CEC MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS
AT THE REGIONAL EMPLOYERS’ ORGANIZATION FORUM

- Antigua and Barbuda Employers’ Federation (ABEF)
- Aruba Trade and Industry Association (ATIA)
- The Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers’ Confederation (BCCEC)
- Barbados Employers’ Confederation (BEC)
- Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI)
- Bermuda Employers’ Council (BEC)
- Dominica Employers’ Federation (DEF)
- Grenada Employers’ Federation (GEF)
- The Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry Ltd. (CAGI)
- Association des Industries d’Haiti /Haiti Association of Industries (ADIH)
- Jamaica Employers’ Federation (JEF)
- Mouvement des Enterprises de France (MEDEF Martinique)
- Saint Lucia Employers’ Federation (SLEF)
- St. Kitts Chamber of Industry and Commerce (SKNCIC)
- St. Vincent Employers’ Federation (SVEF)
- Vereniging Surinaams Bedrijfsleven (VSB) / Suriname Trade and Industry Association (STIA)
- The Employers’ Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECATT)
WHAT’S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- CEC Celebrates 55 Years
- The Future of the CEC
- A look back on some of 2015 activities
- Survey of Issues Results
- Member Features
- CEC Leadership Profiles

THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2016

- Executive Board Strategic Planning Workshop
- CEC 56th Annual General Meeting
- Release of ‘Meeting Skills Needs in the Workplace’ Survey Results
- Regional Workshop for National NEO Representatives on Developing Research Capabilities
- Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Readiness Workshops in Each Country
- Productivity Improvements for SMEs Workshop in Each Country
- Two Further Editions of the Caribbean Employer
- Legislative Analysis
In this its 55th Year of existence the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation (CEC) is positioned to make significant strides in enhancing its capacity to better meet and serve the needs of its growing membership.

In 1960 when the employers’ organizations of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago came together to establish the CEC, the vision was clear- “To be the main stakeholder and advocate for the resolution of labour market issues for Caribbean Employers as well as the coordinating body for the development of the social responsibility of enterprises in the Caribbean territories through their National Employers’ Organization.”

Fifty-five years later, eleven more employers’ organization now share this vision. Today, the CEC represents not only employers within the English speaking Caribbean, but also the Dutch and French speaking nations and territories.

While the CEC’s offices and full-time staff are located in Trinidad, its executive is drawn from all across the Caribbean. Since its 50th Anniversary in 2010, the CEC has continued to participate in and contribute to important strategic regional and international meetings and projects. Some of these include:


- Participation in the Caribbean Policy Development Centre Regional Consultation, Guyana, June 28-29, 2011;

- Participation in the 4th meeting of the CARICOM Secretary-General and heads of regional institutions, Guyana, July 27, 2011;

- Participation in a technical meeting of CARICOM Government and Civil Society Representatives, Paramaribo, November 7-8, 2011;

- Participation in the 11th Annual General Meeting of the CARICOM/Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV and AIDS, Nassau, November 18, 2011;

- Participation in the Commonwealth seminar ‘Addressing the Employment Challenges of Caribbean Youth in Times of Crisis’, St. Lucia, March 29-31, 2012;
• Participation in the 10th CARIFORUM EDF ‘Civil Society Programme – Technical Meeting of Stakeholders’, Barbados, May 24-25, 2012;

• Participation in the 12th Regional Seminar of ACP-EU Economic and Social Interest Groups, in Santo Domingo, July 5-6, 2012;

• Participation in CARIFORUM meeting of Non-State Actors to discuss the role and function of the CARIFORUM-EU Consultative Committee, of which the CEC is a member, in Port of Spain, September 11-12, 2012;

• Participation in the ILO’s regional tripartite meeting ‘Optimising Productivity at Safe and Healthy Workplaces Through Social Dialogue in the Caribbean’, Port of Spain, October 17-19, 2012;

• Participation in a series of workshops conducted in 16 countries and territories jointly with the ILO, ‘The Role of Labour Standards in Accessing International Markets and Supporting the Caribbean Single Market’ throughout 2013;

• Participation in the CARIFORUM ‘Civil Society Working Session of Stakeholders’ held in Guyana, April 23-24 2013;

• Participation in the ILO’s 8th Caribbean Ministers of Labour Meeting held in Port of Spain, July 2-3, 2013, where the assembled Ministers agreed to implement the CEC and CCL’s joint proposal for the establishment for a regional social dialogue forum;

• Participation in the ILO Workshop for ‘Senior Representatives of Employers’ Organisations in the English- and Dutch-Speaking Caribbean on Analysing and Shaping the Business Environment to Influence Policy Development’, held in Antigua and Barbuda, August 26-28, 2013;

• Participation in the CARIFORUM meeting of Regional Stakeholders to discuss the 11th European Development Fund in Guyana, September 17-18, 2013;

• Participation in the 26th meeting of CARICOM’s Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) in Georgetown, Guyana, May 14-15, 2014;

• Participation in the meeting on the ‘State of Play and Outstanding Matters in the text on Labour in Barbados’, June 16-21, 2014;

• Participation in the 27th Meeting of the African, Caribbean Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU) Economic and Social Interest Groups for Small Island Developing States, in Apia, Samoa, September 1-4, 2014;

• Participation in the ILO’s 18th American Regional Meeting in Lima, Peru, October 13-16, 2014 which focused on the unique threats posed by the effects of climate change to Small Island Developing States (SIDS);

• Participation in the inaugural CARIFORUM-EU Consultative Committee Meeting held in Brussels, Belgium, November 13-14;
• Membership of the CARICOM Human Resource Development Commission which had its inaugural meeting on February 13, 2015 and has had several subsequent meetings to develop new education and training curricula and methods for the Carribean;

• Participation in the 5th Meeting of the CARICOM Working Group on Labour held on February 25, 2015 in Barbados;

• Participation in the ILO’s 9th Caribbean Ministers of Labour Meeting held in Nassau, March 3-4, 2015;

• Participation in the ‘IMPACT Justice Arbitration Meeting’ held on March 13-14, 2015, in Port of Spain;


Of these milestones over the last five years, the CEC’s latest endeavour, a collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) with funding from the European Union, is perhaps the most significant. This is a project aimed at strengthening the capacity of CEC and CCL to play a greater role in regional policy development. It promises to be the impetus needed to propel the CEC into a new era of operation.

This project began in February 2015 and will be implemented over a three year period. One of its key objectives is to build the capacity of the CEC to represent the voice of employers and businesses of the region. The project is successfully underway and I implore our membership to continue to support, promote and contribute to the positive impact, growth and sustainability this project seeks to provide us. It is my hope that at the end of this project, this Newsletter’s editorial can boast of several significant accomplishments.

I take this opportunity to thank all our members for their continued support over the past 55 years; to welcome our new members Haiti, Martinique, Aruba and Guyana; to invite other national employers’ organizations to become members in this growing organization, and I look forward to continued collaboration with all our affiliate organizations.
In the 1960s and ‘70s the Employers’ Organisations in each of the countries of the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean were house-hold names.

The industrial relations climate was much more aggressive and confrontational and the involvement of EOs in national negotiations (some of which were very fraught) with the Trade Unions ensured media interest and consequent high profiles for the Organisations, the people who led them, and their members.

Under the strong leadership and influence of the EOs this adversarial approach to workplace relations has diminished significantly over the last twenty years.

A fully holistic focus is now taken to the way businesses operate: finances, marketing, research and development, environmental issues and employee relations are treated as a strategic whole rather than in different “silos”.

This integrated approach has led in turn to a change in the role and function of an employers’ representative body – both at national and regional levels. Whereas previously the focus was on negotiating collective agreements, managing the fall-out from industrial action, giving advice on the application of the agreements and working with the employer to resolve any dispute that arose from them, members’ requirements of their EO are now much broader.

What is of primary concern to businesses today is to have a regulatory environment that enables their enterprises to be sustainable - that is, there are no bureaucratic interventions or outdated legislative provisions in place that inhibit their ability to start or expand their businesses.

There is a recognition at enterprise level by employers and employees alike that for jobs to be provided and decent work to be embedded then enterprises must have an environment that supports productivity improvements and profit making. Thus the advocacy role of EOs to raise members’ issues of concern with Government and to lobby to effect positive change is now of pre-eminent importance.
This changing enterprise-focused landscape has a major impact on the role and function of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation. To give support to its constituent members - the EOs at national level - it must focus on two main areas:

- To develop positions on areas of interest and concern to members incorporating individual country perspectives for presentation at regional institutions where economic and social policies are developed.

- To be at the forefront of identifying new issues that will likely impact on business and provide the support and training that their members will need to meet the challenges presented.

To carry out these roles successfully, the CEC must institute communication systems with its members so that robust discussions on policy proposals can be on-going. The emergence of the Caribbean Single Market Economy calls for a much stronger approach to alignment of legislative principles, labour market information systems and qualification recognition not only to support businesses being able to operate effectively in all countries but also to support the free movement of capital, goods, services and labour.

It is in identifying new areas that business must be mindful of that CEC can play its most important role in the future. Through participation in forums where policies are being developed, CEC will be in a unique position to learn of emerging issues, discuss trends and analyze the impact such matters may have on enterprises in the region. Awareness raising, education and training workshops can then be developed for NEOs so that their members in turn can meet new challenges armed with information and strengthened capacity to deal with them.

Climate change which brings more severe and frequent adverse weather patterns will mean more focus on business continuity programmes; greening the economy will mean the need for alternative energy sources with local educational facilities working with industries to produce differently skilled graduates who can make and install solar panels, repair electric cars and work in desalination plants; increased migration will mean employers will need to develop a wider range of language skills with signage and instructions needed in more than one language and staff fluent to enable interactions with customers and colleagues from different countries.

In this its 55th year of existence, the opportunities for CEC to extend its influence on behalf of the employer community throughout the Caribbean and beyond, are limitless. The International Labour Organisation will continue to do all it can to support the CEC in achieving its goals for the betterment of the societies of the region.
ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR THE CARIBBEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS

As the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation (CEC) celebrates fifty five years as a regional employers’ organization it is doing so in the most challenging period for all our countries.

As a region we possess the tenacity to surmount all hurdles. This period is particularly significant for the Caribbean employers and workers since it marks the third occasion when the two social partners have agreed to combine their knowledge and skills to work together in the interest of a better region. As we make this journey we must remember the significance of similar collaborations of the recent past, when both the CEC and the CCL participated in the Promotion of Management Labour Cooperation (PROMALCO) through the ILO. Alongside this extensive programme we championed together with PANCAP/CARICOM in addressing HIV/Aids in the workplace in the region.

Let us therefore create an even more significant milestone as we build the capacities of all our Organisations - Employers and Workers - for a greater future for the Caribbean.

Linda Besson
Secretary/Treasurer

The Celebration of 55 Years’ commemoration of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation is an important and joyful event for the entire Caribbean Region.

The CEC has constantly represented the Member Associations at the regional and international levels. My wish is to see the CEC - as one of the oldest Confederations in our area - continue to defend Employers’ positions within the triangle of stability - Governments and workers at the other corners of the structure. We have earned success due to the input of the Member Associations and individual employers around the Caribbean.

Marcel Meyer
Former President of the CEC
1998 - 2011
PROJECT NAME
Challenges for CARIFORUM Labour, Private Sector and Employers to Fulfil their EPA

Start Date: February 2, 2015
Duration: 36 months
Budget: €1,715,000.00 (US$ 2 million)

Roles and Responsibilities:
• European Union - Funding Agency;
• International Labour Organization - Executing Agency;
• Caribbean Employers’ Confederation and the Caribbean Congress of Labour - Implementing Agencies;
• National Employers Organizations and Trade Unions - Affiliated Beneficiaries;

The Project is divided into 12 Outcomes. Of particular interest to the CEC and its members, are the joint and CEC specific outcomes:

Four Joint Outcomes
• CARICOM social and economic policies are influenced through CEC and CCL having a recognized status in COHSOD and COSTED;
• Legislative models in place to enable harmonisation;
• Alignment of education outcomes with the needs of the labour market and;
• Employers’ Organisations and Trade Unions play their role in the implementation, governance and monitoring of the effects of the EPA Social Aspects Chapter.

Five CEC Outcomes:
• Involvement of CEC in relevant forums throughout the region as the umbrella organisation to represent and promote employers’ interests;
• CEC, through national Employers’ Organisations, supports social dialogue to implement the Social Aspects Chapter of the EPA;
• CEC’s research/analytical capacity strengthened for the development of policy positions in support of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises;
• CEC’s coordinating capacity for determining policy positions and concerns is reinforced and;
• CEC’s coordination capacity for identification of training needs and delivery is enhanced.

For further information, please contact the CEC’s National Project Officer, Ms. Gabrielle Johnson.
In June 2015, national employers’ organization representatives from across the region, met at the Accra Beach Hotel in Barbados to attend a Forum for Senior Representatives of Employers’ Organisations in the English-and Dutch-Speaking Caribbean entitled: “Facilitating participation of cariforum civil society in regional development and integration processes.”

This was the first employers’ forum hosted under the European Union funded, International Labour Organization facilitated project, aimed at strengthening the capacity of the CEC and its members. Over the course of three days participants were sensitized on the details of the EU-funded project and international trends affecting employers and their organizations.

The forum also focused on the following topics:
• Building Enterprise Resilience for the Impact of Climate Change;
• Productivity and Competitiveness: Improvements for Small and Medium Enterprises - Practical Initiatives and;
• Migration and Free Movement of Labour: Issues for Business.

Prior to the start of this Forum, participants were asked to identify key areas of national concern to their respective organizations and countries and present on one identified area at the meeting. These areas ranged from climate change to improvements in technical vocational education and training in their respective countries. The evaluation of participant feedback on the forum, revealed that these key areas, when presented at the forum, not only served to enlightening participants, but that it allowed them to identify areas of commonality amongst themselves and perhaps even areas of cooperation.

This forum was indeed a great start to understanding the national issues of interest to employers and a step in the right direction to meeting the goals set out in the project to strengthen the voice of employers at national and regional levels.
Survey of concerns & issues affecting EO’s in the Region

ISSUE 1
Exogenous threats from climate changes

ISSUE 2
Legislative focus to support the Implementation of the EPA Social Chapter

ISSUE 3
Migration issues relating to the building of a Caribbean Single Market Economy

ISSUE 4
Institutionalizing tripartism at both a national & regional level

ISSUE 5
Developing an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises

ISSUE 6
Productivity & competitiveness improvements

ISSUE 7
Making TVET institutions and curricula more responsive to employer/business needs
Many anecdotes have been shared over the years about the size of the English-speaking Caribbean diaspora. We have often heard that we have more of ‘our people’ living outside of the Caribbean than we have living at home.

Recently, I decided to test this premise, as very little hard evidence as has been shared to support this notion. So I researched the most recent census data and population estimates for the three countries that have the vast majority of our nationals, the USA, Canada, and the UK. I focused exclusively on residents of those countries that were born in the Caribbean and not on their descendants. The data did not include our nationals who were undocumented residents of these countries, or those who have relocated within the Caribbean.

I did not look in detail at Haiti or Suriname, but a cursory survey of the data suggested that the conclusions that I will outline below also hold true for these two countries. The hard data does not decisively support the popular notion of a Caribbean diaspora larger than home, but the massive number of our people who have left the lands of their birth is quite eye-opening.

The number of first generation emigrants from Dominica and Guyana in these three countries is equivalent to 50% of the population that remains at home. Indeed, the equivalent of 31% of all persons currently living in the English-speaking Caribbean are first generation immigrants to ‘greener pastures’.

It is sobering to note that even relatively wealthy Barbados has lost the equivalent of 33% of its current population, and 25% of the current population of Trinidad & Tobago is correspondent to the number of Trinbagonians who were born in the Caribbean and have left home. These numbers would become exponentially bigger if one were to include the offspring and grandchildren of these first generation immigrants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>29000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>39000</td>
<td>72000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>26000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>37100</td>
<td>73500</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>32000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>51000</td>
<td>110000</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent</td>
<td>22000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>38000</td>
<td>103000</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>53000</td>
<td>16000</td>
<td>22000</td>
<td>91000</td>
<td>277000</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>69000</td>
<td>12500</td>
<td>14500</td>
<td>90000</td>
<td>295000</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Kitts and Nevis</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>16500</td>
<td>55000</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>232000</td>
<td>70000</td>
<td>22000</td>
<td>324000</td>
<td>1320000</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>21500</td>
<td>90000</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>174000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>51500</td>
<td>341000</td>
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<td>334000</td>
<td>207500</td>
<td>653100</td>
<td>51%</td>
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</table>

These two countries have invested heavily in robust and expensive social programmes to eliminate poverty and enhance economic opportunities. Barbados is a ‘First World’ country, and Trinidad and Tobago is on the verge. It is clear that while economics is a factor, it’s not the only factor. Many of our people, especially our youth, just want to live in bigger, wealthier, more open societies.

But when they leave we lose many of our best educated and most enterprising; we lose many of our best and brightest. A World Bank study has shown that Jamaica and Guyana have lost almost 90% of their tertiary graduates.
This has serious implications for the Caribbean’s economic and social development as we are bleeding precious human capital. Most of our countries are experiencing negative or zero population growth, and our populations are growing older as life expectancy increases and young people emigrate.

This means that even as we work to improve social security, there will be fewer young people to pay for the pensions and additional healthcare that the increasing number of older people will require.

This situation is inherently unsustainable. Yet, our policymakers, nationally and regionally, seem not to recognize this looming crisis and our policy deliberations, are akin to decorating our boat’s deck while there is a hole in the hull. We are making policy as if none of this is happening.

An unintended consequence of our adaptation of the Westminster system of democratic government is that it causes Caribbean governments to think in five-year electoral cycles and to focus on policies and projects that have immediate visible impact and voter appeal. So critical issues that require longer-term planning and immediate resources, but are slow to reveal their efficacy, get short shrift. This highlights the need for important non-state actors that have a long-term focus to be substantively involved in policy-making. Social dialogue is of vital importance and we non-state actors have to build our capacity for representation, lobbying, and research and analysis, to ensure that our contributions to policy-making are substantive and credible.

This is why the European Union-funded capacity-building project involving the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation (CEC) and Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL), in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is so important to the region’s future.

Here, the role of the CEC and the National Employers’ Organizations (NEOs) becomes critical. We, in partnership with the local and regional representatives of labour, have to keep our governments focused on critical issues such as migration. Our massive loss of people is only one of several significant challenges that face the Caribbean, but there are also opportunities that we have to tap now, nationally and regionally.

We have to look together at the potential of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) to align our labour markets to the new global realities. This will mean a more productive and competitive Caribbean workforce properly educated and trained for the needs of the market.

We need to work together to find tangible ways to integrate the Caribbean diaspora into a larger concept of a ‘Caribbean Nation’ that goes beyond our geographical boundaries. This will be most efficiently achieved as a tripartite initiative, and to procrastinate will reverse hard-won gains and be catastrophic for our region.

Wayne Chen
President,
Caribbean Employers’ Confederation
Over the course of three months, a series of 14 national bipartite meetings have been held throughout the region by the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation (CEC) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL), with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) under the EU - Funded project, ‘Challenges for CARIFORUM Labour, Private Sector and Employers to Fulfil their EPA Obligations.’

A dedicated team consisting of two representatives from the CEC and CCL (the President or Board Members), the ILO Employers’ and Workers’ Activities Specialists, and two national project officers, have visited the CARIFORUM Member States of St Lucia; Grenada; Dominica; Antigua and Barbuda; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Haiti; Jamaica; Belize; the Bahamas, Barbados; St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Suriname; Guyana; and Trinidad and Tobago to facilitate these meetings. Contributing to the content of these meetings was Dr Olivia Smith, Deputy Programme Manager of the CARICOM Single Market Economy Unit, who spoke on the Importance of Regional Social Dialogue Mechanisms to Support the CSME.

These workshops form part of a three-year €1,715,000 Euro (US$ 2 million) Project1 funded by the European Union (EU) and executed by the ILO along with the CEC and CCL as implementing agencies, which seeks to build capacity of Caribbean regional employers’ and workers’ organizations so that they can make substantive contributions to policy-setting aimed at regional development and the integration process, and thus fulfil their obligations under the Social Aspects Chapter of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

On concluding the national bipartite meeting in Guyana on 30 September 2015, Mr Samuel Goolsarran, Consultant Advisor to the Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry Ltd., noted "A State that is committed to such good governance will ensure that there is genuine participation by the social and political partners with credibility, transparency, and accountability in the administration and management of national affairs. The challenges, in terms of national strategies to promote economic growth, social, political and human development, call for actions at the national level. It is for the governments, the political parties, private sector, the labour movement and civil society in Guyana: -(a) to respect, promote and realize in good faith the fundamental principles of human rights enshrined in our Constitution and laws, and International Labour Standards; and (b) to adopt the social partnership option in the management of change in national
socio-economic and political affairs through sustained national dialogue which must be promoted in a paradigm shift - from the prolonged confrontational posture to one which cultivates consensus and cooperation in the national interest.” This is just one of the comments that embodies the work that the ILO, CEC and CCL set out to achieve when we embarked upon hosting these National Bipartite Meetings.

These meetings also provide a forum conducive to initiate discussion and action on fundamental areas such as social dialogue, technical vocational education and training, legislation and research, while allowing national Employers’ Organization to understand their role in this EU-funded project, as well as the role they are expected to play as social partners in formulating and progressing national social and labour agendas. The Executive Director of the Suriname Trade and Industry Association, Steven MacAndrews noted, “The Bipartite Meeting, which was conducted in Suriname on September 28th 2015, highlighted the need for regular dialogue between employers and trade unions, because, notwithstanding obvious differences, parties more often than not are dealing with similar national issues. The outcome of the meeting underlined this, because in their separate working groups employers and trade unions identified similar priorities.”

The European Union was represented at several of the Bipartite Workshops including Trinidad and Tobago held at the Kapok Hotel in Port of Spain on 1 October 2015. Ms. Daniela Tramacere, Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the Delegation of the European Union to Trinidad and Tobago, stated that “Free movement of labour is one of the pillars of the European Union Single Market. People, goods, services and money, can move around the EU as freely as within a single country. The European Single Market is one of the EU’s greatest achievements and it has fuelled economic growth and made the everyday life of European businesses and consumers easier.”

Ms. Tramacere affirmed that the CEC and CCL along with the ILO “will participate in the work towards the harmonization of labour laws and practices, to support the free movement of labour within the region, and the promotion of the Caribbean Single market.”
“We only start to talk seriously about social dialogue when a crisis is imminent” stated Mr. Wayne Chen, President of the CEC, at the workshop for employers’ and workers’ in Trinidad and Tobago. “The Barbadian example is held up in the Caribbean because it’s time honoured, it’s formalized, it’s in its sixth protocol and it has been going on for 22-23 years. But it was precipitated by a fiscal crisis in Barbados.”

Mr. Chen went on to state “The signs are clear, that the world is changing. How are we going to be creative? How are we going to transition towards the next step?” Mr. Chen pleaded with Caribbean social partners not to leave it too late to start discussing the issues. He noted that if Caribbean States pooled their resources, they would have better economies of scale, as do the larger countries of Latin America that have a competitive advantage over Caribbean States. Mr Chen went on to state “We want highly-paid workers, because highly-paid workers are high paying consumers. We have a mutual benefit.”

“The project is also an opportunity to develop and build on the ILO structures that are so critical to bring about sustainable policies, programmes and strategies needed to implement the Decent Work Agenda and fulfil CARIFORUM’s commitment to good governance and the implementation of the EPA.” stated Ms. Claudia Coenjaerts, Director, ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean.

“In order to build and deliver a coherent program of ILO support in any country, it must be based on and owned by all three of our constituents, the Government, the workers and employers. Tripartism is the ILO’s most fundamental strength and it allows us to bring together many experiences and perspectives.”

A regional bipartite meeting was convened in Grenada from 3-5 November 2015, where representatives of employers and workers of the 15 CARIFORUM member States reported on actions agreed at the National Bipartite Meetings.
A National Survey of 375 Grenadians was conducted to highlight the positive and negative aspects of the service experiences of consumers, their perceptions of national productivity and employment relations.

The survey was conceptualised and administered during early part of 2014 and was completed by the middle of 2015. The survey was commissioned by the Grenada Employers’ Federation and the analyses and reporting were conducted by Dr. Dwayne Devonish, Senior Lecturer in Management Science of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus in Barbados. The survey sought to point to chief recommendations to assist business operators and service providers in improving their service delivery systems, productivity levels, and employment relations and practices.

**Perceptions of service quality and customer experience**

The first aspect of the survey captured consumers’ perceptions of the service quality and its dimensions with respect to their interactions with a number of service providers and firms in Grenada. The core dimensions of service quality experiences are explained below:

- **Reliability**: Ability of service providers in Grenada to perform the promised service dependably and accurately;
- **Responsiveness**: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service;
- **Customer Assurance**: Level of knowledge and courtesy of service providers in Grenada and their ability to convey trust and confidence to consumers/customers;
- **Empathy**: Caring, individualized attention that service providers in Grenada provide for their customers;
- **Appearance of Physical Facilities/Resources**: General appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials of service providers in Grenada;
- **Integrity (trustworthiness)**: The extent to which service providers are perceived as honest, trustworthy and ethical in their business transactions with customers;
- **Security**: The extent to which service providers provide adequate security for customers during business transactions;
Consumers’ perceptions of Service Quality including reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and physical environment of service providers, which was assessed on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), received a modest/fair rating. The Appearance of physical facilities and resources of service providers in Grenada was rated as the highest by sampled consumers (see Figure 1). These dimensions were subjected to statistical correlation analyses to ascertain which dimension(s) made the most significant contribution (i.e. the most relevant determinant) to an average consumer’s positive experience with service in Grenada. The top or core determinants of a good customer experience were:

- Integrity/trustworthiness (rank 1)
- Responsiveness (rank 2):

![Figure 1 perceptions of service quality](image-url)

(1 = Very Poor to 5 = Excellent)
The results suggested that customers cared deeply about how trustworthy, responsive, courteous and knowledgeable service providers are in Grenada as these attributes represented the strongest determinants of high quality service for most Grenadians. These dimensions of service quality are critical to ensuring that customers are generally satisfied with the level of service offered in the country. Male consumers, full-time and self-employed consumers, and highly educated or trained consumers experienced higher levels of service quality during their interactions with service providers compared to their respective counterparts.

PERCEPTIONS OF PRODUCTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

The second aspect of the survey captures consumers’ perceptions productivity and employment relations among firms operating in Grenada. The main dimensions examined included:

- **Employee Attitudes and Productivity:** This dimension captures consumers’ perceptions and ratings of the quality and level of employee/worker attitudes (e.g. job satisfaction, morale, loyalty and respect for employers at work as well as their level of productivity).

- **Employer Attitudes and Treatment** of Employees: This dimension measures the quality and level of employer attitudes (e.g. employers’ respect for employees, employers’ interest in meeting employees’ needs/concerns, and employers’ overall treatment of employees at work).

- **Employer-Employee Relationships:** This dimension captures the extent to which the employer-employee relationship at work is healthy, filled with trust, harmonious, and productive.

Perceptions of workplace productivity, employee and employer attitudes, and employment relations in Grenadian organisations were rated modest at best, suggesting more needs to be done to improve the general human resource management and industrial relations climate in these organisations (see Figure 2).
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SURVEY PROJECT

Service providers in Grenada typically offer an average/moderate level of service to consumers - however, it is recommended that they seek to improve the quality of service above and beyond this level, especially in the areas of reliability, responsiveness, and customer assurance (improved trust and confidence of consumers). Regular training and development opportunities in service quality are critical for both junior-level and senior-level staff who interact often with consumers on a daily basis.

Service quality must be delivered consistently irrespective of customer demographics. It is important that consumers of different demographics have a shared, unified view and experience of service from service providers and that their individual needs and preferences are adequately catered to. Continual market and consumer needs assessments and surveys are needed to obtain updated data (consumer intelligence) to help businesses make sensible and informed decisions about their products and service delivery.

Finally, employers must be cognisant of the level of productivity, employee attitudes, and relationships that exist within their organisations. The state of these metrics can either hurt or benefit the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation. Efforts should be made to enhance the overall climate of employment relations, employee morale and job satisfaction, as well as the level of productivity through the use of attractive reward and compensation packages, incentive and productivity schemes, training and development programmes, and more democratic/participative, employee-friendly initiatives at work. If employees are to be more customer-friendly, managers and employers have to be more employee-friendly. Such reciprocity is the ingredient of organisational success.
He was head boy of his High School, deCarteret College and graduated from U.W.I. with an LLB (Hons.) in 1981. The following year he started his first business, a small Supermarket in Central Jamaica. Over the past 25 years he and his family grew their business, Super Plus Food Stores into an island-wide chain, which at its peak in the mid-2000’s was the country’s largest retailer.

Mr. Chen has received several awards for his business accomplishments and philanthropy including the Jamaica Observer’s 1998 Business Leader of the year. Currently he is the Chairman of CVM Television, NCB Insurance Company, and NCB Cayman, and former Chairman of the Urban Development Corporation, National Land Agency, and the National Gallery of Jamaica. He is a Director of The National Commercial Bank, Jamaica’s largest, and its majority shareholder, AIC (Barbados). He currently serves as a member of the CARICOM Human Resource Development Commission.

Mr. Welzijn is a Senior Legal Counselor at Alcoa in Suriname, Member of the Employment Dismissal Committee at Government Labor Department and National Electoral Council, Teacher/Instructor of Criminal Law at the Police Training Centre in Suriname, Member of National Tripartite Committee on HIV/AIDS/Leader Business Coalition HIV/AIDS.

He was the former Police Commander of the Suriname Police Corps, Member of the ILO Governing Body from 2009–2014, Vice President of the Social Economic Council, Chairman of the Pension Fund of Alcoa Minerals of Suriname and Supervisory Board of Director at FINA bank in Suriname.
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OUR MISSION
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OUR VISION

- 40 years (July 2016)

Annette Joseph, Executive Assistant member of the Bank's Budget and Tenders Committees.

and Tobago where she headed the Procurement and contribution years functioning in senior positions, making her with her a wealth of experience that spans twenty two from the Arthur Lok Jack School of Business. She brings Management and an Executive Masters of Business Francois-Opadeyi following the retirement of Ms. Linda welcomed its new Chief Executive Officer Ms. Joycelyn The Employers’ Consultative Association (ECA)

Changing of the Guard at ECA

moved to the Central Bank of Trinidad

Masters Association. She subsequently Manager of Trinidad Pilots & Berthing she held the position of General of the Business Development Company, and Marketing. A former Vice President management, Finance, Entrepreneurship Management, Human Resource Man-

Accreditation Council now recognized by the of Industrial Relation Jamaica’s largest, and its majority shareholder, is a Director of The National Commercial Bank, Leader of the year. Currently he is the Chairman business accomplishments and philanthropy Mr. Chen has received several awards for his retailer. Stores into an island-wide chain, which at its family grew their business, Super Plus Food (Hons.) in 1981. The following year he started his He was head boy of his High School, deCarteret nine children.

Hyacinth Chen’s Vincent and

the third of

Confederation

Employers’

the Caribbean

President of

Wayne Chen,

Mr. Chen has extensive experience in Retail, Real Estate and FMCG operations and is a respected authority in the retail industry.

His firm specializes in Civil Litigation with particular emphasis on matters of real property, estates and personal injury. He has a specific interest in labour and employment law and has created a niche for the firm in the local market in those areas of practice.

Mr. Gill was called to the Bar in England in 1990 and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Hons.) in History and Sociology from the University of the West Indies 1983, a Bachelor of Laws Degree (Hons.) from the University of the West Indies 1986, a Master of Laws Degree from the London School of Economics 1987 and a Post Graduate Certificate in Air and Space Law from the University College London 1990.

His firm specializes in Civil Litigation with particular emphasis on matters of real property, estates and personal injury. He has a specific interest in labour and employment law and has created a niche for the firm in the local market in those areas of practice.

Mr. Mc Sween attained over 15 years banking experience locally and internationally and benefited from extensive training in credit, finance, investments and operations. Additionally, he served in several managerial positions at the Trinidad and Tobago Unit Corporation (UTC) and currently holds the position of an Online Agent.

He is also the Founder/President of Eve Financial Services Limited. Mr. Mc Sween received many academic, sporting and leadership awards during his university life and was recognised as one of the “Most Outstanding Young Men of America (National Award) for merit and accomplishments as a student.
Ferdinand Welzijn, 1st Vice President of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation since 2007 and is also the President of the Suriname Trade & Industry Association.

Mr. Welzijn is a Senior Legal Counselor at Alcoa in Suriname, Member of the Employment Dismissal Committee at Government Labor Department and National Electoral Council, Teacher /Instructor of Criminal Law at the Police Training Centre in Suriname, Member of National Tripartite Commitee on HIV/AIDS/ Leader Business Coaltion HIV/AIDS.

He was the former Police Commander of the Suriname Police Corps, Member of the ILO Governing Body from 2009–2014, Vice President of the Social Economic Council, Chairman of the Pension Fund of Alcoa Minerals of Suriname and Supervisory Board of Director at FINA bank in Suriname.

Anthony Walcott, Director of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation, joined Barbados Employers’ Confederation (BEC) on May 18, 2009 as Executive Director and was elected in June 2014 to the Governing Body of the ILO as a Deputy Member for the Employers’ Group for the period 2014-2017.

He is a Fellow of the Institute of Financial Consultants (FIFC); Associate of the Institute of Canadian Bankers (AICB); Associate of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries & Administrators, Canada (ACIS), Associate of the Chartered Association of Business Administrators (CBA) and also holds certificates in Property Management and Managing Safety.

He served on the Council of the BEC dating back to the 1980s, rising to the position of Second Vice President (1999 and 2008/2009). He is currently serving as the employers’ representative on the Severance Payments Tribunal and formerly on the Employment Rights Tribunal.

Having delivered several training modules for the BEC and other organizations, Mr. Walcott is a founding member of the Human Resource Management Association of Barbados (HRMAB) holding the position of Treasurer (1997 – 1999) and subsequently a Trustee.

Raymond A. Eytle, Director of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation is the Senior Assistant Registrar, Employee Relations, Compensation, Benefits and Occupational Safety and Health for the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus.

He is a graduate in the field of Industrial and Labour Relations from Cornell University and has been in the field of Human Resources and Industrial Relations for more than 30 years. Additionally, he has been a Guest Lecturer, on Implementation of Computerized Human Resource Information Systems for both the BSc in Computer Science and the MSc in Human Resource Development at the UWI-Mona.

He is a member of the Executive Council and currently Second Vice President of the Jamaica Employers’ Federation (JEF) representing JEF at ILO Tripartite Regional and International meetings, programmes for Employers’ Organizations.

Additionally he is a member of the Labour Advisory Council to the Minister of Labour and Social Security, a member of the Industrial Sub-Committee of the Labour Reform Commission and a Director of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation.
Joyce A. Martin, 
**Director** of the 
Caribbean Employers’ Confederation, is the 
Executive Secretary of Antigua & Barbuda Employers’ Federation (ABEF).

Ms. Martin has worked with the ABEF for over thirty years and has been employed in various capacities. Ms. Martin is a graduate of the Antigua State College and the Antigua & Barbuda International Institute of Technology where she attained a degree in Business Administration.

She is also a Microsoft Certified Professional. Additionally, she is the founder and Honorary member of the Human Resource Professionals of Antigua & Barbuda (HRPAB).

Currently represents her organization on the National Minimum Wage Advisory Board and the National Labour Board. Joyce has participated in numerous ILO Training programmes and Conferences. She is a sports enthusiast and has represented her country at the National Level in both Basketball and Netball and has attained a National Award.

Francis A. Emmanuel 
**Director** of the 
Caribbean Employers’ Confederation is a businessman who has held many leadership and management position both nationally in Dominica and regionally.

Mr. Emmanuel has and continues to represent both the private and public sector in directorship positions. Since 1988, Mr. Emmanuel has held various positions on the Management Committee of the Dominica Employer’s Federation, currently serving as Trustee.

Mr. Francis Emmanuel has served in the capacity of 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President and President respectively, of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation from 1993 to 1997. He is currently the 1st Vice President of the Dominica Association of Industry and Commerce.

Prior to this, he served in the capacity of Governor. He is also appointed as a Justice of Peace in Dominica and is Honorary Consul in the Commonwealth of Dominica for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Linda Besson is the 
**Executive Secretary/Treasurer** of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation for 18 years and is the former Executive Director of the Employers’ Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago where she has spent over nineteen (19) years. In 1993 she was the only female CEO in the top 50 companies in Trinidad and Tobago and possess an International MBA. She is a member of the Association of Business Executives (ABE). Mrs. Besson has over 35 years of management experience and an established background in Administration, Public Relations, Finance and Business Development. She is responsible for the day to day administration of the Regional Secretariat, for ensuring that the Confederation is represented at all meetings, workshops and seminars.

She co-ordinates projects and programmes that the regional body may be called upon to carry out and manages the finances of the Organization.
VISION STATEMENT
To be the pre-eminent organization in effectively promoting and supporting enterprise development in Antigua & Barbuda.

MISSION STATEMENT
To promote and protect the interest of Employers’ through effective Advocacy, Social Dialogue and providing value added services to facilitate an enabling environment for sustainable business.

HISTORY
The Antigua and Barbuda Employers’ Federation was established in December 1950 and registered under the Trade Union Act in January, 1951. The main objectives of the Federation are to present an Organization of Employers with a balanced understanding of both sides of the Industry, to inform members of prevailing Labour Laws, to provide advice and support members as to courses of action to be taken in particular circumstances, to negotiate with the Trade Unions on behalf of the membership, to oppose legislations which were disadvantageous to the business Community, and Associate with other organizations with similar objectives.

In 1962, the Federation was one of the founding members of the Caribbean Employers’ Confederation (CEC) and has maintained said membership. To date, the membership of ABEF have increased to One Hundred and Forty-Seven (147) throughout the business community covering Hotels and Restaurants, Manufacturing, Shipping, Banking and other financial institutions, Transport & Services, Merchants & Agents, Communication and General Business.

ABEF is governed by an Executive Committee of eleven (11) elected Members supported by eleven (11) appointed Alternates. The Secretariat is managed by a staff of three (3) namely the Executive Secretary, an Administrative Assistant and a Labour Relation Officer.

Currently, the Federation’s service includes advising members on their Industrial Relations and Human Resources activities, representation in disputes and Collective Bargaining up to Conciliation, Training, Research and Library.
**OUR VISION**
To be the Premier Employers’ Representative.

**OUR MISSION**
To advance employers’ interest for the creation of optimum sustainable value for all stakeholders.

**HISTORY**
The Employers’ Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA) was formed with 21 firms in 1960 as a not for profit organisation to assist and support employers faced with Industrial Relations issues. During that time, the ECA has built a strong reputation for handling all matters which concern employers in Trinidad and Tobago. The Board of Directors comprises professionals from its member organisations.

The ECA adopts ahands-on approach in dealing with its membership which is now at 695 and grows yearly including companies that belong to a variety of sectors. As an advisor and consultant to it members, the ECA’s focus is to collaborate with companies through the process of partnering with interest groups who are concerned internally to facilitate the cooperation of employers and employees and externally through the tripartism of the main interest groups, i.e. employers, labour and government.

As an umbrella organisation and the recognized social partner, the ECA has forged a prominent place for itself and is actively involved in developing and strengthening relationships at both the macro and micro levels. Its Subsidiary, the Employers’ Solution Centre (ESC), provides Industrial Relations and Human Resource Advisory services and training. The ESC’s Academy of Industrial Relation and Labour Studies is highly acclaimed locally and regionally which is now recognized by the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT).

**Changing of the Guard at ECA**
The Employers’ Consultative Association (ECA) welcomed its new Chief Executive Officer Ms. Joycelyn Francois-Opadeyi following the retirement of Ms. Linda Besson, at the end of June 2015, after nearly two decades of leading the ECA. Ms. Francois-Opadeyi is a Chartered Accountant and has earned a B.Sc. Industrial Management and an Executive Masters of Business Management, Finance, Entrepreneurship and Marketing. A former Vice President of the Business Development Company, she held the position of General Manager of Trinidad Pilots & Berthing Masters Association. She subsequently moved to the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago where she headed the Procurement and Support Services function as well as functioned as a member of the Bank’s Budget and Tenders Committees.

**Employee Service Anniversary**
Annette Joseph, Executive Assistant
- 40 years (July 2016)
The Antigua and Barbuda Employers' Federation (ABEF) was established on 17th June 1951. The main objectives of the Federation are to present employers' views and proposals on Labour and Industrial Relations matters to the Government and the employers' movement. The Federation is governed by an Executive Committee of eleven (11) elected Members supported by eleven (11) appointed Alternates. The Secretariat is managed by a staff of three (3) namely the Executive Secretary, an Administrative Assistant and a Labour Relation Officer.

Currently, the Federation's service includes advising members on their Industrial Relations and Human Resource Advisory services and a Labour Relation Officer. The Federation is also involved in developing and strengthening relationships with members of the Caribbean Employers' Confederation (CEC) and has maintained said membership. To date, the membership of ABEF have increased to Forty-Seven (147) member companies covering all sectors of the economy.

In 1962, the Federation was one of the founding members of the Employers' Solution Centre (ESC) along with the Caribbean Employers' Confederation (CEC) and has forged a prominent place for itself and is actively recognized as a social partner in CARIFORUM. The ESC, provides Industrial Relations and Human Resource Advisory services and Training, Research and Library.

The Employers' Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA) was formed with 21 firms in 1960 as the Employers' Solution Centre (ESC)'s subsidiary, and the ECA has maintained its strong reputation. As an umbrella organization and the only employers association in Trinidad and Tobago, the ECA takes a hands-on approach in dealing with the interest of Employers'

The main interest groups, i.e. employers, labour and government. The ECA acts as an advisor and consultant to its members, which include companies that belong to a variety of sectors. The ECA is a not for profit organisation to assist and support employers faced with Industrial Relations issues. During the past decade, the ECA has built a strong reputation for its hands-on approach and its ability to provide valued advice and support. The ECA's expertise has now been extended regionally which is highly acclaimed locally.

The Employers' Consultative Association (ECA) of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA) was formed with 21 firms in 1960 as an umbrella organization. The ECA has maintained its strong reputation. As an advisor and consultant to its members, which include companies that belong to a variety of sectors. The ECA participates in the tripartism of dialogue and provides advocacy, social communication and training.

The ECA's Academy of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Advisory services and Training, Research and Library.

The ECA's Academy has forged a prominent place for itself and is actively recognized as a social partner in CARIFORUM. The ESC provides Industrial Relations and Human Resource Advisory services and Training, Research and Library. The ESC's Academy has forged a prominent place for itself and is actively recognized as a social partner in CARIFORUM. The ESC's Academy has forged a prominent place for itself and is actively recognized as a social partner in CARIFORUM.

The ECA's Academy provides a hands-on approach in dealing with the interest of Employers'.