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PRESS RELEASE

Auditor General unable to conclude on the efficiency and effectiveness of Summary Courts due to lack of performance information

The report "*Efficiency of Summary Courts*," issued by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) today evaluated the efficiency of processing Summary Court cases.

The report reviewed how Judicial Administration was performing, used its resources, and its relationships with other justice partners and court users. The Auditor General also reviewed plans for the redevelopment of the court house to assess the value for money from the proposed investment.

"The need for a new court house is not in question as the current court facilities are not fit for purpose," says Ms. Winspear. "However, the Outline Business Case for the project is still in draft form and there are a number of significant gaps in the information presented. For example, there is no recent analysis of current and future workload that justifies the need for the number of court rooms being proposed. This makes it very difficult to assess the value for money from the proposed investment at this stage."

The report states that Judicial Administration does not have performance measures in place to manage or improve the Summary Court system.

"Judicial Administration has limited performance information and does not use the information available to understand, manage or improve its performance." Ms. Winspear adds. "In addition, Judicial Administration does not record its expenditure by type of court, despite the budget being set in this way, or calculate the cost per case. The lack of performance and financial information means that is difficult to assess the overall efficiency and effectiveness of Summary Courts or Judicial Administration."

The report highlights that Judicial Administration is in the process of upgrading its Information Technology system, which has the potential to improve the efficiency of operations.

The Auditor General adds, "We found a number of inefficiencies in the system and some of these could be resolved through better use of technology. The current upgrade of the IT systems has the potential to significantly improve the efficiency of Summary Courts by introducing online payments, e-ticketing and electronic court scheduling."

More information about the report can be obtained by contacting Sue Winspear at (345) 244-3201 or Angela Cullen, Director of Performance Audit at (345) 244-3220.

This report and the original OAG reports on which this report is based are available at www.auditorgeneral.gov.ky.

Notes to the editor:

1. The justice system and prosecuting cases through the courts involves a number of public bodies. Judicial Administration is the main organisation responsible for operating the court system. In addition to Judicial Administration a number of other individuals and organisations are involved in the justice system (see paragraphs 1 and 2 on page 4 of the report), and include the following:
 - Judiciary
 - Office of the Director of Public Prosecution
 - Royal Cayman Islands Police Service
 - Department of Community Rehabilitation
 - Cayman Islands Prison Service
 - Accused
 - Defence lawyers
 - Jurors
 - Victims
 - Witnesses.
2. There are a range of different types of court for different levels and types of cases. These are set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the report (on page 7). The audit focused on processing of cases through Summary Courts and the Traffic Court as these cases make up the majority of cases.
3. Judicial Administration's budget for 2018 was \$15.2 million and at the end of December 2018 employed 74 staff.
4. Judicial Administration purchased the Scotia building, close to the existing courthouse, in 2018.