Supporting access to justice and attracting public trust and confidence.

Court Security Unit
For the year under review, the Court Security Unit continued to build on its mission to provide excellence in security services. As part of this process, the Unit also initiated the establishment of occupational health and safety standards for the Court.

EXCELLENCE IN SECURITY SERVICES

In determining what excellence in security services looks like the Unit developed a policy document entitled “Excellence in Security Services—Creating a culture of excellence for the Court Security Unit at the Caribbean Court of Justice”. This policy outlined the concepts of excellence and service. It further identified the various security duties and the standard to which they are to be carried out. The members of the Unit then agreed that in order for the policy to be effective, there was a need for relevant training, proper equipment, open communication, proper supervision, the right attitude and continuous review. All members of the Unit gave their commitment to the policy. Coming out of our commitment to this policy, the Court Security Handbook was also developed. This handbook addresses all aspects of security at the Court including, general rules and regulations, duties, discipline, supervision and vehicles. In putting into practice the concepts of the policy, the Unit aspires to move to the next level of quality service.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT 2004

Compliance with set Occupational Safety and Health standards and tenets is now compulsory in Trinidad and Tobago as mandated by the 2004 Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). The Security and Facilities Departments are charged with the responsibility of establishing and advising on the occupational safety and health standards at the Court. Both departments, working in conjunction, sought to implement an integrated safety management system that not only complied with the legal requirements but also looked at safety management from a strategic perspective. As such, a strategic approach to safety management was developed where the safety management system was tied to the strategic management plan for the Court. One of the main areas identified under this approach was the need for relevant training at all levels.
TRAINING

Developing a Positive Health, Safety and Security Culture

In keeping with our strategic approach to safety management, the Security and Facilities Managers along with the Office Manager and two Security Supervisors, attended the 11th Annual Health Safety and Security Conference hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad and Tobago. Sessions included:

- The importance of Security Standards;
- Cultivating a Security Culture;
- Performing adequate Risk Assessment;
- Business Continuity Planning – Getting it Right;
- Developing a Corporate Health and Wellness Programme; and
- Putting a Safety Committee Together

Specialized Training

The Court’s Security Officers also function as Safety Officers, so their training included specialized safety programmes. Additionally, relevant members of staff were also trained in order to enable them to carry out specific duties. Training in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) continued for all members of staff.

Training in Occupational Safety and Health was carried out by the local Bureau of Standards over a three day period and included:

- The rights and responsibilities of employers and employees under the OSHA;
- How to manage safety and loss prevention effectively;
- Applying standards to work situations;
- The record keeping requirements of the OSHA;
- Creating a culture of workplace safety;
- The role of the safety committee in safety management;
- Hazard Identification, risk assessment and risk management;
- Personal protective equipment;
- Workplace ergonomics; and
- Accident Investigation

After employees were trained in occupational safety and health, a request for volunteers to serve on the Court’s Safety and Health Committee was made and one committee member and an alternate from each department were selected. With this system, employees will be directly involved in the development of safety and health procedures for the Court.

Professionalism and Communication Skills

Members of the Security Unit are usually the first members of staff to interact with our clients and guests. Appropriate training was therefore necessary. The programme included:

- The role of the frontline personnel;
- Behaviours and values;
- Regional similarities and differences;
- Communication role plays; and
- Telephone Transactions

At the end of the programme the officers had a better understanding of the standards for communication and professionalism that the organization requires and the behaviour and values that are part of the skill set for service excellence.
Special Defensive Driving

Security Officers required to drive were trained in special defensive driving.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL SERVICE

The Court Security Unit at the Caribbean Court of Justice has had, and continues to enjoy, a very cordial working relationship with the Trinidad and Tobago Judiciary Security Unit. In the past they have assisted each other in the provision of security personnel and services for special functions and events. For the Conference of the Commonwealth Caribbean Heads of Judiciaries held in Trinidad and Tobago, the CCJ Security Unit was again able to collaborate with the Judiciary Security Unit in the securing of dignitaries and the provision of a range of other security services. The collaboration was successful and the CCJ looks forward to continued cooperation with other organizations locally and within the region.

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

As a member of the American Society for International Security (ASIS), the Court Security Manager attended the 53rd Annual Seminar of the Society in 2007. The seminar featured cutting edge strategies, the latest security solutions on the market, dynamic educational sessions covering the spectrum of security interests and networking on a global scale. The Court Security Manager was invited to apply to become a member of the Society’s Fire and Life Safety Council. She did so and was selected to be a member of the Council. The Fire and Life Safety Council is one of several sub committees established by ASIS to carry out its mission of promoting excellence in and recognition of the security profession. As part of her commitment on the Council, the Court Security Manager has written a two-part article on Safety Management at the Caribbean Court of Justice, the first of which has been published in the ASIS Council’s Newsletter, June 2008 issue.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mindful of the fact that service should not just extend to the Court but to the wider community and the region, the Court Security Unit, hosted a fundraiser for two special centres in Trinidad. The Unit held a breakfast morning on the 18th December 2007, where local breakfast was sold to staff at the CCJ and other neighbouring organizations. The unit was able to contribute the proceeds to the Cyril Ross Home for Children suffering from HIV and the Goodwill Life Centre for Differently Abled Children. The Court Security Unit has decided to host an annual fund raising event and donate the proceeds to charitable organizations in the region.