

# Building the Court's Capacity

In accordance with Strategic Issue V; Organizational Capacity for Caseload Growth, during the period 2012 – 2013, the Court began to review its internal operations. In particular, emphasis was placed on its Court Registry, Information Technology (IT) and the capacity of the Judicial Support Unit. In so doing, the Court President sought the professional assistance of Mr James Rebo, retired Chief Information Officer, Information Systems Division, New Jersey Judiciary; Mr Andre Griffith, Advisor, Corporate Services, Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD); and Mr Justice Stanley Moore, retired Judge, to provide independent assessments in the respective areas identified above.

## Reviewing the Court's IT and Registry Processes

During the period 29 October to 2 November, 2012, Mr James Rebo embarked on a preliminary assessment of the Court's IT systems. Particular attention was placed on the Court's case management system, the Judicial Enforcement Management System (JEMS), to assess its usefulness to the end users and the judicial function. In reviewing JEMS, he also held interviews with representatives of the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Jim McMillan, Principal Court Management Consultant, National Centre for State Courts (NCSC), Mr. Tracy Ownbey, primary architect of JEMS, and Mr. Gregory Girard, Court Executive Administrator for the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court.

After considering Mr. Rebo's final report and recommendations, the Court decided that he would be invited back to assist the Court's team with further developmental work in this area.

In June, 2013 Mr. Andre Griffith was also asked to review the Court's IT, as well as processes of the Court Registry, and to interact with Mr. Rebo, with a view to making recommendations in light of the Court's Strategic Plan. Mr. Griffith submitted a report which contained several recommendations for consideration.

## Developing a Legal Unit

Within the existing organisational structure, there are two Judicial Research Assistants, who are required to work with the seven Judges of the Court. As the Court looks towards the impending caseload growth, given the increasing number of cases in the Court's Original Jurisdiction and additional countries acceding to the Court's Appellate Jurisdiction, the development of a Legal Unit is necessary.

To spearhead this initiative, the Court obtained the professional services of Mr Justice Stanley Moore, retired Justice of Appeal of the Republic of Botswana, retired Senior Justice of the Supreme Court of the Bahamas and retired Judge of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, whose chief mandate was to provide recommendations to the Court President for the Legal Unit's structure, composition, role and responsibilities.

As defined by Mr Justice Moore, the principal function of the Unit will be to provide the full measure of judicial assistance to the President and to the other judges of the Court so as to enable them to deliver reasoned judgments, reflective of the most thorough research of all relevant issues, in the shortest possible time. A subsidiary function of the unit is the provision of assistance to all of the Judges in preparing for the several extra-legal functions which they are required to perform as members of the local and international community. The Legal Unit will also be available to the CEA and to the Registrar for such legal advice and assistance as might be necessary.

Mr Justice Moore's contributions to this project were deemed valuable and are now being considered for implementation.