MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CPID

The Caribbean Court of Justice Protocol & Information Division works towards providing protocol services of the highest quality to the Court and its guests and is the principal organ in the meaningful exchange of information between the CCJ and its regional and international interlocutors, both protocol and information being provided in a courteous, timely and efficient manner.

THE VISION OF THE CPID

The Caribbean Court of Justice Protocol & Information Division provides easily-accessible customer-sensitive service characterised by courtesy and efficiency and in a manner so transparent and of such integrity as to inspire universal trust and confidence.

STRATEGIC GOALS

• to ensure the professional discharge of services in relation to protocol;
• to ensure easy accessibility for all to accurate, user-friendly information, disseminated and delivered in a timely and courteous manner;
• to assist in sustaining a high quality of interaction between the Court and all its interlocutors, thus ensuring a customer-service oriented organisation in which personnel possess a sound knowledge of Court processes.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

• the development of a human resource framework to ensure that the Protocol & Information Unit is adequately and competently staffed;

• the development of a training strategy to improve and maintain the competence and skills of the unit and the wider organisation with respect to all matters under its purview;

• the documentation of procedures and policies on matters pertaining to the Caribbean Court of Justice;

• dissemination of information through an integrated Public Education and Information Programme, aimed at local, regional and international consumers through audio-visual media and outreach programmes;

• the management of all Court events in an efficient, cost-effective and professional manner.

Between 1 August 2007 and 31 July 2008, the CPID was responsible for all aspects of protocol, information, and non-judicial support for judicial officers.

During the period under review, the CPID comprised:
Dr. Michael Anthony Lilla, Court Protocol & Information Officer (CPIO);
Ms. Lisa Furlonge, CPID Secretary; and
Ms. Denise Dickenson, Tea Assistant.

Ms. Seanna Annisette and Ms. Gina Affonso-Smith, Customer Service Representatives, rendered assistance to the division in a variety of ways.

Protocol

The Caribbean Court of Justice is an international tribunal. As such, certain of its attributes cause it to resemble a diplomatic entity. The CPID is the administrative section charged with the responsibility of providing protocol services of various kinds to the Court and the Regional Judicial & Legal Services Commission (RJLSC). The division has thus striven to ensure that in the conduct of the Court’s affairs, both public and internal, is of the kind traditionally associated with such bodies. Over the period under review, the CPID:
• provided airport assistance for international travel;
• provided organisational assistance at formal events;
• represented Court personnel in their dealings with CARICOM Ministries of Foreign Affairs, as well as diplomatic missions based in Trinidad &
Dr. Michael Anthony Lilla, Court Protocol and Information Officer and Ms. Lisa Furlonge, Secretary to the Court Protocol and Information Division.

Tobago and abroad; o represented the Court in its dealings with the various Trinidad & Tobago service agencies with which it must interact, such as, inter alia, the Customs & Excise Department and the Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security:
• represented the Court in its dealings with agencies and organisations outside of Trinidad & Tobago;
• has been the Court’s “voice” in its interaction with local, regional and international entities, ensuring that the nature and responsibilities of the Court are properly understood and the Court perceived and dealt with in a manner befitting its status and functions.

As the Court is an international tribunal, Caribbean and extra-regional dignitaries pay courtesy calls on His Honour the President, as well as other Judges of the Court. Arranging and managing such calls is the function of the CPID. During the period under review, the following visitors were formally received at the Court:

• Mr. Len Kunzitz, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the United States of America (27 September 2007);
• Mr. John Cushing, First Secretary of the Embassy of the United States of America (27 September 2007);
• Ms. Charlotte Ford, Policy Officer of the Law Society of England & Wales (31 October 2007);
• The Law Association of Trinidad and Tobago (14 November 2007);
• Dr. Clarence Henry, Ambassador; Trade Coordinator and NationalAuthorising Officer, EDI, Antigua & Barbuda (16 November 2007);
• Dr. Eletherios Levantis, Head of the Environmental Law Unit, European Public Law Centre (22 November 2007);
• Dr. Fazal Ibrahim Ali, Director of Research, University of the West Indies (St. Augustine) (22 November 2007);
• Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad & Tobago (4 December 2007);
• Ms. Edwina Leacock, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad & Tobago (4 December 2007);
• Mr. Gerald Thompson, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad & Tobago (4 December 2007);
• Her Excellency Fidelia Grand-Galan, Ambassador of the Republic of Suriname (27 February 2008);
• Dr. Leigh Swigart, Director of Programmes in International Justice and Society, Brandeis University (17 March 2008);
• His Excellency Eric Jenkinson, British High Commissioner (3 April 2008);
• The Honourable Mr. Justice Anthony Lucky, President, Chamber for Marine Environment Disputes, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (7 April 2008);
• The Honourable Mme. Justice Zaila McCalla, Chief Justice of Jamaica (14 April 2008);
• The Honourable Mr. Justice Roy Jones, Judge of the High Court of Justice of Jamaica (14 April 2008);
• Ms. Carol Palmer, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice of Jamaica (14 April 2008);
• Ms. DeAnne Robb, Vice-Principal, Wolmer’s Boy School, Jamaica, accompanied by a delegation of teachers and students (21 April 2008);
• The Honourable Sir Burton Hall, Chief Justice of the Bahamas (4 June 2008);
• The Honourable Sir David Simmons, Chief Justice of Barbados (4 June 2008);
• The Honourable Mr. Justice Hugh A. Rawlins, Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (4 June 2008);
• The Honourable Mr. Justice Carl Singh, Acting Chancellor of the Judiciary of Guyana (4 June 2008);
The Honourable Mr Justice Gordon Ward, Chief Justice of the Turks & Caicos Islands (4 June 2008);
Mr Aldo Zammit-Borda, Legal Editor of the Commonwealth Secretariat (4 June 2008);
Dr Derek O’Brien, Centre for Legal Research and Policy Studies, Oxford Brookes University (UK); 11 June 2008
Nina Franco, Centre for Legal Research and Policy Studies, Oxford Brookes University (UK); 11 June 2008
Professor Elyette Benjamin-Labardere, Université de Bordeaux (France); 18 June 2008;
Professor Christian Lerat, Université de Bordeaux (France); 18 June 2008;
The Honourable Mr Justice Brian J. Preston, Chief Judge, Land & Environment Court of New South Wales (Australia) (21 July 2008);
Her Honour Sandra Paul, Chairman, Environmental Commission of Trinidad & Tobago (21 July 2008);

Information

In 2007-2008, the provision of information to the public continued to be made principally through media releases and interviews of Court personnel by the local, regional and international media. Court outreach thus far has been to accommodate requests for tours of the Court by interested institutions and groups. These groups have included students of the Hugh Wooding Law School at St. Augustine in Trinidad & Tobago.

In May 2008, the CPIO graduated from the Institute for Court Management of the National Centre for State Courts (USA) as a Fellow of the Institute for Court Management (IFCM) and Certified Court Executive (CCE). The CPIO’s research paper for the grant of the fellowship was entitled, ‘Promoting the Caribbean Court of Justice as the Final Court of Appeal for States of the Caribbean Community’. Researching the paper led the CPIO to focus on the quality of the Court’s Public Education and Information Programme, its principal outreach vehicle. The data collected revealed that:

• because of ignorance and uncertainty about it, to gain a higher degree of acceptance, the Caribbean Court of Justice needs to “market” itself aggressively in the Caribbean region, and even beyond it;
• the promotional strategy implemented must be manifold in nature;
• in spite of disinformation put about on the court, there is a tier of unplumbed public goodwill towards the court that can, and must be nurtured.

The paper took on board the advice of Margot Lindsay, writing about an effective PEIP in “Improving courts’ public outreach”, in Judicature, Vol. 85, No. 4, Jan-Feb 2002:

Effective public outreach strategies are purposeful, targeted, and ongoing. Purposeful in that they are directed at a specific issue; targeted, in that they are aimed at specific publics; and ongoing in that they essentially represent continuing associations.
The CPIO thus recommended:
• the dedication by the court of a significant portion of financial resources towards a Public Information and Education (PEIP) programme of high quality;
• a PEIP highly diverse in nature, utilising all the media: audio, visual and print, and ubiquitous in frequency: everywhere, all the time, on posters, in classrooms, on the television and in the newspapers;
• the media campaign be supplemented and buttressed by a proactive approach to spreading the gospel of the Caribbean Court of Justice throughout the Caribbean, characterised by periodic and systematic visits of CCJ personnel, both legal and administrative, to member states.

These visits should include well-designed and persuasive seminars and educational tours, with strong emphasis on the full involvement and participation of local state, legal and civil society representatives.

The CPID concluded its third year of operations well aware of the challenges that still lie ahead about its role, and anticipating greater visibility for the Court with the filing of matters under its Original Jurisdiction and a higher regional profile in the 2008-2009 period.