

# PARADISE SHARED

Invest Turks and Caicos shows business leaders how to make the most of this Caribbean island paradise

**TURKS AND CAICOS** – an archipelago of coral islands in the Caribbean – is one of the most luxurious holiday destinations in the world. And rightly so. But beyond the pristine blue waters and the natural beauty of the 40 islands, it's also an attractive place for foreign investors. That's where Invest Turks and Caicos comes in.

"We're a government agency that encourages people and organizations to invest in the Turks and Caicos Islands," explains CEO James Burse. "The islands are very small – with a population of about 42,000 – and our economy is primarily geared towards luxury tourism and eco-tourism, but we also offer excellent opportunities in real-estate development, financial services, tech, agriculture and mari-culture."

With a strong economy, effective regulation, low taxes and a strong legal system, the islands have been developed significantly in the past few decades. "Our main island is called Providenciales, where the great bulk of the development has taken place," says James. "It really was a bare rock in the 1970s, and now we now have paved four-lane highways and all the kind of things that modern developed societies have. However, we also have tremendous beaches and lots of gorgeous blue water – not only do we have spectacular snorkelling, but you can also go diving on some of the most impressive reefs and deep channels anywhere in the world."

As such, Turks and Caicos is an ideal setting for business investment, combining an idyllic setting with a growing infrastructure that's ripe for investors who want to make the most of the spectacular natural environment. And for those who are interested in doing so, Invest Turks and Caicos currently provides advice and confidential support. This includes, but is not

limited to, information about the local business climate, advice on immigration matters and obtaining permanent residence certificates and facilitating the investment process through liaison with key government departments.

"For the moment," explains James, "the advice we give is free, but in time we're actually going to be charging some fees and we're going to be getting involved more closely with projects. But fundamentally, the great majority of what we do is now, and will remain, free in the sense that we actually manage a lot of the inbound investment, we help with the permitting process and we basically review the structures and the organizations to make sure they're compatible with what we're trying to achieve here. Sometimes, we're also a clearing house for ideas and for capital, because there are people who have capital that say just: 'We'd like to invest here. What projects do you have?' and we can provide them with those."

One of the quintessential roles of the agency is to ensure that, while advances in business and infrastructure are made, they're done so with minimal harm to the environment, given that that environment is the centre of life – and business – on the islands. "We're trying to steer the economy towards sustainable development," says Burse, "and at the same time not forget that we're here to encourage job creation, we're here to encourage economic activity and to improve the wellbeing of all the residents of Turks and Caicos."

Don't worry, though – James is proud to point out that there are already Rolls-Royces on the islands, and you're very much encouraged to take your car with you. [www.investturksandcaicos.tc](http://www.investturksandcaicos.tc)

