

Commerce means Business

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MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, INVESTMENT AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Mission Statement

“To actively promote and facilitate, in close collaboration with the Private Sector, the establishment of a dynamic investment and trading environment, which anticipates changes in global circumstance, whilst strengthening and enhancing the productive capacities and competitiveness of Industry and Commerce, encouraging good business practices and promoting consumer interest.”

Opening Message by the Minister - Hon. Emma Hippolyte

With the dynamic changes occurring on the global market place as a result of globalization, as well as, the proliferation of preferential trade agreements between developed and developing countries, the Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs finds it imperative to proactively develop and implement policies and strategic plans to meet the demands of the evolving multilateral trading system.

The bilateral and multilateral trade agreements which CARICOM Member States are signatory to which aim to increase regional and international trade in goods, services and investment have a direct impact on firms operating in the business sector of our country. It is therefore the Ministry's core objective to work with the business community to help them maximize on the market access opportunities which have been created through those trade agreements and facilitate their integration in the global economy.

The Ministry also has a clear and precise mission statement which enforces its commitment to working in close collaboration with the private sector to establish a transparent and predictable investment and trading environment, in order to encourage good business practices and promote consumer interest.

Based on this philosophy one of the major initiatives which has been embarked on by the Ministry, is the crafting of a National Investment Policy for Saint Lucia, which will reflect changes in the regional and global investment climate; stimulate sustainable growth and re-balance Saint Lucia's economy. This policy is intended to benefit our country through the creation and enhancement of domestic and foreign investment through smart specialization.

While as a Ministry we are ensuring that we respond to the needs of the private sector, we are also mindful of our responsibility for ensuring that consumer welfare is safeguarded. This is therefore driving our commitment to the passage of Consumer Protection Legislation at the earliest.

The Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs will use this newsletter as a medium to keep our stakeholders informed of the various policies being developed and implemented by the Ministry to increase the competitiveness of our business community, while promoting consumer interest with the objective of staying abreast of a changing global economy.

Honourable Emma Hippolyte
Minister for Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs

Opening Remarks by Permanent Secretary - Mr. Leo Titus Preville

As Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs, I would like to formally introduce this newsletter under the nomenclature, “Commerce means Business,” to Staff of the Ministry, as well as, our key stakeholders.

The Ministry is cognizant of the importance of keeping our Staff and Stakeholders critically informed of capital initiatives of the Ministry aimed at increasing its efficient and effective operation. It is therefore in the interest of the Ministry to continuously inform of its policies and strategies being introduced, developed and implemented to improve its functions.

Some of these policies and practices which are being introduced by the Ministry are geared towards creating an environment where potential and existing investors, as well as, the business community can easily transact business with the Ministry. This and many other factors contribute towards the Ease of Doing Business in Saint Lucia.

Promotion of consumer interest is also of paramount importance to the Ministry, as we work towards creating an environment where consumers are adequately informed of their rights and responsibilities as consumers.

Commerce means Business will therefore have as its main focus, provision of quality information on areas related to trade, commerce, industry, consumer affairs, business development and investment.

Over the next few months we will continue to use this forum to keep you, our Staff and Stakeholders abreast of developments in the Ministry that impact you.

Mr. Leo Titus Preville
Permanent Secretary

Editor's Note

Welcome! Welcome! Welcome! to the first publication of "Commerce means Business," a publication of the Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs produced by the Commercial Information Centre.

It is indeed a pleasure for the Ministry to bring to life this publication aimed at keeping staff, private and public sector agencies, as well as, the general public informed of the main work activities being pursued by the Ministry, aimed at improving its service delivery, while serving the People and Government of Saint Lucia with pride.

With the advent of globalization and dynamic changes occurring in the global environment, there is need for greater innovation and creativity in the Ministry's approach towards promoting Business Development, Investment, Trade and Consumer Affairs. Based on this notion various initiatives are being undertaken by the Ministry, to strengthen and enhance its operations through the implementation of Quality Management Systems (QMS) and procedures.

Commerce means Business will therefore feature articles on major initiatives and capital projects being undertaken by the Ministry, in its strategic approach towards achieving its mission, vision and objectives.

In this issue of Commerce means Business, our feature article is on the National Investment Policy being developed by the Investment Co-ordination Department of the Ministry, aimed at attracting and stimulating greater foreign and domestic investment. Other interesting articles are also featured by our proficient staff, such as SEDU's 2013 graduation and the student outreach programs of the Consumer Affairs Department.

The Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs is pleased to present this publication to our readers with the hope that we can continue to satisfy your appetite for knowledge and information, through our bi-monthly publication of Commerce means Business.

Happy Reading!!!

**Lydia Dariah - Information Officer/Editor
Commercial Information Centre**

National Investment Policy for Saint Lucia



Mr. Titus Preville, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry giving his opening remarks on the expected outcome of the technical workshop



Representatives of Public and Private Sector Agencies discussing investment objectives



Cleotha Joseph & Aretha Regis, Investment Officers of the Ministry giving concluding remarks on the proposed way forward for the National Investment Policy

The Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs is pursuing the development of a National Investment Policy for Saint Lucia. This Investment Policy is expected to contribute towards positive economic growth of Saint Lucia, while promoting sustainable development. It is expected that synergies will be created with other developmental goals set by the government and that the policy will inform the treatment and attraction of investment in Saint Lucia. The development of this Policy forms an integral component of the Ministry's work programme through the Investment Coordination Department.

One of the key determinants of the success of the National Investment Policy is the extent to which a competitive and favorable environment for doing business in Saint Lucia is developed and maintained.

The objective of this initiative is to develop a policy document which outlines the foundation and philosophy which underpin Saint Lucia's approach to investment in general and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in particular. Furthermore, the policy will identify the priority areas for investment, as well as, articulate the supporting incentives regimes and institutions that are involved in facilitating investment flows in Saint Lucia.

The General Deliverables of the National Investment Policy includes:

- Setting objectives
- Confirming policy foundation and philosophy
- Defining overall policy on investments
- Positioning Saint Lucia as a prime investment location
- Confirming operational means
- Creating a favorable investment climate
- Achieving balance between regulation and liberalization

A technical workshop was held on August 14th, 2013 with public and private sector officials to analyze and discuss the general deliverables of the National Investment Policy. The next step in the development of the Investment Policy will be the draft document. This document will include confirmation of the proposed policy objectives, the policy targets and policy measures. It will include a transition and implementation plan, a capacity-building and technical assistance programme.



Intense discussions taking place among officials and Consultant

By: Cleotha Joseph
Investment Officer
Investment Coordination Department

SEDU's 2013 Graduation Ceremony



The Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU) hosted its 2013 Graduation Ceremony for the Entrepreneurial Development Courses it offers on July 11th, 2013 at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. This year's graduation theme was "Creating Competitive Advantage through Innovation and Creativity," and the feature speaker was Ms. Joanna Charles, Assistant General Manager of Bank of St. Lucia.

Seventy-five students comprising prospective and existing business owners graduated from the following courses, which was held September to December 2012 and February to May 2013: Basic Project Management for Small Contractors; Peachtree Accounting; Quality Management and Small Business Management (SBM)

Amongst this year's graduates were three members of staff of the Ministry namely Mr. Stephen Edmund (Peachtree Accounting and Small Business Management), Ms. Marsha Smith (Quality Management and Small Business Management) and Mrs. Roycelyn St. Hill-Howell (Small Business Management). Special awards were also presented to the top performers in the aforementioned courses by the Permanent Secretary. (see photos below)

SEDU's Entrepreneurial Development courses are aimed at equipping potential and existing business owners with the knowledge required to increase business efficiency and competitiveness. It's services are designed to support the implementation of the Saint Lucia National Industrial Policy by developing organizations through continuous improvement in productivity and by providing technical support for the adoption of effective operational programmes.

*By: Jonathan Allain
Business Development Officer*



Dalia Phillip - Top Performer in SBM Receiving Special Award from Permanent Secretary



Dorothy Bryan - Top Performer in Peachtree Accounting Receiving Special Award from Permanent Secretary



The hard working staff of SEDU who organized the successful graduation ceremony



Ministry of Commerce graduates as referenced in the above article receiving their certificates from Mrs. Barbara Charles-Innocent, Director of SEDU



Do you know your Consumer Rights?

- The Right to be Informed
- The Right to Choose
- The Right to Safety
- The Right to be Heard
- The Right to Satisfaction of Basic Needs
- The Right to Redress
- The Right to Education
- The Right to a Healthy and Sustainable Environment

Young Consumer Advocates for Enactment of Consumer Protection Legislation

In its efforts at garnering support for the enactment of the Consumer Protection Bill, the Consumer Affairs Department (CAD) of the Ministry embarked on a letter writing competition among Primary Schools on the island. The competition was centered on this year's theme in observance of World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD), "CONSUMER JUSTICE NOW!" Participants were required to write a letter to the Hon. Emma Hippolyte, Minister for Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs, requesting her intervention and giving reasons as to why the Consumer Protection Bill should be enacted.

Eleven (11) year old Zannika Emilien of the Fond Assau Primary School in Babonneau, who succeeded at this year's Common Entrance Exams and has gained entry to the Leon Hess Secondary School won the coveted prize of a Laptop.

Like little Zannika, who looks forward to action from the Minister, Hon. Emma Hippolyte on the enactment of the Consumer Protection Bill, the Ministry urges consumers to use the information technology at their disposal to obtain timely and relevant consumer information, given the expectation of our policy makers as outlined by Hon. Dr. James Fletcher, **Minister for the Public Service, Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology**, at the Caribbean ITC Ministers' Forum on Leveraging ITC for Development in the Caribbean, held on August 8th, 2013, Trinidad and Tobago.

In the Minister's speech which was published on August 17, 2013 in **NATION WIDE**, the Official News Magazine of the Government of Saint Lucia, Dr. Fletcher affirmed that, "**There is a tremendous expectation that Information and Communication Technology will be the vehicle for the next wave of economic and social development in our Caribbean region.**" Very aptly put by the Hon. Minister because if consumers cannot have access to timely and important information, certainly this can put them at a serious disadvantage bearing in mind that they are the pivotal axis on which businesses revolve. If there are no consumers, there will be no businesses and by extension there will be no economic and social development, resulting in business dissolution, unemployment and social disorder in all facets of life.

The Minister, Permanent Secretary, Management and Staff of the Ministry would like to extend congratulations to young Zannika on winning the aforementioned competition and succeeding at the Common Entrance Exams. We would also like to urge Zannika to make very good use of her Laptop.

All the best, Zannika, throughout your tenure at your new school and beyond – kindly take a bow!

By: Damian Monrose - Information Assistant
Consumer Affairs Department (CAD)

Zannika's Letter to the Minister Hon. Emma Hippolyte

Fond Assau Primary School
Fond Assau
6 March, 2013

Hon. Emma Hippolyte
Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
4th Floor Heraldine Roch Building
Waterfront
Castries

Dear Hon. Hippolyte,

I am from the Grade Six Class of the Fond Assau Primary School and my name is Zannika Emilien. I have learnt that the theme for Consumer Affairs Day is "Consumer Justice Now!"

At present, there is no consumer protection legislation in St. Lucia but I look forward to the enactment of laws and guidelines that will help protect our consumer rights. So far consumers are still getting a raw deal from local businesses and changes need to be made as quickly as possible.

At the moment the No exchange No refund policy that greet us the consumers when we enter a store is unacceptable. The receipts with prints that fade after a few days, labels with instructions in Spanish/French and goods without expiry dates need to be abolished. These faulty products and poor information can cause injury to unsuspecting shoppers and people. There is need to prevent exploitation of consumers. There is need for legislation to safeguard

people. It is time that consumers get justice. Our parents and people work very hard and should get value for money.

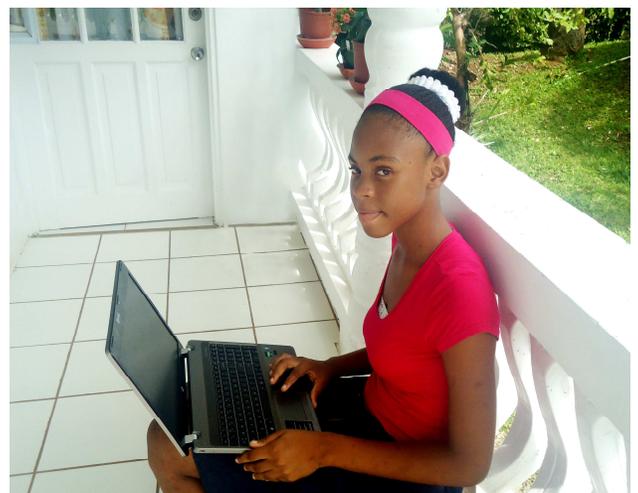
For instance, there was an incident where my mother bought a sandal and two days later it was defaced. I am asking you Hon. Emma Hippolyte to please establish rights to help us defend ourselves and get some justice for our money. There is need for a real change.

I look forward to the day when you will act to help us.

Yours truly,
Zannika Emilien



Mr. Philip Mc Claren, Director, Consumer Affairs, handing over Laptop to Grade 6 Teacher, Mrs. Martina Gajadhar at the Fond Assau Primary School on behalf of Zannika Emilien



Zannika Emilien getting a feel of her new Laptop

Trade Facilitation

On May 19-24, 2013 the WTO Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation (NGTF) convened a meeting of WTO member states. The meeting was held at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Saint Lucia was represented by Ms. Ava Marius, Commerce and Industry Officer with responsibility for Trade Facilitation in the Ministry. The week was spent negotiating various proposals with the aim of removing brackets. Brackets are found around texts where there is no consensus or members have issues with wording.

Saint Lucia raised its flag in support of the position advanced by Mr. Ricardo James in his capacity as Chair of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). This position reiterated the willingness of the ACP Group to consult and continue to negotiate, in order to bring consensus to a section II and eventually the Trade Facilitation Agreement. Saint Lucia also expressed hope that work on both sections can be advanced.

The WTO also hosted a trade facilitation fair where several Annex D partners (IMF, World Bank, WCO, UNCTAD etc) and developed countries presented their Technical Assistance programs to participants. Saint Lucia was able to dialogue with World Bank-IFC representative Mr. Bill Gain on a Trade Logistic Project which is ongoing in the Ministry of Commerce and spearheaded by the Investment Coordination Department.

Since the NGTF meeting, Saint Lucia called a meeting of its task force to debrief on the NGTF and secure positions for the next NGTF. As Saint Lucia was not represented at the NGTF in July, comments were forwarded to the OECS Technical Mission.



Ms. Ava Marius , Commerce and Industry Officer with OECS Delegates

*By: Ava Marius
Commerce & Industry Officer
Commerce & Industry Department*

26th Geneva Week

The 26th Geneva Week was held from 29 April to 3 May 2013 at the WTO Centre, Geneva, Switzerland. Saint Lucia's delegation comprised of His Excellency Dr. Ernest Hilaire, High Commissioner of Saint Lucia to the United Kingdom and Mr. Guillaume Simon, Commerce & Industry Officer of the Ministry.

Mr. Pascal Lamy, WTO outgoing Director-General, welcomed the delegates to Geneva Week, while outlining the successes and challenges of the WTO and the need for continued strengthening of this august body. Chairperson of the General Council, H.E. Mr. Shahid Bashir also welcomed the delegates and provided a brief introduction to the 26th Geneva Week of activities. He stressed the great importance that the WTO attaches to the Geneva Week programme, given that it ensures greater transparency, inclusiveness and effective participation of all members.

The WTO has three major functions which includes monitoring and implementation of the existing multilateral disciplines, dispute settlement amongst Members and negotiations relating to further market access and tightening trade disciplines. Based on those core functions numerous discussions and presentations were made during Geneva week. Discussions were also held on the Implementation of the 2012-2013 Technical Assistance Plan, as well as, consultations on the 2014-2015 Technical Assistance Plan presented by Mr. Maarten Smeets, of the Institute for Training and Technical Co-operation.

Presentation were also made on preparations for the 4th Global Review- Aid for Trade; Integrating into Value Chains; Promoting Access to Medical Technologies and Innovation; the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and the State of Play in the DSU negotiations which were presented by H.E. Mr. Ronald Saborío Soto, Chairman of the Special Session of the Dispute Settlement Body.

Discussions also focused on the groundwork for the Ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization which will be held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 6 December 2013.



*Mr. Guillaume Simon with
Mrs. Natasha Edwin-Walcott, Technical
Attache of the OECS Mission in Geneva and
H.E. Dr. Ernest Hilaire,
High Commissioner*

*By: Guillaume Simon
Commerce & Industry Officer
Commerce & Industry Department*

Supporting Youth Development

Opening Ceremony



*Mr. Jonathan Chalon,
organizing participants
into groups*

The Saint Lucia National Youth Council (NYC) held the first ever 'Lucian Leaders' Summit' at the Grande Riviere Primary School during the period August 19th – 23rd, 2013. This activity was directed by the NYC 1st Vice President, Laverne Verdant and immediate past President Mr. Jonathan Chalon and was coordinated by the NYC Secretariat Staff Karen Scott, Kina Nicholas, Marius James and Maria Sebastian (Peace Corps Volunteer).

The summit was aimed at providing youth from various Secondary Schools an opportunity to develop core life skills, such as, leadership, personal development, health & wellness, and financial literacy which are paramount for enhancing their academic performance. Various training sessions were held to help equip the participants with these life skills which included, Conflict Management, Setting S.M.A.R.T Goals, Budgeting, Promoting a Positive School Environment, Using Social Media and key team building exercises, just to name a few.

To start off the Summit an opening ceremony was held on August 19th, 2013 where Lydia Dariah, Information Officer of Ministry was in attendance. Ms. Dariah used the opportunity to address the participants by encouraging them to embrace this opportunity to learn new skills and acquire life long knowledge, while interacting positively with each other. She also mentioned the value and importance of such youth development programs in building self-confidence and self-esteem which are important attributes for becoming successful leaders of today and tomorrow.

The Ministry of Commerce supported this initiative by contributing foods items to the National Youth Council for the participants of the Lucian Leaders Summit, as well as, the NYC Camp Kalinago, which was held 26th – 29th, July, 2013 at Fond Jen Libre in Choiseul.



The Ministry wishes the NYC continued success in its youth development initiatives.

*By: Lydia Dariah– Information Officer
Commercial Information Centre*

Let's Meet the Staff - Ms. Lydia Dariah



In each publication of **Commerce means Business**, the Ministry will be featuring a staff profile so that our readers are aware of the cadre of staff producing the various articles and working assiduously to move the Ministry forward. To start off I will feature a profile of myself, Lydia Dariah.

I joined the Public Service in September 2005 as a Clerk in the Ministry of the Public Service. No sooner I joined the Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade and Civil Aviation in the same capacity attached to the Information Services Division.

Working in the Ministry of External Affairs afforded me the opportunity to gain knowledge on contemporary and interesting areas, such as, international trade, political and economic issues, protocol and consular, while gaining an insight into the work of regional and international bodies, such as, the Caribbean Community, United Nations and Organization of American States. This was indeed an avenue for achieving professional growth and career development.

Therefore, in my thrust to make an even greater contribution to the Ministry, I commenced the pursuit of a Bachelor of Science Degree in 2006 with the University of the West Indies, Open Campus and graduated in 2010 with a First Class Honours Degree in Management Studies.

Having attained this added knowledge and skills in Management, I had an even greater desire to push myself further and so I pursued a Master of Science Degree in International Trade Policy with the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus and graduated in 2012.

On March 1st, 2013 I joined the Ministry of Commerce as Acting Information Officer of the Commercial Information Centre. Since then I have been working towards improving and enhancing the work and value of the department by increasing the accessibility and flow of quality information to Staff and other users of the Centre. With changes in the structure of the Centre and the approach of the Staff, there has been an increased use of the resources of the Centre by both internal and external users.

As Information Officer I also make it my duty to work closely with other departments of the Ministry where I can provide information and research support, while gaining understanding of the work of the departments. From a trade perspective I have gained some practical knowledge on trade-related issues being faced by the business community.

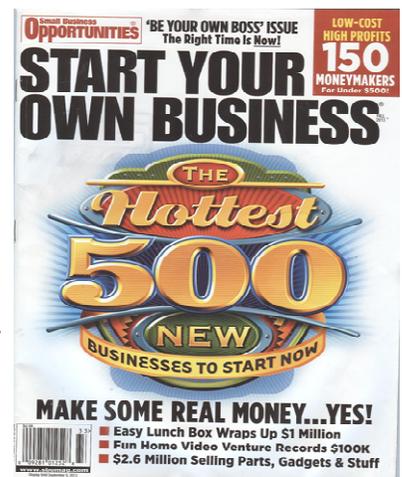
With time I am hoping to make a greater impact in the Ministry of Commerce through the application of my knowledge in Management and International Trade as I want to make this Ministry my second home.

What's in CIC



CIC presently has available the September issues of the magazines "Small Business Opportunities" and the "Entrepreneur." These issues provide very resourceful information on building business ideas, enhancing one's entrepreneurial skills and devising strategies towards improving one's small business operation through effective marketing.

Feel free to visit CIC to have a read of these insightful publications which can further enhance your knowledge on Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management.



Follow my lead

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entrepreneur.com/inspireleadership



Excerpt from the Entrepreneur Magazine

The Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, Investment and Consumer Affairs welcomes your comments and suggestions towards improving this publication. We would also like to welcome and encourage all staff members to submit articles for our upcoming issues of Commerce means Business.

Kindly email the Commercial Information Centre at cic@govt.lc with your articles and feedback.

Thank you to all those who contributed to this first issue of Commerce means Business. We look forward to your continued contributions.

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