

BELIZE FACTS AND FIGURES

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SECTION: PART II: GOVERNANCE/THE EXECUTIVE

The Executive branch

The executive authority in Belize is vested in the Queen who appoints the Governor General to act on her behalf as figure-head of the Executive. The Governor General appoints a Prime Minister who is leader of the party which gains the most number of seats in the House of Representatives. The Prime Minister is then charged with the responsibility of forming a Cabinet, the chief policy making body in Government.



Figure 1: The Office of the Prime Minister of Belize.

Cabinet is the principal executive body in Government. To form a Cabinet, the Prime Minister may delegate members of the National Assembly or specially appointed Senators to the post of Minister. The Prime Minister thus assigns each Minister a portfolio which he or she is responsible to manage. The Prime Minister usually takes the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance. The senior public servant who the Prime Minister relies on for the day to day management of the nation's finances is the Financial Secretary in the Ministry of Finance.



Figure 2: Inside the Cabinet Room of Belize.

The main portfolios that are assigned to Ministers are:

- Finance
- Natural Resources
- Foreign Affairs
- Attorney General's Ministry
- Trade
- Education
- National Security
- Housing
- Works
- Tourism
- Health
- Labor
- The Public Service
- Human Development
- Public Utilities

The Prime Minister may also appoint Ministers of State (Junior Ministers) in the ministries. He may also add new ministries or merge different ministries.

Ministries are managed by Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) who are usually trained or experienced in Management. Within each Ministry, there are usually a number of units called Departments. Departments have more specific responsibilities than Ministries and are usually headed by persons trained in technical subjects.

The people who work in the Ministries and Departments are called Public Servants. Public Servants work in the Public Service which takes its directives from the Executive branch of government.

Besides the Public Service, Belize has a number of Statutory Bodies which have been created by law. These bodies are financed by Government but they are considered to be semi-autonomous. Statutory Bodies usually have very specific purposes and include:

- The Belize Tourism Board (BTB)
- The Central Bank of Belize (CBB)
- The Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT)
- The Coastal Zone Management Authority (CZMA)
- The Social Security Board (SSB)
- The Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA)
- The Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB)
- The Belize Social Investment Fund (SIF)
- The Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE)
- National Institute of Culture and History (NICH)
- Belize Marketing and Development Corporation (BMDC)
- Border Management Agency (BMA)
- Belize Intellectual Property Office (BELIPO)
- Belize Port Authority (BPA)
- National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO)
- Belize Airports Authority (BAA)
- Public Utilities Commission (PUC)