



## Doing Business in Bermuda:

### 2013 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT, U.S. & FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 2010, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES.

- [Chapter 1: Doing Business In Bermuda](#)
- [Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment](#)
- [Chapter 3: Selling U.S. Products and Services](#)
- [Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment](#)
- [Chapter 5: Trade Regulations, Customs and Standards](#)
- [Chapter 6: Investment Climate](#)
- [Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing](#)
- [Chapter 8: Business Travel](#)
- [Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research and Trade Events](#)
- [Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 1: Doing Business in Bermuda

- [Market Overview](#)
- [Market Challenges](#)
- [Market Opportunities](#)
- [Market Entry Strategy](#)
- [Market Fact Sheet](#)

### Market Overview

[Return to top](#)

The most current economic statistic available are for 2011.

#### Key economic indicators (2011):

- GDP: BMD 5.6 billion
- GDP per capita: BMD 85,996
- GDP growth rate: -2.8%.
- Unemployment rate: 6%
- Inflation rate: 2.9%.
- Retail sales: BMD 94.5 million
- Total revenue: BMD 871.2 million
- Total expenditures: BMD 1,202.8 million
- Capital expenditures: BMD 121.0 million
- Total assets for banking sector (Q4): BMD 25,543 million
- Total deposits (Q4): BMD 22,023 million

#### Trade Statistics (2011):

- Imports: BMD 892.9 million (clothing, household goods, chemicals, live animals, machinery, transport, and miscellaneous manufactures)
- Exports: BMD 13.5 million (pharmaceuticals, semitropical produce, light manufactures)
- Trade partners: United States 70%, United Kingdom 3%, Canada 12%, Caribbean 1%, all others 13%.

#### Other issues:

- The Bermuda dollar is pegged 1:1 to the U.S. dollar.
- American air passengers make up nearly three-quarters of all tourists visiting Bermuda.
- Bermuda is a politically stable overseas territory of the U.K. There have been no recent incidents of political violence in Bermuda.
- There is a low threat of terrorism in Bermuda.

### Market Challenges

[Return to top](#)

Those who wish to do business in Bermuda should be aware of the following challenges to market entry:

- Strict regulatory and legal systems grounded in U.K. law (i.e. 60/40 ownership rule, see Chapter 3: Joint Ventures/Licensing);
- High cost of customs/import duties;
- Attracting and retaining skilled expatriate workers: including work permits
- High cost of living: Bermuda is three to four times as expensive as the U.S. or the UK.;
- Limited land for development;
- Race and class tension; and
- Physical isolation: Bermuda is in the Atlantic Ocean 700 miles east of North Carolina; it does have regular direct commercial flights to cities on the east coast of the United States, Toronto, and London.

### Market Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

Best prospect sectors, major projects and business opportunities include:

- Top five sectors: International business (insurance, reinsurance, and general financial services), real estate, financial intermediation, general business activities, education, health and social work;
- Major projects: King Edward Memorial Hospital, hotel and building development;
- Business opportunities: due in part to the 2008 global economic downturn and in part to the departure of significant numbers of international company on-Bermudian staff, Bermuda's economy is now entering its fifth straight year of recession; opportunities appear to remain in the areas of energy efficient technologies, importation of retail goods, and consultation services in business, education, and healthcare. To stimulate the economy, the Government of Bermuda (GOB) has made several policy changes such as eliminating limits on how much time foreign workers may remain in Bermuda and relaxing rules about non-Bermudian real property ownership.

Comment [s1]: The pool opened today, so we can remove mention of it.

### Market Entry Strategy

[Return to top](#)

Companies seeking to enter the Bermuda market should be aware that the Government of Bermuda has strict rules about conducting business on the island. The best way for a U.S. business to successfully enter the market is to:

- conduct market research to find potential niches;
- visit Bermuda to gain firsthand knowledge of the market;
- develop a sound marketing plan; and if exporting goods from the U.S., use a local wholesaler/distributor; the wholesaler/distributor can assist with pricing, promotion, inventory, distribution, and financial support.

[Return to table of contents](#)



## COUNTRY FACT SHEET: BERMUDA

### PROFILE

Capital: Hamilton

### ECONOMY

	2010	2011	2012
Nominal GDP (Current \$US)			
Nominal GDP Per Capita (Current \$US)			
Real GDP Growth Rate (% change)			
Real GDP Growth Rate Per Capita (% change)			
Consumer Prices (% change)			
Unemployment (% of labor force)			
Economic Mix in 2010: 7.8% All Industries; 91.4% Services; .8% Agriculture			

### FOREIGN MERCHANDISE TRADE (\$US Millions)

	2010	2011	2012
Bermuda Exports to World	0	0	9.6
Bermuda Imports from World	970	881	867
U.S. Exports to Bermuda	637	611	622
U.S. Imports from Bermuda	22.5	59.9	83.8
U.S. Trade Balance with Bermuda	614	551	539
<b>Position in U.S. Trade:</b>			
Rank of Bermuda in U.S. Exports	85	93	90
Rank of Bermuda in U.S. Imports	152	134	129
Bermuda Share (%) of U.S. Exports	0.05	0.04	0.04
Bermuda Share (%) of U.S. Imports	0	0	0

#### Principal U.S. Exports to Bermuda in 2012:

1. Petroleum & Coal Products (17.1%)
2. Transportation Equipment (14.9%)
3. Special Classification Provisions, Nesoi (12.4%)
4. Food & Kindred Products (11.5%)
5. Computer & Electronic Products (9.9%)

#### Principal U.S. Imports from Bermuda in 2012:

1. Goods Returned (Exports For Canada Only) (89.4%)
2. Waste And Scrap (6.8%)
3. Beverages & Tobacco Products (1.7%)

### FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

	2009	2010	2011
U.S. FDI in Bermuda (US \$Millions)	282,662	297,096	327,185
FDI in U.S. by Bermuda (US \$Millions)	-7,646	1,959	1,406

Source: Created by USDOC/ITA/OTII-TPIS from many sources: FDI from USDOC, Bureau of Economic Analysis. US Trade from USDOC, Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division. Bermuda Trade with World from United Nations where available. National Macroeconomic data from IMF/World Bank databases including World Economic Outlook and World Development Indicators. .WORLD and other country aggregates are summaries of available UN COMTRADE, IMF and other data, and coverage varies over time and by source, but typically represents greater than 85 percent of world trade and production. Note: Principal U.S. Exports and Imports Are 3-digit NAICS Categories

## Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5375.htm>

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 3: Selling U.S. Products and Services

- [Using an Agent or Distributor](#)
- [Establishing an Office](#)
- [Franchising](#)
- [Direct Marketing](#)
- [Joint Ventures/Licensing](#)
- [Selling to the Government](#)
- [Distribution and Sales Channels](#)
- [Selling Factors/Techniques](#)
- [Electronic Commerce](#)
- [Trade Promotion and Advertising](#)
- [Pricing](#)
- [Sales Service/Customer Support](#)
- [Protecting Your Intellectual Property](#)
- [Due Diligence](#)
- [Local Professional Services](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

### Using an Agent or Distributor

[Return to top](#)

Because entering the Bermuda market can be challenging, U.S. vendors are encouraged to contact any of the islands 30-plus wholesale distributors who can assist in selling foreign imports. Wholesalers distribute grocery (fresh, frozen, and dry), health and beauty, pharmaceuticals, food service, and direct store delivery products. To find a partner to assist with import/export shipping needs, contact Bermuda Consumer Affairs at [www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm), the Bermuda Chamber of Commerce at [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com) or the Commercial/Economic section of the U.S. Consulate General Hamilton, or visit the Bermuda Yellow pages at [www.bermudayp.com](http://www.bermudayp.com). Note: U.S. businesses can export construction materials directly to Bermuda without going through a wholesaler. Potential exporters should contact local construction firms or the Construction Association of Bermuda ([www.constructionbermuda.com](http://www.constructionbermuda.com)) for information.

An alternative to using a wholesaler/distributor is the Salesperson's Permit. Although Bermuda law prohibits direct sales by non-Bermudians, sales representatives are permitted entry on a case-by-case basis and must apply for a Salesperson's Permit. Non-Bermudians may not sell or promote products on behalf of an overseas agent or business until permission to do so is granted. Permits will not be issued to a person to sell goods in competition with those of the same type sold in Bermuda. The Chamber screens each application to determine if the product is already represented by one of the business firms and whether the permit will threaten that firm's interests; or if the product is not yet available on the Island, determine which businesses would have an interest in the product and set up appointments with interested firms on behalf of the visiting salesperson.

For more information on the Salesperson's Permit please contact the Bermuda Chamber of Commerce at [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com). Please note that travel into Bermuda for the purpose of business is closely monitored by Bermuda Immigration and proper documentation (i.e., Salesperson's Permit) must be issued prior to entry into Bermuda.

### **Establishing a Local Office**

[Return to top](#)

The process of establishing an office in Bermuda may involve several government entities depending on the size and type of business. Those interested should contact a local attorney to determine the appropriate process.

As a general rule, businesses must develop a detailed business plan, determine the legal business structure, register the business name, and pay for a business license. Once the government approves a business plan, businesses should contact a local accounting firm for further assistance.

### **Franchising**

[Return to top](#)

With only a few exceptions (e.g., Marks and Spencer, the island's single KFC), franchises are generally not permitted except in the hotel/resort sector. Potential investors must receive special permission from the Ministry of Economic Development to establish a franchise on the island. Legal requirements for franchising are governed by the contract and the Companies Act 1981.

### **Direct Marketing**

[Return to top](#)

There is little or no direct telephone marketing or door-to-door sales.

### **Joint Ventures/Licensing**

[Return to top](#)

For potential investors in Bermuda, establishing a joint venture is the same as establishing a local (AKA non-exempt) company. Local companies must meet the requirements of the 60/40 rule whereby Bermudians:

- 1) are the owners of at least 60 percent of the shares in the company;
- 2) exercise at least 60 percent of the total voting rights in the company; and
- 3) make up at least 60 percent of the directors of the company.

While Bermuda's corporate law is largely based on the corporate law of the United Kingdom, it also includes provisions derived from other jurisdictions or that are unique to Bermuda. The key corporate legislation, the Companies Act 1981 (the "Companies Act"), is amended regularly to keep pace with international commercial developments. A local company may apply to the Ministry of Finance for a license to conduct business in Bermuda where Bermudian control is less than 60% under section 114B of the Companies Act 1981. Issuance is entirely at the discretion of the Ministry and will be for such duration and subject to such terms and conditions as the Ministry sees fit to impose.

When forming a joint venture or local company, parties must adhere to Bermuda's strict standards and regulations. Most businesses in Bermuda are limited liability companies

with 100% ownership by one person. Businesses are strongly advised to contact a local law firm or accounting firm for assistance (see [www.bermudayp.com](http://www.bermudayp.com) for listings).

Exempt companies are those companies that do not meet the requirements of the 60/40 rule. Exempt companies located in Bermuda cannot do business in Bermuda unless they receive a special license from the Ministry of Finance.

The Bermuda Monetary Authority ([www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)) vets all prospective companies. The Registrar of Companies ([www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)) issues certificates of incorporation. In some cases, companies may need to seek approval from the Ministry of Finance ([www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)).

### **Selling to the Government**

[Return to top](#)

There are opportunities for the private sector to do business with the Government of Bermuda. The GOB purchases goods and services either directly from a vendor/company or advertises tenders for bids. Tenders are usually for skilled or technical assistance which may not be present in the local market and are usually advertised in the Official Gazette section of the Royal Gazette. Legal requirements for selling to the government are covered by general legal principals and case law. Opportunities observed recently include management consulting for the Bermuda Job Training Replication Program, new equipment for the Bermuda Police Service, and marketing for the Bermuda Department of Tourism.

### **Distribution and Sales Channels**

[Return to top](#)

Due to the restrictions placed on foreign companies/investors from opening most types of businesses in Bermuda, normally local wholesalers/distributor purchase goods intended for sale overseas (principally from the U.S., but from other jurisdictions, as well) and import and then distributed them locally. All goods arriving in Bermuda are inspected by H.M. Customs, regardless of the port of entry. The main distribution center/port is the Hamilton docks where most goods arrive by container ship. Some goods (perishable/specialty/courier items) arrive by air at the L.F. Wade International Airport. Oil arrives by tankers to the Ferry Reach oil docks in St. George's. Special construction materials may arrive directly the docks in St. George's.

### **Selling Factors and Techniques**

[Return to top](#)

Packaging requirements in Bermuda are the same as in the U.S. and U.K. Because Bermuda is an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom, sales and marketing materials should be in English.

Most local wholesalers employ their own salespersons, buyers, and customer service representatives. In some instances, they use on-line ordering sites. Some wholesalers also host trade promotions and other events for potential investors, such as the annual Butterfield and Vallis Food Show.

(See Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research & Trade Events).

### **Electronic Commerce**

[Return to top](#)



Bermuda has a well developed telecommunications network and transportation facilities that link Bermuda directly with countries around the world. The network comprises four diverse bandwidth routes through fiber optic and satellite networks, quality hosting facilities with maximum security and full redundancy as well as sophisticated telephone, facsimile, satellites services. Bermuda hosts several Internet Service Providers, web design companies, computer hardware and software vendors, and certified internet payment solutions companies. The GOB continues to welcome and pursue emergent e-commerce technology and has recently reformed its telecommunication regulatory scheme to bring it into sync with current technology.

Electronic commerce is widely used in Bermuda. The Electronic Transactions Act 1999 positioned Bermuda at the forefront of the world in terms of recognizing in legislative terms not only the importance of e-Business, but also the need to establish a proper legal framework within which to conduct it.

For more information on the Electronic Transactions Act 1999 visit Bermuda Laws online ([www.bermudalaws.bm](http://www.bermudalaws.bm)) or call the Department of Telecommunications at: (441) 292-4595.

#### **Trade Promotion and Advertising**

[Return to top](#)

There are many opportunities for trade promotion in Bermuda. Events such as the Butterfield and Vallis Food Show and the Coldwell Banker Home Show are run annually. Please review *Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research and Trade Events* for a complete listing.

Most advertising occurs in the local newspapers (Royal Gazette: [www.royalgazette.com](http://www.royalgazette.com) and the Bermuda Sun: [www.bermudasun.bm](http://www.bermudasun.bm)), on the local radio stations (ZBM/ZFB, VSB: [www.vsbbermuda.com](http://www.vsbbermuda.com), Hott 107.5: [www.hot1075bermuda.com](http://www.hot1075bermuda.com)), local magazines (Bottomline: [www.royalgazette.com](http://www.royalgazette.com)), and online. Bermuda is home to a number of professional advertising agencies. For more information, contact the Bermuda Chamber of Commerce at: [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com).

#### **Pricing**

[Return to top](#)

When determining pricing, vendors must consider shipping costs, customs duties/wharfage, competition, overhead costs and any wholesaler charges. There is no VAT in Bermuda.

#### **Sales Service/Customer Support**

[Return to top](#)

Local agent/distributors have in depth knowledge of the market and local contacts and can provide sales, marketing, warehousing and customer support to local consumers that enables better penetration of the market.

For more information on sales, service and customer support please contact the Bermuda Chamber of Commerce at: [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com) or Consumer Affairs at: [www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm).

#### **Protecting Your Intellectual Property**

[Return to top](#)

Several general principles are important for effective management of intellectual property (“IP”) rights in Bermuda. First, you should have an overall strategy to protect your IP. Second, IP is protected differently in Bermuda than in the U.S. Bermuda provides protection of copyrights, trademarks, patents, and designs under the Trade Marks Act, the Patent Designs Act, and the Copyrights Act. Third, rights must be registered and enforced in Bermuda, under local laws. Your U.S. trademark and patent registrations will not protect you in Bermuda. For more information on Bermuda’s intellectual property law, contact the Registry General’s Office at [www.registrygeneral.gov.bm](http://www.registrygeneral.gov.bm).

Registration of patents and trademarks is on a first-in-time, first-in-right basis, so you should consider applying for trademark and patent protection before selling your products or services in the Bermuda market. It is the responsibility of the rights’ holders to register, protect, and enforce their rights where relevant, retaining their own counsel and advisors. Intellectual property is primarily a private right in Bermuda, and the US government cannot enforce rights for private individuals in Bermuda. Companies may wish to seek advice from local attorneys or IP consultants who are experts in Bermuda law. The U.S. Consulate General can provide a list of local lawyers upon request: <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/hamilton/19452/pdfs/lawyerslist2010B.pdf>.

It is always advisable to conduct due diligence on potential partners. Negotiate from the position of your partner and give your partner clear incentives to honor the contract. A good partner is an important ally in protecting IP rights. Consider carefully, however, whether to permit your partner to register your IP rights on your behalf. Doing so may create a risk that your partner will list itself as the IP owner and fail to transfer the rights should the partnership end. Keep an eye on your cost structure and reduce the margins (and the incentive) of would-be bad actors. Projects and sales in Bermuda require constant attention. Work with legal counsel familiar with Bermuda laws to create a solid contract that includes non-compete clauses and confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions.

### **IP Resources**

Companies would be well advised to work with trade associations and other organizations to support efforts to protect IP and stop counterfeiting. These organizations include:

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce (in the U.S.)
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
- International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA)
- International Trademark Association (INTA)
- The Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy
- International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC)
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

A wealth of information on protecting IP is freely available to U.S. rights holders. Some excellent resources for companies regarding intellectual property include the following:

- For information about patent, trademark, or copyright issues -- including enforcement issues in the US and other countries -- call the STOP! Hotline: **1-866-999-HALT** or register at [www.StopFakes.gov](http://www.StopFakes.gov).
- For more information about registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), contact the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) at: **1-800-786-9199**.
- For more information about registering for copyright protection in the US, contact the US Copyright Office at: **1-202-707-5959**.
- For more information about how to evaluate, protect, and enforce intellectual property rights and how these rights may be important for businesses, a free online training program is available at [www.stopfakes.gov](http://www.stopfakes.gov).
- For US small and medium-size companies, the Department of Commerce offers a "SME IP Advisory Program" available through the American Bar Association that provides one hour of free IP legal advice for companies with concerns in Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Russia. For details and to register, visit: [http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/ipprogram\\_consultation.html](http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/ipprogram_consultation.html)
- For information on obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights and market-specific IP Toolkits visit: [www.StopFakes.gov](http://www.StopFakes.gov) This site is linked to the USPTO website for registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), the U.S. Customs & Border Protection website to record registered trademarks and copyrighted works (to assist customs in blocking imports of IP-infringing products) and allows you to register for Webinars on protecting IP.
- The U.S. Commerce Department has positioned IP attachés in key markets around the world. You can get contact information for IP attaché Christine Peterson who covers Bermuda at: <http://www.stopfakes.gov/contact> .

## Due Diligence

[Return to top](#)

While there is no local equivalent of a Dunn and Bradstreet in Bermuda, international and local accounting firms and law firms can check the bona fides of banks, agents, or customers. Information can also be obtained from the Registrar of Companies ([www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)) or the Bermuda Chamber of Commerce ([www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com)). While the U.S. Commercial Service's International Company Profile service can provide financial reports on companies in over 80 countries worldwide, unfortunately Bermuda is not one of them. ([http://export.gov/salesandmarketing/eg\\_main\\_018198.asp](http://export.gov/salesandmarketing/eg_main_018198.asp))

## Local Professional Services

[Return to top](#)

A wide range of professional services are available in Bermuda. For selling retail and wholesale products, local wholesalers are willing and able to assist. Bermuda has over 100 professional associations for a variety of business services, such as accounting, real estate, I.T. services, and legal assistance. To view these organizations please go to: [www.netlinkbermuda.com](http://www.netlinkbermuda.com). The most current list of local attorneys is available from the Bermuda Bar Association at: [www.bermudabar.org](http://www.bermudabar.org).

## Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Bar Association: [www.bermudabar.org](http://www.bermudabar.org)  
Business Bermuda: [www.businessbermuda.org](http://www.businessbermuda.org)  
Bermuda Chamber of Commerce: [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com)  
Bermuda Government: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)  
Bermuda Monetary Authority: [www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)  
Bermuda On-line: <http://bermuda-online.org/>  
Bermuda Economic Development Corporation: [www.bedc.bm](http://www.bedc.bm)  
Bermuda Yellow Pages: [www.bermudayp.com](http://www.bermudayp.com)  
Construction Association of Bermuda: [www.constructionbermuda.com](http://www.constructionbermuda.com)  
Ministry of Finance: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)  
Netlink Bermuda: [www.netlinkbermuda.com](http://www.netlinkbermuda.com)  
Registrar of Companies: [www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)  
Registry General: [www.registrygeneral.gov.bm](http://www.registrygeneral.gov.bm)  
Royal Gazette: [www.royalgazette.com](http://www.royalgazette.com)  
The Bermuda Sun: [www.bermudasun.bm](http://www.bermudasun.bm)

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment

Bermuda's small size dictates that almost everything is imported. Due to the island's recent economic decline, imports have decreased by 8 percent from \$969.3 billion in 2010 to \$892.9 million in 2011. The United States is by far Bermuda's primary trading partner, providing approximately 61% of imports at an estimated value of \$575.4 million in 2011.

### **Top Commercial Sectors based on the GDP 2011**

1. International business activity
2. Real estate and renting activities
3. Financial intermediation
4. Business activities
5. Education, health and social work
6. Wholesale and retail trade and repair services
7. Public administration
8. Hotels and restaurants
9. Transportation and communications
10. Construction and quarrying

### **Smaller sectors in brief**

11. Other community, social and personal services
12. Electricity, gas and water supply
13. Manufacturing
14. Agriculture and forestry and fishing

## I. International Business

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	4,431	4,287	4,077
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BD\$)	2,088,671,891	2,033,573,372	1,860,174,472
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BD\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BD\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

Comment [s2]: See my comment on page 2.

The international business (IB) sector (mainly insurance, reinsurance, and financial services) contributed an estimated \$1.28 billion to the economy in 2011. As the largest single group of employers in Bermuda, IB generates approximately a quarter of the island's GDP directly and is estimated to be indirectly responsible for another 45% of GDP. In common with similar jurisdictions that host IB sectors, Bermuda's Department of Statistics does not recognize the international business sector as a resident industry. By law, international (exempt) businesses registered in Bermuda are not permitted to conduct business or sell their products in Bermuda.

### Best Prospects/Services

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda's international (exempt) business sector comprises insurance, reinsurance, insurance captives, investment holdings, and mutual funds. Securities trading, commodity brokering, shipping, and consultancy also contribute to this sector.

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

Current opportunities for U.S. investors are in insurance, reinsurance, investment holding, mutual funds and insurance captives. Although this sector is now entering its fifth year of contraction, it remains the largest single component of Bermuda's economy, directly responsible for approximately a quarter of the island's GDP and indirectly responsible for as much as another 45%. Several of the island's financial services institutions offer Islamic financial products in and from Bermuda.

### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Association of Bermuda Insurers & Reinsurers: [www.abir.bm](http://www.abir.bm)

Bermuda Monetary Authority: [www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)

Business Bermuda: [www.businessbermuda.org](http://www.businessbermuda.org)

Ministry of Finance: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Registrar of Companies: [www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)

## II. Real Estate and Renting Activities

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	606	574	491
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	1,335,798,115	1,310,640,516	1,300,498,415
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

Comment [s3]:

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

Output in this sector is generated by the real estate activities of both residential and commercial properties owned or leased by the government and the private sector. Real estate agents sell and rent properties and assist those looking to buy or rent. A limited supply in upper and middle markets keeps rental prices high compared to other developed countries and is closely monitored by the government due to the lack of developable land. Rental prices in the lower market remain steady. The average price in 2012 for a luxury home was \$6.0 million, the average price of a single-family home was \$1.1 million; and condominiums hit an all time low of \$473,000. The current average price for a single family home for non-Bermudians is over \$2.8 million. Non-Bermudians may own only one residential property and may lease or rent from Bermudians or non-Bermudians. Bermudians may buy and sell to anyone. Home sales rose briefly in 2012 after the GOB passed a law permitting mixed, i.e., Bermudian/non-Bermudian, couples to purchase more than one residential property. They slowed, however, after that pent-up demand was satisfied. As a result of the exodus of as many as 2000 expatriate workers from the international business sector since 2009, housing and rental prices are on a downward trend.

### Best Prospects/Services

[Return to top](#)

The best prospects in real estate and renting activities are in fractional ownership properties (standard hotel structures and condominium complexes), hotel development/management, brokerage of luxury and executive properties, and, potentially, low-income housing.

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

There are no specific opportunities in this sector at this time.

### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Ministry of the Environment & Planning  
 Dame Lois Browne-Evans Building 5<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
 58 Court Street, Hamilton HM 12  
 Tel: (441) 297-7590  
 Website: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Bermuda Land Development Company  
 P.O. Box DD 221  
 St. David's, DD BX Bermuda  
 Tel: (441) 293-5712  
 Website: [www.bldc.bm](http://www.bldc.bm)

### III. Financial Intermediation

#### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	2,781	2,741	2,747
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	932,116,540	986,976,626	1,013,580,577
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

Comment [s4]: See comment on page 2.

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

Bermuda's financial intermediaries - investment funds, trusts, pension fund administration, collective investment schemes, hedge funds, and banking - are highly respected and have historically performed well in the global and local markets. In 2011, businesses involved in financial intermediation grew 5% although the value added for this industry remained well below the peak level recorded in 2008.

#### Best Prospects/Services

[Return to top](#)

The best prospects for U.S. investment in the financial intermediation/management sector are in investment funds, trusts, pension fund administration, collective investment schemes, hedge funds, and banking.

#### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

There is no information on specific investment opportunities at this time.

#### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Monetary Authority: [www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)  
 Business Bermuda: [www.businessbermuda.org](http://www.businessbermuda.org)  
 Ministry of Finance [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)  
 Registrar of Companies: [www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)

### IV. Business Activities



**Overview**[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	4,197	4,033	3,976
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	739,506,406	720,959,152	696,084,286
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices<sup>3</sup> Not available

The business services sector supports international businesses in Bermuda. The steady decline in output from the international business sector has caused a similar decline in the business services sector.

**Best Prospects/Services**[Return to top](#)

Best prospects in this sector include accounting, law, management, engineering, architecture, and information technology services.

**Opportunities**[Return to top](#)

Engineering and architectural services and many information technology services are outsourced to other countries such as Canada and the United States. The GOB regularly seeks vendors to contract business services (visit the Government of Bermuda online at: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)).

**Resources**[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Association of Professional Engineers: [www.bape.bm](http://www.bape.bm)

Bermuda Bar Association: [www.bermudabar.org](http://www.bermudabar.org)

Bermuda Monetary Authority: [www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)

Bermuda Business Directory: [www.netlinkbermuda.com/doingbus.htm](http://www.netlinkbermuda.com/doingbus.htm)

Business Bermuda: [www.businessbermuda.org](http://www.businessbermuda.org)

Certified General Accountants Association of Bermuda: ph: (441) 295-1393

Government of Bermuda: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Institute of Bermuda Architects: [www.iba.bm](http://www.iba.bm)

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bermuda: [www.icab.bm](http://www.icab.bm)

**V. Education, Health & Social Services**

**Overview**[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	3,624	3,625	3,895
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	575,225,534	612,891,624	632,816,155
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices<sup>3</sup> Not available

The sector includes activities in public and private educational institutions, private health, and social service agencies.

**Health:** Bermuda's health care system consists of a public and a private sector. The Ministry of Health and Seniors, which is responsible for health matters in Bermuda, is mandated to promote and protect the health and well-being of the island's residents and to ensure the provision of health care services, the setting of standards, and coordination within the health care system. Health services are either paid through an insurer, by a government agency, or by the consumer. There is no universal, publicly funded health insurance, although the GOB offers health insurance under two different plans. Hospitalization insurance is mandatory for all employed or self-employed persons. Both employers and employees contribute an equal share of insurance premiums.

**Education:** Education is free in public schools and compulsory up to age 16. All education in Bermuda, whether at a government-funded/taxpayer-supported school (a public school) or private school, is administered and controlled by the Bermuda Government's Ministry of Education.

**Social rehabilitation/services:** Social services in Bermuda are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Community and Cultural Development, Department of Child and Family Services. The Department is responsible for providing day care services, care and protection services for children, and residential and counseling services for adolescents, and assisting recipients of government financial assistance in moving from financial dependence to economic independence via training, employment and supportive services. Court Services, under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs provides enhanced programs, services and resources through effective case management, referrals, supervision, monitoring, community partnering, and treatment regimes.

**Best Prospects/Services**

Bermuda employs a number of professionals in the fields of education, health care, and social services and actively recruits expatriates from the U.S., Canada, U.K, and other countries to fill various vacancies.

**Opportunities**[Return to top](#)

Because all supplies and equipment must be imported from overseas, the healthcare industry is a sector ripe for U.S. investment. Current education and social services projects include the development of a One-Stop Career Center and a career education program called Career Pathways.

**Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Ministry of Community & Cultural Development  
Dame Lois Browne-Evans Building 4<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
58 Court Street  
Hamilton HM 12  
Tel: (441) 292-1681  
Website: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Ministry of Education  
14 Wallers Point Rd,  
St. David's, DD 03  
P.O. Box HM 1185  
Hamilton, HMEX  
Tel: (441) 278-3300  
Fax: (441) 278-3348  
Website: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Ministry of Health  
Continental Building  
25 Church Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
P.O. Box HM 380  
Hamilton, HM BX  
Tel: (441) 278-4900  
Fax: (441) 292-2622  
Website: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Attorney General & Ministry of Legal Affairs  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Global House  
43 Church Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Tel: (441) 292-2463  
Fax: (441) 292-3608  
Website: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

## VI. Wholesale, Retail Trade & Repair Services

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	4,752	4,658	4,529
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	603,616,005	595,380,883	563,422,561
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

Due to location and limited manufacturing capacity, nearly all products purchased by consumers in Bermuda are imported, mostly from the U.S. Wholesale distributors supply retail stores and restaurants with high quality merchandise from both sides of the Atlantic.

Wholesale activity fell 7.7 percent in 2011 compared to 2010 with a 7.4 percent decrease in value added. The retail trade sector is heavily dependent on resident and visitor spending and is closely correlated to the global economy as a whole.

### Best Prospects/Services

[Return to top](#)

The best prospects for U.S. investment are in the wide variety of goods needed: food, other grocery items, clothing, health and beauty supplies, restaurant supplies, automobile and motorcycle parts, hardware goods, household appliances, and pharmaceuticals, to name a few.

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

The importation of food, health, and beauty and pharmaceuticals products remains steady. Two noteworthy declines were experienced in the sale of motor vehicles, which hit a 15 year low in 2011, and in the sale of building materials which fell by 10.8 percent in 2011 up from 5.4 percent in 2010. The Government of Bermuda promotes the use of energy efficient products and technology. Duty has been reduced in most cases on these goods to zero.

### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Chamber of Commerce: [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com)

Bermuda Yellow Pages: [www.bermudayp.com](http://www.bermudayp.com)

Registrar of Companies: [www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)

## VII. Public Administration

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	4,318	4,296	4,284
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	534,423,802	563,903,883	529,119,673
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

The Government of Bermuda is the island's largest single employer, spender, and revenue earner. As of April 2013, the GOB directly employed more than 5300 civil servants, or approximately 14% of the island's workforce. Those figures do not include government-run "quangos," or quasi-NGO, for which exact current figures are unavailable. - 46.8 percent of government expenditures are attributed to payroll. In the past, the GOB has relied heavily on the use of overseas consultants; however, this practice is currently under review.

### Best Products/Services

[Return to top](#)

From time to time, the GOB seeks consultant/advisory/technical services assistance in areas in which expertise is not available in the local market.

Tenders for bid for these positions are advertised locally in the Official Gazette section of the Royal Gazette or under the Commercial Opportunities section of the Consulate's website..

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

Currently, the GOB is redeveloping a national training program focusing on remedial education, job training, and social programs. A career program called Career Pathways was started in September 2012. This program's goal is to help Bermudian students with college prep and to assist them in entering the workforce.

### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Sun [www.bermudasun.bm](http://www.bermudasun.bm)  
 Government of Bermuda [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)  
 Royal Gazette [www.royalgazette.com](http://www.royalgazette.com)

## IX. Hotels and Restaurants

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	4,674	4,349	4,533
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	487,766,471	490,638,049	478,929,280
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

**Hotels:** The value added for the hotel and restaurant industries fell 2.2 percent in 2011. Higher hotel occupancy levels and visitor expenditure kept sales marginally above the 2010 level. When combined with a reduction in operations costs by hoteliers, the value added for the hotel industry grew 2.9 percent in 2011. Hotel occupancy rates averaged 55.7 percent in 2012, a reduction of 1.7 percent from 2011. (American air passengers make up nearly three-quarters of all tourists visiting Bermuda.)

**Restaurants:** Bermuda's population enjoys eating out year round, although the general economic downturn impacted negatively on the operational activity of restaurants and bars sales. The economic contribution of restaurants was plagued by several closures and a 4.5 percent drop in food sales. Total value added for restaurants in 2011 decreased by 8.7 percent compared to 2010. The United States is the island's leading trading partner, accounting for approximately 61% of all food imports.

### Best Prospects/Services

[Return to top](#)

Best prospects currently lie in the development/construction of hotels, resorts; provision of construction materials and hotel equipment; and the export of food and restaurant equipment to current establishments.

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

Several large hotel/resort construction/expansion projects (i.e. Starwood's St. Regis hotel, Rosewood's Tuckers Point, Morgan's Point) have been proposed. However, due to the current economic situation they have yet to move forward. The Government is currently in talks with developers and unions to bring down the costs of building new hotels.

### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Chamber of Commerce: [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com)

Bermuda Department of Tourism: [www.gotobermuda.com](http://www.gotobermuda.com)

Bermuda Hotel Association: [www.experiencebermuda.com](http://www.experiencebermuda.com)

## VIII. Transport & Communications

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	2,471	2,322	2,293
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	524,669,404	503,421,124	477,176,431
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

Transportation and communication services are critical industries due to the island's geographic isolation. The sector declined 8 percent in 2011 marking the fourth consecutive year of decline.

**Transportation:** The Ministry of Tourism Development and Transport is responsible for the administration of the Departments of Civil Aviation, Airport Operations, Marine & Ports Services, Maritime Administration, Transport Control Department, and the Public Transportation Board. While the transportation sector was hit hard by the global increase in the cost of fuel, they have tried to maintain reasonable rates to retain customers. The 2012 Bermuda aircraft registry remains steady with more than 700 aircraft currently on its registry. Most are new, sophisticated and technically advanced corporate jets, owned by very high net worth individuals.

**(Tele) communications:** In April 2013, the telecommunication industry in Bermuda underwent major changes in its regulatory regime by allowing telecom companies to apply for Integrated Communication Operating Licences (ICOLs). This change will allow telecoms to offer bundled cell phone, long distance, cable television, and internet services, ultimately creating operating efficiencies and better pricing for the consumer. Bermuda's internal telephone system is 100% digital, with fiber optic trunk lines. The overseas links are fiber optic cables, and there is considerable redundancy built into the system to negate the effect of faults. Postal services fall under the jurisdiction of the GOB, and most well known courier services are already represented here (DHL, Federal Express, UPS, IBC, ZipX).

### Best Products/Services

[Return to top](#)

Best products and services for U.S. investment include: aircraft, buses, ferries, motor vehicles, postal and courier services, and telecommunication technology and equipment.

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

The Government of Bermuda may be looking to develop a public-private partnership which will improve the infrastructure at the L.F. Wade International Airport, namely

building out capacity to take control of Bermuda's commercial airspace. In late 2012, Bermuda chartered a ferry from the U.S. for one to two years to complement Bermuda's aging ferry fleet. More ferries may be needed in the near future.

**Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Ministry of the Environment & Planning  
Dame Lois Browne-Evans Building  
5th Floor, 58 Court Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Tel : (441) 297-7590 / Fax (441) 292-23497  
[www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Ministry of Tourism Development & Transport  
TCD Building  
11 North Street  
Hamilton HM 11  
Ph: (441) 295-3130 / Fax: (441) 295-1013  
[www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Department of Telecommunications  
Corner House  
20 Parliament Street  
Hamilton HM 12  
Ph: (441) 292-4595 / Fax: (441) 295-1462  
[www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)



## X. Construction, Mining & Quarrying

### Overview

[Return to top](#)

	2009	2010	2011
Total Market Size <sup>1</sup>	3,488	3,042	2,549
Total Local Production <sup>2</sup> (BDA\$)	616,734,126	498,069,696	384,853,659
Total Exports	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Imports (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Imports from the U.S. (est, BDA\$)	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Number of filled jobs

<sup>2</sup> Calculated at current market prices

<sup>3</sup> Not available

Bermuda's construction and quarrying industry has contracted by 23.2 percent and accounted for \$200.0 million output for 2011. This level of output is the lowest in the past 10 years as all businesses engaged in construction activities experienced declines in their contribution to GDP. Hotel developments, commercial properties, and large scale housing projects have diminished across the island resulting in the layoff of many Bermudian and third country national construction workers.. Although there is some local limestone quarrying in Bermuda - used primarily for roofing - it does not factor greatly into the GDP. Mining, either land based or offshore, is currently non-existent.

### Best Prospects/Services

[Return to top](#)

Best prospects in the construction sector lie in the development of hotels, affordable housing airport works, docks, bridges and mixed residential/commercial properties. U.S. businesses can export construction materials directly into Bermuda without going through a wholesaler. Businesses should contact local construction firms or the Bermuda Construction Association for any opportunities.

### Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

A project to expand the Tynes Bay Waste Treatment Facility is on hold.

### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Ministry of Public Works  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl., General Post Office Building  
 56 Church Street  
 Hamilton HM 12  
 Tel: (441) 293-5712  
 Fax: (441) 295-0170  
 Web Site: <http://www.blcd.com>

Bermuda Construction Association  
 P.O. Box M 238  
 Hamilton, HM AX  
 Tel: (441) 292-0633  
 Fax: (441) 292-0564  
 Website: [www.constructionbermuda.com](http://www.constructionbermuda.com)

## **XI. Smaller Sectors In Brief**

### **I. Other Community, Social & personal services**

#### **Overview**

[Return to top](#)

Other community, social and personal services account for approximately 2% of total GDP. These services include:

- Sewage and refuse disposal; sanitation and similar activities;
- Membership organizations activities (i.e. fundraising);
- Recreational, cultural and sporting activities (i.e., Bermuda Musical Festival, Bermuda Festival of the Arts, recreational water activities);
- Private households with employed persons (i.e. nannies, private nurses, gardeners, maids etc.); and
- Other service activities.

Sewage/refuse and cultural/sporting activities usually fall under the administration of the GOB. Investments in this sector generally require a tender to bid, a work permit, and other documentation as required by the responsible government ministry or department.

#### **Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Government of Bermuda: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Listing of organizations: [www.bermuda-online.org/businessorgs.htm](http://www.bermuda-online.org/businessorgs.htm)

### **II. Electricity, Gas & Water Supply**

#### **Overview**

[Return to top](#)

**Electricity:** Government-regulated monopoly BELCO (Bermuda Electric Light Company Limited) produces nearly all of the island's electricity from imported oil. BELCO is wholly owned by Bermuda-based joint stock company Ascendant Group, which trades on the Bermuda Stock Exchange (BSX). Electricity is very expensive compared to the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, or Europe. The Tynes Bay Waste Treatment facility produces some electricity by incinerating garbage and converting it into electricity which is sold back to BELCO. In 2009/2010, the Government of Bermuda reduced, in some cases to zero, the customs tariff duty on certain renewable energy and energy efficient technologies brought into Bermuda. The use of solar energy is slowly growing. Currently, there a number of studies looking into solar, wave and wind technologies as potential alternative sources of energy in Bermuda. The GOB continues to consider "green" energy policies and incentives for investors to promote "green" technology on the island.

**Gas and Petroleum Products:** The only two retailers allowed to offer gasoline and oil in Bermuda are U.S.-based [ExxonMobil](#) (trading in Bermuda as Esso) and the British-Dutch [Shell Oil Company](#). There is no competition between Esso and Shell. The Bermuda Government sets the price per liter of petroleum products.

Two local companies provide Bermuda with household gas (propane only): Bermuda Gas and Utility, which purchases its propane from Shell, and Sunshine Gas. Bermuda Gas and Utility, like BELCO, is wholly owned by the Ascendant Group. Bermuda Bulk

Gases and Pure Air Gases supply medical and industrial gas, which is purchased directly from the United States.

**Water:** Bermuda's water supply system is unique. The only natural source of water on the island is rainfall. Therefore, water is collected via specially designed roof systems and stored in cisterns (called "tanks") under the buildings. To supplement rain water, consumers can purchase water from water truckers, who in turn buy it from one of the Bermuda Government reservoirs or GOB-owned sea water distillation or reverse osmosis plants. Bermuda imports bottled water from the following countries (in alphabetical order): the Azores, Belgium, Canada, France, Iceland, Italy, United Kingdom and the U.S. In 2012, the island imported approximately \$12.0 million worth of bottled water with about 2/3 coming from the U.S.

#### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Gas: [www.bermudagas.bm](http://www.bermudagas.bm)

Bermuda water dealers: [www.bermudayp.com](http://www.bermudayp.com)

Bermuda Stock Exchange: [www.bsx.com](http://www.bsx.com)

Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Public Works, Department of Energy: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

### III. Manufacturing

#### Overview

[Return to top](#)

Manufacturing in Bermuda makes up only 1.2 percent of the GDP. Goods are locally produced but generally with raw materials imported from overseas. Exporting to Bermuda the goods needed for the production of local products represents a potential investment opportunity for U.S. businesses. In 2012, Bermuda exported more than \$13.5 million worth of merchandise, more than \$5 million of which was to the U.S.

Products produced include:

- food and beverage products (i.e., Barritts beverages, Goslings rum, Gombey Pepper Jam);
- textiles and upholstery (i.e., residential, commercial, auto, marine);
- carpentry and wood products;
- publishing and printing;
- paints (i.e., Bermuda Paint Co. only);
- perfumes (i.e., Bermuda Perfumery only);
- metal work (ornamental and decorative);
- dairy farming – (Dunkley's Dairy only); and
- jewelry design.

The carpentry, wood, jewelry, and clothing products produced in Bermuda are considered a 'cottage industry' (home based vs. factory based) by industry standards.

#### Resources

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Yellow Pages: [www.bermudayp.com](http://www.bermudayp.com)

Chamber of Commerce: [www.bermudacommerce.com](http://www.bermudacommerce.com)

#### **IV. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing**

##### **Overview**

[Return to top](#)

A small amount of agricultural, forestry, and fishing activities occurs in Bermuda. While there is no opportunity to invest directly in this sector, many products to support the sector must be imported onto the island. Landscaping is the largest component within the industry. In 2011, the GOB restricted the number of work permits available for non-Bermudians in landscaping.

**Agriculture:** Agriculture does not play a significant role in Bermuda's economy. Only a very small portion of the land is under cultivation. Food supplies are mostly imported from the U.S. and Canada, and dairy products and goods are imported from a variety of countries including the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland and New Zealand. Bermudian farmers produce eggs, bananas, grapefruit, oranges, and other fruits and vegetables. Local company Dunkley's Dairy has a monopoly on the production and sale of fresh cow's milk. When certain locally grown fruits and vegetables are in season (and premium priced), temporary embargoes are placed on the importation of competing produce to allow local farmers to take advantage. While there is some cultivation of flowers for the local market, many indoor and outdoor plants are imported into Bermuda for resale by local nurseries. However, the Department of Environmental Protection has tight restrictions to control/prevent the importation of harmful pests and diseases.

**Forestry:** There is little forestry in Bermuda. Any cultivation of trees is closely regulated by the Ministry of the Environment under the 1986 Bermuda National Parks Act and the 1988 Bermuda National Parks Regulations. Most wood and lumber products are imported from the U.S. and Canada.

**Fisheries:** Bermuda has no factory fisheries. Local fishermen sell their small catches directly to the public, restaurants, and grocery stores. Wholesalers import fish and seafood for sale to markets and restaurants. For more information on fishing restrictions and how to obtain fishing licenses, contact the Department of Environmental Protection in the Ministry of the Environment, Planning and Infrastructure Strategy.

##### **Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Ministry of the Environment, Planning & Infrastructure Strategy: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Ministry of Public Works: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Department of Environmental Protection: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

## Chapter 5: Trade Regulations, Customs and Standards

- [Import Tariffs](#)
- [Trade Barriers](#)
- [Import Requirements and Documentation](#)
- [U.S. Export Controls](#)
- [Temporary Entry](#)
- [Labeling and Marking Requirements](#)
- [Prohibited and Restricted Imports](#)
- [Customs Regulations and Contact Information](#)
- [Standards](#)
- [Trade Agreements](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

### Import Tariffs

[Return to top](#)

Her Majesty's Customs is responsible for the collection of import duty, which makes up approximately 25% of the Bermuda Government's revenue. Bermuda uses the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System 2012 as the basis for its Customs Tariff. The System is a list of codes for every type of imported product which provides Customs officers the rate of customs or import duty on the item. Customs officers work at the official ports of Hamilton, St. George, L.F. Wade International Airport, and Dockyard.

H.M. Customs's main office is in Hamilton where officers process Bermuda Customs Declarations for arriving air and ocean freight and control the movement of passengers and cargo. H.M. Customs works with the Bermuda Police Service in combating the cross-border movement of illicit drugs, contraband, and the proceeds of crime.

Bermuda has adopted the WTO Valuation rules (GATT) as the basis for valuing imported goods for duty purposes. Customs duty is normally calculated on an ad valorem basis, generally on the transaction value of imported goods. The most common rate is 22.25%, although most food items have a lower rate of 5% - 15%. Customs duty relief is available for some materials used in local manufacturing. Passenger vehicles incur duty at much higher rates. Residents receive \$200 duty free baggage allowance on each trip abroad. Accompanied personal goods of persons arriving in Bermuda by air or sea is currently 25% of the transaction value. Visitors are entitled to a \$30.00 gift allowance once every 31 days. There are also allowances available to visitors and residents on alcohol and tobacco- every passenger may claim one liter of wine, one liter of spirits, 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars, and ½ kg of tobacco duty free per arrival. Alcohol and tobacco imported in excess of the duty free allowance are subject to duty at \$2.89 per liter for wine, \$10.63 per liter of spirituous beverages, \$44.00 per carton of 200 cigarettes and 25% on cigars and tobacco. In 2010, GOB reduced the import duty on some energy efficient goods and some goods for use in harnessing power from renewable energy resources.

A dual-channel or red/green system was introduced at the airport in November 2012. The green channel is for travelers who have no more than their duty free allowances, no prohibited or restricted goods and no more than \$10,000 (or equivalent) in cash or negotiable instruments. The red channel is for travelers who have goods that exceed

their duty free allowances, goods for business use, prohibited or restricted goods, or more than \$10,000 (or equivalent) in cash or negotiable instruments. More information on the red/green system can be found on [www.customs.gov.bm](http://www.customs.gov.bm) under “travellers”.

## Trade Barriers

[Return to top](#)

There are currently no specific trade barriers between the United States and Bermuda.

## Import Requirements and Documentation

[Return to top](#)

All articles being imported or exported are subject to inspection by customs and/or the relevant statutory authority (e.g., the Bermuda Police Service or other government agencies).

A Bermuda Commercial Declaration Form (BCD) must be used to declare goods for resale, commercial samples, or goods bought on commission or as an accommodation for any other person.

Every traveler arriving in Bermuda must complete a Customs Traveller Declaration form. Returning residents must declare all goods and are allowed up \$200 BDA duty free allowance per person per trip. Visitors must also declare all goods, and are entitled to a \$30 duty free allowance every 31 days per trip. Duty must be paid on any imported goods not covered by a duty free allowance.

Travelers must declare the value of imported goods in Bermuda dollars. Exchange rate information for currencies other than the U.S. dollar is available from H.M. Customs. The U.S. dollar may be used to purchase goods and services in Bermuda. The Bermuda dollar is pegged 1:1 to the U.S. dollar.

All animals arriving in Bermuda must be accompanied by an Import Permit issued in advance by the Department of Environmental Protection – [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm).

## U.S. Export Controls

[Return to top](#)

The U.S. Departments of State, Commerce, Homeland Security, Treasury, Defense, and Energy each play a critical role in export control and nonproliferation activities both within the United States and outside its borders. The U.S. Export Administration Regulations ([www.gpo.gov/bis/ear/ear\\_data.html](http://www.gpo.gov/bis/ear/ear_data.html)) provides important information to exporters.

## Temporary Entry

[Return to top](#)

Some goods may be imported on a temporary basis without the payment of customs duty. Goods imported for short periods of time (e.g., tools of trade) must have a monetary security placed with customs prior to being released. Qualifying goods may be found in the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Bermuda Customs Tariff ([www.customs.gov.bm](http://www.customs.gov.bm)). Some restrictions apply and proper export procedures must be followed in order to obtain a refund of the financial security. Any goods that remain in Bermuda are subject to import

duty at the appropriate rate. If the goods are sold or otherwise disposed of without authorization from the Collector of Customs, the goods are liable to forfeiture and the importer is liable for a monetary penalty of up to \$12,000.

Goods re-entering Bermuda may be imported exempt from duty providing it is proven to the satisfaction of Customs that the goods have not undergone any changes and that ownership remains the same. Goods re-imported after repairs or replacement are subject to duty on the cost of those repairs or replacement. However, goods re-imported which are warranty repairs or replacements are exempt from duty provided that proof of warranty is provided.

Persons moving to Bermuda with their used personal possessions may qualify for Transfer of Residence Allowance (TRA). TRA applies to anyone taking up residence in Bermuda for the first time and former residents returning after living abroad for more than one year. The exemption applies to goods older than six months which arrive within 90 days before or after your arrival. Exceptions are listed in Public Notice #28. An itemized list with depreciated values must be supplied for used goods. Goods purchased within six months of arriving in Bermuda must be duty paid with invoices submitted. Customs reserves the right to inspect all incoming shipments. Please refer to "Public Notice #28, Duty Free Allowance: Transfer of Residence" which is available to H.M. Customs website.

#### **Labeling and Marking Requirements**

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda follows the same labeling and marking requirements as the U.S. and the U.K. The foreign food labels must be applied prior to import into Bermuda. The Public Health Act provides for the regulation and enforcement of food labeling legislation.

Food labeling legislation does not apply to locally produced or manufactured goods. The Department of Health and the Department of Consumer Affairs are in the process of drafting food labeling legislation for locally produced products. To date local producers have been operating under a voluntary agreement of understanding to put the minimum information on the labels such as:

- Name of product
- Name of manufacturer or distributor
- Address and contact number of manufacturer or distributor
- List of all ingredients in descending order of quantity
- Additives- natural or artificial
- Net quantity of the food (by weight if solid, by volume if liquid)

No person shall import into Bermuda any food:

- a) which has been manufactured or prepared under unsanitary conditions; or
- b) which has been adulterated; or
- c) which is not permitted to be sold, or whose sale is restricted in the country from which it is exported.

For more information please contact the Department of Health ([www.health.gov.bm](http://www.health.gov.bm)) and the Department of Consumer Affairs ([www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm)).

## Prohibited and Restricted Imports

[Return to top](#)

The following is a list of prohibitions and restrictions on imported and exported items:

- Animals – live, prohibited, endangered species
- Arms, ammunitions, explosives – armaments and weapons of war, explosive substances and fireworks, firearms, weapons
- Building sand, crushed rock, gravel, peat and synthetic potting media
- Controlled chemicals
- Foodstuffs – embargoed produce, fish, lobster, meat, milk
- Fumigating substances – restricted to licensed fumigators
- Gaming machines
- Historic articles (relating to Bermuda) – this is an export restriction
- Lottery advertisements and material – foreign lotteries are banned
- Motorcycles
- Motor vehicles
- Obscene publications
- Organotin or tributyltin anti-fouling paint
- Petroleum – restriction on storage only
- Plants, plant material, fruits and vegetables (living or dead, including seeds)
- Pesticides
- Prescription drugs
- Prohibited publications
- Seditious publications
- Soil
- VHF radios, radar and CB radios – license required to operate

Permission to import or export these items must be sought from the appropriate Ministry (for example, soil – Ministry of Environment, Planning & Infrastructure; [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)).

## Customs Regulations and Contact Information

[Return to top](#)

Information on customs regulations may be found in the sections on Import Tariffs and Import Requirements and Documentation.

For additional information please contact:

### H.M. CUSTOMS

P.O. Box 2084

Custom House

40 Front Street

Hamilton HMHX

Bermuda

Telephone: (441) 295-4816

Fax: (441) 295-5392

Email: [customs@gov.bm](mailto:customs@gov.bm)

Webpage: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

## Standards

[Return to top](#)



[Overview](#)  
[Standards Organizations](#)

**Overview**

[Return to top](#)

Although there are no official trade standards organizations in Bermuda, the Department of Consumer Affairs currently oversees product standards. Standards are based upon the country of origins standards (i.e., U.S., U.K., and Canada) and the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) regulations. Existing standards can be found online on the Bermuda Laws website ([www.bermudalaws.bm](http://www.bermudalaws.bm)) under the Consumer Protection Act 1999 and the Sales of Goods Act 1978. The Consumer Affairs office in Bermuda can answer any questions about standards or conformity assessments in Bermuda ([www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm)). Safety standards fall under Bermuda's Consumer Protection Act and products must be able to be sold in the U.S., U.K. or Canada before being sold in Bermuda.

**Standards Organizations**

[Return to top](#)

For information regarding standards in Bermuda, please contact the Consumer Affairs office. There is no plan at this time to develop an annual plan of standards.

Consumer Affairs  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Ingham & Wilkinson Building  
129 Front Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Bermuda  
Phone: (441) 297-7627  
Fax: (441) 295-6892 Website: [www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm)

**National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Notify U.S. Service**

Bermuda, as an overseas territory of the U.K., is not a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and, therefore, is not required under the WTO's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with WTO member countries. Notify U.S. is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL: <http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

**Conformity assessment:** Bermuda has the same standards as the U.S., U.K. and Canada. The National Center for Standards and Certification Information (NCSCI) at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the U.S. Department of Commerce provide information on U.S. and foreign standards, technical regulations, and conformity assessment procedures for non-agricultural products. NCSCI staff responds to requests for information by identifying relevant standards and regulations, and by referral to the appropriate standards-developers or private-sector organizations. Under copyright restrictions, NCSCI cannot provide copies of standards, but NCSCI does provide sources for accessing standards.

**Product certification:** Bermuda has the same standards as the U.S., U.K. and Canada. If the product can be sold in the U.S., U.K. or Canada, it may be sold in Bermuda. Food

and pharmaceuticals certification and tobacco licensing must be cleared by the Bermuda Department of Health. There are no mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) with U.S. organizations at this time.

**Accreditation:** There are no official accreditation bodies in Bermuda. Many products and services utilize U.S., U.K. or Canadian accreditation bodies. The Bermuda Monetary Authority vets all financial institutions wishing to do business with Bermuda. The Chief Medical Officer at the Bermuda Department of Health keeps a register of clinical laboratories which are accredited in the U.S., U.K. and Canada.

**Labeling/marketing requirements:** Bermuda follows the same labeling and marking requirements as the U.S. and the U.K. The foreign food labels must be applied prior to import into Bermuda. The Public Health Act provides for the regulation and enforcement of food labeling legislation.

Food labeling legislation does not apply to locally produced or manufactured goods. The Department of Health and the Department of Consumer Affairs are in the process of drafting food labeling legislation for locally produced products. To date local producers have been operating under a voluntary agreement of understanding to put the minimum information on the labels such as:

- Name of product
- Name of manufacturer or distributor
- Address and contact number of manufacturer or distributor
- List of all ingredients in descending order of quantity
- Additives- natural or artificial
- Net quantity of the food (by weight if solid, by volume if liquid)

No person shall import into Bermuda any food:

- a) which has been manufactured or prepared under unsanitary conditions; or
- b) which has been adulterated; or
- c) which is not permitted to be sold, or whose sale is restricted in the country from which it is exported.

For more information please contact the Bermuda Department of Health ([www.health.gov.bm](http://www.health.gov.bm)) and the Bermuda Department of Consumer Affairs ([www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm)).

**Publication of technical regulations:** Can be found under the appropriate legislation at [www.bermulaws.bm](http://www.bermulaws.bm) (i.e. food regulations under the Health Act, vehicle regulations under the Motor Car Act).

## Trade Agreements

[Return to top](#)

The WTO (World Trade Organization) Agreement does not apply to Bermuda, because it is a British Overseas Territory. Bermuda has adopted the 2007 International Harmonized System 2007 as the basis for its Customs Tariff and the WTO Valuation rules (GATT) as the basis for the valuation of imported goods for duty purposes. Bermuda has been a member of the World Customs Organization since 1990. Bermuda is an associate member of Caricom (Caribbean Community).

**Web Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Laws Online: [www.bermulalaws.bm](http://www.bermulalaws.bm)

Consumer Affairs: [www.ca.gov.bm](http://www.ca.gov.bm)

Department of Environmental Health: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Department of Environmental Protection: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

Department of Health: [www.health.gov.bm](http://www.health.gov.bm)

H.M. Customs Bermuda: [www.customs.gov.bm](http://www.customs.gov.bm)

U.S. Export Administration Regulations: [www.access.gpo.gov/bis/](http://www.access.gpo.gov/bis/)

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 6: Investment Climate

- [Overview of Foreign Investment Climate](#)
- [Conversion and Transfer Policies](#)
- [Expropriation and Compensation](#)
- [Dispute Settlement](#)
- [Performance Requirements and Incentives](#)
- [Right to private Ownership and Establishment](#)
- [Protection of Property Rights](#)
- [Transparency of Regulatory System](#)
- [Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment](#)
- [Competition from State-Owned Enterprises \(SOEs\)](#)
- [Corporation Social Responsibility](#)
- [Political Violence](#)
- [Corruption](#)
- [Bilateral Investment Agreements](#)
- [OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs](#)
- [Labor](#)
- [Foreign-Trade Zones/Free Ports](#)
- [Foreign Direct Investment Statistics](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

### Overview of Foreign Investment Climate

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda is a major industry center for the world insurance and reinsurance market. With a Bermudian population of approximately 50,000 and an expatriate presence of 10-14,000 living on a small group of islands approximately 21 square miles in size, Bermuda can literally and figuratively be somewhat insular. This manifests itself in all facets of life: social, political and business. Foreign investors should be aware that Bermudians generally feel strongly about ensuring that the assets of Bermuda benefit Bermudians, guaranteeing Bermudians have first preference with regard to employment, and retaining real property for the citizens of Bermuda. Most Bermudians are related, know one another, or know someone who knows another.

Despite its size, Bermuda's business and financial industries operate in a sophisticated multinational environment. Its strength lies in its strong regulatory and legal systems. As an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom, Bermuda's systems adhere to current and high ethical standards and are grounded in UK law. Since 1684, the Crown has appointed a Governor who is responsible for external affairs, defense, and internal security. In other matters, he/she acts on the advice of the cabinet of the Government of Bermuda (GOB). Bermuda has its own written constitution, giving its elected government almost complete self-determination in conducting local affairs and enacting its own legislation.

#### Openness to and Restrictions upon Foreign Investment

The GOB welcomes foreign direct investment and continually seeks to develop innovative new financial services and products that manage risk and facilitate the efficient flow of capital. Incorporating a company in Bermuda is a relatively

straightforward, well regulated, and efficient process, and the GOB has recently announced its intention to streamline the process even further.

Bermuda has a stable democratic government, low personal and corporate taxes, a relatively large pool of skilled professionals, close proximity to the United States, and extensive air and communication networks. Its currency, the Bermuda dollar, is pegged one-to-one to the U.S. dollar. Bermuda's economy has been in recession since 2009, a trend that is likely to continue in 2013 and perhaps through 2014, despite efforts of the new government – elected in December 2012 – to encourage foreign investment and business growth. Its current government debt is \$1.45 billion. In anticipation of additional spending needs over the next three to five years, in February 2013 the GOB raised its debt ceiling to \$2.5 billion; the government is hopeful that the debt will not reach that level.

According to the Bermuda Department of Statistics, the top five investment sectors in Bermuda are international business, real estate and rental activities, financial intermediation, general business activities, education, and health and social work. At the end of 2011, 14,882 international companies and partnerships were registered on the island representing a 1.4 percent decrease from the 15,091 companies that were registered at the end of 2010. (Data from 2012 are not yet available.)

The Companies Act 1981 and its subsequent amendments are the principal statutes governing the formation and operation of Bermuda companies and regulate foreign investment through acquisitions, mergers, takeovers, greenfield investments, and the incorporation of companies.

Foreign investors interested in doing business in Bermuda should be aware of the 60/40 rule. To be classified as a "local" or "non-exempt" company, and able to conduct business within the local economy, a company normally must meet the following three requirements: (1) Bermudians must be beneficial owners of at least 60 percent of the shares in the company; (2) Bermudians must exercise at least 60 percent of the total voting rights in the company; and (3) Bermudians must make up at least 60 percent of the directors of the company.

Most insurance, reinsurance, and other financial services companies – commonly referred to collectively as "international business" - are exempt companies, i.e., companies that are domiciled in Bermuda but are exempt from the 60/40 rule. Exempt companies may be 100% owned by non-Bermudians. The term "exempt" has only to do with ownership, not taxation; the tax system for both local and exempt companies is the same. Nor does the term imply that the companies are subject to any less supervision, regulatory oversight, or fiscal rules than are local non-exempt companies. In general, exempt companies are precluded from doing business within the local economy and may not own real property in Bermuda (with a few exceptions created by individual acts of the legislature). However, exempt companies may deal with other Bermuda-based exempt companies without restriction. Exempt companies may also buy their locally-needed supplies or services from local companies, such as accounting, banking, legal, management and office supply services.

Companies with non-Bermudian ownership of more than 40 percent wishing to do business in the local economy generally must apply to the Ministry of Finance for a license pursuant to the exemption provisions of section 114B of the Companies Act. Many hotels and telecommunications companies fall into this category. In recent years, the Ministry of Finance waived the 60/40 ownership restrictions as they apply to three of

the island's four banks. A factor contributing to this decision may have been an interest in complying with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) guidelines that seek to eliminate separate regulatory regimes for local and international companies. In 2012, the ownership distinction between local/non-exempt and exempt companies began to narrow even further. In July 2012, Bermuda amended the Companies Act to allow companies listed on the Bermuda Stock Exchange to apply for a license to seek foreign investment over and above the 40 percent maximum foreign ownership. The GOB hopes that relaxation of the rule will attract foreign investment, increase liquidity in the local market, and boost the economy.

Overseas and resident investors may form partnerships under the Partnership Act 1902. Partnerships are either local or exempted and may be general or limited. A local partnership is composed of Bermudian partners only and is permitted to conduct business locally and abroad. If one or more of the partners in a partnership is not Bermudian, then the partnership is considered an exempted partnership and may only conduct business outside Bermuda from a principal place of business within Bermuda. An overseas partnership formed outside Bermuda may, through the Bermuda Monetary Authority (BMA), apply to the Minister of Finance for a permit to operate in Bermuda or outside Bermuda from a place of business in Bermuda. These partnerships must appoint and maintain a resident representative on the island.

Bermuda scrutinizes who it will permit to engage in business in its country, and the vetting process undertaken in incorporating a business is rigorous. The Bermuda Monetary Authority is the integrated regulator of the financial services sector in Bermuda and screens all potential foreign investments. The Corporate Services Providers Business Act 2012 eliminates the requirement for double vetting. Depending on the type of business being established, the Ministry of Finance, Registrar of Companies, and/or the Tax Commissioner's Office may also become involved in the process. Because Bermuda seeks to distance itself from offshore jurisdictions that are considered tax or money laundering havens, the BMA has a list of criteria that companies must meet. At a minimum, the BMA requires a copy of the company's most recent financial statements, a detailed business plan, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, equivalent documentation for non-incorporated bodies, copies of client agreements used or intended to be used for the business, personal questionnaires completed by all proposed institutional and/or individual controllers of the entity, a description of the group structure, an up-to-date chart for licensed institutions forming part of wider groups, and a check for the application fee. By maintaining this standard, the BMA acts as the regulator for company incorporation. In October 2009, the BMA launched an automated e-filing and e-approval system for corporate registrations. The system enhances the existing process by improving the speed of processing applications, while maintaining the integrity of its application review procedures. Company incorporation may take as little as four weeks. As noted above, the GOB has recently that it intends to further streamline the incorporation process.

The BMA provides continuing supervision and regulation of all investment providers, which are required to regularly submit financial documentation and other information about their business. If this criterion has not been met, or if there has been a failure to comply with law or regulation, the BMA has the authority to restrict or revoke the company's license. The BMA will notify the company, which then must initiate corrective action with the BMA within a period of 14 days. Under the Investment Business Act, the BMA may take several disciplinary actions: public censure, issuance of warning/

discontinuance notices, or winding up or dissolution of the company. An investment provider may appeal the BMA's decision to a tribunal constituted in accordance with the Investment Business Act 2003, section 34.

Opportunities to invest in privatization programs are minimal. In Bermuda, industries such as airports, tourism and transport, which have been privatized in many other countries, are controlled by the GOB. As Bermuda's economy continues to struggle, some see privatization as the means to effect government cost-savings, but to date, there have been few such opportunities. When privatization opportunities do arise, foreign investors are generally not treated differently from local investors. The Ministry of Public Works publishes public tenders in the Royal Gazette (official gazette) and places its contract tendering system on its homepage for potential bidders to view. With the exception of franchise hotels, non-local franchises are generally not permitted in Bermuda; therefore, the GOB must give investors special permission to establish a franchise on the island.

Many in the international business and financial sector viewed certain of the actions and policies of the previous government, e.g., raising the payroll tax without consultation, imposing limits on the amount of time a foreign citizen could work in Bermuda, etc., as anti-business. That, in combination with the global economic downturn, led many companies to move their non-Bermudian executive staff to locations outside Bermuda. (Estimates of the number of foreign staff who left Bermuda since 2008 range from several hundred to more than a thousand.) At the same time, those companies laid off no longer needed unneeded Bermudian support staff. Few new businesses – international or otherwise - established themselves in Bermuda during that period, and those that did maintain a small staff footprint. The effect of this downsizing on the local economy has been significant: recession, the closing of dozens of local retail and service businesses, a steep drop in the value of real property, a 40% office vacancy rate, and high unemployment (from 4% in 2009 to 8% in late 2012).

With the change in government after the December 2012 election, most in the international business sector see the outlook as improving. The new government campaigned on a business-friendly platform and has already taken steps to lure international business to Bermuda, as outlined elsewhere in this statement. Although there has been some concern and speculation about the impact of FATCA on Bermuda, the market remains open to potential investors.

## **Conversion and Transfer Policies**

[Return to top](#)

. The U.S. dollar is used and accepted in Bermuda with the Bermuda dollar, which trades at par. Both currencies are freely interchangeable and transferable without restriction. The BMA administers the Exchange Control Act 1972 (and regulations made there under) that states that no capital or exchange controls apply to non-residents or to the various forms of offshore entities (exempt or permit companies or partnerships), which are free to import and export funds in all currencies with a \$50,000 transfer limit. The BMA reviews all transfers on a case-by-case basis. No taxes apply to such transfers, and there is no withholding tax on interest, dividend or royalty payments. In practice, government consent is not required for Bermudians to hold foreign currency and assets. The regulations ensure the maintenance of local ownership and make sure

that people coming in from other countries have been vetted and found credible and not at variance with world standards governing financial flows. In 2010, Bermuda passed the Foreign Currency Purchase Tax Amendment Act, which applies to the purchase of all non-local currencies, including the U.S. dollar. The foreign currency purchase tax doubled from 0.5 percent to 1 percent per transaction. The Act also raised the tax on goods bought overseas and imported into Bermuda.

The BMA performs inspections prior to granting specific exchange control permission for the issue and transfer of registered securities in Bermudian companies to persons deemed non-resident for exchange control purposes. Additionally, the BMA must approve the issuance and transfer of securities of local and exempt companies unless listed on a stock exchange.

In 2009, Bermuda passed The Proceeds of Crime (Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorist Financing) Amendment Regulations 2009 authorizing the BMA to oversee all wire transfers. The legislation requires financial institutions to verify the accuracy and completeness of the information on the payer/originator before transferring funds, retain complete records on the payor/originator of the fund transfer for a period of five years, and maintain effective procedures to detect whether complete information on the payor/originator is received with the wire transfer. The legislation specifies how the receiving institution should treat transfers with missing or incomplete information. Generally, there are no major delays for remitting investment returns unless the entity needs approval from the BMA. Such approvals usually take less than 60 days. In 2009, Bermuda updated the Revenue Act 1898 to strengthen the requirements relating to cross border transportation of currency and monetary instruments. The threshold for reporting is \$10,000. Mandatory declaration forms are used for all incoming passengers (regardless of point of embarkation). For outgoing passengers to Canada and the UK there is a disclosure system in place.

### **Expropriation and Compensation**

[Return to top](#)

Expropriation is regulated by the Housing Loan Insurance (Mortgage) Regulations 1984 and the Municipalities Act 1923. Generally, there is no history of expropriation without just compensation in Bermuda, nor have there been any expropriatory acts towards U.S. investors in Bermuda.

### **Dispute Settlement**

[Return to top](#)

The BMA is the primary entity involved in handling investment disputes in Bermuda. Despite the large amount of investment business in Bermuda, dispute resolution is seldom required.

As an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom, Bermuda's legal system, which has been in force since 1612, is based on English common law and principles of equity as well as English statutory law. The system is effective at enforcing property and contractual rights. The rules of practice and procedure are very similar to those of England, and there is no government/authority interference in the court system. Three courts preside in Bermuda: the Magistrates Courts, the Supreme Court, and the Court of Appeal. The court of last resort in Bermuda's legal system is the Privy Council in



London. Bermuda also has arbitration legislation, which may be invoked in certain circumstances.

With respect to international disputes, Bermuda enacted the Bermuda International Conciliation and Arbitration Act in 1993 in which it adopted the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) model law of arbitration. The United Kingdom extended the 1958 UN Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards ("The New York Convention") to Bermuda in 1979, and Bermuda became a party in 1980. As a result, arbitration awards from other countries - including the United States - are readily enforceable in Bermuda, and vice versa. Bermuda has not entered any reservations regarding its ratification of the New York Convention. The United Kingdom has also ratified and extended to Bermuda the Washington Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States 1965 ("ICSID Convention"). Bermuda is not a party to any bilateral or multilateral investment treaties.

The current (unwritten) GOB policy is that arbitrators and foreign counsel travelling to Bermuda for the purposes of arbitration do not need work permits. However, the Department of Immigration requires advance notice of their presence in the jurisdiction for the purpose of the arbitration.

Commercial arbitration in Bermuda has been directly linked with the growth of international companies, in particular insurance and reinsurance companies. Arbitration clauses are found in many insurance and reinsurance contracts. Often, these contracts name Bermuda as the arbitral seat, although they sometimes provide for arbitration in other locations, including London under New York substantive law (the so-called "Bermuda form"). Providing for arbitration in Bermuda pursuant to Bermudian substantive and procedural law is becoming increasingly popular in lieu of "Bermuda form" arbitration clauses.

The Bankruptcy Act 1989 as well as the Companies Act 1981 and the Companies (Winding Up) Rules 1982 govern the winding-up of companies. The Supreme Court (the first instance court of general jurisdiction) administers the bankruptcy process. Foreign money judgments can be enforced under Bermudian law under statute or common law, depending upon the country in which the original judgment was obtained. Under the Judgments Reciprocal Enforcement Act 1958 (JRE), Bermudian courts will recognize and enforce foreign money judgments as if they had been originally obtained in Bermuda. The JRE follows the same procedure as the Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1933 of the United Kingdom. A foreign creditor may apply for the bankruptcy of an individual or for the winding-up of a company provided the creditor follows the procedures set out in the aforementioned Bankruptcy Act 1989 and the Companies Act 1981.

## **Performance Requirements and Incentives**

[Return to top](#)

Except with regard to tourism and certain energy efficient goods and technologies, there are no grants or incentives available to foreign or domestic investors interested in investing in Bermuda. The Hotel Concession Act 1991 may provide full or partial relief from, or deferral of, customs duty for materials used in hotel renovations, and/or tax on land, occupancy, and payroll and/or lease requirements. The GOB is discussing offering additional incentives to spur investment in hospitality on the island. Special

development orders (SDO) may be granted on a case-by-case basis. The expanded version of the Temporary Customs Duty Relief Bill 2002 extends similar relief for restaurant renovations. In 2010, the GOB removed the import duty on many energy efficient goods and goods for use in harnessing power from renewable energy resources.

Bermuda's low taxation incentives are applicable to Bermudian and non-Bermudian businesses alike. There is no income tax, profits tax, withholding tax, capital gains tax, capital transfer tax, estate duty/inheritance tax, or VAT or sales tax in Bermuda, although there is a duty on almost all goods imported into Bermuda. Customs duty is normally calculated on an ad valorem basis, generally on the transaction value of imported goods and on whether it is for commercial or personal use. The most common rate is 22.25%, although luxury items such as boats and cars carry a higher rate, while most food items have a lower rate. Relief is available for materials used in local manufacturing. The most common rate for accompanied personal goods of persons arriving in Bermuda by air or sea is 35% of the transaction value.

Annual government fees are imposed on businesses, and there is a 14% payroll tax - two-thirds paid by the employer and one-third by the employee. The 2012 Incentives for Job Makers Act, designed to encourage international business executives to relocate and reside in Bermuda, recognizes and rewards companies that have demonstrated a commitment to Bermuda by exempting up to five of their senior executives from work permits for as long as the executive continues to be employed with the company and the company continues to invest in Bermuda. It also provides that senior executives will be eligible to apply for permanent residence status after ten years. The families of those exempt will also be entitled to reside in Bermuda. To be eligible for the exemption, companies must have at least 25 Bermudians on staff, employ Bermudians at all levels, provide entry-level positions for Bermudians, have programs in place for developing and promoting Bermudian employees, and engage in fair labor practices.

The BMA usually imposes minimum capital and regulatory requirements for exempt companies. These requirements are found in the Statement of Principles section of the agreement between the BMA and the investor. The Statement of Principles provides guidance on which assets the BMA accepts as liquid. The standard requirement is for liquid assets to be at least equivalent to the total of three months' expenditure. This does not apply in the case of licensees who act neither as principal nor agent, in which case only one month's expenditure must be maintained in the form of liquid assets. The GOB does not force foreign investors to establish and maintain data storage within Bermuda. With the restructuring and re-domiciling of businesses after the 2008 economic slump, some organizations have shifted their IT departments to less costly jurisdictions, including Canada and the United States.

The Bermuda Customs Department has no discriminatory or preferential import or export policies affecting foreign investors, although the Bermuda Customs Tariff contains a number of preferential duty reliefs for certain local commercial activities (e.g., for the poultry and dairy industry). Investors are not required to purchase goods from local suppliers or export a certain percentage of output.

Because of Bermuda's small size, the GOB does not normally solicit investment in infrastructure, although, as mentioned above, it has on occasion entered into public-private partnerships for large projects.

For information about labor requirements and work permits, see the section entitled "Labor" below at para. 18.

### **Right to Private Ownership and Establishment**

[Return to top](#)

Under the amended Companies Act pursuant to Section 114(b), local companies are permitted to own property. General speaking, however, exempt companies cannot own real property, although they may lease commercial land for up to 50 years and residential property for their employees for up to 21 years. The scheme for hotels is different; according to the Hotel Concession Act section 4 (h), "notwithstanding the provisions of section 78 of the Bermuda Immigration Act 1956 and paragraph 12 of the First Schedule to the Companies Act 1981, a company may lease a hotel or residential unit for a period not exceeding 131 years with an option to renew for a similar period."

Except for trash collection and ferry services, the GOB has few monopolies. The postal service is in competition with private mail services. Public education competes with private education. Public bus service competes with taxis, local mini-bus services, and multiple-passenger airport buses. There is significant competition within the telecommunications industry. Bermuda currently has four categories of telecommunication companies: Class A providers, which are international service providers; Class B providers, which are fixed and wireless domestic service providers; Class C providers, which are internet service providers (ISP) providing DSL (broadband) and dial-up services; and Cable TV providers, which are Bermuda-based cable television companies authorized to provide limited telecommunication services. In April 2013, a new telecommunications regulatory scheme - the Regulatory Authority Act and the Electronic Communications Act - will come into effect. Among other things, the new scheme will increase competition – and hopefully result in better products and lower prices to consumers – by allowing providers to "bundle" wireless, internet, and television services.

### **Protection of Property Rights**

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda law recognizes and enforces secured interests in property, both movable and real. Bermuda protects property rights under the Mortgage Registration Act 1786, the Acquisition of Land Act 1970, the Development and Planning Act 1974, and the Registry General, all of which protect and facilitate the acquisition and disposition of property rights, such as land, buildings, and mortgages. Bermuda also has a land tax office and land valuations office. In November 2011, the Senate approved the Land Title Registration Act 2011, moving Bermuda from deeds-based property transactions to a parcel-based land registration system. Until the new registration system is implemented in April 2013, land owners must retain a Bermudian lawyer to research the history of the property and ensure that a third party does not have a claim. Each time a piece of real estate in Bermuda changes hands it is recorded in a deed of conveyance or a mortgage.

There is adequate protection for intellectual property, patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets. As an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom, the island cannot enter into treaties separate and apart unless the UK expressly authorizes it to do so. Therefore, Bermuda is subject to the same treaties to which the UK is a party, including those concerning intellectual property rights. One such agreement is the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (Berne Convention), which requires its signatories to recognize the copyright of works of authors from other signatory countries (known as members of the *Berne Union*) in the same way it recognizes the copyright of its own nationals. Bermuda has also passed its own laws for protecting intellectual property, patents, copyrights, and trademarks. These include the Patents and Designs Act 1930, the Trade Marks Act 1974 (as amended), and the Copyright and Designs Act 2004. While the GOB has taken steps to implement the WTO Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement, it has yet to sign the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) internet treaties.

### Transparency of Regulatory System

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda's legal, regulatory and accounting systems adhere to high ethical and current transparency standards. As noted previously, the legal and regulatory systems are grounded in UK law, while the accounting systems and auditing standards typically follow Canadian Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). A Bermudian company may choose to follow the GAAP of any other jurisdiction, subject to full disclosure of its accounts. Bermuda is also a member of regulatory standard-setting bodies for banking (BASEL), insurance (International Association Insurance Supervisors or IAIS) and investment business (Financial Services Authority or FSA). Technically speaking, Bermuda is not considered an offshore financial centre because there is no distinction between how it regulates businesses operating in the local economy and the exempt companies operating internationally from within Bermuda. The BMA continually strives to improve transparency within the regulatory system. Neither unlicensed nor unregistered entities are permitted to operate in the financial services sector. The BMA is the sole regulatory body for financial services and is responsible for the licensing, supervision, and regulation of financial institutions, including those conducting deposit-taking, insurance, investment, and trust business in Bermuda. There are separate regulatory acts that apply to each of these sectors. The GOB posts new laws and regulations in the Royal Gazette (the official gazette) for public comment.

The amended Investment Business Act 2003 enhances the regulatory powers of the BMA, granting the BMA stronger intervention powers and clarifying provisions, such as the BMA's ability to cooperate with foreign bodies. The amended Investment Business Act 2012, the Trust (Regulation of Trust Business) Amendment Act 2012, and the Banks and Deposit Companies Amendment Act 2012 further regulate investment businesses, trusts, and banks in the areas of civil penalties, public censure, prohibitions against providing certain services, and publications of decisions. Other provisions include measures to strengthen criminal and regulatory penalties. The Investment Business Act 2012 also brought the Bermuda Stock Exchange (BSX) under the regulation of the BMA.

In 2008, Bermuda passed the Proceeds of Crime Regulations (Supervision and Enforcement) Act (amended 2010), which designated the BMA as the supervisory body for securing compliance with regulations by regulated entities. The Act was amended in 2010 as part of Bermuda's ongoing effort to strengthen its anti-money laundering and

anti-terrorism financing (AML/ATF) framework to ensure a high level of compliance with international standards.

In March 2009, the BMA issued Guidance Notes for AML/ATF Regulated Financial Institutions on Anti-money Laundering and Anti-terrorist Financing, outlining and interpreting the legal and regulatory framework, indicating good industry practices, and assisting institutions to design and implement systems and controls to limit AML/ATF risks to institutions. This was followed up by an AML/ATF market survey, which was designed to ensure that licensed entities were in compliance with the Proceeds of Crime Regulations.

The BMA regulates collective investment schemes (CIS). The 1997 Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) and the 2006 Investment Funds Act (IFA) regulate the fund administrators. Collective investment schemes are also subject to IFA, which clarifies and codifies the current regulation of funds in order to strengthen Bermuda's position in the international funds market.

Bermuda's Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) is a member of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units. The FIA shares information with other agencies, as appropriate, within and outside Bermuda. In addition, the BMA Amendment (No. 3) Act 2004 clarifies the power of the BMA to cooperate with other overseas authorities. Other laws that authorize the sharing of information with overseas regulators include the Banks and Deposit Companies Act 1999, the Trusts (Regulation of Trust Business) Act 2001 and the Investment Act 2003.

## **Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment**

[Return to top](#)

The GOB's policies facilitate the free flow of financial resources in the product and factor markets. As the third largest insurance market in the world, Bermuda seeks to stay ahead of insurance product innovations. Bermuda has a commercially sensible regulatory regime, an international stock exchange, an established financial and legal services sector, and a geographical position between the U.S. and European markets that make it a prime location for the convergence of the insurance world and capital markets. Commercial credit lines are normally arranged through U.S. or UK institutions. The Banks and Deposit Companies Act 1999 implemented the Basel Committee's Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision. Bermuda banks are currently compliant with the Basel II Accord. In 2011, the BMA published a discussion paper on enhancing Bermuda's current regulatory framework for banks in line with Basel III. As noted previously, Bermuda's currency, the Bermuda dollar, is fixed or pegged to the U.S. dollar at a 1:1 rate. The BMA, which has limited central bank powers, oversees Bermuda's currency. The BMA also facilitates portfolio investment but does not determine interest rates, which are set by the market and usually follow the Federal Reserve System (Fed) rates. Liquidity and solvency are important concerns for Bermuda's four banks as there is no monetary policy, no lender of last resort, and no implied guaranty. In July 2011, the GOB passed the Deposit Insurance Act, which lays out proposals for implementing a Deposit Insurance Scheme (DIS) for the Bermuda market. To be implemented in 2013, the DIS will provide insurance coverage to small depositors in banks and credit unions.

Because Bermuda's economy is so intertwined with the U.S., local capital restriction policies tend toward an open flow of capital. Bermuda does not have developed capital markets, as it relies on the U.S. and other overseas markets. Credit is allocated on

market terms, and foreign investors are able to get credit on the local and international market. The private sector has access to a variety of credit instruments through the local banks. Many companies, particularly the larger ones, maintain external banking relationships. Since Bermuda does not have a central bank and does not conduct a controlling monetary policy, it has no need to intervene in the markets.

Bermuda's banks are highly capitalized and hold significantly high quantities of liquid U.S. dollar assets on their balance sheets. Approximately two-thirds of their aggregate balance sheet consists of inter-bank placements or holdings of high quality marketable securities. The amount of total assets within the banking sector decreased 2.8 percent or \$672 million from Q2 2011 to Q2 2012, largely driven by lower interbank deposit levels (down by 18.0% or 1.1 billion during the quarter) amid stable lending both in BD\$ and foreign currency. The BMA's Regulatory Update from November 2012 reports the total assets for the banking sector for Q2 2012 were \$23.6 billion. Cash and deposits fell by 8.1 percent or 650.5 million while loans and advances increased 5.9 percent or 517.1 million during Q1. Banks are required to meet a minimum capital ratio of 10 percent at the consolidated level, but the aggregate ratio exceeded 20 percent in 2012. In other matters, the banks follow the Bank of England model. They are required to maintain separately capitalized subsidiaries in order to conduct their trust business. Bermuda's banking system is sound, although there has been a steady increase in the ratio of non-performing loans to capital. As of September 2012, that ratio stood at 37.4%.

Solvency for the banking sector remains high as capitalization improved slightly during the second quarter of 2012. The aggregate risk asset ratio (RAR) rose to 22.1% in Q2 2012, as net capital rose by 0.6% (or 14.8 million), while risk-weighted assets (RWAs) declined by 0.7% (or 77.4 million).

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) recognized the Bermuda Stock Exchange (BSX) as a "Designated Offshore Securities Market" in October 1996. In 1999, the BSX became a full member of the International Federation of Stock Exchanges. In 2005, the UK Financial Services Authority granted the BSX Designated Investment Exchange status. The BMA provides oversight of the BSX and its trading activity. The BSX employs the Bermuda Securities Depository (BSD) - an electronic clearing, settlement and registration system - under BMA oversight. The BSD was designed to facilitate more efficient trade settlement for BSX-listed securities by allowing book entry settlement rather than paper-based settlement. Companies listed on the BSX include: ACE Limited, Argus Group Holdings Limited, Bermuda Commercial Bank, Bank of Butterfield, HSBC Corporate Money Funds, Lines Overseas Management and Orbis.

## **Competition from State Owned Enterprises (SOEs)**

[Return to top](#)

Bermudian state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are active in public transportation (buses and ferries), healthcare, and postal services. The rest of the economy is in the hands of private enterprise. In Bermuda, public enterprise generally has easier access to market, credit, licensing, and other critical business operations than do private enterprises. SOE employees are members of the Bermuda Industrial Union.

Governance of SOEs is hierarchical in structure and led by a politically-appointed Cabinet Minister. SOEs are required to provide financial information as necessary to the

Minister who submits the information annually to the Auditor General. Generally, no boards of directors are affiliated with Bermuda SOEs, with the exception of the Hospital Board; some SOEs may have advisory boards.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

[Return to top](#)

There is a general awareness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) among both producers and consumers, and many local and international companies domiciled in Bermuda practice it regularly. Many firms are involved in philanthropic endeavors such as donating, volunteering, and fundraising for local and international causes, including college scholarships for talented Bermudian students. Many companies also have environmental programs in place to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and create “green” office spaces and buildings.

Businesses may apply to the Ministry of Economic Development for designation as a “Good Corporate Citizen.” This program identifies companies of good standing in Bermuda that support (via training, scholarships, etc.) and employ a fair number of Bermudians. If a company meets the criteria, the Ministry may, for example, grant pending work permit applications permission-in-principle and fast-track them through the work permit process.

### **Political Violence**

[Return to top](#)

There have been no recent incidents of political violence in Bermuda.

### **Corruption**

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda has laws, regulations and penalties to combat corruption and effectively enforces them impartially. The Bermuda Criminal Code 1907 and the Proceeds of Crime Act 1997 make provisions for punishing corrupt practices in the area of investments, particularly for the offences of misleading statements and practices, market manipulation, and insider trading. The Parliamentary Election Act 1978 addresses giving bribes to (or accepting bribes from) a government official; the penalty under this act is \$1,000 or up to two years imprisonment or both. The Parliament Act of 1957 provides for a five-year imprisonment and/or up to \$84,000 in fines for the bribery of a member of the House of Legislature.

In 2010, the GOB published several reports from former auditors general that referred to evidence of massive mismanagement of government funds in 2007-08 and recommended that police investigate four cases of overspending and/or lack of oversight and poor internal controls. The investigation is ongoing. In 2012, the GOB enacted the Good Governance Act 2012 to improve the transparency and accountability of Government contracts. The Act provides protection for whistleblowers, stronger internal audits, and establishes an Office of Project Management and Procurement in order to strengthen oversight and control of government projects.

Keen to rise above any perceived impropriety associated with offshore banking centers, Bermuda continues to update its regulatory framework to meet international standards, including those of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Financial Action Task

Force (FATF) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

### **Bilateral Investment Agreements**

[Return to top](#)

There is no bilateral investment treaty between Bermuda and the United States.

Bermuda has two bilateral taxation-related treaties with the U.S., the “Convention between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on Behalf of the Government of Bermuda) and the Government of the United States of America Relating to the Taxation of Insurance Enterprises and Mutual Assistance in Tax Matters” (Convention) (1986) and the “Tax Information Exchange Agreement” (TIEA) (1988). Under the Convention Act, the United States agrees to waive for eligible Bermudian insurance companies any income and excise taxes on insurance premium income derived from the United States. An “eligible” company is defined as one whose “predominant business activity is the issuing of insurance, reinsurance, or annuity contracts and the investing of insurance reserves and other capital incident to the carrying on of the insurance business” that does not operate as a permanent establishment in the U.S.

Bermuda is on the category “A” list of signatories to the IOSCO MMOU (International Organization of Securities Commissions Multi-lateral Memorandum of Understanding), which provides for mutual co-operation and the exchange of information among securities regulators. In June 2009, the BMA was approved as a signatory to the Multi-lateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMoU) established by the International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS). The IAIS developed the MMoU to establish a formal basis for cooperation and information exchange between signatory regulators who supervise insurers with international, or cross border operations.

### **OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs**

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda is an Overseas Territory of the UK and is not a member of the Overseas Private Investor Corporation (OPIC) or any other investment insurance programs.

Investors in Bermuda do not enjoy the same kinds of protections as provided by other jurisdictions such as the U.S. and should exercise their own “due diligence.” There is no deposit protection for owners of mutual funds or trusts, nor is there any central fund to reimburse investors. The BMA, however, maintains as public information a register of all licensed investment service providers. Moreover, investment managers must be licensed pursuant to the Investment Business Act of 1998. Prior to licensing, the investment service must provide proof of adequate professional indemnity insurance. In 2006, the GOB passed the Investment Funds Act, which clearly outlines how public funds are regulated, defines the framework for non-public, institutionalized funds, and includes requirements for fund administrators.

### **Labor**

[Return to top](#)

According to GOB figures released in December 2012, unemployment stands at 8%, compared to only 4% in 2009. Unemployment among young people age 25 or under is estimated to be more than 30%. Historically, a large part of the international business,



hotel and hospitality, and construction workforce came from overseas because of the lack of skilled or qualified labor within the island's small population. That has become a political issue within Bermuda.

The GOB requires investors to employ Bermudian workers where at all possible. The GOB's overall objective has been to encourage the training and eventual hiring of locals to fill senior management positions at local and exempt companies. To support this objective, the Bermuda Department of Immigration has established specific guidelines. Companies must hire an equally qualified Bermudian or qualified spouse of a Bermudian before hiring a qualified foreign national.

On January 30, 2013, the GOB eliminated the controversial "term limits" policy, under which foreign workers were allowed to work in Bermuda for no more than six years unless their employers could demonstrate that they were "key employees," whereupon they were permitted to work up to ten years. The "term limits" policy had been adopted to ensure that foreign nationals did not remain on the island for extended periods of time with the possibility of becoming permanent residents. The GOB believes abolition of the policy will encourage foreign businesses to maintain and/or establish themselves on the island and keep productive foreign citizens in Bermuda. It has pledged to look for additional ways to streamline the immigration process.

As noted above, the 2012 Incentives for Job Makers Act was designed to encourage certain international business executives to relocate and reside in Bermuda and to reward them and their family members by exempting them from work permits and putting them on a fast track to permanent residence. In February 2013, the GOB introduced special category work permits, including global work permits and new business work permits. A global work permit facilitates a global company's ability to transfer employees throughout their organization, including Bermuda. New business work permits allow exempt companies that are new to Bermuda to expedite up to five work permits for overseas recruits for senior executive positions. A recruitment declaration form will be incorporated into the work permit process to ensure that Bermudians are treated fairly in the recruitment process, with hefty penalties for violators.

In 2011, the GOB imposed a work permit moratorium on cleaning, landscaping, and gardening jobs. In February 2013, it added technicians, grocery packers, cashiers, and couriers to the moratorium list and placed carpenters, administrative assistants, room attendants, kitchen porters, landscape gardeners, and masons in a restricted category. English competency will be officially incorporated into the new work permit policies. The GOB does not force foreign investors to establish and maintain data storage within Bermuda. With the restructuring and re-domiciling of businesses after the 2008 economic slump, some organizations have shifted their IT departments to less costly jurisdictions such as Canada or the United States.

Although Bermuda continues to have labor disputes (under the purview of the 1992 Labour Disputes Act), the number of disputes has decreased in recent years due in part to the passage of fair labor laws favored by most Bermudians. The government labor force is highly unionized and when there are disputes, they can be particularly adversarial and contentious.

Bermuda has no free port or duty-free import zones.

#### **Foreign Direct Investment Statistics**

[Return to top](#)

There are few statistics available regarding foreign direct investment in Bermuda. In general, ownership in the Bermuda insurance sector is geographically diverse, but U.S. companies own approximately 60% of the active commercial insurers. Bermudian-owned and European-owned insurers represent approximately 20% and 15% of the market, respectively. Approximately one in three commercial insurers is a publicly-listed company, of which two-thirds are listed on U.S. exchanges.

#### **Web Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.bermudacommerce.com>  
Bermuda Hospitals Board: [www.bermudahospitals.bm](http://www.bermudahospitals.bm)  
Bermuda Insurance Market: [www.bermuda-insurance.org](http://www.bermuda-insurance.org)  
Bermuda Laws On-line [www.bermudalaws.bm](http://www.bermudalaws.bm)  
Bermuda Monetary Authority [www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)  
Bermuda On-line: <http://bermuda-online.org/>  
Bermuda Stock Exchange: [www.bsx.com](http://www.bsx.com)  
Business Bermuda - [www.businessbermuda.org](http://www.businessbermuda.org)  
Department of Statistics: [www.statistics.gov.bm](http://www.statistics.gov.bm)  
Government of Bermuda: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)  
HSBC Bank of Bermuda: [www.hsbc.bm](http://www.hsbc.bm)  
Registrar of Companies: [www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)  
The Royal Gazette: [www.royalgazette.com](http://www.royalgazette.com)

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing

- [How Do I Get Paid \(Methods of Payment\)](#)
- [How Does the Banking System Operate](#)
- [Foreign-Exchange Controls](#)
- [U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks](#)
- [Project Financing](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

### How Do I Get Paid (Methods of Payment)?

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda companies commonly pay by check, bank draft, standing order, local interbank transfers or international money transfers (wire payments or cables) for payment of goods and services. Drafts are checks issued on behalf of a client and are used to make payment overseas in instances where checks drawn on a local account are not acceptable. Drafts are drawn on funds held at correspondent accounts so they clear through the country where the currency is domiciled. Standing orders are used if checks, drafts, money transfers or account transfers are requested for the same amount on a regular basis. International Money Transfers (IMTs) are often referred to as wire payments or cables using the SWIFT network. They provide the means for receipt and transfer of funds internationally. Manager's Checks are used to make payments locally rather than being drawn on overseas correspondent banks.

Companies may also be paid by open account, letter of credit, cash in advance, documentary collections and factoring. There is no central clearing house yet, but common Automated Clearing House (ACH) standards are in use.

Settlement of payments occurs through a network of correspondent banks and can, therefore, be made in any major currency at nearly any bank in the world. Typically, employees of local firms are paid in BDA, whereas some exempt firms pay in USD.

There are no credit rating agencies in Bermuda. Bermuda does have two debt collection agencies, the Bermuda Credit Association, ([www.bca.bm](http://www.bca.bm)) and the Bermuda Debt Collection Agency (ph. 441-292-8651)

### How Does the Banking System Operate?

[Return to top](#)

Bermuda has a strong, well developed banking system due to the large international business sector domiciled in Bermuda. There are four banks licensed to operate in Bermuda. There is one global bank (Bank of Bermuda/member of HSBC group), one regional bank (Butterfield Bank), and 2 local banks (Capital G and Bermuda Commercial Bank) available for financial services, products and advice.

These banks offer a wide range of commercial banking facilities including comprehensive investment, trust, financial management services and direct access to a variety of currency alternatives. The English common law rule of confidentiality prevails on all accounts. Accounts can be maintained in most foreign currencies. Bermuda's banking sector is closely monitored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF),

international risk rating agencies and the Bermuda Monetary Authority (BMA). The BMA is the integrated regulator of the financial services sector in Bermuda, including monitoring anti-money laundering, which is deemed crucial to maintaining the financial reputation of the island.

Many banking transactions are done electronically and a majority of the population use Internet banking. Internet banking has become a common channel through which Bermudians transfer cash and pay for services.

### **Foreign-Exchange Controls**

[Return to top](#)

Exempted businesses and non-resident individuals may trade and maintain bank accounts in any currency, remitting or repatriating their funds without exchange controls. However, Bermuda does have a Foreign Currency Purchase Tax (FCPT) of 1.0% per transaction on the purchase of all non-local currencies including the US Dollar. This includes all purchases of foreign currencies for travel and business purposes and all telegraphic (wire) transfers of monies from Bermuda to individuals and businesses abroad.

In March 2009, Bermuda updated the Revenue Act 1898 to strengthen the requirements relating to cross border transportation of currency and monetary instruments. The threshold for reporting is \$10,000. Mandatory declaration forms are used for all incoming passengers (regardless of point of embarkation) and for outgoing passengers to the U.S. For outgoing passengers to Canada and the U.K. there is a disclosure system in place.

### **U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks**

[Return to top](#)

There are no U.S. banks located in Bermuda. Although the Bank of New York is on the island, this branch is an investment bank only. While there are no correspondent banks in Bermuda, all Bermudian banks have relationships with major U.S. banks. There are no multilateral development banks in Bermuda.

### **Project Financing**

[Return to top](#)

The Bermudian government expects potential investors to have project financing in place as part of the business plan for proposed projects in Bermuda. There are no national financial entities in Bermuda to assist with foreign project financing.

### **Web Resources**

[Return to top](#)

Bank of Bermuda: [www.hsbc.bm](http://www.hsbc.bm)

Bermuda Commercial Bank: [www.bcb.bm](http://www.bcb.bm)

Butterfield Bank: [www.bm.butterfieldgroup.com](http://www.bm.butterfieldgroup.com)

Capital G Limited: [www.capital-g.com](http://www.capital-g.com)

EXIM Bank Country Limitation Schedule:

<http://www.exim.gov/tools/countrylimitationschedule/>

Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

OPIC: [www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)

USDA Commodity Credit Corporation:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=about&subject=landing&topic=sao-cc>

U.S. Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov>

Page 52 of 63

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of International Trade:

<http://www.sba.gov/about-offices-content/1/2889>

U.S. Trade and Development Agency: [www.usda.gov/](http://www.usda.gov/)

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 8: Business Travel

- [Business Customs](#)
- [Travel Advisory](#)
- [Visa Requirements](#)
- [Telecommunications](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Language](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays](#)
- [Temporary Entry of Materials and Personal Belongings](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

### Business Customs

[Return to top](#)

Given the proximity of Bermuda to the United States, there is extensive knowledge of and parallels to the American business culture. Bermudians highly value good manners and personal courtesy. Bermudians usually shake hands upon meeting and sometimes exchange business cards. Still, there are some cultural differences. A greeting of “Good morning,” “Good afternoon,” or “Good evening” will start you off on the right foot. Unlike Americans, Bermudians appreciate being addressed by their family name (i.e. Mr. Smith or Mrs. Brown). Conversations move to a first name basis a bit more slowly than in the United States. Although island life can be slower and more relaxed than the mainland, business visitors should be on time for meetings and dressed appropriately since the international business sector tends to be formal and efficient. Business dress can be more formal than in the U.S.; many companies subscribe to “smart casual” dress, but this is dependant on the company policy.

Bermuda is the one of the few places in the world where there is an unwritten national dress for men. Bermudians and professional businessmen wear Bermuda shorts for business attire and cocktail parties predominantly during the summer months. The shorts are worn three inches above the knee, accompanied by Bermuda (knee-length) socks, a short- or long-sleeved button down shirt, a tie, and a single or double breasted navy blue blazer, sport coat, or linen jacket. Black or brown loafers with tassels, depending on the color of the shorts, are the most appropriate shoes.

### Travel Advisory

[Return to top](#)

The U.S. Department of State's Consular Information Program advises Americans traveling and residing abroad through Consular Information Sheets, Public Announcements, and Travel Warnings. Consular Information Sheets exist for all countries and include information on entry and exit requirements, currency regulations, health conditions, safety and security, crime, political disturbances, and the addresses of U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad. Public Announcements are issued to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions overseas that pose significant risks to the security of American travelers. Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid travel to a certain country because the situation is dangerous or unstable.

Americans should register with Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) for the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the country in which they are visiting or residing to make their presence and whereabouts known in case of an emergency, a disaster overseas, or an evacuation if that were to become necessary.

Please visit the <http://travel.state.gov> website for any travel advisories for Bermuda and other countries and to enroll in STEP.

## Visa Requirements

[Return to top](#)

### For visitors

A visa is not required for a U.S. citizen entering Bermuda as a visitor; however, a valid U.S. passport is required. Upon arrival, visitors must present their round trip ticket to Bermuda Immigration. *A visitor can stay on the island up to 90 days (3 months), any longer they have to request permission from the Bermuda Immigration department.*

### For potential residents (employment)

To work in Bermuda, a work permit is required and must be secured before arrival on the island. Non-compliance may result in denial of entry into the country. The prospective employer is responsible for securing work permits for their non-Bermudian employees.

Immigration policy requires that qualified and interested Bermudians be given the first opportunity to fill job vacancies via advertised career ads. If no qualified and interested Bermudians or spouses of Bermudians are available, then the employer may apply for a permit to employ a non-Bermudian unless the position is in a closed category. Work permits issued after April 1, 2001, in most cases will not be renewable after a period of 6 years. In certain cases the period may be extended an additional 3 years for those designated as “key” employees. In November 2011, the GOB passed the Incentives for Job Makers bill which gives senior executives who satisfy certain criteria such as hiring Bermudians at all levels, the right to apply for permanent residence. In February 2013, work term limits were eliminated.

The initial work permit application, including the immigration questionnaire form, a copy of the job advertisement and the required fee, must be in writing, addressed to the Chief of Immigration Officer at the Department of Immigration.

For Americans traveling to Bermuda on business, the U.S. Consulate strongly recommends the company/individual contact Bermuda Immigration to see if a work permit is required. Bermuda Immigration and Bermuda Customs are very strict and some travelers without correct/sufficient documentation have been sent back to their country of origin.

If you are planning a trip or are moving to Bermuda and need more information on Bermuda Immigration or Customs requirements, contact Bermuda Immigration: (441) 295-5151 or [www.immigration.gov.bm](http://www.immigration.gov.bm).

Every official U.S. Government visitor to Bermuda must obtain a country clearance from the U.S. Consulate at least 72 hours in advance. For more information please contact the U.S. Consulate in Bermuda at <http://hamilton.usconsulate.gov>.

U.S. companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security opinions and rulings/findings are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links:

State Department Visa Website: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html)

## Telecommunications

[Return to top](#)

**E-Commerce:** Bermuda has established itself as a leading e-commerce jurisdiction; it was one of the first countries in the world to pass legislation that established legal principles for the conduct of e-commerce and the processing of electronic transactions.

**Telecommunications:** Bermuda has a competitive telecommunications market due to the efforts of the Ministry of the Environment, Planning & Infrastructure Strategy. In May 2013, the telecommunication industry in Bermuda underwent major changes in its regulatory regime by allowing telecom companies to apply for Integrated Communication Operating Licences (ICOLs). This change will allow telecoms to offer residents cell phone, long distance, cable t.v., and internet services and create operating efficiencies and better pricing for the consumer. Bermuda's internal telephone system is 100% digital, with fiber optic trunk lines. The overseas links are fiber optic cables, and there is growing redundancy built into the system to negate the effect of faults. Although communications in Bermuda are state of the art, with multiple satellite, ocean cable, and fiber-optic cable facilities in place, severe winds and storms can bring local communications down for periods ranging from hours to weeks.

Telephone and fax service extends throughout the island. Long distance service is rapid and efficient, with direct dialing to the U.S. and most of the world. Calls from the U.S. are not international and only require 1 + 441 (area code) to place an incoming long distance call. Rental rates for phone lines and local service costs are comparable to those in the U.S. With the advent of competition, direct dial calls to the U.S. range from \$.09 - .19 BDA per minute, depending on the payment package selected. Many international brands of telephone and fax sets are available for purchase on the island for home and business use, and a wide range of cellular phone equipment and services are available. There are seven Internet services companies providing dial-up and DSL service on the island (five consumer, two business). Currently, prices are considerably higher than in the United States and the Caribbean. For example, DSL service runs about \$99 BDA per month.

### **The Emergency Broadcast Station - FM 100.1**

The Emergency Broadcast Station (EBS) is a Government Disaster Preparedness Facility used by the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO). In the event of an emergency, the Department of Communication and Information (DCI) and Police Media Relations (PMR), as directed by the EMO, will disseminate emergency information to the public via the EBS on a continuous basis. The station is located at COMOPS (Combined Operations), Police Operations Centre, Prospect Devonshire. The Department of Telecommunications, which is responsible for the maintenance of the station, carries out prerecorded weekly testing of the station.



## Transportation

[Return to top](#)

### Airlines

Several commercial airlines fly between Bermuda and the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. daily, although during the winter months there are reduced flight schedules. The Bermuda International airport changed its name to the L.F. Wade International Airport in 2007 and is located at the Civil Air Terminal in St. David's approximately 10 miles from the capital, Hamilton. Please go to [www.bermudaairport.aero/default.aspx](http://www.bermudaairport.aero/default.aspx) to view flight information and schedules.

### Automobiles

Driving on the island is on the left, British-style, and the maximum speed limit is 15 mph in Hamilton and 21 mph on the rest of the island. Under Bermudian law, non-residents are not allowed to own, rent, or drive four-wheeled vehicles. Non-residents must rely on taxis, buses or rental scooters.

### Buses/Ferries

There is a regular, island-wide public bus and ferry service, and daily and weekly and monthly passes are available at the Central Bus Terminal, or Visitors' Service Bureau or Ferry Terminal in Hamilton. The buses and ferries are generally inexpensive, accommodating, clean and efficient. Schedules can be found in the phone book or at [www.bermudabuses.com](http://www.bermudabuses.com) and at [http://www.seaexpress.bm/ferries\\_about.aspx](http://www.seaexpress.bm/ferries_about.aspx).

### Scooters

Rental motor scooter are readily available, and the required helmet is provided. However, visitors should carefully consider whether it is worth the risk to ride a scooter. Motor scooters provide the greatest road peril in Bermuda. Those unfamiliar with driving on the left are likely to find the roundabouts and regulations for yielding at junctions confusing and dangerous. In addition, vehicles often stop on the side of the road, blocking one lane of traffic. Main roads, while generally in good condition, are extremely narrow and tend to be bordered by heavy vegetation or low stone walls. Travelers who rent scooters should be aware that scooter accidents involving visitors are common, and they can sometimes involve serious injuries or fatalities.

### Taxis

Taxis are readily available for use across the island, although local rates are somewhat pricey by US standards. The best access is via hotel taxi stands.

## Language

[Return to top](#)

The official language of Bermuda is English, but Portuguese is widely spoken among the sizeable Portuguese community.

## Health

[Return to top](#)

Local doctors and dentists meet international standards. Many are trained in the U.S., Canada or England and are licensed and accredited. All physicians in the yellow pages of the Bermuda telephone directory are licensed by the Bermuda Government and speak English. No special vaccinations are required for travel to Bermuda.

*Please note:* The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy coverage applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. Some U.S. medical insurance plans do not cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Further, U.S. Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States. However, many travel agents and private companies offer insurance plans that will cover health care expenses incurred overseas, including emergency services such as medical evacuations. If applicable, you will generally have pay to at the time of service with either cash or credit card and then submit the receipt to your insurance company for reimbursement.

There are two main hospitals in Bermuda. The King Edward VII Memorial Hospital, just east of Hamilton, is a relatively well-equipped and modern general medical and surgical hospital with about 300 beds. All customary services are available at the King Edward, including an emergency and outpatient department. There is also a psychiatric hospital called the Mid Atlantic Wellness Institute. The Lamb-Foggo Urgent Care Centre is an emergency medical clinic located in the northeast end of the island. Both are accredited under a Canadian system.

King Edward VII Memorial Hospital  
7 Point Finger Road  
Paget, DV04  
Phone: (441) 236-2345

Mid Atlantic Wellness Institute  
P.O. Box DV501  
Devonshire DVBX  
Phone: (441) 236-3770

Lamb-Foggo Urgent Care Centre  
1 Hall St. South Side  
St. David's DD 03  
Phone: (441) 298-7700

### **Prescription Drugs**

U.S. prescriptions are not honored in Bermuda. It will be necessary to visit a Bermuda doctor and have a new prescription written if you need to have it filled here. Most common medications are available locally, upon presentation of a prescription from a Bermuda doctor. If you are taking prescription medication, you must inform Bermuda customs officials at the point of entry. Medicines must be in labeled containers, and travelers should carry a copy of the written prescription and a letter from the physician or pharmacist confirming the reason the medicine is prescribed.

### **Emergency Numbers: Police, Fire and Ambulance 911**

The emergency phone number for the Police, Fire and Ambulance service is **911**. The phone number for the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital is **(441) 236-2345**.

More information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747) or through their website at: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the website of the World Health Organization (WHO) at: [www.who.int/en](http://www.who.int/en)

For information about hurricanes in Bermuda, consult the Bermuda weather website at: [www.weather.bm](http://www.weather.bm) or the U.S. National Hurricane Centre at: [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov).

### Local Time, Business Hours, and Holidays

[Return to top](#)

#### Time Difference

Bermuda is on Atlantic Standard Time (AST). The time difference between New York City and Bermuda is one (1) hour. When it is 12:00 noon in New York City, it is 1:00 pm in Bermuda. London is four (4) hours ahead of Hamilton; therefore, when it is 12:00 noon in Bermuda, it is 4:00 pm in London.

#### Business hours

The regular business work week in Bermuda is from Monday to Friday from 9 to 5 p.m. however many retail and grocery stores are open on Saturdays as well. Banks are open from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday to Thursday and from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday. Some grocery stores are open on Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. During tourist season, some retail stores in Hamilton will stay open on Wednesdays until 9 p.m.

#### U.S. and Bermuda Official Holidays 2013

NOTE: (O)=OBSERVED, A=AMERICAN, B=BERMUDA

Holiday/Event	Date	Country
2013 New Year's Day (O)	Tuesday, January 1	A/B
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday (O)	Monday, January 21	A
Washington's Birthday	Monday, February 18	A
Good Friday	Friday, March 29	B
Bermuda Day	Friday, May 24	B
Memorial Day	Monday, May 27	A
National Hero's Day	Monday, June 17	B
Independence Day	Thursday, July 4	A
Emancipation Day	Thursday, August 1	B
Somer's Day	Friday, August 2	B
Labor Day	Monday, September 2	A/B
Columbus Day (O)	Monday, October 14	A
Remembrance/Veterans Day	Monday, November 11	A/B
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 28	A
Christmas Day (O)	Wednesday, December 25	A/B
Boxing Day (O)	Thursday, December 26	B
2014 New Year's Day (O)	Wednesday, January 1	A/B

### Temporary Entry of Materials and Personal Belongings

[Return to top](#)

Some goods may be imported on a temporary basis without the payment of customs duty. Goods imported for short periods of time (e.g. tools of trade) must have a monetary security placed with customs prior to being released. Qualifying goods may be found in the 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Bermuda Customs Tariff ([www.customs.gov.bm](http://www.customs.gov.bm)). Some restrictions apply and proper export procedures must be followed in order to obtain a

refund of the financial security. Any goods which remain in Bermuda are subject to import duty at the appropriate rate. If the goods are sold or otherwise disposed of without authorization from the Collector of Customs, the goods are liable to forfeiture and the importer is liable for a monetary penalty of up to BDA\$12,000.

Goods re-entering Bermuda may be imported exempt from duty providing it is proven to the satisfaction of Customs that the goods have not undergone any changes and that ownership remains the same. Goods re-imported after repairs or replacement are subject to duty on the cost of those repairs or replacement. However, goods re-imported which are warranty repairs or replacements are exempt from duty provided that proof of warranty is provided.

Persons moving to Bermuda with their used personal possessions may qualify for Transfer of Residence Allowance (TRA). TRA applies to anyone taking up residence in Bermuda for the first time and former residents returning after living abroad for more than one year. The exemption applies to goods older than six months which arrive within 90 days before or after your arrival. Exceptions are listed in Public Notice #28. An itemized list with depreciated values must be supplied for used goods. Goods purchased within six months of arriving in Bermuda must be duty paid with invoices submitted. Customs reserves the right to inspect all incoming shipments. Please refer to "Public Notice #28, Duty Free Allowance: Transfer of Residence" which is available to H.M. Customs website.

#### **Web Resources**

[Return to top](#)

American Consulate in Bermuda website: <http://hamilton.usconsulate.gov>

Bermuda Customs website: [www.customs.gov.bm](http://www.customs.gov.bm)

Bermuda Ferry Schedule: [http://www.seaexpress.bm/ferries\\_about.aspx](http://www.seaexpress.bm/ferries_about.aspx)

Bermuda Hospitals Board: [www.bermudahospitals.bm](http://www.bermudahospitals.bm)

Bermuda Immigration: [www.immigration.gov.bm](http://www.immigration.gov.bm)

Bermuda Public Transit information: [www.bermudabuses.com](http://www.bermudabuses.com)

Bermuda Weather: [www.weather.bm](http://www.weather.bm)

Centre for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Government of Bermuda: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)

National Hurricane Centre website: [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)

Travel.state.gov: <http://travel.state.gov>

World Health Organization: [www.who.int/en](http://www.who.int/en)

[Return to table of contents](#)



Fax: (441) 295-1966  
Website: [www.bec.bm](http://www.bec.bm)

- **Bermuda Insurance Market** Website: [www.bermuda-insurance.org](http://www.bermuda-insurance.org)
- **Bermuda Monetary Authority (BMA)**  
BMA House, 43 Victoria Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Bermuda  
Tel: (441) 295-5278  
Fax: (441) 292-7471  
Website: [www.bma.bm](http://www.bma.bm)
- **Business Bermuda**  
The Windsor Place  
22 Queen Street  
Hamilton, HM 11  
Bermuda  
Tel: (441) 292-0632  
Fax: (441) 292-1797  
Website: [www.businessbermuda.org](http://www.businessbermuda.org)
- **Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bermuda**  
Sofia House, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
48 Church Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Bermuda  
Phone: (441) 292-7479  
Fax: (441) 295-3121  
Web site: [www.icab.bm](http://www.icab.bm) Email: [info@icab.bm](mailto:info@icab.bm)
- **Ministry of Finance**  
Government Administration Building  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 30 Parliament Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Bermuda  
Tel: (441) 295-5151  
Fax: (441) 295-5727  
Website: [www.gov.bm](http://www.gov.bm)
- **Registrar of Companies**  
Government Administration Building  
30 Parliament Street  
Hamilton, HM 12  
Bermuda  
Tel: (441) 294-9244  
Fax: (441) 292-6640  
Website: [www.roc.gov.bm](http://www.roc.gov.bm)
- **U.S. Consulate General – Bermuda**

“Crown Hill”  
16 Middle Road  
Devonshire DV03  
P.O. Box HM 325  
Hamilton HMBX  
Tel: (441) 295-1342  
Fax: (441) 295-1592  
Website: <http://hamilton.usconsulate.gov>

## Market Research

[Return to top](#)

There is one research firm in Bermuda that can assist you with market research: Total Research Associates Ltd. - [www.totalgroup.bm](http://www.totalgroup.bm), and several ad agencies, for example: AAC Saatchi & Saatchi - [www.aac.bm](http://www.aac.bm); Aardvark Communications - [www.aardvark.bm](http://www.aardvark.bm); Advantage Ltd. - [www.advantage.bm](http://www.advantage.bm); Emedia Bermuda Ltd. - [www.emedia.bm](http://www.emedia.bm); Insight Visual – [www.insight.bm](http://www.insight.bm); RBK Advertising & Design - [www.rbk.bm](http://www.rbk.bm).

To view other market research reports produced by the U.S. Commercial Service, visit [www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp](http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp) and click on Country and Industry Market Reports.

Please note that these reports are only available to U.S. citizens and U.S. companies. Registration to the site is required, but free of charge.

## Trade Events

[Return to top](#)

The following is a list of some of the trade events in Bermuda for 2013:

- Coldwell Banker Home Show – February
- Butterfield & Vallis Food Show – March
- 2nd Annual Capital G Private Wealth Conference - April
- Bermuda Captive Conference - June
- Insurance Day Summit Bermuda – June
- Review of Optometry Bermuda Conference – July
- Natwest Island Games XV – July
- Annual Conference for Bermuda Insurers & Reinsurers (Convergence) - November
- International College and University Fair hosted by the Bermuda College - December

Please click on the link below for information on upcoming trade events in the U.S.: <http://export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>.

[Return to table of contents](#)

## Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services

The President's National Export Initiative aims to double exports over five years by marshaling Federal agencies to **prepare U.S. companies to export successfully, connect them with trade opportunities and support them once they do have exporting opportunities.**

The U.S. Commercial Service offers customized solutions to help U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium sized businesses, successfully expand exports to new markets. Our global network of trade specialists will work one-on-one with you through every step of the exporting process, helping you to:

- Target the best markets with our world-class research
- Promote your products and services to qualified buyers
- Meet the best distributors and agents for your products and services
- Overcome potential challenges or trade barriers
- Gain access to the full range of U.S. government trade promotion agencies and their services, including export training and potential trade financing sources

To learn more about the Federal Government's trade promotion resources for new and experienced exporters, please click on the following link: [www.export.gov](http://www.export.gov)

For more information on the services the U.S. Commercial Service offers to U.S. exporters, please click on the following link: (Insert link to Products and Services section of local buyusa.gov website here.)

U.S. exporters seeking general export information/assistance or country-specific commercial information can also contact the **U.S. Department of Commerce's Trade Information Center at (800) USA-TRAD(E).**

To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this report is accurate as of the date published. However, **The Department of Commerce** does not take responsibility for actions readers may take based on the information contained herein. Readers should always conduct their own due diligence before entering into business ventures or other commercial arrangements. **The Department of Commerce** can assist companies in these endeavors.

[Return to table of contents](#)