act would be useful to them (vs. 56% in 2018).

Top 2 Responses	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Public authorities will become more open and accountable.	76%	59%	67%	66%
Members of the public will have more confidence in the decisions made by public authorities.	62%	55%	60%	59%
This act will be useful to me.	53%	54%	56%	59%
Public authorities will find a way round the Act and won't provide any information they don't want to.	52%	54%	55%	57%
No one will bother to use the rights provided by the act.	25%	21%	20%	18%

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 continued to believe that the PATI Act was important to them (88% vs. 87% in 2018).

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
Top 2	79%	86%	87%	88%
Very important	48%	48%	51%	55%
Somewhat important	31%	38%	36%	33%
Neither / nor	9%	7%	7%	7%
Somewhat unimportant	4%	2%	2%	2%
Not at all important	5%	3%	1%	1%
Don't Know	4%	2%	4%	2%

- Residents aged 18-24 years were less likely to believe that the Act was important to them.

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

Up by 4 points in 2019, 80% believed that creating and enforcing the PATI Act was a very important public investment.

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Sample	*400*	*401*	*400*	*405*
I believe that creating and enforcing the PATI Act is a very important public investment.	77%	80%	76%	80%
The PATI Act is not important and the public funds required for creating and enforcing PATI should be spent elsewhere.	5%	3%	5%	4%
Don't Know	19%	17%	19%	16%

- Residents aged 65 years and over were more likely to believe in the importance of the investment.
- Residents aged 25-34 years were less likely to believe in it.