Supporting Access to Justice and aiding the Court's Accountability

Court Facilities, Assets & Office Management
This unit maintains and upgrades the Court’s facilities and assets in an efficient and proactive manner and is responsible for the Court’s Office Management Systems inclusive of the court’s drivers and messengers.

The overarching vision of the Court Facilities, Assets and Office Management Unit is to provide for the Caribbean Community a safe, accessible and convenient facility that is maintained and managed in a manner worthy of emulation both regionally and internationally.

The goals of the Unit are:
- to assist the Court in achieving its vision by anticipating, and seeking proactive solutions to, the emerging challenges towards the Court’s Facilities, Assets and Office Management;
- to maintain efficiently the physical environment and assets of the organization in a manner worthy of emulation by the courts of the region;
- to satisfy our external customers actively by ensuring the Court and its facilities are safe, accessible and convenient to use;
- to satisfy actively our internal customers by maintaining a comfortable, safe, efficient and functional work environment;
- to procure and manage contracted goods and services in the most effective and efficient manner possible;
- to implement and maintain adequate standards and procedures relating to Facilities, Assets and Office Management that assist both the Court and the Unit in achieving their goals and objectives; and
- to seek ways to improve constantly the Facilities Unit’s service and value to the Court.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW

The Facilities, Assets and Office Management Unit is currently staffed by the Court Facilities Manager, Mr. Vaughn Halliday and the Office Manager, Mr. Nigel Payne. The department bade farewell to its Secretary, Ms. Carole Noble, who left the institution in June of 2008.

During the period of review, the Facilities, Assets and Office Management Unit has continued to focus significantly on adjustments to the building and facility improvements to make the Court safer, more accessible, and more convenient for use by both its internal and its external customers. In so doing, a concerted effort has been made to provide efficient space management given the limited available built space and the growing needs of the institution. Some of the measures undertaken during the period of review included:
- upgrading the fire alarm system and the emergency lighting system;
- the completion of the installation of a public address system;
- creation of locker rooms for Court Security Personnel;
- creation of additional storage space—Ground floor & First floor;
- installation of a video intercom system at the rear entrance; and
- supplementary air conditioning installations in areas, which previously received insufficient cooling and ventilation.

Another significant improvement undertaken was the construction of a witness box in Courtroom 1 whilst maintaining the original architectural style of the Court. This will provide witnesses with the facility to give testimony especially in cases in the Original Jurisdiction, using the appropriate courtroom technology.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Despite the improvements made thus far, it is recognised that as the Court develops and lessons are learnt, several internal reconfigurations and improvements will be required to allow the institution to function more effectively. Accordingly, during the next year several additional projects have been scheduled to meet the needs of the Court’s internal customers. These include:
- the creation of a Bindery and accommodations for a Library Assistant within the Library;
Court Facilities, Assets & Office Management

Court Drivers/Messengers
(L to R) Front Row: Mr. Oscar Peters; Mr. Jeffrey Benjamin; Mr. Selwyn Hart; Mr. Sheldon Daniel.

Back Row: Mr. Derrick Young; Mr. Brian Salandy; Mr. Sheldon Cambridge; Mr. Hudcliffe Samuel; Driver to the RJLSC; Mr. Garth Jerry; Mr. Keith Gordon.

- The creation of a Meeting Room and an office for the Deputy Registrar within the Registry;
- The provision of an office for the Executive Secretary to the RJLSC;
- The creation of a locker room for the Court Drivers;
- Several other minor modifications to improve the working areas of new and existing staff and
- The modification of the fire suppression system to provide protection for the Commission’s documents.

Larger projects will also be undertaken to provide the people of the region with greater access to justice, including:

- Infrastructural work in Courtroom 2 to facilitate case management conferences
- Infrastructural work in the Training and Conference Room to facilitate video conferencing and meetings,
  Library Assistant within the Library
- The creation of a Meeting Room and an office for the

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training, development, and the constant critical review of policies and procedures have continued to play key roles in efforts to uphold the court performance objective that dictates a proactive stance towards new conditions and emergent events. To that end, the Unit’s staff underwent training on Occupation Health & Safety Compliance and Corporate Events Management, while the Judges’ Drivers successfully completed training to become Certified Protection Specialists. The Facilities Manager also attended seminars on Indoor Air Quality, Financial Principles in Facilities and Maintenance, and Maximizing the Facilities Investment.

Training sessions in conjunction with the Court Security Unit such as Safety & Emergency Training Sessions and Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) training have also begun while the formation of an Occupational Safety and Health Committee spearheaded by the Security Manager is in its infancy stages. Collaborative training sessions between these two units are expected to intensify in the near future, as greater emphasis will be placed in the upcoming period on training all staff in Court Emergency and Safety Procedures along with additional safety and security-oriented training for the Court Drivers.

The Facilities Unit also has plans to increase training geared specifically towards improving the efficiency of procurement activities and the effective management of Court Facilities. This training is in conjunction with the impending implementation of a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS).

The Facilities, Assets and Office Management Unit continued to be involved actively in a number of internal functions geared towards staff team-building such as the Court’s inaugural Children’s Christmas Party, the CCJ Christmas Luncheon, Divali Celebrations and the Court’s Carnival “Panyard Crawl”. The Unit also continued to play a significant role in the success of a number of the Court’s public outreach initiatives such as:

- Educational seminar – Hugh Wooding Law School, Trinidad – November 2007;
- EDF Signing Ceremony, Caribbean Court of Justice, Trinidad – August 2007;
- Numerous Tours of the CCJ Facilities