



*Impressive buildings at the  
Crane Resort & Residences.*



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# Building for the Future

**I**n every construction project, from a single-story structure to the most complex multi-story building, standards play a vital role in helping to address important issues including safety, reliability, energy efficiency, integrity, durability and economy. Standards is the single largest attribute on which the Barbados Construction Sector prides itself, and testimony to this is the fact that the sector is managing to manoeuvre its way through the turbulent times while maintaining a positive outlook.

Barbadian Contractors, Developers, Manufacturers, Engineers, Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Real Estate Agents and Project Managers have enjoyed a long and enduring partnership marked by progress and innovation in the building of homes, plants, hotels, marinas, condominiums, airports, seaports and other commercial and residential projects. The relationship has been driven for the most part by construction-related needs and the common desire to continuously improve on standards and efficiencies to meet the demands of the industry and to ensure its viability, while preserving quality and integrity for which the local industry is so well known.

Persons investing in Barbados need to feel comfortable that their investments are sound and this involves the usual careful analysis of the economic, political and business risks that may result in unexpected investment losses. The analysis of country risk is a fundamental step towards investors committing to establish businesses or purchase properties, both of which the Construction Sector play a pivotal role in and depend on. The sector is cognizant of the fact that Barbados is not a cheap destination and that the country prides itself on attracting the discerning investors who are looking for a sophisticated and authentic Caribbean destination that provides high levels of

service and an enabling environment for persons and companies in which to do business. The Construction Sector is also fully supportive of ensuring that it too can offer the support needed to these investors.

Worldwide, the construction industry employs more people than any other industry. In flourishing economies, real estate is often the driving force, and prior to the global financial crisis, we had one of the largest construction booms in history. Unfortunately when the crash happened the exact opposite occurred and this has forced the need for diversified thinking, with the industry bringing added value to potential projects in order to maintain employment and social stability. The local industry has stepped up to, and is meeting these ongoing requirements.

The population in Barbados is aging, there being more people of pensionable age than children under 16. The aging population does not only affect building design and structure, it is also having a serious impact on the construction workforce and the industry itself. The industry must begin to take account of the changing needs of the population, as the likely impact is that a great deal of knowledge and skills will be lost with fewer professionals lined up as replacements, as the demographic changes. This is also forcing the need for technological improvements to the Construction Sector in finding ways to reduce cost, improve quality, reduce risk and meet the sustainability needs which are prevalent. Although the industry has been built around bricks, mortar, steel and labour, technology is now playing a larger part and will continue to do so as the need to be more efficient is a daily part of what the Sector addresses. Attracting talent has always been a requirement for the sector and the country has no shortage of this.

The Government continues to invest in infrastructure works



*The Sagcor building.*

and housing needs and is constantly looking at creating private/public sector partnerships to provide opportunities for the industry in order to offer various solutions to meet both the sector's and country's needs. This has played an important role and is an indication of the encouraging ways that the Government is working with the sector.

Taking the processes of supplying materials to the site and having tradesmen assemble or build things is quickly becoming a thing of the past as companies in Barbados are moving to manufacture products offsite and pre-build as many of the components as possible in a factory for assembly on site. This approach gives way for the ability of the contractors to spend more time planning and less time building which also means that the developer can do the same and turn projects over in a shorter timeframe, therefore tying up less capital and getting a better return at a lesser cost, as the efficiencies support the need.

The Sector has also tapped into 3-D modelling technology and is adopting the Building Information Model, or BIM, to facilitate the

design of green buildings. This allows the professionals to design, build and manage buildings on a lifecycle basis seamlessly. It can also analyse a building's energy needs and consumption to improve energy efficiency, which is critical in running costs. Through adopting this approach the industry will be able to reap the benefits with better coordination, less re-work and achieve cost savings.

The Construction Sector is a key economic growth sector and is of strategic importance in supporting the future development of Barbados. It is therefore imperative to tackle all of the approaching challenges positively so that we can capitalize on key growth areas to enhance its long-term competitive edge and business sustainability.

With continued manpower, development and technological advancement, we will continue to establish a strong, resilient industry which will help propel our economic growth and meet our responsibility to the economy.

<http://www.businessbarbados.com/industries/construction>