

Government response on Alexia Hefti

The Government can confirm that Ms Alexia Hefti continues to serve as Special Representative for the Middle East and Africa under a professional services agreement with the Cabinet Office.

Her role supports Bermuda's engagement with international governments, organisations and strategic partners in areas including economic cooperation, skills development, public-sector capacity building and international relations.

Since the commencement of this engagement, Bermuda has gained access to training, professional development, technical assistance and international partnership opportunities that have delivered benefits to Bermudians and the public service.

These include:

- The Bermuda Coders Initiative, which provides free digital skills training opportunities to Bermudians
- The Digital Educator Global Academy, through which 71 Bermudian educators participated in international professional development programmes.
- The Government Exchange Leadership Programme, through which approximately 20 Bermudian public officers received executive leadership training at no cost to taxpayers.
- Additional technical assistance, knowledge-sharing programmes and capacity-building opportunities secured through Bermuda's international partnerships.

The engagement has also supported the development and advancement of international partnerships and cooperation agreements, including:

- The Memorandum of Understanding with Ghana.
- The Memorandum of Understanding between the Bermuda Airport Authority and Dubai Air Navigation Services.
- The Memorandum of Understanding on Public Finance Management with the United Arab Emirates.
- The amendment to the Double Taxation Agreement with Bahrain.
- Cooperation initiatives relating to data sovereignty, logistics and international connectivity.
- Ongoing discussions and partnership opportunities with international organisations and strategic stakeholders.

The engagement has further supported Bermuda's participation in major international forums and strengthened relationships with governments, international organisations, business leaders and strategic stakeholders in key global markets.

This work has included support for international business development initiatives, government-to-government cooperation and the promotion of Bermuda as a jurisdiction for business, innovation and international collaboration.

Many of these programmes, training opportunities and technical cooperation initiatives were provided at little or no direct cost to Bermuda, reducing expenses that would otherwise have fallen on taxpayers.

The Government's focus is not solely on one country or region, instead it is on creating opportunities for Bermudians and advancing Bermuda's interests wherever those opportunities exist.

Many of Bermuda's closest partners, including the UK, continue to expand their economic and strategic engagement throughout the Gulf region because of its growing importance in global finance, technology, trade, logistics and investment. Bermuda cannot afford to overlook opportunities in one of the world's fastest-growing regions.

The Government renewed this engagement because it believes it continues to deliver value through skills development, international partnerships, technical cooperation and strategic initiatives that support Bermuda's long-term economic and social objectives.

Examples of outcomes supported through this engagement include:

- International training opportunities for Bermudian educators.
- Executive leadership development opportunities for Bermudian public officers.
- Free digital skills training opportunities through Bermuda Coders.
- International agreements, memoranda of understanding and cooperation arrangements advanced or concluded.
- Training, technical assistance and other forms of in-kind support secured for Bermuda.

Questions have also been raised regarding alleged personal relationships involving Ms Hefti and individuals who may have had separate engagements with the Government.

Ms Hefti has advised that she is not married and is not involved in the engagement, administration or oversight of contracts between the Government and third parties.

The Government's assessment of any consultant, advisor or contractor is based on the services provided, the terms of their engagement, and the outcomes delivered. The Government does not make decisions regarding professional engagements based on speculation concerning an individual's private life.

No conflict of interest has been identified in relation to Ms Hefti's engagement with the Government.

The Government remains committed to ensuring that professional services engagements are subject to appropriate oversight, accountability and governance requirements while maintaining a focus on delivering results for the people of Bermuda.

The Government will continue to pursue opportunities that strengthen our public service, expand skills and training opportunities, build international partnerships and support Bermuda's long-term success.

The statement was given in response to these questions from *The Royal Gazette*:

What was the cost of the Premier's January 2026 trip to the UAE and Bahrain?

Was Ms Hefti's contract renewed from April 1, 2025? If so, for how long and for how much?

Was Ms Hefti's contract renewed from April 1, 2026? If so, for how long and for how much?

Has notice of these contracts been published in the Official Gazette?

Is it correct that Ms Hefti wrote much of the Government's recent Green Paper on Caricom?

If so, did that fall under her Cabinet Office contract or did she have a separate contract for that work with the Ministry of Home Affairs?

Does she have any other contracts with the Government?

Ms Hefti describes herself as CEO of eGovern and special adviser on the Middle East to the Prime Minister of Barbados. Do those positions present any conflict with her work for the Government of Bermuda, either in the Middle East or on Caricom?

How many hours a week or month is Ms Hefti contracted to work for the Government of Bermuda?

Has eGovern been involved with any Government of Bermuda initiatives

What has been its role in those matters and is that separate from Ms Hefti's role as special representative/adviser?

Does Ms Hefti's husband Gabriel Abed still serve as digital currency consultant to the Government?

Has the Emirates Family Office Association opened a branch in Bermuda? If yes, what economic benefits has this brought to the island?

Any response to criticism from the shadow finance minister?