Puerto Rico — When a summary moves faster than the shipment



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A supplier, a municipal desk and a coastal reserve each need different evidence before acting on AI output in Puerto Rico. CAIA proposes a common rule for handovers: the person who receives a summary must be able to find its source, challenge an error and reach the official responsible.

The decision before local leaders

This paper proposes two starting points for Puerto Rico. Before either begins, the service owner should agree on an existing comparison service, a way to challenge an error and the conditions for ending the trial.

Audit whether a municipal assistant gives the same appointment requirements in both languages.

Proposed lead. Participating municipal service manager and bilingual reviewers

What to measure. Count differences that change the required document, place or deadline.

Trace each proposed shipment field to the supporting document.

Proposed lead. Participating manufacturer’s logistics and quality leads

What to measure. Record discrepancies caught before booking and time spent checking each batch.

Local evidence in context

Indicator	Value	Observation	Source
Population	3,184,835	2025	World Bank WDI
GDP per person, current US dollars	40,620	2025	World Bank WDI
Residents aged 65 and over	25.3%	2025	World Bank WDI
People using the internet	87.3%	2022	ITU / World Bank

The year and geographic coverage belong to each observation. These figures describe the jurisdiction as a whole. Collect service-level figures before setting a cost target, staff requirement or digital access threshold.

Economic and social needs

Protect the decision at the shipping desk

The US Bureau of Economic Analysis identified pharmaceuticals and organic chemicals as the main contributors to the rise in Puerto Rico’s goods exports in 2023. An AI assistant could summarise shipping papers for a manufacturer, but a missing batch identifier can make a tidy summary unusable. The trial should keep the original document beside each extracted field and send any conflict to the person authorised to release the shipment.

Policy response. Test incomplete and conflicting shipping papers in shadow mode before a summary can trigger an onward booking.

US Bureau of Economic Analysis, Gross Domestic Product for Puerto Rico, 2023

Check that both versions ask for the same thing

The US Census Bureau’s assessment of its 2020 language programme describes English and Spanish support for Puerto Rico. A public desk preparing a bilingual appointment message should test both versions with people who would use the service. A translation can preserve the date while changing whether a resident needs an original document, a copy or simply its number. Reviewers should flag differences that would cause another trip.

Policy response. Ask residents using each version to identify what to bring and where to go. Correct divergent answers before sending the notice.

US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Language Program Operational Assessment

Public institutions and environmental needs

Put grievances on the right desk

The US Department of the Interior identifies Puerto Rico as a US insular area and states that its Office of Insular Affairs has no responsibilities for Puerto Rico. A model that treats every US territory as administratively identical could send a complaint to an office that cannot act. Each participating programme should identify the actual Puerto Rico, municipal or federal decision-maker and test a referral all the way to receipt.

Policy response. Maintain a programme-specific directory with a responsible office, contact, review date and process for returned referrals.

US Department of the Interior, Puerto Rico

Check the water before classifying the coast

NOAA describes Jobos Bay as a research reserve used for long-term water-quality monitoring and coastal stewardship, including mangrove islands around Cayos Caribe. Aerial colour can help identify where to investigate. A classification alone cannot establish why a patch of water changed. A proposed monitoring tool should give the field team the image date, weather context and location of recent observations before anyone circulates an explanation.

Policy response. Retain the original image and field observation separately. Label unvisited areas and allow a field reviewer to withhold a classification.

NOAA, Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

How the policy would change a decision

Use the Spanish-language benefit form the assistant will explain. Test a household whose eligibility depends on an unresolved fact. Check whether the answer points the resident to an officer or inadvertently discourages an application the agency should accept for consideration.

- Keep the PRITS decision, impact assessments and written purchasing authorisation with the contract. Document a significant change in the model or its purpose for reassessment.
- Map the steps for a suspected data breach under Law 111-2005 and relevant sector rules, including how the custodian reaches the owner and who decides which residents must receive notice.

The agency project director should see the test answer alongside the benefit rule and a caseworker’s explanation. Escalate any advice that could wrongly close off an application. Keep that function out of service until PRITS requirements are met and the caseworker confirms the corrected answer reaches the right review route.

Source: CAIA jurisdiction guide for Puerto Rico. The worked example illustrates the proposal.

Try a report without mobile data

Test Spanish-first voice and radio reporting with community workers as well as utilities. Include a resident without mobile data and a facility whose generator is failing. Do not publish a list of homes containing vulnerable people.

The local pilot connects to Energy, water and data centres · Telecommunications. Review R09 · R11 in the regional risk register.

Implementation and public review

Stage	Evidence or decision	Proposed responsibility
Before the trial	Define a completed case and sample the current process. Include people who use the phone, desk or an offline route.	Participating municipal service manager and bilingual reviewers
During shadow testing	Count differences that change the required document, place or deadline. Compare the same cases through both routes and record every override.	Participating municipal service manager and bilingual reviewers
At the local decision	Record discrepancies caught before booking and time spent checking each batch. Record whether the result justifies a live trial and identify the person who can stop it.	Participating manufacturer’s logistics and quality leads
After six months	Publish results by channel, the correction time, unresolved complaints and the decision to continue, revise or stop.	Local service owner

What partners can share

Other island utilities could learn from Puerto Rico’s outage-reporting tests. Share error measures and repair categories. Keep critical network layouts and household medical information private.

Record the local approval, correction route and stop authority before exchanging results. Other jurisdictions can reuse the method and run their own tests. Regional recommendation 5.

Where to draw the boundary

An office adopting this proposal would still need to check its own powers, contracts and data permissions. Organisations named as possible reviewers or leads have not been appointed by this publication. Publish any accepted role and its date with the local trial record.

A 90-day plan for the first service

Audit whether a municipal assistant gives the same appointment requirements in both languages.

Proposed pilot lead. Participating municipal service manager and bilingual reviewers

Two language versions ask for different documents

Failure to test. A municipal assistant gives different requirements or deadlines to Spanish-first and English readers.

Evidence to retain. Keep official dated requirements, matched test cases across languages and the corrected route.

Pause condition. A person using either language could lose access or a filing deadline.

When	Proposed action and evidence
Days 1–30	Participating municipal service manager and bilingual reviewers agrees the eligible cases, existing service measures, staffed alternative and authorised decision owner. Record reviewers and a cost estimate in local currency for staff time, testing, access and recovery. Identify the funding source and who would approve it.

When	Proposed action and evidence
Days 31–60	Run the original and proposed routes on the same sample. Count differences that change the required document, place or deadline. Report counted errors and eligible cases by channel and language where lawful, plus the time from error report to correction.
Days 61–90	Witness the fallback, correction and restart before asking the accountable officer for a decision. Pause on the condition above. Record affected cases, unresolved issues, costs and the date for the next check.
Six months after live launch	Publish a lawful comparison with the baseline, including corrections, open complaints and the decision to continue, change or end the use.

Sponsorship, funding and the proposed lead’s acceptance require a recorded local decision. Share test methods with Caribbean partners using the local data permissions.

Sector guide · US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Language Program Operational Assessment · Local evidence and sources · Regional high-impact use rules · Local risk scenario

Sources and method

The committee used published local evidence to select the four priorities and compared them with the Caribbean AI Framework's requirements for access, data, skills, oversight and adoption. Recommendations and stories are editorial proposals. This edition reports no results from a completed local pilot.

1. US Bureau of Economic Analysis, Gross Domestic Product for Puerto Rico, 2023
2. US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Language Program Operational Assessment
3. US Department of the Interior, Puerto Rico
4. NOAA, Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
5. World Bank WDI — Population
6. World Bank WDI — GDP per person, current US dollars
7. World Bank WDI — Residents aged 65 and over
8. ITU / World Bank — People using the internet
9. Puerto Rico jurisdiction guide, Caribbean AI Association
10. Puerto Rico pilot note, Caribbean AI Association
11. Caribbean AI Framework, consultation edition, 27 November 2026

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