

United Progressive Party **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS** 2004 - 2014



The Right Choice

Achieving the 'Right' things
At the 'Right' time
Benefitting Antigua and Barbuda

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The Right Choice

United Progressive Party
MAJOR
ACHIEVEMENTS
2004 - 2014

FOREWORD

ON A MISSION TO REDEEM ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The United Progressive Party (UPP) was elected to office in 2004 on a mandate of putting “People First” and with a bold vision of empowering citizens and residents through jobs, education, business opportunities and good governance. With democracy, equal rights and justice at the core of the UPP philosophy, this message captured the imagination of Antiguan, Barbudans and the immigrant community. And together with the people of Antigua and Barbuda, the UPP helped to restore pride and prosperity, as well as the country’s image and reputation abroad.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr. Baldwin Spencer, the UPP wasted little time enacting that visionary change and swiftly introduced a range of social programmes that brought security and stability to the most vulnerable.

In addition, it sought and secured valuable tourism investments and identified other opportunities for economic development and growth, including in agriculture. Despite a huge national debt, an under-performing economy, and the dislocation created by the global economic crisis, the demise of the Stanford Empire and the collapse of BAICO/CLICO, the UPP implemented sound plans and budgetary policies that set Antigua and Barbuda on the road to recovery and then positioned it for economic take-off, according to Forbes magazine.

The UPP’s proud legacy and solid track record of achievements are carefully laid out in this book. Among the Party’s extensive record of success is the GATE Programme. This landmark initiative was designed to cultivate youth skills in ICT, produce a cadre of trained apprentices, and create the entrepreneurial opportunities critical for driving economic growth. The GATE Programme was singled out for its innovativeness throughout the region and farther afield.

The Construct Antigua and Barbuda Initiative (CABI) is another flagship UPP programme that continues to generate significant benefits to homeowners and contributes to the national economy. Spearheaded by former Finance Minister Harold Lovell, this policy sustains significant employment in construction and other related sectors, while lowering the cost of home ownership.

The UPP’s handprint on several facilities throughout Antigua and Barbuda remains intact and is critical to the country’s infrastructure. These include our modern hospital facility, state-of-the-art airport, national stadium, National Parliament and National Public Library among others. Some of these legacy structures have played a critical role during times of crisis. Following the destruction of Barbuda by Hurricane Irma, the stadium at the Sir Vivian Richards Ground doubled as an emergency shelter. Similarly, our hospital and airport were critical to the national COVID-19 recovery and resilience strategy.

The UPP's social programmes, such as the School Meals Programme, School Uniform Grant, PDV-Caribe benefits and Christmas Barrel, remain as proud emblems of our legacy and have helped to put Antigua and Barbuda on a firm path of resilience throughout some of the country's most difficult economic times.

Many of the UPP Administration's programmes and plans should have been adopted by the Antigua Labour Party in order to maintain Antigua and Barbuda's head start. Unfortunately, these opportunities have been squandered and many UPP-led programmes have been either mismanaged or totally abandoned by the Labour Party.

However, the UPP remains relentless in our commitment to a "People First" agenda. We seek your support as we begin to share new plans and policies to redeem Antigua and Barbuda.

A Vote for the UPP is a Vote for Upliftment and Hope.

A Message from
DR. WINSTON BALDWIN SPENCER
(Former Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda)



For 10 wonderful years as Prime Minister, I was honoured to be the servant-leader of this Nation under the first United Progressive Party Administration.

We began the journey with the primary goal of putting “People First,” and although we encountered many hurdles along the way, we enjoyed many successes in our quest to empower every Antiguan and Barbudan and those who have made this country their home.

At this time, when our Nation is emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, we need strong, steady, caring and visionary leadership that will revive our economy, create jobs, protect pensioners and fulfill the dreams of our youth.

The UPP has the experience and a clear plan to revive this country. Under the capable leadership of Political Leader Harold Lovell, we will chart a better way forward for our Nation, with the needs and ambitions of The People as our primary focus.

As we seek your support in advancing this vision, I invite you to spend some time to reflect on our significant accomplishments. I am confident that our past performance will reinforce your confidence in the UPP’s ability to do it again and will inspire you to support our new mandate to redeem Antigua and Barbuda.

I remain confident that the UPP is “The Right Choice.”

Sincerely,
Dr. Winston Baldwin Spencer

Message from
HAROLD LOVELL
(Political Leader – United Progressive Party)



The last eight years have not been good – except for a very few people in Antigua and Barbuda. Particularly since the pandemic, businesses have lost confidence or gone under; the youth have failed to secure jobs; farmers have lost both hope and land; pensioners have lost independence and dignity; Barbudans have lost autonomy; and The People of Antigua and Barbuda have lost faith in the Gaston Browne Administration.

After grandiose promises, still-born investments, false statistics, poor maintenance of our infrastructure, murky borrowings, reckless spending and general mismanagement, Antiguan, Barbudans and residents are crying out for a clean break from the ravages of the Labour Party Administration.

We remain the people-centered Party and, as demonstrated in the past, we are here to listen to and collaborate with ordinary citizens, business owners, community leaders, religious bodies, experts and technical officers, stakeholders, grassroots organizations, and, especially, the youth.

Out of our discussions already, several solid social and economic policies have been developed to improve our present quality of life; secure our young people's future; protect our land rights, environment and sovereignty; and ensure that every person who aspires has an opportunity to achieve.

As we prepare to roll out our plans and policies to redeem Antigua and Barbuda, we proudly present our report card for the period 2004-2014 and invite you to review and assess the many accomplishments of the UPP. At this critical juncture in our Nation's development, the UPP is "The Right Choice."

Sincerely,

Harold Lovell
Political Leader

A Message from

HON. JAMALE PRINGLE

(Member of Parliament – All Saints East and St. Luke II Leader of the Opposition II Deputy Political Leader)



Antiguans and Barbudans are crying out for visionary, passionate and committed leadership where there are no ulterior motives – only service in the interest of the people. We need competent leaders to ease the burden of everyday living.

For many, life is extremely tough. The escalating cost of living is hurting everyone, since salaries are not keeping pace and putting food on the table remains a daily struggle. Jobs are hard to come by, especially for recent school-leavers. The overall morale of workers, many of whom are owed back pay and overtime, is at rock bottom.

The UPP has delivered more in economic and social development and nation-building than any other political party in Antigua and Barbuda. To prove this, we invite you to review our extensive list of accomplishments during the period 2004-2014. You will see that, even during extremely difficult times, the leaders of the UPP served our country loyally and with distinction.

We seek your support as we begin to roll out our plans to uplift and unite this country through mutual respect and hope for all citizens and residents. We have a nation to build and a country to mould. Let us get to work in restoring pride and prosperity to this country.

UPP is “The Right Choice.”

Sincerely,
The Hon. Jamale Pringle
Leader of the Opposition



United Progressive Party
MAJOR
ACHIEVEMENTS
2004 - 2009



OVERVIEW

Enacted Reforms for Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance

- After 2004, under the Hon. Baldwin Spencer, people began to believe in leadership they could trust. The UPP Administration was able to gain the love and respect of Antiguan and Barbudans; restore Antigua's image and good name at home and abroad; and bring back national pride after decades of being called a rogue and corrupt country.
- The UPP enacted reforms for transparency, accountability and good governance.
- Investor confidence and trust were restored in Antigua and Barbuda. Nothing was passing under tables anymore.
- Antigua & Barbuda got an accountable administration, and people were able to actually see how their tax dollars were being spent.

Integrity In Public Life Act Passed

The UPP Administration passed a Trilogy of Integrity Legislation that governed behaviour in public office and established accountability and transparency in government processes and procedures, placing Antigua and Barbuda at the forefront of open and democratic governance in the region. These laws:

- The Integrity in Public Life Act
- Prevention of Corruption Act
- Freedom of Information Act

fulfilled the UPP's promise to create a social and political environment where honesty and integrity were the hallmarks of political life.

Some Strong Economic Growth Indicators

The UPP Government oversaw an economic growth rate averaging 6.9%, whereas the ALP could manage only an average growth rate of 3.2% before 2004.

Encouraged Business Growth and Construction

Between 2004-2008, the number of applications for commercial construction averaged 125 per annum, overshadowing the 57 achieved in 2003 under ALP.

Reduced Deficit and Debt

The UPP Administration almost halved the current-account deficit, from \$121.4M (under ALP) to an average of \$70.2M between 2004-2008. The UPP also eliminated more than \$680M in debt and realized over \$500M in savings for the people of Antigua & Barbuda.

Elimination of a Raft of Taxes via the ABST

The UPP Administration instituted the Antigua & Barbuda Sales Tax (ABST) to harmonize the following:

- Customs Service Tax
- Entertainment Tax
- Loan Tax
- Radio/TV Tax
- Dog Licence Tax
- Hotel Tax
- Hotel Guest Tax
- Restaurant & Catering Tax
- Telecommunications Tax



NATIONAL SECURITY & LABOUR

The Police, Fire and Defence Forces

The UPP Administration solicited support for training and reconstruction for the Police and the Defence Forces from the Canadian Mounties and Interpol. The result was a sharp decline in crime.

The Police

The UPP Administration

- Reformed the Police Force
- Increased police salaries by 23.5%
- Paid insurance for police officers injured in the line of duty (that had not been paid since 1990)
- Supplied the Police with more vehicles (including police-command vehicles) than in the previous 28 years
- Provided the Police with five (5) new motorcycles
- Repaired police stations
- Provided greater accountability of the Police to the public
- Outfitted the Police Department with a new, modern, state-of-the-art communication system, costing over \$15M, and more tools to solve crime
- Provided more training to the Police in Forensics and Evidence Control and Management
- Introduced the Public Safety Communications Network (PSCN), which included AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System)
- Installed CCTV cameras at Her Majesty's Prison

- Opened the Langfords Police Station, which was started and never opened by the ALP
- Made protection of women and children a top priority
- Trained units to handle gender-based crimes
- A Police Task Force on sexual violence was set up, especially to reduce rape, which was a serious problem at the time.
- The UPP also settled arrears totalling \$1.2 million, accumulated over many years, with the Police Credit Union.

Fire Services

For the first time after Independence, the UPP Administration did not have to seek assistance from the US Air Station for firefighting equipment. The UPP provided the Fire Department with six (6) new Fire Tenders, costing over \$10M, by acquiring the latest Hamrato fire equipment and engines.

Defence Force

The UPP Administration met a Defence Force that was understaffed and in urgent need of equipment essential to the proper discharge of its functions. Allocations were made in the budget for the purchase of equipment and vehicles and for the employment of 56 recruits.

Justice

The UPP Administration

- Repaired the Magistrates Court
- Employed more magistrates and judges to speed up the backlog of cases in the courts
- Provided greater efficiency in the Child Maintenance System so that mothers could have speedier access to remittances



IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION

Millenium Naturalization Act

The UPP Administration, in an effort to provide a fair and equitable nation with no second-class citizens, sought to right a wrong that was perpetrated under the ALP. For years, our Caribbean brothers and sisters were held as political hostages, and were given an ultimatum to vote for the Labour Party or be sent home. When the UPP took office there were 2,500 unsigned residency applications.

The Millennium Naturalization Act was introduced by the UPP to correct this wrong and to bring security and integrity to Caribbean immigrants living among us. The Act outlined Government's obligation to provide the fundamentals, such as quality health care, affordable housing, quality education, religious freedom, opportunities for jobs and personal growth to those whom it granted citizenship, as enjoyed by nationals.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology Programme

The UPP introduced a nationwide Information Technology Programme called the 'Connect Antigua & Barbuda Initiative' for students, and also for adults who wished to become computer literate.

The UPP Administration

- Spent more than \$26M between 2004 and 2008 to implement its Digital Agenda, the focus of which was to increase access to computer technology in schools and communities
- Over a period of four years, set up 16 computer access centres throughout the country
- Created mobile access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), delivered by a fleet of buses converted into classrooms to ensure that students in all corners of the island were online
- Created the Education Max Advantage Programme, which was designed to strengthen performance in key areas, such as literacy, numeracy, computer literacy and health awareness
- Developed a trainer-of-trainers module in IT geared to teachers
- To ensure no one was left behind in the ICT revolution, designed a training programme for the physically, visually, and otherwise challenged, using the new technologies
- This IT programme introduced by the UPP won the regional "Connect the Caribbean" Award in 2008.

A Free Media

The UPP encouraged and supported a Free Media: People could now "talk as you like," something that was impossible prior to 2004.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Road Building Programme

- The UPP embarked on a comprehensive Road Building Programme, and made improvement of the nation's road network a top priority. \$430M was spent to construct and upgrade roads in St. John's City, in various communities across the island, and in Barbuda.
- Over 500 miles of new roads were built.
- Roads and drains were also repaired for longer-lasting service.

Airport Expansion Programme

The UPP Administration:

- Upgraded the Arrivals Hall to include computerized systems and controls
- Expanded and upgraded the Departure Lounge
- Initiated an ongoing expansion and upgrade of the runway and adjacent areas of the V.C. Bird International Airport
- These resulted in the elevation of the facility's profile within the global aviation industry and greater efficiency and improved comfort for the travelling public.
- Established the Airport Authority, a statutory body responsible for managing the facility

2005 Contribution to LIAT

The UPP Administration, in its commitment to regional travel and integration, injected \$60M into LIAT through a CDB loan and saved the jobs of hundreds of our people.

Street Lighting Project

- The UPP made sure that the Sir Sidney Walling Highway, from Sprugoo's gas station all the way up to the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, was well lit.
- Lights were also acquired and successfully installed on other major roadways, including the Valley Road, Friars Hill Road and the Sir George Walter Highway.

The Upgrade and Enhancement of St John's City

The UPP gave St. John's City, formerly described as "ramshackle and flyblown," a well-deserved facelift.

- It eliminated the horrible, slimy, green, mossy gutters and turned the city into a clean, well-ordered centre of vibrant trade and tourist activity that all could be proud of.
- The UPP constructed sidewalks where citizens and visitors could walk comfortably and safely.
- St. John's became a cleaner city, with a better waste-collection system.
- In general, the UPP commenced the building, repairing and maintaining of St. John's infrastructure, its public spaces and cultural facilities.

Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Grounds

The UPP Administration built and commissioned a new state-of-the-art athletic and sports centre, the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Grounds. This facility, among the most prestigious sports centres in the region, became the flagship of a new integrated development of athletics and sports in the nation, a development slated to become the sporting mecca of the Eastern Caribbean. Miles of roads in the vicinity were constructed in time for Cricket World Cup 2007.

Sport Education and Facilities Upgraded

- In addition to upgrading many sporting facilities across the nation, the UPP provided our young athletes with the opportunity to study and train overseas.

2007 Cricket World Cup

- The UPP Administration confirmed Antigua as a venue for Cricket World Cup 2007
- Apart from getting ready assistance from China for the construction of a new cricket stadium, we sought and received cooperation from the private sector which, in turn, was offered a set of incentives to spur the growth of hospitality and entertainment businesses.
- The UPP Government enacted the Cricket World Cup Projects Incentives Act, 2005, to develop and operate projects that would facilitate the hosting of the Super 8 Leg of Cricket World Cup 2007. This led to the construction and addition of some 50+ new properties to the hospitality and business pool.
- We were able to provide a major boost to our construction industry.
- We also received positive international publicity that would otherwise have cost us millions of dollars.

Facilitating Mass Investment on Friars Hill Road

The UPP Administration facilitated mass local investment along what became known as the "Golden Mile" on Friars Hill Road, including at the Woods Mall, where the Government, itself, invested in a permanent home for the Inland Revenue Department.



BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS

Cuba

The UPP Administration developed a relationship with Cuba that rested on a mutually beneficial structure of cooperation. This assisted Antigua & Barbuda in capacity building in sports, education, culture, agriculture, fisheries, energy, the infrastructure and the healthcare system. To highlight a few:

- Cuban healthcare specialists, including doctors, nurses and technicians, provide service to our people through our hospital and clinics.
- Our young people pursued higher education at Cuban universities, 25% in medicine.
- With Cuban assistance, APUA saved millions of dollars through a more rational use of energy by households and businesses.
- The Roads Construction and Rehabilitation Programme benefitted from the presence of Cuban technical experts. The nation, especially the tourism plant, reaped immediate and productive fruit.

Venezuela

The primary platform for the increased collaboration between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Antigua & Barbuda was the PetroCaribe Initiative signed onto in 2005, designed to benefit this country through a number of social and infrastructure-development programmes. These included:

- A **\$3M** donation to the Public Library project
- A **\$6.7M** allocation to the Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy Programme
- **\$5.5M** for the construction of the Grays Green Community Complex

- \$27M loan for the North Sound Housing Project
- \$21.6M grant for a major water-infrastructure improvement and expansion project
- \$20.25M grant to refurbish V.C. Bird International Airport in preparation for Cricket World Cup
- \$5M allocation for the People's Benefit Programme (for the disabled and for economically disadvantaged persons)
- Access to 10 megawatt-generating capacity for APUA

In addition to these benefits, the UPP Administration ensured that adequate provisions were made with Venezuela to settle the financed portion of the fuel purchased under the PetroCaribe Initiative, so that future generations will not be saddled with the debt associated with the purchase of the fuel. (We do recall that the ALP left an individual debt of over \$40,000 to every man, woman and child.)

The BRIC Countries

Brazil, Russia, India, and China

During its first term, the UPP Administration solidified the country's pre-existing diplomatic relations with three of the BRIC countries: Brazil, India, China. Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer made personal visits to each of them, holding intense discussions to advance specific areas of collaboration. Resulting from these visits were the following:

Brazil

- Establishment of a consulate in Sao Paolo, commercial capital of Brazil
- Retention of Brazilian firm, Andrade Gutierrez, to complete the refurbishment and expansion work at the Airport
- Establishment of a Brazilian embassy in St. John's

India

- Technical assistance from India for the establishment of the nation's Community Access Centres
- Expansion of relations between the AUA and the Manipal University of India, granting Antigua & Barbuda 12 scholarships each year
- Agreements to carry out a feasibility study on a National Sewage Plan and to provide assistance to the Defense Force
- Offer of five (5) scholarships per year for five (5) years
- Training in Network and JAVA Studies in India for three (3) young nationals from the IT Centre

China

- Grant funding for the stadium at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Ground
- Sponsorship of the national street-lighting programme
- Scholarships to be undertaken in China
- Assistance with the completion of the Mount St. John Medical Centre
- Covering of the Grays Hill Reservoir
- Construction of a Community Centre in Barbuda
- Financing for the new airport terminal
- Financing for the renovation of the St. John's Deep Water Harbour

PM Spencer, Chairman of the G77

The Leader of the UPP Administration, Baldwin Spencer, received international acclaim when he was elected to hold the distinguished office of Chairman of the G77 and China, demonstrating that his leadership transcended national and regional boundaries. He was the third regional leader to hold such an honourable position.



SOCIAL PROGRAMMES

Putting People First!

The core philosophy of the UPP is that the principal purpose of Government is to improve the lives of its citizens, to put people first in all planning and policies, and to prudently and equitably use the resources available for the greatest good for the greatest number of people. To this end, from the first year in office, the UPP Administration implemented a number of measures designed to brighten the lives of the citizens and residents of Antigua & Barbuda.

Poverty Reduction

The UPP Administration, with financial and technical support from the CDB, undertook a Poverty Assessment Survey to help in the development of new and innovative programmes that would improve the lives of the nation's needy.

\$50 Million Subsidy To Fuel

- The UPP Administration embarked on an aggressive programme to subsidize the cost of gasoline and diesel by over \$50M.
- (2008) Despite the fact that international oil prices exceeded US\$145 per barrel, the UPP Administration maintained a price of \$14.74 per gallon, while prices in other regional territories exceeded \$16. The price was further reduced by another \$1.70.

\$6M Subsidy On LPG

The UPP Administration reduced the impact of escalating international fuel prices by implementing a \$6M subsidy on LPG (cooking gas). That price remained the lowest in the region during the term of the UPP.

Food Voucher Programme

In addition to its School Meals Programme, dubbed 'Nutrition for Learning,' the UPP provided food vouchers for low-income families.

Dollar Barrel Initiative

- (2004) The UPP introduced the Dollar Barrel Initiative, which allowed households to import food items, clothing and toiletries at a nominal fee of \$1 during the Christmas season. Between 2004 and 2005, over 17,000 households benefitted from this initiative.
- (2008) The UPP commenced the fifth cycle of the Dollar Barrel designed to be a benefit to even more households.
- The estimated cost to the UPP over a 3-year period was \$36M.
- The Dollar Barrel Initiative continued in the same format up to 2013.

Free School Uniform Grant

The UPP introduced the School Uniform Grant to help ease the burden on families with school-age children.

- In 2004, 75% of the student population benefitted from the School Uniform Grant
- Each primary school child received a \$350 yearly grant and \$500 per secondary school student.
- There was a steady increase in beneficiaries – from 10,240 children to 12,589 (2005); 15,007 (2006); 19,053 (2007); and 21,156 (2008).
- Up to 2010, over 260,000 uniforms had been distributed to over 21,000 students in 81 schools, creating employment for over 30 local suppliers and vendors.
- The programme cost \$12 million, or about \$150 per child, over 4½ years.

School Meals Programme

The UPP Administration committed itself to improving the physical and mental health of the nation's youth. It introduced a National School Meals Programme that provided free hot meals for schoolchildren in 15 primary schools.

- In 2010, over 1 million nutritious meals were served.
- The UPP secured the financial assistance of the local private sector and the Government of Trinidad & Tobago to administer the programme.

Tax Exemption On Baby Food And Supplies

The UPP provided a tax exemption on baby food and related supplies.

GRACE

The UPP introduced the Government's Residential Assistance and Care for the Elderly and Eligible (GRACE) Programme. GRACE served to protect our elderly from abuse and hardship, and ensured that they maintained their dignity by providing a number of social workers, known as Elder Care Assistants, to attend them in their homes.

Funeral Grant

The UPP provided a Funeral Grant to families who needed financial support to cover the costs of final burial arrangements for loved ones.

Board of Guardians

- In 2004, the UPP created the Board of Guardians to provide support to the most vulnerable in society. Recipients included the elderly, mentally challenged, visually impaired, and other groups of individuals who received stipends every fortnight to help cover their basic necessities.
- In 2005, the stipends under this programme were increased by up to 100%.
- The programme assisted more than 500 persons.

Vagrants Feeding Programme

(2007) The UPP Administration Government introduced a Vagrants Feeding Programme which provided meals to transients within the city. On average, this programme fed 85 persons on a weekly basis.

Utility Subsidy Credit Through Petro Caribe For Seniors

(2005) The incorporation of PDV Caribe (PDV-CAB) by the UPP included the importation of petroleum products and the implementation, management and funding of social and infrastructural projects for the maximum benefit of the citizens of Antigua & Barbuda.

The UPP facilitated, through the Petro Caribe initiative, a \$1,200 annual utility credit for senior citizens. This was applied to any APUA bill.

Reduction In Property Tax For Senior Citizens On The First \$150,000.00

- Under the UPP, property tax was calculated on the fair market value, rather than the replacement cost, as it was under the ALP.
- The UPP exempted the first \$150,000.00 of the value of their home for all Antiguans.
- The UPP further exempted seniors over 75 years of age from the tax on the second \$100,000.

Home Improvement Grant For Seniors, The Disabled And The Needy

Under the UPP, all seniors, the disabled and needy were entitled to a \$2,500 grant to improve their homes.

Grant To Association Of Persons With Disabilities

The UPP made a grant of \$250,000 to the Association to be used for, among other things, the purchase of equipment and services.

Waiver Of Taxes For The Disabled

The UPP also waived taxes on wheelchairs, prosthetics and hearing aids.

Relief For Pensioners

- (2004) The UPP Administration made a one-off aggregate subsidy payment of \$500,000 to the Pensioners Association for all persons earning a pension of \$500 or less. (For some, this meant an increase of over 400% in their monthly payments). This sum was also to aid in the Association's administrative functions.
- The UPP further provided an annual grant of \$50,000 to the Pensioners Association to facilitate its work on behalf of pensioners.
- (2005) The UPP increased the minimum pension by 50%, to \$750 per month – more than a six-fold increase for some pensioners.
- The UPP increased the Social Security minimum pension by more than 133%, to \$350 per month, for persons over 70 years old.
- (2008) The UPP further increased the minimum pension to \$800 per month. Together with the increase in the Social Security minimum pension, a considerable number of pensioners were receiving an aggregate minimum pension of \$1,150 per month.
- As a further relief, the UPP introduced a provision in the new property tax system, whereby local pensioners who own and occupy their homes were entitled to an additional 50% reduction in their tax liability. (They would receive not only the \$150,000 residential allowance granted to all residential property owners, but would also benefit from a 50% reduction in the tax payable on the remaining \$100,000 value of their property.)

Basket Of Essential Goods

- The UPP implemented the Basket of Essential Goods in 2005 with just under 50 items.
- The UPP gradually reduced the Customs Service Tax from 10% to 0% on the Basket of Essential Goods to help the people cope with rising international prices.
- The UPP increased the Basket of Essential Goods to more than 177 items.
- Upon the implementation of the ABST in 2007, the UPP zero-rated these items, in addition to eliminating the Customs Service Tax on them.
- The UPP also exempted water services, electricity for domestic purposes, medical, dental, nursing, optical and other similar services from the ABST.

Waiver Of Consumption Tax On Electricity Bills

The UPP waived consumption tax on electricity bills.

Utilities Subsidy

The UPP Administration zero-rated consumption of water, consumption of electricity for domestic purposes, and the first 50 units of electricity consumed for commercial activity.



Energy Saving Initiative

- (2008) The UPP Administration zero-rated solar water-heaters and offered similar concessions to businesses seeking to invest in the development of alternative-energy sources.
- To reduce energy consumption, the UPP Administration, with the assistance of the People's Republic of Cuba, embarked on an energy-saving initiative. Over 20,000 households benefited from the Cuban Light Bulb Programme by which incandescent bulbs were changed to fluorescent ones, resulting in big savings in energy costs.
- Over 600,000 energy-saving bulbs were installed, with an annual collective saving of some \$20M.

Establishment Of A Probation Unit

The UPP established the Probation Unit, which treated 150 persons at a cost of \$50,000.00 per inmate.

Human Service Support

The UPP provided human service support to:

- The Boys' Training School
- The HIV-AIDS Secretariat



OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Labour

The UPP Administration

- established a Minimum Wage Committee comprising public sector, private sector, trade union, and civil society representatives to review the minimum wage and make recommendations to the Minister of Labour
- implemented a 25% increase in the Minimum Wage, from \$6.00 to \$7.50 per hour, as recommended by the Committee
- enacted laws to secure and safeguard the viability of trade unions
- provided the Trade Union Congress with an annual grant of \$25,000
- passed laws to safeguard the compensation due to workers where their employers had declared bankruptcy or had closed operations
- initiated the mechanism for an Unemployment Grant

Back Pay For Civil Servants/Increase For Civil Servants

The UPP Administration paid salaries and wages every month – not like in the past when people could not get paid.

- The UPP government paid back pay to civil servants in the amount of \$46M, which had been owed to them by the ALP government since 1994.
- The UPP awarded increases of 10% and 7% across the board for all public servants, established and non-established.
- Created a dedicated Civil Servants Fund at Board of Education.

Property Tax Relief

- (2007) The UPP overhauled the property-tax system, providing targeted relief to all property owners
- All owner-occupied residential properties were granted a \$150,000 residential allowance
- Property owners were also granted:
 - ▶ **90%** tax relief on productive agricultural land
 - ▶ **25%** tax relief for taxable property adapted for use in the hotel industry
 - ▶ **25%** tax relief on property used by manufacturing enterprises
 - ▶ **50%** tax relief on property maintained as a historical site
 - ▶ **50%** tax relief for property maintained for cultural purposes and/or recreation; and
 - ▶ **50%** tax relief for property reserved for special public interests, including institutional property.

Reduced Stamp Duty On Residential Mortgages and The Transfer Of Property

The UPP Administration

- reduced the stamp duty in respect of mortgages for residential construction
- reduced the rate from \$6 per \$1,000 to \$4 per \$1,000 (e.g., for a person receiving a \$350,000 mortgage, the total cost to be paid would be \$1,400 instead of \$2,100)
- removed the stamp duty on the discharge of charge for residential property (based on advice from the taxpayers). Thus, persons who had completed paying their residential mortgages would no longer have to pay any stamp duty to retrieve their land certificate.
- enacted legislation that would make it less costly for a parent or grandparent to transfer property to a child or grandchild (cost reduced from 10% to 2%)
- reduced the cost for spouses to transfer title or ownership of property into their joint names from 10% to 2%.

Reduction Of The Corporate Income Tax

- The UPP Administration used the expertise of the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority and the Customs Renewal Programme to help adjust the corporate income tax in the promotion of investment and to encourage private-sector activity.
- The UPP Administration reduced the rate of corporate income tax, from 35% to 30%, in 2005; and, in 2008, the corporate income tax was further lowered to 25%.

Tax Credits And Personal Income Tax Deductions:

The UPP Administration

- provided a tax credit of up to \$250,000 to businesses making financial contributions to the development of culture, education or sports
- adjusted the legislation re: the PIT to provide additional relief to taxpayers. PIT payers could claim income-tax deductions in respect of:
 - ▶ Interest paid on residential mortgages
 - ▶ Contributions paid into approved pension schemes
 - ▶ Health insurance premiums; and
 - ▶ Tuition payments on behalf of children pursuing university studies
- provided an allowance of up to \$1,000 where a taxpayer is supporting a child (between the ages of 18 and 25 years) who is studying full time; and \$2,000 where there are multiple children in the household.



Concessions To Taxi Drivers, Bus Drivers And Tour Operators

- The UPP Administration offered a 50% reduction in the duty applicable to selected parts for passenger vehicles operated by taxi drivers, bus drivers and tour operators. Concessions were given on batteries, windscreens, brake pads, tyres and shock absorbers.
- The UPP Administration added new buses to the list of items for which concessions were granted.
- The UPP Administration increased the concession offered to bus drivers from 50% reduction in the duty to a full waiver of the duty on the eligible items. (As a result, bus fares remained unchanged.)

Subsidy To Farmers And Fishermen

- The UPP refocused the CMC from the selling of electronic items, like televisions and radios, as was done under the ALP, to providing good service to farmers and fisher folk throughout the island.

Subsidy To The Trade Union Congress

- Following the merger of the major trade unions to form the Trade Union Congress, the UPP Administration provided a \$50,000.00 grant to facilitate the general operations of the TUC.



HEALTH

Delivering Health Services

During its 10 years in office, the UPP

- Spent over \$446M on healthcare in the first five (5) years
- Constructed and refurbished clinics in various communities and established public-health facilities with newly opened health centres nationwide
- Increased the fleet of ambulances
- Increased the list of ailments covered by the Medical Benefits Scheme
- Provided medical assistance for persons going overseas – to over \$2M
- Improved garbage collection island-wide and improved efficiency
- Provided a cleaner St. John's City
- Provided additional equipment to the Holberton Hospital
- Implemented the Vector Control and National Beautification Programmes

Mount St John Medical Centre –MSJMC

The UPP Administration completed and opened the Mount St. John Medical Centre. After a period of careful planning and organization, there was a smooth transition from the old Holberton Hospital to the new Medical Centre. The facility became the centerpiece of a new system and the standard of quality healthcare for all.



Waiver Of ABST On Medical Services

The UPP waived the ABST on medical, nursing, dental and optical services.

Cuban Eye Care Programme

The UPP, through assistance from the People's Republic of Cuba, secured treatment for some 1,200 persons with various forms of eye ailments. These persons travelled to Cuba to receive surgery and complete after-care.



EDUCATION

Fostering Education for All

During its 10 years in office, the UPP:

- Repaired most of our secondary schools
- Introduced the school uniform programme to all secondary school students
- Completed and opened the National Library 40 years after it was destroyed
- Created a Test of Standards to ensure our children get the best from our teachers
- Created ABICE (Antigua & Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education) which provides a second chance for the nation's youth
- The UPP Administration awarded over 1,200 scholarships to our children, as against the few that were given by the ALP prior to 2004

National Student Loan Fund (NSLF), 2008

The UPP Administration launched its National Student Loan Fund (NSLF) with an initial endowment of \$2 million.

- We increased scholarships to over 1,000 for young people pursuing undergraduate studies, graduate studies, doctoral studies, post-secondary/technical education, and vocational studies in a wide range of subjects in countries throughout the world
- The fields of study included accounting, management, computer science, surveying and land information, criminal justice, education, tourism and hospitality management and nursing.



- The NSLF offered students a loan of up to \$50,000 at a low interest rate of 3% per annum for higher education.
- The NSLF was administered by a Student Loan Advisory Committee which was responsible for reviewing applications and issuing loans to the successful applicants.
- The total value of the loans granted was \$2M, and recipient students had up to ten years (not 1 year) to repay the loan.

2004 – Training For Teachers

- The UPP Administration increased and expanded the necessary facilities for the proper training of teachers. The UPP equipped the nation's schools with more trained and qualified teachers.
- 100 teachers received training yearly as opposed to only 30 under the ALP.
- The increase significantly affected the contact time teachers had with students.

Skills Training And Empowerment Programme

The UPP set up the Skills Training and Empowerment Programme (STEP) to help unemployed single mothers find jobs.



TOURISM

Tourism Development

The UPP completely revamped the tourism plant and restored the tourism sector – from almost total annihilation in 2004 to a burgeoning sector, with the second best performance in the entire Caribbean and showing double-digit growth in the first quarter of 2014 (CTO figures).

- The UPP established a National Tourism Task Force.
- The UPP Administration created and published a Ten-Year Tourism Master Plan to provide a comprehensive framework for the development of the industry, and to chart the strategic direction, structure and logistics for the industry's programmes and overall initiatives.
- Between 2004 and 2008, the UPP grew room stock by approximately 40% -- from 3,000 to 4,154.
- The UPP increased direct flights to Antigua by American Airlines and Delta Airlines.
- It created a tourist attraction at Betty's Hope.
- The UPP repaired Antigua & Barbuda's image and the quality of the visitor experience.

Tourism Industry Growth and Development

- Under the Cricket World Cup (Projects) Incentives Act, 61 local Antiguan received assistance in the construction of small hotels, inns and guesthouses, creating additional wealth and employment.
- Record hotel construction and renovation projects, including five new properties: Sandals, Hermitage, Verandah, Hodges Bay and Sugar Ridge.



- (2007) Under the UPP Administration, Antigua & Barbuda received the highest annual level of investment per capita because of its direct investment, mainly attributed to construction in the tourism sector. The World Investment Report ranked us highest in the OECS and fourth in the Caribbean region.

Increased Visitor Arrivals

- In 2007, the UPP set records in visitor arrivals. Stay-over visitors numbered approximately 262,000; and cruise-ship arrivals were over 384 ship visits and close to 673,000 passengers. Our total visitor arrivals climbed steadily from 423,000 in 2004 to reach 934,574.
- There was a 25% increase in room stock, from 3,000 in 2007 to 4,154 in 2008, representing more than US\$2 billion of investment, unmatched in the history of development in Antigua & Barbuda.
- The UPP increased airlift out of the USA and introduced new services from Europe.

Tourism Marketing and Branding

- The UPP Administration rebranded the tourism product and developed a distinctive universal logo that brought marketing activities across all markets into alignment ('The Beach is just the Beginning').
- Launched 'Romantic Rhythms' to position Antigua & Barbuda as the Events Capital of the Eastern Caribbean
- Between 2006 and 2007, the destination received more than ten (10) travel-industry awards.
- Entertained celebrities and celebrity shows like 'America's Next Top Model' to promote the destination

Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA)

- The UPP set up the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority, which served as a specialized agency to include the creation of a Tourism Consultative Council comprising representatives from a wide cross-section of tourism stakeholders.

Antigua & Barbuda Hospitality and Tourism Institute (ABHTI)

- Restructured the ABHTI. Offered, for the first time, Associate Degrees with opportunities to pursue Bachelor's programmes in Hospitality Management at The UWI. Students from as far away as Grenada studied at the Institute.
- A Service Ambassadors Programme was introduced to credentialize service providers within the industry and secure licensing in specific service areas.

Tourism Cadet Corps

- The UPP re-engineered the Tourism Cadet Corps within secondary schools. The Corps was recognized as a good-practice initiative among CTO member-states and the Caribbean region.

Tourism Statistical Database

- The UPP, through the Ministry of Tourism, addressed the need to establish an intelligence database with critical tourism statistics by developing an effective and strategic Statistics Division.

Sailing and Yachting Tourism

- The UPP established strategic alliances with private-sector partners to market Antigua & Barbuda as a premier yachting destination, through Sailing Week and other yachting events.

Beach Safety and Security

- The UPP, through the Ministry of Tourism, established a Beach Enhancement Project that entailed the construction of beach parks, equipped with picnicking, recreational and entertainment facilities, as well as emergency medical services on nine (9) beaches. A Beach Safety and Security Unit provided essential training for hospitality officers to ensure beach safety and security for visitors and locals alike.

Enhancing the Tourism Product

- The UPP Administration linked tourism to culture, sports, the arts and the environment.
- It developed a concept of community tourism by training locals to provide accommodation and other services to visitors within their communities.

Tourism Awards from Strong Marketing

- 2006 - Launched June as 'Romance Month,' designed to position Antigua and Barbuda as the 'Romance Capital of the Caribbean'
- Each year hosted a Celebrity Destination Wedding, with celebrity guests, including American actors and performers, such as Vivica Fox, Kenny Lattimore & Chante Moore, Faith Evans and Ginuwine
- 2006-7 - Antigua voted 'Best Wedding Island of the Year' - Caribbean World Magazine



FINANCE

- The UPP completed the re-structuring of the Finance System, the PIT, the ABST, and Property Tax, making it fairer.
- With the PIT, no one working for less than \$3,000 monthly paid personal income tax. This exemption was increased to \$3,500.
- Property tax was exempted on the first \$150,000 in value
- The UPP implemented greater revenue control to manage wastage in government spending.
- Paid all our debts to regional institutions to the tune of \$84M
- Payment to all international organizations owed was over \$75M
- Reduced all taxes on most food items (making final cost to citizens and residents cheaper)
- The UPP successfully floated Treasury Bills. These were all over-subscribed.

Other Financial undertakings already mentioned:

- Paid \$46 Million in back pay to public servants who were owed since 1995
- Gave all government workers a minimum of 10% and 7% in salary increases
- Subsidized fuel at a cost of over \$60M
- Subsidized LPG (cooking gas) to lower the cost (average \$40 elsewhere)
- Paid monthly contributions to statutory corporations: Medical Benefits, Education Levy and Social Security
- The Dollar Barrel Initiative

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Ministry Of Finance And The Economy And Public Administration (2004 – 2009)

- Voluntary Separation Package - \$62M
- Monthly payments to statutory corporations - \$4M
- Debt Reduction by over \$650M
- Yearly debt interest payment of over \$110M
- Successful hosting of Annual Economic Symposium
- Payment to local contractors who were owed under the ALP – over \$500M
- Restructuring of the Tax System
- Removal of 1% currency tax over \$10M
- Removal of the 3% non-nationals loan tax
- Launched Treasury Bills and Bonds
- Attracted major investment to Antigua (Hermitage, Verandah, Sandals, Hodges Bay and Sugar Ridge)
- Reduced the Debt to GDP from 140% to 97%
- Published the IMF Report (never done before – or since – under ALP)
- Restructured the Audit Department to provide more efficiency in submitting audited financial statements to Parliament
- Laid financial statements in Parliament after some 15 years
- Setting up of the Antigua & Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA)
- Reduction of Customs Duties, Customs Service Tax and Common External Tariff on essential goods
- Provided greater fiscal responsibility by presenting the budget before the fiscal year rolled over
- Passed the new Finance Administration Act, which provided greater control of all finances, from both statutory and Government departments
- Provided \$21M for the completion of the Mount St. John Medical Centre
- Set up the Small Business Act with an initial \$10M to empower a substantial number of individuals to start their own businesses by granting them the necessary financing and concessions
- Secured 25% Government procurement for small and micro businesses
- Implemented the Government Treasury software accounting package, Free Balance
- Set up the Customs Renewal Programme CASE
- Instituted quarterly meetings with the banking and business communities

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

- Before the UPP, FDI averaged \$230M (1999-2003).
- Under the UPP, FDI averaged \$715M (2004-2008). This was three (3) times more than the ALP attracted.

OTHER NOTABLE FINANCIAL POLICIES AND MEASURES TAKEN

Partnerships for a Better Economy

- Partnered with the Stanford Financial Group to establish a \$10M Empowerment for Ownership initiative
- Powered by the ABDB, loans were offered on concessionary terms to businesses
- (2006) Total of 33 loans valued over \$1M were approved
- Businesses benefitting included agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, IT services, agro-processing, transportation and tourism services

Offering Low Mortgage Interest Rates

The UPP Administration offered incentives to banks offering low mortgage-interest rates to encourage private-sector activity. Rates were no more than 8%, commercial lending no more than 10%.

Treasury Bills and Bonds Programme

(2006) The UPP Administration put up \$17M worth of Antigua & Barbuda Treasury bills for auction.

- Received over \$40M in bids locally, regionally and internationally
- All issues of the bills were oversubscribed and over EC\$63M in offers were recorded
- Highest oversubscription ever recorded

Employment on Development Projects

Under the UPP, the construction industry offered employment to over 90% of these workers: masons, carpenters, electricians, welders.

They found work on the following projects: Carlisle Bay, Nonsuch Bay, Southern Point, Royal Antiguan refurbishing, Verandah, Brysons Complex, Village Walk, AUA School of Medicine, Valley Church Condos, Sugar Ridge, Lighthouse, Sandals Grande, Tamarind Hills, Galley Bay Heights, Hermitage, Serendipity, and many more.



AGRICULTURE

National Food Plan, Phase 1

In 2007, Antigua & Barbuda imported 16.1 million pounds of fresh tropical vegetables, fruits and root crops valued at \$45.1M. The UPP Administration responded to this unacceptable situation by implementing Phase 1 of the National Food Plan to reduce the level of imports and to curtail the high price of fresh produce. The results were:

- (2008 – 2009) Increased local production from 4.6 to 6 million pounds of fresh vegetables
- Harvested 4 million pounds of fruit and root crops
- Total local production of 10 million pounds at a value of \$28M
- Superior increase in such produce as carrots and onions with plans made to export surplus to other countries in the region
- Exported cotton and pepper seeds
- Won regional agricultural competitions every year



BARBUDA

An Improved Barbuda

- The UPP ensured that the Barbuda Council got and maintained full authority to plan and manage the affairs of the island.
- Under the UPP Administration there was running water in Barbuda for the first time.
- Revived the Agriculture sector
- Constructed a modern fishing complex in collaboration with the Government of Japan
- More than \$15M spent on the road programme. Well-paved roads were constructed in Barbuda for the first time.
- Improved primary school and constructed a new secondary institution, the Sir McChesney George Secondary School, in Codrington
- Provided scholarships for over 40 Barbudan youth to attend universities in various countries
- The UPP upgraded the electricity system on Barbuda with two new generators.
- The UPP piloted the passage of the Barbuda Land Act.
- The UPP passed the Barbuda Pension Act, 2007, which allowed, for the first time, Barbuda Council workers to receive a pension when they retired.



SUMMARY TOP 10 ACHIEVEMENTS

Government Performance

The UPP Administration raised the standards of Government Performance and Achievement. The integrity, trust and character that were the distinguishing marks of the first term raised the standards of governance to the extent that we were an acknowledged leader in the Caribbean in respect of best practices in governance.

Good Governance and International Recognition

The UPP Administration restored Antigua and Barbuda to its rightful place in the comity of nations. Through our valiant efforts in diplomacy and international relations, we successfully repositioned our country to a place of respect and high standing in the world. We were recognized as a model of an efficiently run and well-managed small state, and were held up as an example to inspire other small states worldwide.

Integrity in Public Office

The UPP Administration passed a Trilogy of Integrity Legislation governing behaviour in public office and establishing accountability and transparency of government processes and procedures.



Presiding over Strong Economic Growth

The UPP Administration reconstructed and revived the national economy. When we took office in 2004, the country was mired in debt; government was broke and unable to pay public-service employees on time; businesses were failing; investment had dried up; unemployment was at its highest in decades. Five years later, in 2009, at the end of our first term, we had achieved full employment, investment was pouring into the country, government finances were stable, and there was hope for continued progress and advancement in rebuilding our economy. A measure of the general confidence in the nation's economy was the fact that every issue of government bonds floated by the Ministry of Finance was oversubscribed.

Institution of Social Programmes

The UPP Administration constructed and institutionalized a broad range of social programmes (Dollar Barrel, School Uniform Grant, PDV-CAB Utilities Voucher, the People's Benefit Card, Board of Guardians Subsidy, etc.) that guaranteed a dignified and decent life for everyone, both citizens and residents alike. This achievement was another fulfillment of the promises of our Agenda for Change manifesto.

Infrastructure – Road Rehabilitation

The UPP Administration greatly enhanced the infrastructure of our nation. One of the success stories of our first term was the rehabilitation of the road network. The whole nation was proud of the excellent-quality roads that were being laid down in both town and country areas. Similarly, much progress was made in provision of utilities, the nation's energy system, and the environment.

Youth Empowerment

Prior to the UPP, no other administration had given such priority to the interests of young people. Young people in Antigua and Barbuda were able to enjoy, among other benefits, free health care, nutritious school meals, free school uniforms, and free education, including scholarships for all those who had the qualifications and ambition to go to university.



United Progressive Party MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS 2009 – 2014



The second term in office saw the UPP Administration having to cope with the global economic downturn, the Stanford debacle, and the CLICO/BAICO misfortune. With proper planning, the Government set about repositioning Antigua & Barbuda to begin to reap the benefits of careful stewardship and resilience.

Poised to be Rich(2013)

The World Bank, in an article published in the famed Forbes magazine, named Antigua and Barbuda as one of fourteen countries poised to grow richer. The article said this country was included in the new rich list; but by World Bank standards, the country was already there. We were judged on the basis of:

- we were already in a middle- to high-middle income bracket
- we had a high level of governance
- we had made high improvements to corporate and securities monitoring agencies post the 2008 financial crisis.

World Bank Loan

Antigua and Barbuda negotiated its first US\$10 million loan with the World Bank. This achievement was only possible because of the UPP Administration's dedication to following best practices with respect to fiscal and debt management.

Stand-by Arrangement with the International Monetary Fund

The UPP Administration conducted successful negotiations and completed a Stand-by Arrangement with the International Monetary Fund, through which Antigua and Barbuda received US\$101 million.

European Union Financial Support

The UPP Administration worked in harmony with the European Union to procure financial assistance for the following projects:

- The EU Vulnerability Flex Budget - Over 9M Euros (about \$30 million) was procured for budgetary support through the Vulnerability Flex mechanism
- An EU Grant for a Public Financial Management Reform Programme - \$10.9M was acquired for this project
- The Emergency Ferry Docking Facility - The UPP Administration worked with the European Development Fund (EDF) to achieve this project, which was geared towards emergency-evacuation planning from Montserrat. It cemented the longstanding cooperation arrangements between Antigua & Barbuda and Montserrat, and provided a pier that continues to play a critical role in moving goods and people, including cruise passengers on day tours.

Caribbean Development Bank Loan (CDB)

The UPP Administration negotiated a US\$30M Policy Base Loan from the Caribbean Development Bank.

2011 The Manufacturing Sector Strategy

The UPP Administration committed to devising innovative and practical ways to reposition the Manufacturing Sector to ensure that its numerous and diverse stakeholders were able to compete meaningfully, nationally and regionally.

The UPP Government came up with a strategy to address fiscal incentives, trade-policy measures and infrastructure development. It began with developing an industrial policy to improve cash flow and save jobs in the manufacturing sector.

The Government

- Waived import duty on all raw materials, packaging materials and machinery in respect of manufacturers
- Waived the Revenue Recovery Charge (RRC) in respect of all raw materials, packaging materials and machinery

Finance and The Economy

The UPP Administration

- moved the Inland Revenue Department into its new headquarters and conducted comprehensive staff training. IRD compliance rates improved from a low 40% to 90%.
- negotiated and received grant funding from the CDB to finance functional reviews for Government ministries
- implemented and maintained procurement procedures for the ministries' expenditure on goods and services to ensure spending remained aligned to revenue
- developed databases for monitoring Government travel and approving personal advances
- implemented the Utilities Policy to cap Government-paid utilities
- rescheduled debt with multilateral creditors, domestic banks and selected external bilateral creditors



FINANCIAL REPORTING

The UPP Administration achieved the following re: financial reporting:

- Completed and submitted the 2009 and 2012 financial statements to the Director of Audit Profile
- Review for 2006 to 2010
- Completed Antigua & Barbuda's debt profile
- Reduced time taken to process payments
- Improved account reconciliation
- Achieved accurate and reliable financial reporting

(2011) The Credit Guarantee Scheme

The UPP believes that small businesses complete a circle of productive enterprises and sectors, and that they provide vital support services to every sector, making them the engine of economic growth. The Credit Guarantee Scheme was a joint initiative of the Ministry of Finance, the Antigua Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA) and the Antigua Barbuda Development Bank (ABDB), intended to support small businesses, in general. The Scheme enabled registered authorized businesses to access credit facilities from authorized financial institutions in a hassle-free way.

- The UPP Administration passed the Small Business Development Act to create the right environment for small businesses to play a meaningful role in economic development.
- Up to \$2.5 million was guaranteed by the Antigua Barbuda Development Bank under this Scheme.
- The amount of guarantee for an SME was 80% of the approved loan, to a maximum of \$20,000.
- The guarantee period covered the life of the loan from the first drawdown date.
- 25% of government contracts for the procurement of goods and services were reserved for micro, small and medium businesses.



Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Grounds

The UPP provided funding for infrastructural work done at the Stadium.

Grant to St John’s Cathedral

The UPP Administration made a contribution of \$500,000 to the Cathedral to assist with its renovation in light of its historic value and its status as a major tourist attraction. It was also the intention to include the Cathedral as one of the country’s historic sites.

Treasury Building

The Treasury Building was a State Insurance Corporation construction project, under which a \$15M office building would be constructed. This project, a multi-storey office complex, was under a build, own, operate and transfer (BOOT) arrangement where, after 20 years, the Government would take over full ownership of the building. This would add to State Insurance Corporation’s investment portfolio and help to reduce Government’s rent expenditure.

- The building was to house the Treasury Department.
- Construction was geared to stimulate the economy with the employment of some 150 workers.

Antigua Department of Marine Services (ADOMS) Building

The UPP Administration facilitated the construction of this \$24 million, state-of-the-art, multi-storey office complex for the Antigua Department of Marine Services (ADOMS) to house the Marine Services, the Financial Services Regulatory Commission (FSRC), the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA), and the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA). It was expected that 200 persons would be employed and construction would last 20 months.

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION (NEST) PLAN

National Economic and Social Transformation Plan (NEST) 2012

The NEST Plan was the UPP Administration's response to the global economic downturn. The plan was developed by the government, in consultation with the private sector, trade unions and other stakeholders. It created a strong macroeconomic foundation which set the stage for Antigua and Barbuda to achieve the highest and most practical sustained level of economic growth.

The plan sought to address 4 critical areas:

- Fiscal Consolidation Programme
- Economic Action Plan
- Financial-Sector Stability
- Social Transformation Programme

Fiscal Consolidation Programme

- Sought to address the overall deficit. In 2009, the deficit declined from 20% of the GDP to approximately 1% of the GDP.
- Decline in interest burden payment by 68% (from \$234M in 2009 to \$75M in 2012)
- Antigua & Barbuda was among the three (3) ECCU economies that experienced growth in 2012.
- Antigua & Barbuda had the highest growth rate in the ECCU at 2.79% following the global economic crisis in 2012.

Economic Action Plan between the government, the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union (ABWU) and the Hotel Association

- The UPP Administration facilitated and executed a multi-stakeholder Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that provided tax concessions to the hotel sector for capital items and security equipment.
- Operational costs to hotels were reduced to guarantee the jobs of hotel workers.
- (2013) Enacted the sunset legislation entitled the Tourism and Business (Special Incentives) Act
- Arranged for granting of concessions to a wide cross-section of domestic and foreign investors willing to invest EC\$1M or more
- Beneficiaries included tourism-related or other businesses
- This initiative was devised by the UPP to encourage domestic and foreign investment.

Financial Sector Stability:

The UPP Administration worked closely with the Central Bank and the FSRC to promote stability and transparency within the Financial Services Sector.

Social Transformation Programme:

A comprehensive social safety net to protect low income families, the elderly and the physically challenged was developed.

Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP)

The UPP Administration set up a task force to critically assess the possibility of introducing a Citizenship by Investment Programme (CIP) in Antigua & Barbuda. At the end of a 12-month period, having concluded that the CIP was a viable strategy to encourage investment and increase resident tourism, conditions under which the programme should be pursued were articulated.

The CIP required for eligibility:

- Purchase of property of at least US\$400,000
- A contribution to the National Development Fund of US\$250,000 (or a business investment of at least US\$1.5M)

An Antigua & Barbuda passport valid for five (5) years was granted, provided that the eligibility criteria were met. The acquisition of citizenship did not automatically bestow the privilege or right to vote.

Construct Antigua Barbuda Initiative (CABI)

- In 2011, to spur economic activity during the World Economic Crisis and keep home ownership within the reach of residents, the Antigua & Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA) collaborated with the private sector – the commercial banks, the insurance companies, contractors and the hardware and construction-materials businesses – to create the 'Construct Antigua Barbuda Initiative' (CABI). All parties made concessions on prices while the UPP Administration made concessions on the payment of ABST on related goods and services, thereby reducing the cost of construction by 20%.

This initiative benefitted not only homeowners but kept the construction and related sectors afloat during the global financial crisis.

- During the first phase of the CABI (ended February 2013), the ABIA had approved 258 residential construction projects with a total value of \$110.6M.
- An estimated 1,200 jobs were created.

CABI provided the following incentives:

- Waiver of ABST and RRC on building materials purchased locally.
- A 10-15% discount on all building supplies procured locally at hardware stores.
- Discounts with participating hardware stores ranging between 5% to 20%.
- The UPP ensured a further reduction of interest rates to 7.5% on 25-30 year mortgages with participating banks (prior to CABI these interest rates were set at 8% and over).
- Discounts on premiums with participating insurance companies, which ranged between 10% - 20% depending upon variable factors
- Discounts on labour rates by participating contractors and subcontractors. These included labour rates paid to masons, carpenters, steel-benders, painters, tilers and labourers.

The CABI stimulated economic activity, in general, through the multiplier effect.



WORK PROGRAMMES PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCE

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Leadership Through Excellence Award Programme (LEAP)

- Started in 2013, the LEAP was designed to groom young graduates (18 to 25 years) from tertiary institutions, who were seeking employment in Government ministries and statutory bodies of their choice. Three different cohorts of 14 awardees each underwent and successfully completed three months of on-the-job training, plus a weekly session in public-sector administration training. All awardees received a monthly stipend of \$1,500, and a \$5,000 award on successful completion of the programme. The total cost of all three cohorts was \$280,000.
- Awardees received training and guidance from dedicated civil servants via weekly lectures in policy and procedures in the civil service.
- Awardees prepared group projects at the end of training. These were assessed by professional technicians in the areas of the project topics.
- From each cohort, three places in the civil service were guaranteed.



The New Work Experience Programme (NEWP)

This Programme provided an opportunity for job seekers to develop skill sets required to equip them for permanent employment. The practical experience gained from the training received was to give the participants a competitive edge, as well as to boost their morale and confidence. Some activities were introduced to motivate and support the participants. Participants undertook orientation seminars, self-development seminars, community-project preparation and performance reviews. They received a weekly stipend of \$400 and were assisted in finding permanent positions in the private sector.

Antigua and Barbuda Skills Training and Empowerment Programme (ABSTEP)

The UPP Administration received financial support from the World Bank to undertake this project. ABSTEP offered employment and training opportunities for about 1,000 Antiguan and Barbudans between the ages of 17 and 50 years old. Participants received life-skills training, re-training and competency certification. They also were offered job placements in selected projects, including small infrastructure refurbishment, or development projects and programmes that support community development. Participants in the skills-training component of the ABSTEP received EC\$1,600 monthly for a period of six months.

The New Work Programme Initiative

Provided human support for the Boys Training School, the HIV-AIDS Secretariat and Persons with Disabilities, with benefits to offset the cost of housing and employment support.



The Enterprise Achievement Challenge Project – (EACH)

The UPP devised the EACH to provide skills that would empower and enhance the marketability of the youth and single mothers and improve their chances of gaining employment. The programme started with 68 low-skilled to unskilled trainees and ran for a period of 20 weeks. Attachments exposed participants, three days per week, to five (5) to eight (8) hours of practical training with expert practitioners. The programme was predicated on trades development and soft skills for a more productive and professional workforce.

Two days per week, trainees were exposed to:

- Customer service
- Business communication
- Ethics
- Understanding basic contracts
- Basic money management

Trainees were also exposed to addresses and contact with the following persons:

- motivational speakers on matters related to the appropriate attitude for the workplace
- labour-relations experts
- entrepreneurs in areas of business
- business-development professionals
- law-enforcement personnel

Their preparation for the workplace also included learning the value of:

- good customer service
- quality workmanship
- respectfulness
- timeliness
- courtesy
- good citizenship



BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS

CHINA

Successfully Negotiated Technical and Financial Support from the People's Republic of China

(2013) In celebration of 31 years of diplomatic relations between Antigua & Barbuda and the People's Republic of China, and after talks on economic and technical cooperation between both nations, the following projects were planned and, in some instances, undertaken:

- (2013) The Grays Green Gutter was completed.
- Construction of the Five Islands Secondary School, a modern state-of-the-art institution, at a cost of \$44M.
- Construction of a community centre and basketball court in the Grays Green Community.
- New Airport Terminal Building.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provided for rehabilitating the Deep Water Harbour.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provided for improving the facilities at the decommissioned V.C. Bird International Airport terminal, with work to include a runway extension, construction of a cargo building, Fire Services building, and an Air Traffic Control Tower.
- Training for technicians who attended conferences, seminars and training programmes
- The provision of over 100 university scholarships for young Antiguan and Barbudan nationals
- Expansion of the King George V Grounds
- A Maintenance Agreement for the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium
- Built a community centre in Barbuda
- The execution of an agricultural-demonstration project that involved experts from China introducing new technologies and techniques to help increase the yield of agricultural produce



MEXICO

Contribution to Electoral Reform

- Six young Antiguan and Barbudans received scholarships to pursue university studies in Mexico. Three (3) were enrolled in technical studies in electrical engineering and computer science and three (3) in Spanish-proficiency certification courses.
- Negotiations between the UPP Administration and the Government of Mexico led to a \$675,000 contribution towards Antigua and Barbuda's electoral-reform exercise. This significant contribution was to ensure continued transparency in the democratic process in Antigua and Barbuda.
- Agreement provided for complete island wide street naming and house numbering exercise.

JAPAN

- (2005) The UPP Administration negotiated the construction of the Point Wharf Fisheries Complex with the Government of Japan. This complex was built in the Point Community at a cost of approximately \$35M million of which \$26 million was a grant.
- Fisheries complexes in the villages of Parham and Urlings were also constructed largely through grant assistance from the Government of Japan.
- (2011) Thirty-four (34) Antiguan and Barbudans benefitted in the areas of education and training from scholarships from the Government of Japan, at an approximate value of \$1.8M. Twenty-four (24) persons were trained between 2004 and 2009 at an estimated cost of \$975,000.
- (2012) \$216,000 was donated to the Waste Recycling Corporation to recycle waste materials, and to the GARD Centre to build classrooms for vulnerable-youth training programmes.
- (2012) \$330,000 to Fisheries for development and resource management
- \$406,500 to train 10 Antiguan and Barbudans in tourism, coastal fishing, mathematics and solid-waste management

REPUBLIC OF KOREA Grant Funding Offer

The UPP Administration received a commitment of grant funding to the value of US\$100,000 from the Republic of Korea to upgrade the nation's fleet of protocol vehicles.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Government of the United Arab Emirates, in the interest of deepening cooperation with the peoples of both nations, concluded an agreement for grant support to Antigua & Barbuda amounting to \$2.7 million to fund activities in health, information and communication technologies, transportation, disaster management and education.

REPUBLIC OF CUBA

The ties between Antigua & Barbuda and the Republic of Cuba grew stronger as each nation discovered and nurtured their mutual interests. Their shared values in respect of health, education and sports formed a natural basis for engagement.

- Cuba continued to provide healthcare professionals to staff the Mount St. John Medical Centre, as well as our clinics.
- Many young Antiguan and Barbudans were also afforded opportunities to pursue medical training in Cuba.
- Many students also received training in physical education, economics, accounting and architecture.
- The Ministry of Works also benefitted from the contribution of Cuban engineers and other professionals skilled in different aspects of road construction and rehabilitation.

BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

- The UPP Administration negotiated the PetroCaribe Initiative, which was the centerpiece of the collaboration between Antigua and Barbuda and Venezuela. The PetroCaribe was an energy-cooperation agreement, framed within the overall objective of promoting and enhancing the social and economic welfare of the citizens and residents of Antigua & Barbuda.
- Under the Agreement, Venezuela provided oil products and LPG on concessional terms to Antigua & Barbuda.
- 2010 marked the fifth year since PDV-CAB, the local handling company for the agreement, was incorporated.
- Approximately 390,000 barrels of oil, at a cost of just over \$90M, were imported on concessionary terms.

SPAIN

Collaborated with the Government of Spain on a youth project for growing onions and carrots on a 40-acre farm.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Connect Antigua & Barbuda Initiative and Government Assisted Technology Endeavour (GATE) (2013)

The UPP Administration allocated \$9.6M to further assist ICT through its flagship projects 'Connect Antigua & Barbuda Initiative' and the GATE Cadet Training Facility.

- Launched an ICT Cadet Programme, a recruitment initiative that targeted young people coming out of secondary school to acquire technical skills, as well as gain valuable workplace experience. The GATE Cadet Training Programme provided training in computer repair, upgrades and diagnostics.
- Cadets developed their skills in areas such as photography, videography, and new-media techniques.
- Through GATE, thousands of students, teachers and civil servants received tablets and high-speed Internet connectivity free of cost.
- Implemented unlimited wireless access and made e-books available at the public library.
- Developed an Internet portal, the 'Connect Antigua & Barbuda Biz (CABB),' to assist local SMEs (small and micro enterprises) to present their products and services on an ICT platform that exposes them to potential local, regional and international clients.



WORKS AND TRANSPORT

Works and Transport Infrastructural Development 2011 - 2013

The UPP, mainly through the Ministry of Works and Transport

- Installed Fibre Optic Broadband Connectivity which allowed for full access to the Integrated Financial Management System
- Devised creative ways of providing basic maintenance service to the various ministries and departments, despite the drastic cut in the budgetary allocations
- Undertook major refurbishment of the High Court Building
- Renovated several government facilities throughout the island, including the Bendals and Jennings Clinics, the Post Office at Old Road, the crèche at John Hughes, and the Audit Department Headquarters on St. Mary's Street.
- Installed a new roof at Her Majesty's Prison
- Construction of the new Transport Board headquarters
- The UPP facilitated the expansion of the American University of Antigua.
- Facilitated the baseball stadium and community center at Simon Bolivar Boulevard.
- Completed 48 miles of base road works, three (3) miles of concrete drains and five (5) miles of road with asphaltic concrete
- Built a new roof over the main hall at the House of Culture
- Fenced sports complexes around the country
- Renovated Government departments and facilities like the General Post Office, the Defence Force Headquarters, the Stadium, Clarevue Psychiatric Hospital, the Parliament Building, ABIIT and Government House



- Refurbished Burma Quarry, resulting in increased output of material for the road programme
- Reactivated the Parham and Lindsay quarries to service the expanded road programme
- Acquired the Wadadli Power Plant

Hurricane Omar Hurricane Relief Programme

The UPP Administration provided over \$1M in assistance to nearly 600 families affected by the passage of Hurricane Omar. This assistance came within days of the storm. Persons received, among other things, beds, tabletop stoves, uniform vouchers and cash.



EDUCATION

Education

The UPP Administration, through the Ministry of Education

- provided basic training, special-needs training, early-childhood training, and upgrading in pedagogic skills for teachers
- presented over 70 students from ABICE for the Caribbean Vocation Qualification (CVQ), the majority of whom were successful
- provided Universal Early Childhood Education by establishing pre-school classes at the Green Bay and Villa Primary Schools
- appointed an Education Officer to address Special Needs issues
- secured a loan from CDB to expand the Sir McChesney George Secondary School in Barbuda, Irene B. Williams School in Swetes, and the St Mary's Secondary School in Bolans
- Erected a second building (Maintenance Unit) at the Board of Education

Universal Secondary Education

The UPP Administration delivered on a promise of Universal Secondary Education (USE) for all children by 2013 by expanding the school plant. Three junior-secondary schools were upgraded to full secondary-school status – the Irene B. Williams School, the St. Mary's School of Excellence, and the Glanvilles Primary School – bringing the number of government secondaries to 12.



Construction of Secondary Schools – Five Islands and Tomlinsons

- Successful negotiations with the People’s Republic of China resulted in a grant of a \$44 million secondary school constructed at Five Islands.
- Successful negotiations with the Caribbean Development Bank produced funding for a new secondary school at Tomlinsons.



NATIONAL SECURITY AND LABOUR

National Security And Labour(2013)

Through capacity building and improved technology, The UPP Administration, through the Ministry of National Security

- Increased its detection competence in solving crimes
- Implemented the OECS/USAID Juvenile Justice Project, which benefited the Boys Training School, Probation Unit, Ministry of Sports, Youth Intervention Unit and former Truancy Unit
- Improved customer service and greater efficiency in service-delivery at the Passport Office
- Through skillful lobbying by the ABDF, received donations of Coast Guard boats and heavy equipment
- Strengthened the relationship with the private sector, NGOs and volunteers to assist with rehabilitative programmes and donations to improve the physical condition of Her Majesty's Prison
- Recruited and trained additional soldiers, police officers, prison officers and immigration officers
- Procured a new border-management and e-Visa system that would facilitate the smooth processing of passengers and visa applicants
- Established the Financial Compliance Unit (FCU) within the ONDCP to conduct on-site and off-site examinations of financial institutions to evaluate their money-laundering and terrorist-prevention programmes



In Labour:

- Maintained industrial peace by timely intervention in industrial disputes
- strengthened conciliation and mediation capacity
- increased collaboration with trade unions and employers
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of the Free Movement Committee in processing the applications and verification of the 'Skilled National' certification
- Increased the categories for artistes
- Completed the UN Domestic Workers project, which resulted in the creation of awareness of UN Convention 189, the rights and contribution of domestic workers to national development
- Rebranded and expanded the New Work Experience Programme with new components, such as orientation, classroom training and community service
- Crafted a five-year strategic plan for the Ministry of National Security and Labour.



TOURISM

Marketing Strategy

The UPP Administration adopted an aggressive marketing strategy to increase the number of flights from our main source markets. By implementing integrated online marketing and Internet strategies, we capitalized on the use of the World Wide Web to increase awareness of the destination. Social media – Facebook, Twitter and YouTube – were used.

- The UPP launched a new global website, VisitAntiguaBarbuda.com, which marked a departure from a mostly informational website to a hybrid of informational and transactional services.
- The website featured a world-class content-management system and the best-in-class design, using high-quality rich content and video.
- The new website was constantly updated with rich content by a full-time team of young Antiguan and Barbudans.
- Local businesses with products to offer visitors got the opportunity to showcase their goods and services on a sophisticated platform that was viewed across the world.

Airlift

- Dedicated airline service showed increased air capacity with regular flights into Antigua from North America by Delta, United Airlines and American Airlines out of JFK, Newark, Miami and Atlanta, and US Airways out of Charlotte, NC, once weekly.
- Increased airlift out of Canada showed a 30% growth in arrivals from 2012. Air Transat and WestJet operated twice weekly out of Montreal and Toronto.
- Out of Europe, Virgin Atlantic increased its flights from three (3) to four (4) per week, with three (3) turnaround flights out of Antigua. British Airways resumed weekly service from London with plans to increase its flights in the summer. Thomas Cook's once-weekly flight out of Manchester increased arrivals from the UK market, making this a significant development.
- Closer to home, a twice-weekly flight between Antigua and Guadeloupe coincided with transatlantic flights from France and opened up opportunities for more French tour operators to sell packages to our destination.

Sports Tourism

The Sport Tourism Alliance in the Ministry of Tourism continued to promote the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium as a premier multi-purpose facility for use by international sporting groups seeking an innovative venue to host events.

Cruise and Yachting

- 550,000 passengers from 293 cruise ships called on Antigua in 2013.
- As a result of sound marketing, projections for 2014 were 610,000 passengers from 310 ships.
- Invested in the formation of a yachting school, offering courses in all aspects of the industry, and worked with the yachtsmen to create a foundation to subsidize the expense
- New additions to the yachting-events calendar ensured that Antigua and Barbuda continued to be the mecca for first-class sailing and yachting services in the Caribbean.
- Ensured proper and sufficient CCTV cameras were installed in all yachting areas
- Introduced "E Sea Clear" pre-Immigration and Customs arrival clearance for yachts

Tourism Awards

- 2012 - Hosted 'Bride Villa' with international Event Planner Preston Bailey
- 2012 - One of the Caribbean's Top Destinations for Weddings and Honeymoons - About.com
- 2013 - The 'Caribbean's Leading Honeymoon Destination' - World Global Travel Awards



AGRICULTURE, LANDS, HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT (2013)

Backyard Garden Initiative

The UPP Government led an initiative under which more than 1,000 home-based gardeners and 60 small-scale farmers received farming inputs to encourage production. This initiative became an award-winning project that was endorsed and supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and was highlighted as a model venture at a World Food Summit held in Rome. The programme also became a model for the region.

Project 40/20 - Youth in Agriculture Project

The Ministry of Agriculture identified 40 acres of land in Pares, which were subdivided into one- and two-acre plots.

- This Youth in Agriculture Project was implemented to support production and lead to self-sustenance.
- All youth graduates, roughly 160, were trained to be absorbed in the agriculture sector as farmers or skilled agricultural workers.



Agri-Business Expansion Plan

Many farmers were granted 25- to 40-year land leases to expand their agricultural businesses as part of a national production-expansion plan.

Cades Bay Pineapple Station

Varieties of pineapple were under cultivation for year-round production.

Annual Independence Food Fair

Independence Food Fair relocated to the cricket stadium because of its massive growth under UPP, which necessitated the move from St. John's.

Building for the Environment Division

Constructed a building for the Environment Division in the Botanical Gardens



HOUSING & LAND DISTRIBUTION

Affordable Housing – North Sound and Foleys

The UPP Administration instituted two affordable housing projects – the North Sound Housing Development and the Foleys Housing Project – to help residents attain the goal of home ownership.

- North Sound commenced with generous financial assistance from Venezuela, at an initial cost of US\$10M. Seventy (70) homes were offered to public servants and employees of statutory corporations.
- A rent-to-own arrangement was implemented to facilitate the sale of homes in the Foleys Project. This put ownership within the grasp of persons who might not have been able to access financing to purchase the homes outright.

Bau Panel Systems

- Bau Panel Systems Antigua Limited was a joint-venture company between Bau Panel Systems Limited and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, through CHAPA, which had a 25% stake in this project.
- The project involved the construction of affordable houses using the patented, state-of-the-art Bau Panel System.
- It was meant to provide employment for over 1,000 workers and make home ownership more affordable.

- A critical part of this project was the financing component, through which prospective purchasers would be able to access bank loans using government land as collateral. Areas identified were Lightfoot, Bolans, Lyons and Denfields.
- The project also comprised a component to manufacture the famous Bau Panel System housing for Antigua & Barbuda, the CARICOM region and South American market.
- A three-year lease on the former Gale Force Building at Crabbes was signed to construct a factory to produce housing panels.
- Phase 2 of the Project called for the production of panels to be exported from Antigua to other Caribbean Islands, South America and the USA.
- Estimated cost of the project was US\$200M.

Lightfoot Gardens

The UPP Administration provided concessions to a local entrepreneur to construct the Lightfoot Gardens Housing Project, which would produce seventy-three (73) 2- and 3-bedroom units at affordable prices. Two hundred (200) construction jobs were to be created.

Land Distribution

(2013) With the view of increasing its land-distribution programme, the UPP Administration, through the Lands Division and the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHAPA), distributed 220 parcels of lands across the nation to citizens and residents who had no interest in purchasing homes in a housing development.





HEALTH

Health, Social Transformation, And Consumer Affairs (2013)

In Health:

- Opened the Bethesda Clinic
- Commenced construction of the Cedar Grove Clinic
- Opened the All Saints Dental Clinic
- Extended working hours at Grays Farm Health Centre
- Opened the Vision Centre at Grays Farm Clinic
- The Medical Benefits Scheme introduced the Smart Card Initiative.
- Opened the Emergency Medical Services Sub Station in Johnsons Point
- Established an American Heart Association (AHA) Training Site at EMS Headquarters. The Emergency Medical Services Training Academy trained more than 100 healthcare providers and lay rescuers, including nurses, EMT's, doctors, dental assistants and utility workers.
- Refurbished the Male Convalescence Ward at Clarevue Psychiatric Hospital
- Restarted a Patients' Farm Project at Clarevue
- Implemented free eye examinations for all patients and staff at Clarevue
- Developed draft Tobacco Control legislation
- Held the Inaugural Schools' Health Fair
- Provided free and confidential HIV testing and counseling to more than 1,000 persons
- Acquired ambulances, even some mini ones for use in areas where the regular ambulance could not access



Social Transformation:

- Continued formulation and oversight of the Government's extensive social and related policies and programmes
- Developed a Social-Protection Policy
- Completed the Draft Report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Continued street-naming and household-numbering in collaboration with the Governments of Colombia and Mexico
- Established a Directorate of Youth Affairs

Consumer Affairs:

The Prices and Consumer Affairs Division investigated a large number of faulty-goods and services cases with a 75% success rate, while the other 25% were sent to the courts for adjudication.

Public and Social Sector Transformation (PSST) Project

The UPP partnered with the World Bank to implement the PSST, which was designed to enhance our ability to design, implement and monitor coherent social policies and interventions. Under the component for social transformation, technical assistance was provided to the Social Policy, Research and Planning Department of the Health Ministry for strengthening its role as the lead agency for social protection in Antigua & Barbuda.

OECS Cancer Centre

The OECS Cancer Centre was constructed on the fringes of the Mount St. John Medical Centre.

UPDATES ON SOCIAL PROGRAMMES

By early 2014, the UPP Administration had made significant improvements to the social programmes introduced in 2004 – 2005.

School Uniform Grant Programme

- 14,846 students were registered for the grant – an 18% increase over 2012.
- Vouchers issued also had an increase of 22%.
- Vendors were paid over \$1.4M in 2013, an increase of \$300k over 2012.
- Approximately \$25M spent on uniform grants since its inception in 2004

National School Meals Programme

- Served a total of 20 primary schools, feeding 3,000 students daily in 2013
- More vegetable, poultry, and livestock farmers added to the programme in 2013

Board of Guardians

- 487 persons, or an increase of 3%, received a monthly stipend in 2013.

National Student Loan Fund (NSLF)

By 2013, 538 persons had received loans under the NSLF.

Since its inception in 2008, the UPP Administration allocated \$14M to the programme.

Dollar/Christmas Barrel Initiative

- Some 2,500 barrels were processed in 2013
- Since 2004, when the initiative was introduced, approx. 31,000 barrels were cleared

Support for Pensioners

- The minimum aggregate pension instituted by the UPP Administration plateaued at \$1,150 monthly.
- Nearly 5,000 pensioners benefitted from the Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy Programme of the PDV-CAB, receiving a \$100 voucher every month toward their APUA bills.

Support for Persons with Disabilities

- The 10% travel tax was waived for members of the Association of Persons with Disabilities in February 2014.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to protect the rights and dignity of these persons, was finally ratified.

People's Benefit Programme (PBP)

- Administered by the PDV-CAB
- The main beneficiaries were the economically disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, senior citizens without a pension, and single mothers based on their income, with plans to include single parents even if their income exceeded the existing \$800 monthly threshold.
- 2,163 beneficiaries received a special debit card that was loaded with \$215 monthly, with the card being used to purchase food and selected personal items at designated outlets.



BARBUDA

Codrington Airport Upgrade

The UPP undertook the upgrade of the airport to enhance the safety and security of operations at the Codrington Airport. This included overlaying, widening, extending, lighting and painting the runway.

- The 1st phase was completed.
- The second phase (lighting the runway) was 90% finished.

LPG Subsidy

The UPP, through the PDV-CAB, covered the full cost of transporting LPG cylinders to Barbuda to help reduce the retail price of propane gas there.

Other Developments

- Completion of the Barbuda Justice Complex
- Completion of the Artisanal Fishing Port
- Upgrade to the roads network

Back Pay to Civil Servants

The UPP Administration continued to address the failings of the ALP to implement agreements for salary and other increases to public servants.

- Since 2004, the UPP Administration paid in excess of \$90M in back pay and salary increases.
- In 2005, the UPP addressed the back pay and outstanding salary increases for the period 2000 to 2002 by implementing a 7% increase.
- \$32M, due for the period 1995 and 1996, was paid over the period 2006 and 2007.
- An increase in travelling allowance due since 1994 was implemented in 2007.
- A general public-sector 10% increase followed in 2008.
- The Police received an increase of 23.5%.
- The Customs Department received an increase of 33.3%.
- Air traffic controllers received an increase of 36%.

Resolution of Arrears to Key Statutory Corporations

The UPP Administration resolved almost \$1 billion in arrears that were owed to Social Security, Medical Benefits and the Board of Education. Some of these arrears dated back more than 30 years. More than 50%, or about \$560 million of these arrears, were due to Social Security. The cash flow challenges faced by Social Security were due, in large part, to the failure of previous administrations to make consistent contributions to the institution. Further, past ALP administrations also withdrew funds from Social Security and failed to repay. In an effort to address these challenges, the UPP Administration ensured that contributions were paid in to the Scheme. Between 2004 and 2013, the UPP Administration paid \$122,770,268.00 (Over 122 Million Dollars) to the Social Security Board. This included a \$10 million lump-sum payment in June 2013. A further \$20 million lump-sum payment was later paid to the Social Security Board.

Personal Income Tax Relief

The UPP Administration, from January 2014:

- increased the personal income tax threshold from \$3,000 to \$3,500
- Income from \$3,501 to \$15,000 attracted tax at a rate of 8%, instead of 10%.
- Income above \$15,500 continued to be taxed at 25%.
- Four thousand (4,000) persons no longer paid PIT.
- 14,000 persons had their monthly taxes reduced by an average of 20% (middle class).
- High-income earners also saw a reduction in their taxes.



Social Security Reform

Before December 2004, some pensions were below \$100 per month. The UPP Administration increased minimum pension to \$500 per month in December 2004. Before Dec 2004, aggregate minimum pension - \$250 per month, including Social Security pension. Since Dec 2004, aggregate minimum pension - \$1,150 per month (nearly quadrupled). Minimum Pension increased to \$750 in 2005. Minimum Pension further increased to \$800 in 2007. The UPP Administration, mindful of the importance that Social Security holds in the nation's system of social safety nets, made significant efforts to ensure that it paid in deductions made from the salaries of Government employees.

- Between 2004-2014, the UPP Administration paid into Social Security, \$122,770,268.00.
- The UPP Administration took steps to strengthen the organization and place it on a path of long-term sustainability.

The UPP is proud that, during its administration, it took no money out of the Social Security Scheme.

LIAT (2013)

- The UPP Administration, through a loan from the CDB, extended US\$21M to LIAT to implement its re-fleeting project.
- The UPP executed the LIAT Headquarters Agreement in January 2014 for the new LIAT headquartersto be set up.

PROJECTS IN TRAIN BEFORE THE 2014 ELECTIONS

All of these projects had their genesis in the United Progressive Party. Some had already begun construction; some had gone through the vetting process (Legal Affairs, Lands Division, DCA, etc).

Others were in the due diligence phase and were scheduled to be given full attention following the elections.

- The **UPP Administration** partnered with the PDV-CAB to effect the following projects:
 1. The **National Public Library**. Funding began in 2009 with an allocation of \$3M. In 2014, the UPP held a soft opening of the Library, which had had no home since 1974 since it was not a priority of the ALP.
 2. The **Grays/Green Community Recreational Centre**. This project was intended for economic, social and cultural services to the Grays Farm and Green Bay areas. It provided for a back-up power source, waste-treatment plant, on-site cistern, and security fence and drainage around the site
 3. The **National Tennis Centre**. The UPP provided financial assistance to the Antigua & Barbuda Tennis Association to construct the Centre at Vikings Court.
 4. **Construction of solar dryers**. Funding was provided to the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARD) for construction of the dryers.
- **Bau Panel Systems**
- **ADOMS Building**
- **Treasury Building**
- **V C Bird International Airport**
- **Five Islands Secondary School**
- Government continues to provide incentives and concessions to local businesses seeking to make major contributions to the hospitality sector. One such business is the **Engine House Ltd. Paul Deeth, Developer and also the Operators of Admiral's Inn, located in English Harbour**. This project on completion in 2015 was to provide 50 construction jobs and 21 full-time jobs when fully operational. **(Construction in progress) US\$7million.**
- **Willoughby Bay Beach Development Limited**
Willoughby Bay Beach Resort Development Limited, which is a locally-owned company, applied for incentives and concessions to build and operate a luxury resort at Willoughby Bay. **(Project sent back to developer for more details.)**
- **Orange Antigua Limited**
Orange Antigua Limited is currently developing at Pearn's Point a 5-star resort and residences involving a boutique hotel, freehold-managed condominiums, residential lots, a spa and health club, and a casino. **(Construction in progress) US\$253million.**
- **Bau Panel System**
Government formed a joint venture company with Bau Panel System to manufacture the Bau Panel System housing for Antigua & Barbuda, the CARICOM region and South America; also to construct a factory to produce housing panels to be exported from Antigua. **(Project on the way.) US\$200million.**
- **Bio-Antigua Ltd**
A 15- to 20-year development plan for an eco-friendly state-of-the-art initiative containing several phases. **(Pre-construction phases completed.) EC\$36 million.**
- **Hodges Bay Club (Ongoing Negotiations)**
- **Emerald Cove Development (Construction in Progress)**

- **YIDA International Investment Antigua Ltd (Due Diligence Ongoing)**
- **Sunwing Travel Group of Toronto (Ongoing Negotiations)**
- **NonSuch Bay Resort (NonSuch Development Ltd.) – Cameron Fraser**
Phase 2 of the NonSuch Bay Resort calls for the construction of a marina complex and 94 new one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom units, making the final count of Phase 1 249 bedrooms with the completion of all the single-family homes. In addition, four 5-bedroom villas are being added to Phase 1. **(Ready for construction phase). US\$66million.**
- **Construction Products Ltd. – Myles Codrington, local developer**
Construction at Lightfoot Gardens of 73 2- and 3-bedroom low-income houses. **(Project progressing well) EC\$18 million.**
- **The Villas at the Verandah Resort & Spa – Rob Barrett, Larry Basham and Brian D’Ornellas**
The construction of up to 38 new luxury two-bedroom tourism villas. **(Ongoing construction) EC\$100 million.**
- **Cedar Valley Golf Club Ltd. (Due diligence ongoing)**
- **Beaches Resort, Butch Stuart**
A 5-Star Beaches facility of 125 suites, a water park, 12 restaurants, a movie cinema, an ice-skating rink, rock climbing, and family entertainment programming. **(On hold) US\$150 million.**
- **LEGO Development Company Limited, David & Derrick Hadeed**
BOOT operated to revert to Government ownership after 20 years.

**Achieving the 'Right' things
At the 'Right' time
Benefitting Antigua and Barbuda**



The Right Choice