



Republic of Trinidad and Tobago



EOC

Equal Opportunity Commission

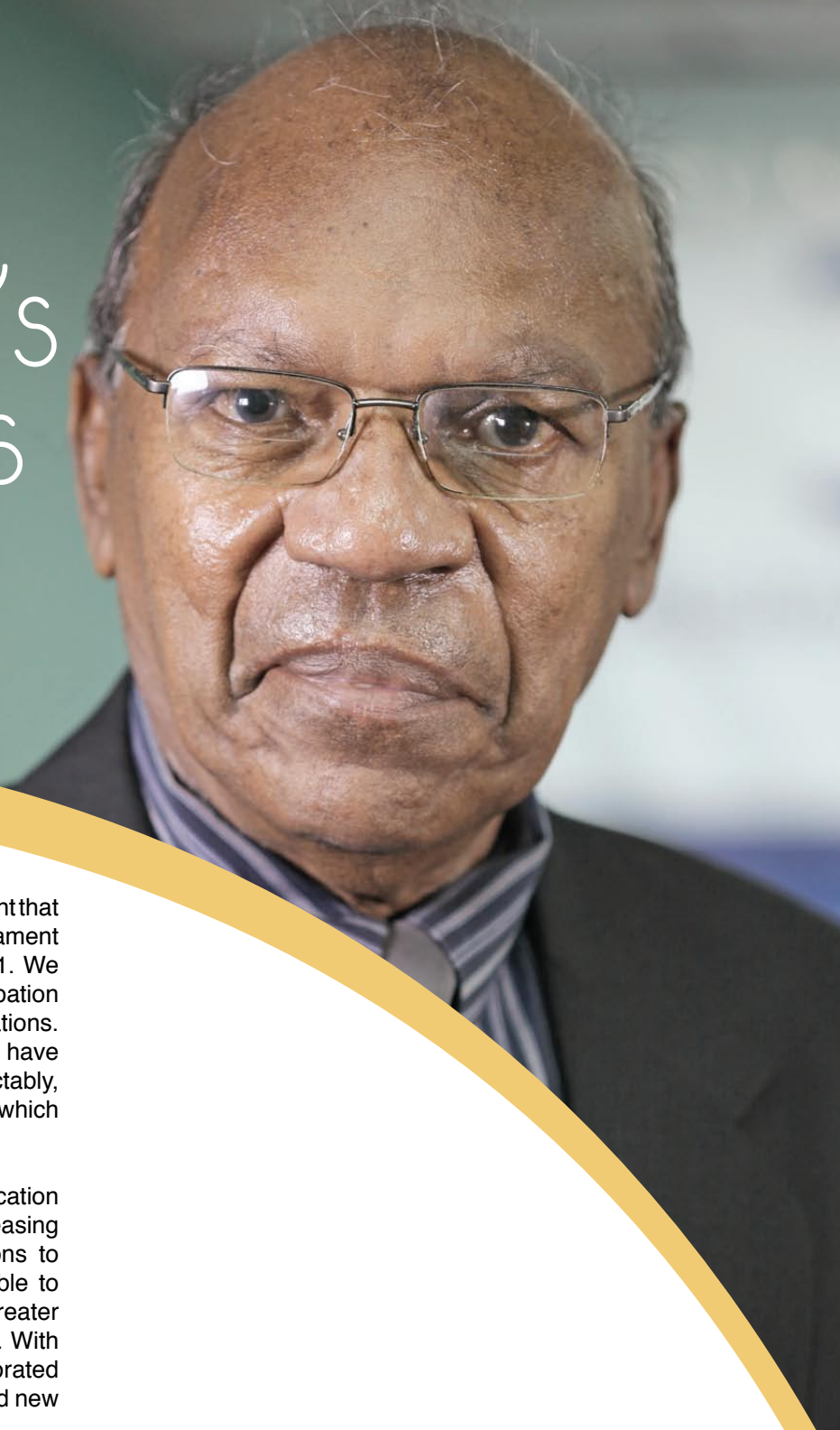
Promoting Equality

Annual Report 2011

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Chairman's Remarks



It is with considerable pride and a sense of achievement that I offer to the Honourable Attorney General, to Parliament and to the wider public our report for the year 2011. We were established in 2008 and our major pre-occupation soon after was the construction of our foundations. Our initial staffing and accommodation problems have been solved and 2011, understandably and predictably, witnessed a surge in the number of complaints with which we had to deal.

This resuscitated an expansion in our Public Education Programme following which there have been increasing requests from various organisations and institutions to make our services, free as they are, more available to the wider public. There is, accordingly, in 2011 greater public awareness of our relevance and importance. With the appointment in 2011 of a new and re-invigorated Commission I confidently expect renewed vigour and new initiatives.

This report is worthy of your reading and reflection.

*Professor John La Guerre
Chairman,
Equal Opportunity Commission.*

Background, Vision and Mandate

The Equal Opportunity Commission (the “Commission”) was established by section 26(1) of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 [Act No 69 of 2000 as amended], for the purpose of exercising the jurisdiction conferred upon it by that Act.

This report is submitted in keeping with section 53 of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 which provides: “The Commission shall within three months after the end of each calendar year submit to the Minister a report of its operations during that year.” This report covers the period 1st January – 31st December 2011.

The Commissioners were first appointed on 21st April, 2008 with a mandate of carrying out the work of the Commission. The term of office for the first Commissioners came to an end in April 2011. Two new faces were added- Dr. Indira Rampersad and Mr. Gerard Besson. At present, the Commission comprises five Commissioners who are as follows:- (L to R)

- **Professor John La Guerre** - B. Sc. (Economics) (UWI), M. Sc. (Government) (UWI), Ph. D. (Manchester) - **(Chairman)**
- **Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie** - Doctorate in Education majoring in Human Resource Development from the George Washington University, USA - **(Vice - Chairman)**
- **Dr. Indira Rampersad** - B.A. (Language in Literature), Dip. I. R., Certificate in Translation from Spanish to English, M. Phil. (Latin American Literature), M. Phil. (International Relations), Ph.D. (Political Science) - **(Commissioner)**
- **Ms. Beverly Ann-Marie Beckles** - B.Sc. (Business Management) (St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, Canada), Master in Rehabilitation Administration (Mc Laren School of Business, University of San Francisco) - **(Commissioner)**
- **Mr. Gerard Besson** - Humming Bird Medal (Gold) for Heritage Preservation and Promotion in 2007 - **(Commissioner)**

The profiles of the Commissioners are attached as **Appendix I**.



Vision

The Equal Opportunity Commission envisages an informed and empowered nation that is assured of fair and equitable treatment for all citizens, contributing to a common endeavour for the good of all.

Mandate

The Equal Opportunity Commission is created by section 26(1) of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 [Act No 6 of 2000 as amended], (“the Act”) and is guided in its mandate by the terms and provisions of the Act. The Act seeks, among other things, to prohibit certain kinds of discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different statuses. In particular, the Act applies to:

- (i) Discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, religion, disability, origin including geographical origin, ethnicity and marital status or for reasons of victimisation (as defined by section 6) with respect to employment (sections 8 to 14), to the provision of education (sections 15 and 16), to the provision of goods and services (section 17) and with respect to the provision of accommodation (section 18); and
- (ii) Actions that are done in public that may be considered “offensive” in that it is reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or groups of persons, or it is done because of the gender, race ethnicity, origin, or religion of the other person or some or all of the other persons in the group and is done with the intention of inciting gender, racial or religious hatred (section 7).

The Act recognises the importance of the removal of all barriers to the free flow of resources of talent, opportunities and aspirations, so that each individual can contribute to the national endeavour and expect a fair response in return. In the pursuit of these objectives, the Commission is mandated by section 27 (1) –

- (a) To work towards the elimination of discrimination
- (b) To promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status generally;
- (c) To keep under review the working of the Act and any relevant law and, when required or otherwise thinks it necessary, to draw up and submit proposals for amending them;
- (d) To receive, investigate and, as far as possible, conciliate allegations of discrimination;
- (e) To develop, conduct and foster research and educational programmes for the purpose of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status;
- (f) To prepare and publish appropriate guidelines for the avoidance of discrimination and
- (g) To do any other thing conducive or incidental to the carrying out of its functions.

Report With Respect to Investigations and Conciliation of Complaints

Under section 27(1)(c), the Commission is mandated “to receive, investigate and, as far as possible, conciliate allegations of discrimination”. The investigation and conciliation of complaints is singularly the largest activity that the Commission undertook in 2011.

Complaints Received

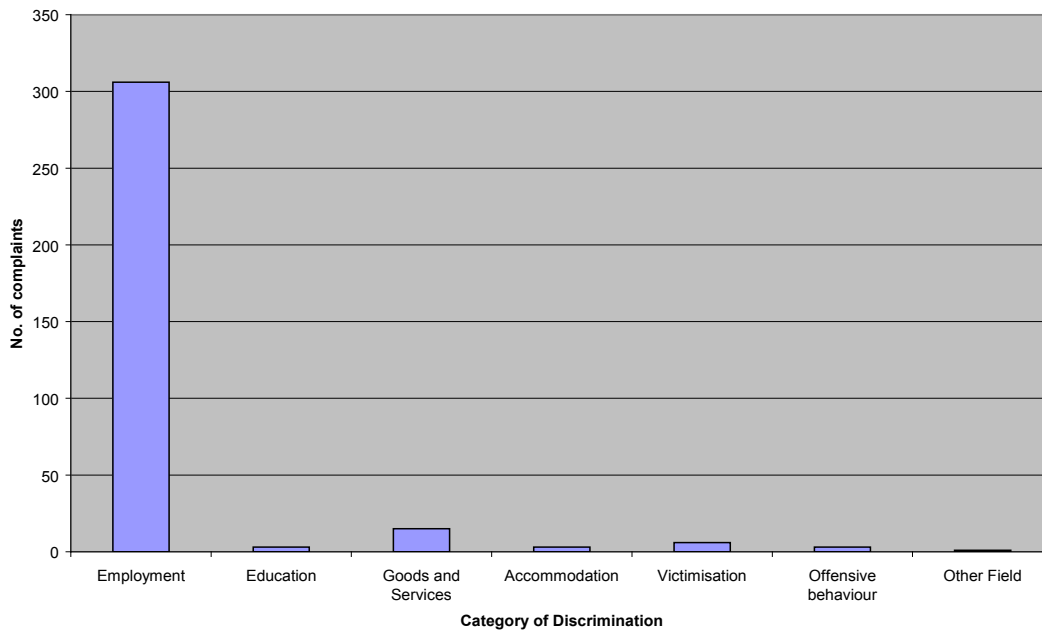
During the period 1st January to 31st December 2011, the Commission received 337 complaints, which are broken down in the categories set hereunder.

• Employment –	306
• Education –	3
• Provision of Goods & Services –	15
• Provision of Accommodation –	3
• Victimization –	6
• Offensive Behaviour –	3
• Other Field –	1

Roughly 91% of the complaints received were employment-related.

Figure 1

Complaints received by category of Discrimination (2011)



Analysis of Complaints received per Quarter:

About 67% of the complaints were received during the second quarter of the year. By contrast, the last quarter accounted for only about 8%.

Table 1

Details	1st Quarter Jan. - Mar. 2011	2nd Quarter April - June 2011	3rd Quarter July - Sept. 2011	4th Quarter Sept. - Dec. 2011	Year to Date
No. of Complaints	40	226	44	27	337

Figure 2

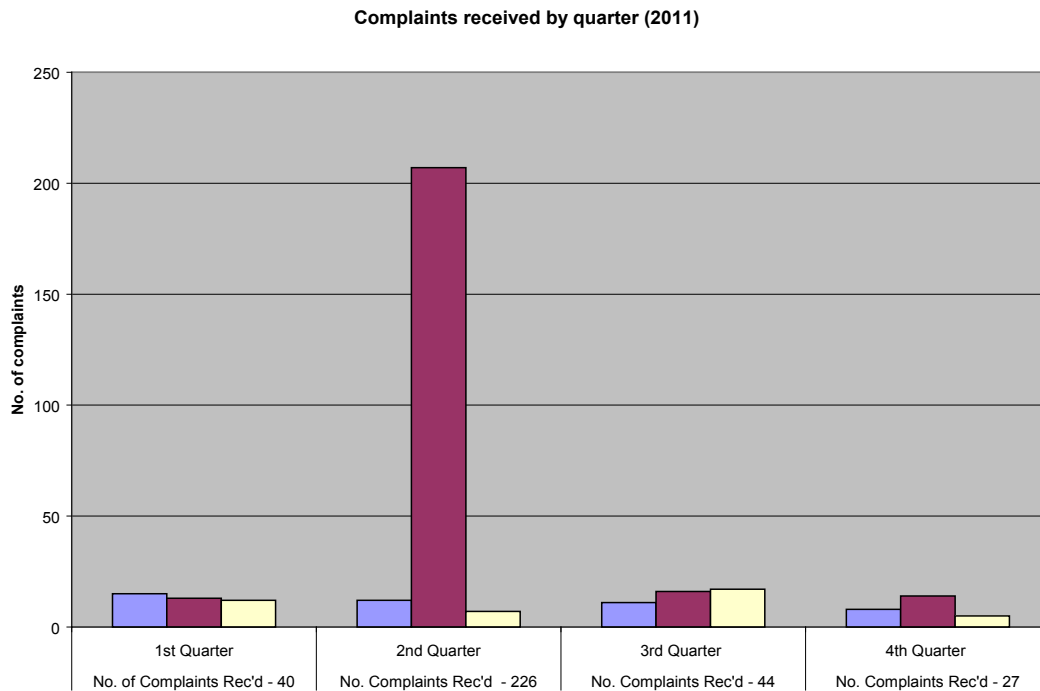
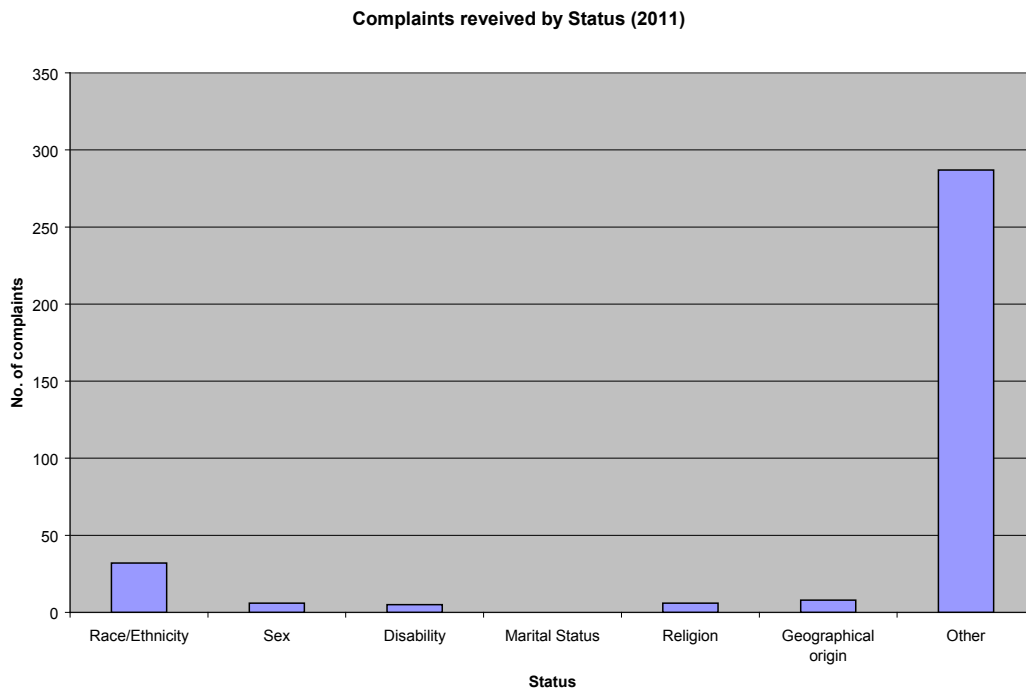


Figure 3

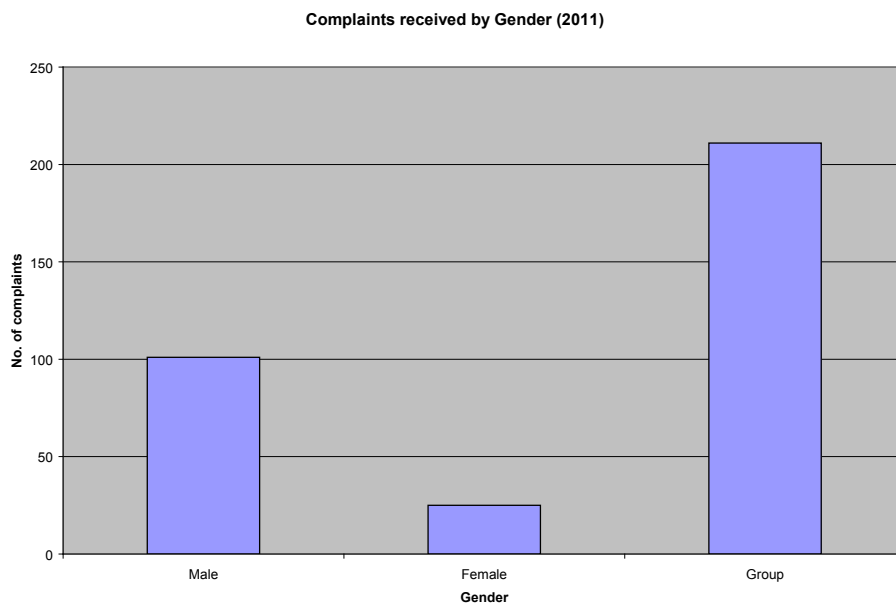


Number of Complaints received by Gender:

- Male – 101
- Female – 25
- Group – 211

Roughly 62% of the complaints were received from groups of persons as opposed to individuals. With respect to individuals, males made four times as many complaints as females.

Figure 4



Complaints Referred to Conciliation

According to the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 [Act No 69 of 2000 as amended], where, upon investigating a complaint, the Commission finds that there is no evidence of discrimination (to which the Act applies) it shall inform the complainant in writing of this, and shall take no further action (section 34). However, if the Commission finds that the matter may be resolved by conciliation, it shall take steps to have the matter conciliated (section 35). During the period 1st January to 31st December 2011, twenty-one (21) matters were referred to the two Mediation Officers employed with the Commission for the purposes of conciliation.

Conciliation Report for the period January 1st 2011 – December 30th 2011

The Conciliation department has received twenty one (21) cases for the period January 1st, 2011 to December 30th, 2011. Out of the twenty one (21) cases received two (2) cases were scheduled for conciliation within the month of January 2012 whilst, nineteen (19) cases were conciliated. Out of the nineteen (19) cases conciliated one (1) case is awaiting final agreement by the parties, six (6) cases were settled with written agreements, three (3) cases were resolved with no formal agreement and no resolution was achieved for nine (9) cases.

Table 1

Details	1st Quarter Jan. - Mar. 2011	2nd Quarter April - June 2011	3rd Quarter July - Sept. 2011	4th Quarter Oct. - Dec. 2011	Year to Date
No of cases received for the Period	7	4	8	2	21
TOTAL	7	4	8	2	21
No. of cases in Progress				3	3
No. of cases - Mutual Agreement	2	2	1	1	6
No. of cases - Resolved with no formal agreement	3				3
No. of cases - No resolution	2	1	6		9
TOTAL	7	3	7	4	21

Chart 1
Number of cases received and Areas of Discrimination for 2011 Complaints

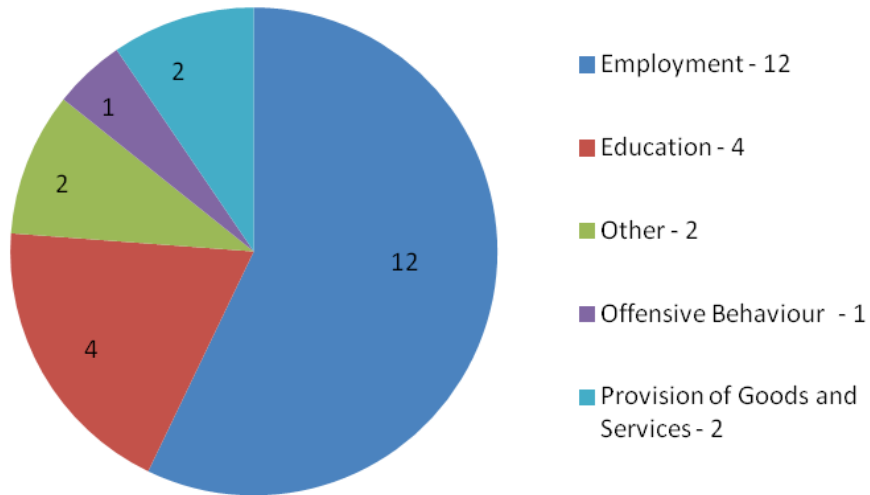
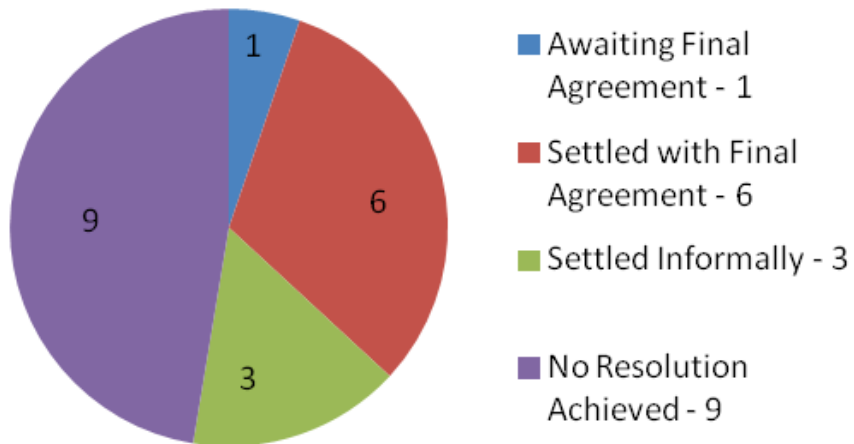


Chart 2
Status of the cases conciliated for 2011



Complaints Referred to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal

Apart from creating the Commission, the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 also created the Equal Opportunity Tribunal (the “Tribunal”). The Tribunal is established by section 41 of the Act as a superior Court of Record and is vested with all powers and jurisdiction inherent in such a Court, additional to the jurisdiction and powers conferred on it by the Act. By section 39, where the Commission is of the opinion that a matter before it cannot be resolved by conciliation, or where the Commission has attempted to resolve the matter by conciliation but it remains unresolved, the Commission, after preparing and publishing a report and sending copies of that report to the parties, shall initiate proceedings before the Tribunal, with the consent of and on behalf of the complainant. There were no matters referred to the Tribunal in 2011, either as unsuitable for conciliation or unresolved after conciliation.

San Fernando City Corporation Public Awareness Session (Photos, page 11):
Pic 1) L to R: Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal), Ms. Beverly Beckles (Commissioner, EOC), Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC) and Dr. Indira Rampersad (Commissioner, EOC)

Pic 2) L to R : Mr. Deodath Ragoobar (Chief Executive Officer San Fernando City Corporation), Ms. Beverly Beckles (Commissioner, EOC), Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), Her worship, The Mayor Alderman Marlene Coudray, Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal), and Dr. Indira Rampersad (Commissioner, EOC)

Pic 3) 4) 5) Audience at the San Fernando City Corporation Awareness Session

Pic 6) Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), and Her Worship, the Mayor Alderman Marlene Coudray, San Fernando

Report With Respect to Work Towards the Elimination of Discrimination, Promotion of Equality of Opportunity Generally and Public Education and Research Programmes.

Under section 27(1)(a) of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 [Act No 69 of 2000 as amended], the Commission is mandated “to work towards the elimination of discrimination”. By section 21(1)(b) the Commission is required “to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status generally”. Further section 27(1)(e) charges the Commission “To develop, conduct and foster research and educational programmes and other programmes for the purpose of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status.”

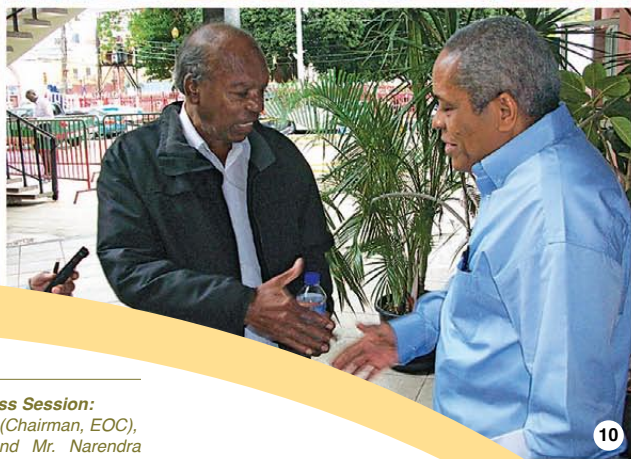
Pursuant to this, the Commission in 2011, firstly embarked on several general and specific awareness programmes. Secondly, the Chairman engaged in a number of appearances and activities and, thirdly, a survey was commissioned to provide feedback and insight.

General and Specific Awareness Programmes

General Public Sessions:

Two sessions were held for members of the general public. The first was at the San Fernando City Corporation and the second was at the Port-of-Spain City Corporation. They were titled “Awareness Sessions on the various amendments suggested to our line ministry, the Ministry of the Attorney General (MOAG)” as well “Awareness Sessions on the procedures in relation to complaints and matters we are empowered to investigate” respectively.





Port-of-Spain City Corporation Public Awareness Session:
Pic 7) Panelists L to R: Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), Ms. Beverly Beckles (Commissioner, EOC) and Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal)

Pic 8) 9) Audience at the Port-of-Spain City Corporation Public Awareness Session

Pic 10) Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), and His Worship, the Mayor Louis Lee Sing, Port-of-Spain

Pic 11) Feature speaker: Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal)

These sessions both served to present information on the purpose and scope of the Commission, as well as to provide information on the procedures used by the Commission to investigate matters. They were aimed at raising awareness of and encouraging public discussion on issues of equal opportunity as well as deepening public understanding of the work of the Commission.

Public Awareness Programmes:

Public Awareness Programmes were conducted in 2011 as follows:

Tuesday February 15th, presentation to the Employers' Consultative Association (ECA) on the Equal Opportunity Legislation and Employers' Rights at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre in Port-of-Spain.

Monday July 18th, presentation to the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Tobago Division at the Teal Building, Milford Road, Scarborough, Tobago.

Thursday August 25th, presentation to the San Fernando City Corporation at the San Fernando City Hall Auditorium.

Monday October 17th, presentation to the Port-of-Spain City Corporation at the City Corporation's Auditorium.

Friday October 21st, presentation at the Ministry of Public Administration, Human Resources, Leaders Network Forum at the National Library Building, Corner Hart & Abercromby Streets, Port-of-Spain. The audience included all Human Resource Managers and Directors of the different Government Ministries.



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Public Awareness Programmes conducted in 2011:

Pic 12) Audience at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Tobago Division

Pic 13) Presentation at the Employers' Consultative Association (ECA)
L to R: Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), Ms. Beverly Beckles (Commissioner, EOC) Ms. Linda Besson (Director, ECA) and Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal)

Pic 14) San Fernando City Corporation Public Awareness Session
L to R: Mr. Deodath Ragoobar (Chief Executive Officer San Fernando City Corporation), Ms. Beverly Beckles (Commissioner, EOC), Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), Her worship, The Mayor Alderman Marlene Coudray, Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal), and Dr. Indra Rampersad (Commissioner, EOC)

Pic 15) A member of the audience asks questions during the Q and A at the San Fernando City Corporation Public Awareness Session

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Pic 16) Professor John La Guerre (Chairman, EOC), and His Worship, the Mayor Louis Lee Sing, Port-of-Spain

Pic 17) Audience at the Port-of-Spain City Corporation Public Awareness Session

Pic 18) Presentation at the Ministry of Public Administration, Human Resources Leaders Network Forum. Feature Speaker: Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry (Head, Legal)



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The Commission's staff members that attended and/or presented at these sessions included (L to R): the Chairman, Professor Emeritus John La Guerre, Commissioner Ms. Beverly Beckles, Head Legal, Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry and Communications Specialist, Mrs. Ria Mohammed Pollard.



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Branding and Outreach: Billboards, Website, Information and Media

Billboards (Trinidad)

The Commission erected three (3) billboards throughout Trinidad. The three are strategically placed; one in the North (Port-of-Spain), one in the East (Arima) and one in the South (San Fernando). (See page 15)

- The Northern billboard is located along **Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain**
- The Eastern billboard is located at the junction of **Pinto Road and the Eastern Main Road, Maturita Village, Arima**
- The Southern billboard is located on the **San Fernando Bypass.**

Website:

The Commission was engaged in the process of upgrading its website. This was outsourced to the Government Information Services (GISL) for reconstructing. The purpose of reconstructing the site was to ensure security and to facilitate online complaints.

Commission's Corporate Jingle:

A corporate sixty second (60 sec) radio jingle was generated and aired during prime-time hours (6.00am-9.00am and 3.00pm-7.00pm) between October and December on the following radio stations.

October 2011

- Hott 93 (93.5fm)
- Radio Vision (Power 102.1 fm)

November 2011

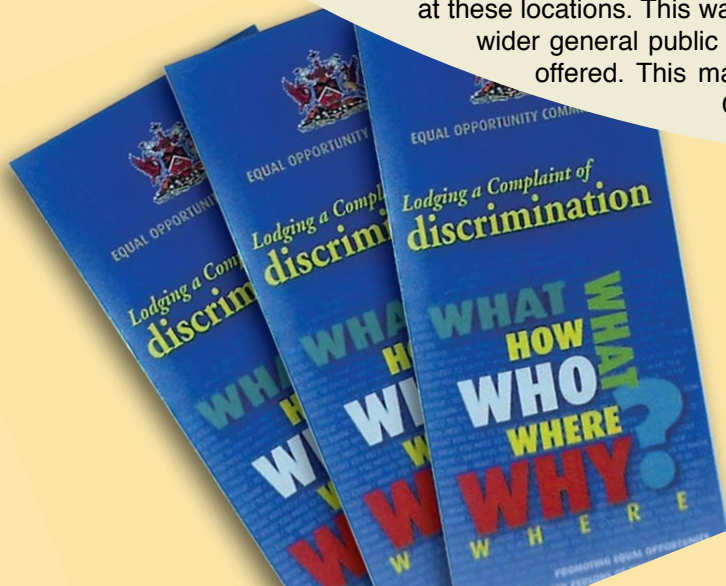
- Radio Jaagriti (102.7fm)
- Citadel Limited (i95.5fm)

December 2011

- CNMG: Talk City 91.1fm and Sweet 100.1fm

Leaflet

The Commission's leaflet on "How to Lodge a Complaint" was again distributed to each Regional Corporation, the Tobago House of Assembly (THA); the Office of the Ombudsman and Warden's offices in the various geographic districts areas. Complaint forms were also distributed at these locations. This was to ensure dissemination to the wider general public and accessibility to the services offered. This material is also accessible on the Commission's website.



The Commission's leaflet on "How to Lodge a Complaint"



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Media

Information with respect to the Commission’s core functions, events, notices and its mandate was published in the following print media:

- Trinidad Express,
- Trinidad Guardian,
- Newsday and
- Tobago News.

Additionally, members of staff appeared on talk-radio and television-talk programmes as follows:

- February 5th 2011 Win TV “Rapid Fire”
- April 4th 2011 interview with Juhel Browe (this made the news survey with regards to the Tribunal not having a registrar)
- July 7th 2011 CNMG, “First Up”
- July 7th 2011 Power 102 talk show
- July 29th 2011 CNC, “Early Morning Show”
- 2011 IBN “Breaking Barriers”

Public Appearances and Activities of the Chairman

Further to the mandate given to the Commission at sections 27(1)(a), (b) and (e) of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03, the Chairman of the Commission Professor Emeritus John La Guerre engaged in a number of public appearances and activities during 2011 which include as follows:

- **January 29th 2011** - Made a presentation to Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) on ‘Background to Discrimination in Trinidad and Tobago’.
- **February 15th 2011** - Presented at the Employers Consultative Association’s (ECA) Session on ‘Equal Opportunity Legislation and Employment Rights’.
(picture 22, page 17)
- **February 4th 2011** - Met with Mr. Collin Robinson of the Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (Caiso).
- **February 7th 2011** - Met with Public Services Association, Mr. Watson Duke - Discussion on the work of the Commission and the Act.
- **April 20th 2011** - Attended the Send-Off ceremony for Commissioners marking the end of their term in office 2008 - 2011 *(picture 25, page 17)*
- **May 6th 2011** - Swearing-in Ceremony at the residence of His Excellency the President of the new Commissioners of the Equal Opportunity Commission.
(picture 23, page 17)
- **May 11th 2011** - Visit by the Honourable Attorney General Senator Anand Ramlogan to the Equal Opportunity Commission.
- **May 31st 2011** - Inaugural meeting the of new Commissioners for its new term 2011-2014.

- **July 6th 2011** - Met with the Chief Administrator of the Tobago House of Assembly for discussions on the Commission’s Public Awareness Drive in Tobago.
- **July 15th 2011** - Attended the retirement function for the Honourable Mr. Justice Michael de la Bastide TC, President of the Caribbean Court of Justice.
- **August 12th 2011** - Attended a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce, Westmoorings entitled ‘Business Hall of Fame’. *(picture 26, below)*
- **August 15th 2011** - Delivered an address at the San Fernando City Corporation in keeping with the Equal Opportunity Commission Awareness Drive. “Awareness Sessions on the various amendments suggested to our line ministry, the Ministry of the Attorney General (MOAG)” *(picture 24, below)*
- **August 31st 2011** - Attended the Independence Day National Awards Ceremony at the official residence of His Excellency the President.
- **September 29th 2011** - Attended a lecture hosted by the Judicial Education Institute of the Trinidad and Tobago Supreme Court, at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom, delivered by Sir Shirdath Ramphal on ‘Creating Regional Jurisprudence’.
- **October 17th 2011** - Delivered another address, Equal Opportunity Commission, Awareness Drive session at the Port-of-Spain City Corporation. “Awareness Sessions on the procedures in relation to complaints and matters we are empowered to investigate” *(picture 27, below)*

The ensuing discussions and issues raised were all subsequently brought to the attention of the Commission.



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MORI Opinion Leaders Survey

In 2011, the Commission wished to obtain base-line data with respect to public perceptions towards the Commission and the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03. The Communications Department, in collaboration with the Research Unit, utilised the services of the Market and Opinion Research International (MORI) Opinion Leaders Panel Survey of the Ministry of Public Administration. The Survey, termed Wave 19, was implemented during the months of May - July 2011. It was based on interviews conducted on a representative sample of the adult population of Trinidad & Tobago in order to understand the reasons behind certain attitudes and to establish a baseline of public opinion towards human rights.

Recommendations

The findings of the MORI survey have not yet been released, as Cabinet has not yet granted approval for same. However the Ministry of Public Administration, in its report, outlined the following recommendations:

- that there was need for sensitisation programmes about the Commission: its purpose, objectives and services
- that there was need for assistance to individuals to respond effectively to experiences of discrimination;
- that there was need for enhanced policymaking in public and private organisations by contributing an equality perspective to policies and programmes
- that the Commission ought to develop a Strategic Plan which covers an annual Public Awareness/ Sensitisation Campaign targeting key stakeholders: the youth, Ministries, Public and Private sectors ; and the
- that there was need for engagement with public authorities, employer bodies, trade unions and non-governmental organisations to mobilise, develop and support a wider framework of action for equality and non-discrimination

The data gathered and the recommendations made will be used for in house analysis / planning and for Public Education Session in 2012.

Report With Respect to Review of the Equal Opportunity Act

Under section 27(1)(c) of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 [Act No 69 of 2000 as amended], the Commission is mandated “to keep under review the working of the Act and any relevant law and, when required or otherwise thinks it necessary, to draw up and submit proposals for amending them.” Following discussions in 2010, a number of proposed amendments to the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 have been submitted to the Ministry of the Attorney General for consideration. The Legal Unit has been liaising with the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel with respect to the proposed Bill to amend the Act. The proposed Bill is still currently under review.

Report With Respect to The Preparation and Publication of Guidelines

Under section 27(1)(f) of the Equal Opportunity Act Chap 22:03 [Act No 69 of 2000 as amended], the Commission is mandated “to prepare and publish appropriate guidelines for the avoidance of discrimination.” No guidelines were prepared or published in 2011. The Legal Unit has set this as one of its targets for 2012.

Report With Respect to Departments and Units of the Commission for 2011

Communications Unit

Much of the work undertaken by the Communications Unit was detailed in the section titled “Report with respect to work towards the elimination of discrimination, promotion of equality of opportunity generally and public education and research programmes”.

Two major challenges that this Unit faces are:

1. As the Commission expands, there may not be appropriate Communications support to meet dynamic and changing needs. For example a graphic artist and communications assistant to expedite media activities and website updates will be among the HR requirements.
2. Lack of sufficient funding to execute effective educational programmes.

For the new calendar year the Communications Unit proposes to embark on the following activities:

- (i) The expansion of the Unit to meet the manpower requirements of an increased number of Public Awareness Sessions.
- (ii) Ongoing Public Awareness sessions for both Private and Public Sector organisations and institutions. Immediate targeted audiences would include all Regional Corporations, Chambers of Commerce, Rotary clubs and Employer Bodies.
- (iii) Monthly awareness visits to both the San Fernando City Corporation and Tobago to receive complaints and assist the general public in understanding the work of the Commission.
- (iv) Essay Competition geared toward Fifth and Sixth Form secondary school students.
- (v) Conceptualising, producing and directing the Commission’s corporate video.
- (vi) Producing a brochure on “Understanding the Complaints Process”.
- (vii) Collaborating with TTConnect to reach the rural areas of Trinidad & Tobago.
- (viii) Generating press releases after each Commissioners meeting outlining cases dealt with and statistics unveiled.
- (ix) The launch of the EOC’s reconstructed website in order to facilitate online complaints.

Human Resources

Staffing

The Commission falls under the line purview of the Ministry of the Attorney General, and the Human Resource Department of that Ministry continues to play an integral role in the recruitment of personnel to staff the Commission.

The following posts were filled during the year 2011:

Dates of Assumption of duty	Contract post
10th October 2011	Business Operator three (BOA 3)
	Ms. Charlene Renaud
17th October 2011	Investigating Officer
	Ms. Gillian Ash

The present staff structure is attached at Appendix II.

Staff Training:

The Investigating Officers of the Commission were trained in “Conducting Internal Investigations” from the Caribbean Institute of Forensic Accounting in collaboration with the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) from 7th - 8th November at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce. The facilitator was Mr. Stephon Grey-CFE, Certified Forensic Accountant.

Legal Unit

The Legal Unit advises the Commission on all legal issues that pertain to the investigation and conciliation functions of the institution as well as all general legal and policy issues that may arise. This Unit is in charge of all the complaints received during this period.

Research Unit

The Commission’s Research Unit commenced operations in June 2010, with the appointment of a Research Officer II. The main responsibility of the Research Unit is to develop, conduct and foster research and educational programmes and other



Investigating Officers of the Commission at the training session on “Conducting Internal Investigations”, held at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce. L to R: Navindra Ramadhar, Donnalyn Harry, Stephen Grey - CFE (facilitator), Keisha McLean-Woods and Gillian Ash.



Stephen Grey - CFE (facilitator), speaks with the participants at the training session.



Participants at the training session enjoy a fabulous lunch break.

programmes for the purpose of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status. More specifically the Unit:

- assists in planning, organising and conducting programmes of research into areas related to the functions and objectives of the Commission;
- collects, analyses and evaluates data on relevant trends of equality ; and
- liaises and collaborates with other Research Units in Government Ministries and Departments and private organisations for the exchange of information relating to Equality of Opportunity for the citizenry of Trinidad and Tobago.

The role of the Research Unit is to encourage research, and to ensure the quality and dissemination of research projects associated with the Commission by providing support, advice and education on research matters.

In 2011 the Research Unit focused on:

- Identifying research needs and commissioning research accordingly;
- Obtaining baseline data for future comparative study and analysis; and
- Building an evidence- based culture within the Commission.

In this regard the Research Unit was involved in the following activities:

1. **MORI Opinion Leaders Survey** - this survey was detailed in the section titled “Report with respect to work towards the elimination of discrimination, promotion of equality of opportunity generally and public education and research programmes”
2. **Statistical Analysis of Data of the Complaints received and handled by the Commission** - The purpose of this research was to investigate the nature of discrimination being reported to Commission by a content analysis of the complaints made. This research study would analyse the data according to a number of characteristics such as type of discrimination, the nature of discrimination and the finalisation of the complaint. While the analysis of complaints would be an effective method for gathering statistical data on the nature and frequency of reported discrimination and gaining insight into the complaints process, it would be unable to provide insights into the frequency of the incidence of discrimination in the country. In short, this research investigation would provide information about who reports discrimination but does not provide a full picture of who is being discriminated against. As such, it is not possible to extrapolate the full picture solely from the complaints data.

Information Technology

The Information Technology Unit is responsible for providing and managing the information technology and systems policies of the Commission. These include planning, administration, information system and application support, networking and communications, and service support.

However, during 2011, because of the proposed relocation of the Commission’s offices the IT Unit did not engage in any physical changes to the existing network infrastructure. The Unit was mostly responsible for the review of the new site-related systems/infrastructure designs as well as procurement and outsourcing from vendors and suppliers.

Inter-Departmental Activities



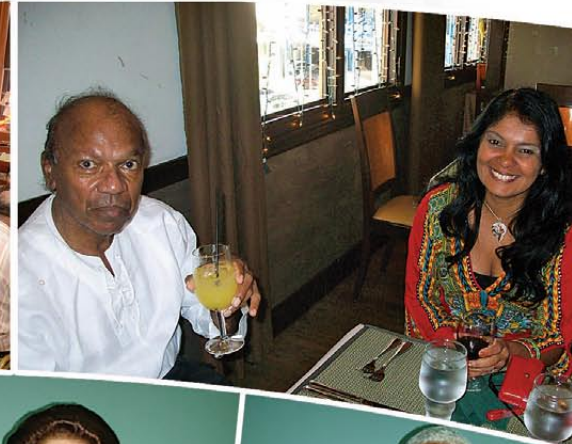
EID observations - Commission staff collaborated effort



Father's Day Celebrations - Commission staff collaborated effort



Christmas Luncheon at Jaffa's



April 20th 2011- Send off ceremony for Commissioners for end of their term in office 2008 - 2011

Accommodation

The Equal Opportunity Commission is currently housed on the first floor of the Ceramic (Trinidad) Building, located at No. 37 Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain. The Commission has taken preliminary steps for relocation to a more appropriate, spacious and centralised building for both the Commission and the Tribunal. A property at Ramsaran Street, Chaguanas has been sourced and is at present being completed.

Additionally the Commission has been offered office space for conducting public awareness sessions to meet the public on a monthly basis by the San Fernando City Corporation at City Hall, Harris Promenade, San Fernando and the Central Administrative services of Tobago (CAST) at its building on Jerningham Street, Scarborough Tobago.

A circular arrangement of diverse hands holding each other, symbolizing unity and support. The hands are of various skin tones and are set against a background of green foliage. The entire scene is framed by a semi-circular orange border at the top.

www.equalopportunity.gov.tt

Report With Respect to Income and Expenditure of the Commission

Financial Expenditure

During the period January 2011 – September 2011 the Equal Opportunity Commission (the “Commission”) and the Equal Opportunity Tribunal (the “Tribunal”) shared one vote and obtained releases in the sum of four million, six hundred and sixty-three thousand, two hundred dollars (TTD \$4,663,200.00). From October 2011 – December 2011 the Commission, under its own vote, obtained releases in the sum of two million, twenty-five thousand, five hundred dollars (TTD \$2,025,500.00). A total of six million, six hundred and ninety thousand, seven hundred dollars (TTD \$6,690,700.00) was received from the Budget Division, Ministry of Finance for the stated period. This sum was in relation to Goods and Services.

Out of these releases, the sum of three million, one hundred and seventy-eight thousand, seven hundred and ninety-six dollars and nineteen cents (\$3, 178,796.19) was spent under 02/003 – Goods and Services and ninety-six thousand, one hundred and thirty-four dollars and twenty-five cents (\$96,134.25) was spent under 03/003 –Minor Equipment.

A total of five million, one hundred and thirty-three thousand, seven hundred and seven dollars and sixty-four cents (\$5,133,707.64) was utilised by the Commission for 2011. It is to be noted that both the Commission and Tribunal shared one Item -003 during the period January 2011 and September 2011.

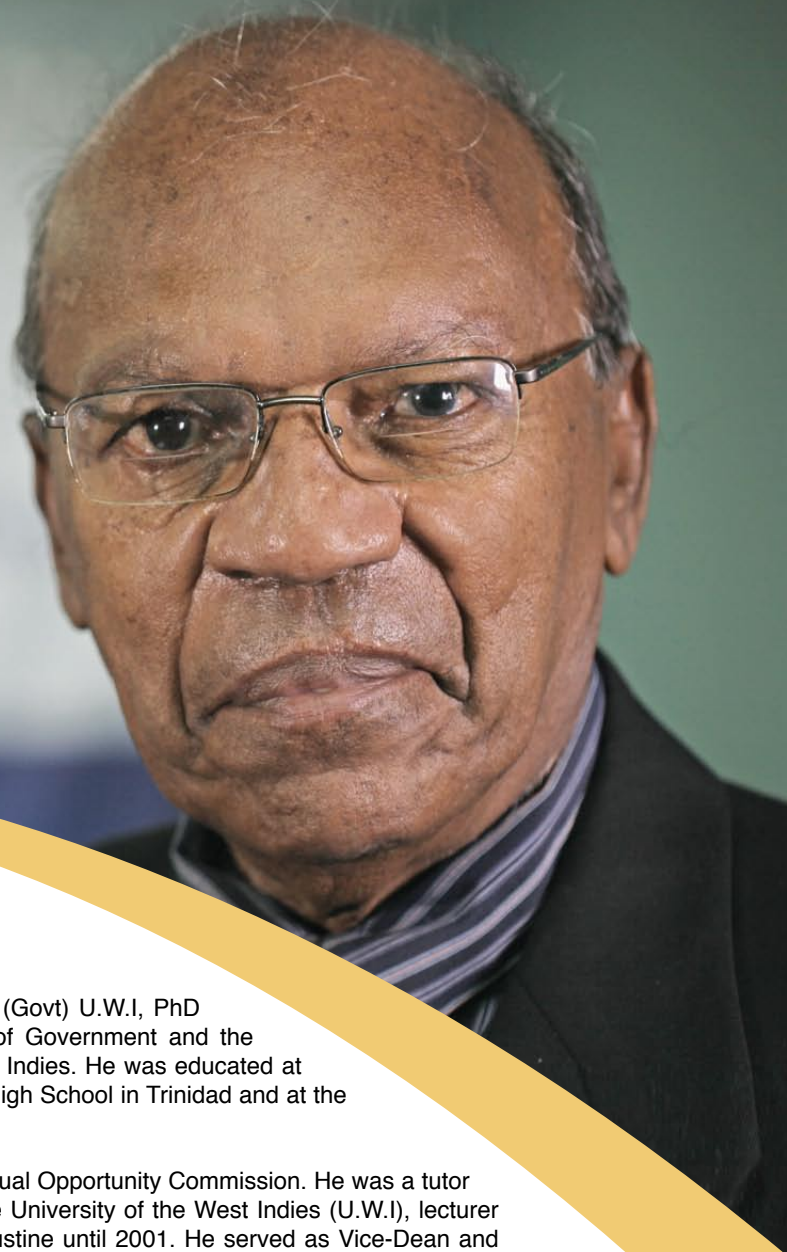
Table 2

STATEMENT OF COST AND EXPENSES	
Expenditure for January - December 2010	
EXPENSES	TT\$
Goods and Services (02/003)	
Fixed Cost	
Rent/Lease	1,656,000.00
Janitorial Services	202,777.20
Total Fixed Cost	1,858,777.20
Variable Cost	
Travelling	7490.00
Electricity	195,000.00
Telephone	442,241.04
Office Stationery & Supplies	82,818.27
Books & Periodicals	13,236.00
Materials & Supplies	1,743.50
Maintenance of Vehicle	2,861.85
Maintenance of Equipment	10,600.02
Contract Employment	1,940,000.00
Training	26,100.00
Maintenance of Building	1,462.80
Other Contracted Services	34,049.69
Postage	2,668.75
Medical Expenses	1,993.50
Promotion/Publishing/Printing	386,029.37
Hosting of Conferences	30,501.40
Minor Equipment (03/003)	
Office Equipment	67,687.50
Furniture & Furnishings	10,891.75
Other Minor Equipment	17,555.00
Total variable Cost	3,274,930.44
Total Expenditure	5,133,707.64



Appendix I

Profile of Commissioners



Chairman

Professor John La Guerre -B. Sc. (Economics) (UWI), M. Sc. (Government) (UWI), Ph. D. (Manchester)

John Gaffar La Guerre – B.Sc (Econ) U.W.I, M.Sc (Govt) U.W.I, PhD (University of Manchester) is Emeritus Professor of Government and the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies. He was educated at Progressive Educational Institute and St. Andrews High School in Trinidad and at the University of the West Indies, Manchester and Paris.

Professor La Guerre is currently Chairman of the Equal Opportunity Commission. He was a tutor in Politics and the University of Manchester and the University of the West Indies (U.W.I), lecturer and Professor of Government at the U.W.I St. Augustine until 2001. He served as Vice-Dean and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chairman of African and Asian Studies Unit at the U.W.I. He was also the Public Orator at the University and was for many years the Head of its Department of Government. He has written many books on the politics of the Caribbean and Africa and has contributed several articles to professional journals.

Professor La Guerre has contributed several papers to conferences in the Caribbean and elsewhere. He has prepared several reports for the Government including reports on Employment practices in the Public Sector as well as scholarship awards by the state. He was a member of the Hyatali Commission of 1987, was Co-Director of the Centre for Ethnic Studies, U.W.I, St. Augustine during the period 1992-1996, a member of a Task Force on Legal Education in Trinidad and Tobago in 1997 and is now a member of the Round Table on Constitution Reform.



Vice-Chairman

Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie – Doctorate in Education majoring in Human Resource Development from the George Washington University, USA

Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie was born 5th October 1941 in the village of Bethany, Tobago. Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie attended St. Patrick Anglican Primary School; she went on to Bishop's High School. After graduating from Bishop's she joined the teaching profession in 1960. Four years later she went on to Mausica Teacher's Training College where she graduated in 1966 with a Teaching Diploma. She gained the reputation as the student having the best record of all time, having won every major academic prize on offer.

After teaching for five years at the Hope Anglican Primary School, Dr. Mc Kenzie moved to the Community Development Division as a Community Development Officer and later moved to the position of Education Extension Officer in the Education Division. Further academic achievements include a Post Graduate Diploma in Community Development where she received the Burney Prize for the Best External Student Dissertation in 1977, followed by a Masters Degree in Education (M.ED.) in 1979 from the University of Manchester, England and a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) majoring in Human Resource Development from Washington University in 1987.

Dr. Mc Kenzie was appointed an Independent Senator in 1995, and served until 2009. To date she is the only Tobagonian to lead the Independent benches in the Senate, and has

represented the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago at conferences in the Turks and Caicos Islands, New Zealand, The Bahamas and India. Her interest in the education system afforded her the opportunity to serve on many education committees. She served as Chairman of a Task Force on the poor performance of Tobago students in Tobago and sat on a specially-appointed Task Force on Education in Trinidad and Tobago.

She once headed the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP) and initiated School Leaving Examinations classes in the Tobago prisons. Dr. Mc Kenzie has been a member of the executive committee of the Tobago Council of Handicapped Children Inc. since its formation in 1974, religious instructor on behalf of the Methodists Church at the Scarborough Secondary since 1996, and a motivational speaker at schools and Parent/Teacher Associations. She was also manager/tutor of the Homework Centre at St. Patrick's AC run by the Carnbee Mt. Pleasant Sports Club at the Carnbee Mt. Pleasant Community Centre.

Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie possesses a terrific sense of humor, and still finds time to engage in the performing arts. She has acted in several plays, both live and on-screen and is versed in the island's oral traditions and speaks the Tobago dialect fluently and effectively. She has also written several folk monologues.

A portrait of Dr. Indira Rampersad, a woman with long dark hair, smiling. The background is blurred, showing a logo with the letters 'EO' and a yellow circle. A yellow curved graphic element is at the bottom of the image.

Commissioner

Dr. Indira Rampersad

Dr. Indira Rampersad holds a Bachelor of Arts in Language in Literature, a Diploma in International Relations, a Certificate in Translation from Spanish to English, a Master of Philosophy in Latin American Literature, a Master of Philosophy in International Relations and a Ph.D in Political Science.

She has been awarded two Fulbright scholarships for study in the United States, one at the Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, to explore the American Political System, the other to undertake her Ph.D in Political Science at the University of Florida, Gainesville, where she majored in International Relations and minored in Public Policy. Her doctoral dissertation focused on American foreign policy to Cuba on which she has published and presented at many academic and non-academic forums. Her research now extends to Latin American and Caribbean Politics and International Relations, American foreign policy, alternative energy, food security and crime with specific emphasis on the Caribbean.

Dr. Rampersad speaks Spanish fluently and has undertaken extensive research throughout the United States including Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, New York and Washington D.C. Her research has also taken her to Latin America namely Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Panama, Colombia, Brazil and Cuba. She has also been an election observer for the Organization of American States in Grenada and El Salvador.

She writes a regular column for the Trinidad Sunday Guardian and the New York based Guyana Journal. In addition, she is a regular a media commentator on national, regional and international issues.

Dr. Rampersad is now based at the Department of Behavioural Sciences at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, where she is a Lecturer in International Relations.



Commissioner

**Ms. Beverly Ann-Marie Beckles – B.Sc.
(Business Management) from St. Francis Xavier
University, Nova Scotia, Canada, Master in Rehabilitation
Administration from Mc Laren School of Business, University of
San Francisco, USA**

Beverly Ann Marie Beckles is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD). She has twenty-seven years experience in the field of advocacy on behalf of the disability. As a defender of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all walks of life, her work has been key to the development of National Policies for Persons with Disabilities in seven Caribbean Countries. Her work involves close contact with governments, international agencies and civil society groups in the promotion of equal opportunity for persons with disabilities.

Ms. Beckles is highly respected in her field as demonstrated by her involvement in a multiplicity of public and private endeavours. She is a past Director of the Global Applied Disability Research & Information Network on Employment and Training (GLADNET), an international organisation based at Cornell University, USA and is a past chair and member of the National Coordinating Committee on Disability. Ms. Beckles has received several acknowledgements for her work in the field of disability nationally, regionally and internationally.

In 1993, she received a National Award in recognition of community service for persons with disabilities and an international award from Goodwill Industries Inc. in recognition of extensive contributions to persons with disabilities in the Caribbean.

She has also received awards from other internationally recognised institutions and has the distinction of being the first recipient of the Inter-American Development Bank's Award for Social Entrepreneurship (1999). She is the holder of a Master's in Rehabilitation Administration (MRA) from the University of San Francisco, USA and is currently working on her dissertation towards a Doctor of Philosophy from Capella University, USA.



Commissioner

Gerard Besson

Mr. Gerard Besson was educated at Tranquillity Boys' School and at St. Thomas High School in Port of Spain. He is the founder of Creative Advertising Co. Ltd. which he served between 1973 and 1993 and Paria Publishing Co. Ltd. in 1981 which he continues to lead.

Mr. Besson served for seven years on the Council of the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine Campus), and on the Advisory Council for the setting up of an Academy of Arts, Letters, Culture and Public Affairs at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT).

He also served as Chairman on the committee to inaugurate the O'Meara and the Battery Point Campuses and organised the first graduation ceremony of the UTT.

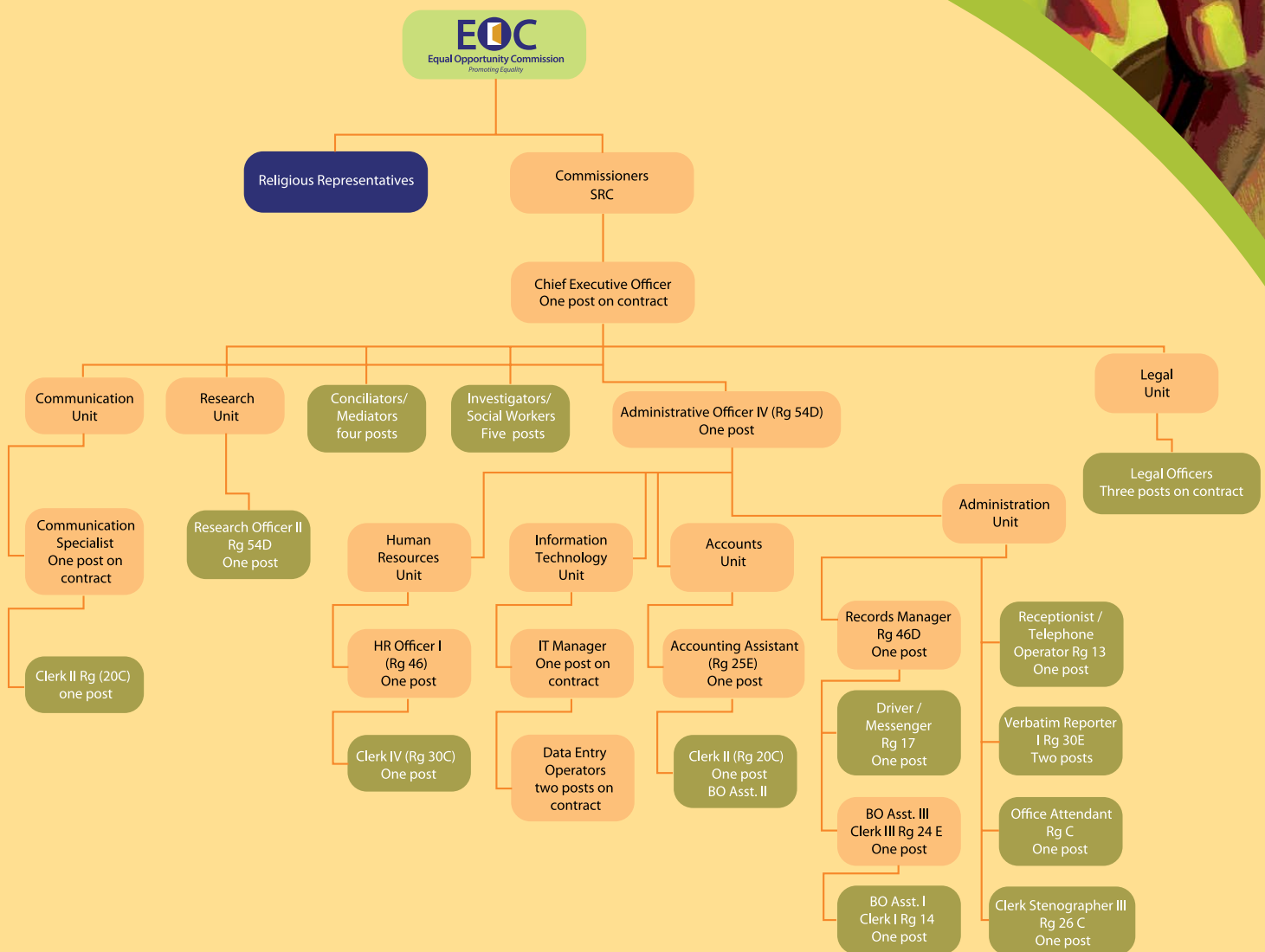
Mr. Besson was a director of the National Museum and was appointed to the board of the National Trust. He was the convener of the Cabinet-appointed Work Group to observe the 1987 centenary anniversary of Tobago as a ward of the unified colony of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Besson is a member of the Society of Caribbean Historians, an international organisation for the furthering of historical research and teaching of the Caribbean experience. He is also a member of the Caribbean Publishers' Network, a pan-Caribbean association created to support and promote indigenous publishing throughout the region.

Gerard Besson has worked in all media, and as a writer, publisher and social historian he has curated museums and designed several historical and cultural exhibitions. He has authored books on the history and culture of Trinidad and Tobago, and through his publishing company, has facilitated the publishing of local authors. Mr. Besson was the recipient of the Humming Bird Medal (Gold) for Heritage Preservation and Promotion in 2007. He also was awarded the Heritage Preservation Award—Lifetime Achiever 2007 from the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago.

Appendix II

Staff Structure





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