



**ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR THE YEARS  
2011-2017**

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## INTRODUCTION FOR THE YEARS 2011-2017

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) genesis lies in the Herdmanston Accord (1998), which was signed by late Mrs. Janet Jagan of the People's progressive Party/Civic and late Mr. Hugh Desmond Hoyte of the People's National Congress. The Accord which sought to provide a peaceful solution to the political impasse that had gripped Guyana following the December 1997 Regional and General Elections, was brokered by a Caricom Mission that included Sir Shridath Ramphal, Sir Alistair McIntyre and Sir Henry Forde.

The Accord sets out a menu of measures that provided for, among other things, the establishment of a Constitutional Reform Commission. Among matters to be addressed by the Commission were measures and arrangements for improving race relations in Guyana, including the contribution which equal opportunities legislation and concepts drawn from the Caricom Charter of Civil Society could contribute to the cause of justice, equality and progress in Guyana.

The Commission was composed and its report to the National Assembly on July 17, 1999, recommended that the Constitution should establish an adequately funded and suitably broad-based Ethnic Relations Commission, comprising representatives of religious bodies, the labour movement, the private business sector, youth and women.

The draft Bill that provided for the establishment of the Ethnic Relations Commission and outlining its functions was presented, debated and passed in the National Assembly. On August 11, 2000 it assented into law as Constitutional (Amendment No.2) Act No. 11 of 2000.

The purpose of the Ethnic Relations Commission is to promote ethnic harmony and good relations amongst all peoples in Guyana. The Commission has twenty-four functions which can be grouped into the following four (4) categories:

- Investigate complaints of ethnic discrimination
- Promote conflict resolution
- Conduct research in matters relating the ethnic relations
- Educate and inform the public on matters relating to ethnic relations
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The Ethnic Relations Commission as decreed by Parliament has seven (7) Constituencies. These are:

- |                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| • Women                   | • Christian |
| • Youth                   | • Hindu     |
| • Private business sector | • Muslim    |
| • Labour movement         |             |

The Ethnic Relations Commission was duly established and commenced its work in 2003 with the swearing in of most of its Commissioners in March, 2003 and the remainder in June, 2003.

## **The Commission is divided into four (4) Units**

- **ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS**

This unit is responsible for the daily administrative aspects of the Commission including making arrangements and preparations for Statutory and Special meetings and any other duties necessary to support the work of the Commission.

Also the Unit is responsible for document preparation for the entire Commission, general maintenance of the building, the equipment, care and maintenance of the vehicles, processing of annual leave, sick leave and general supervision of the daily activities of the Commission. Schedule and make arrangements for outreach programmes on behalf of the Commissioners, make preparations for hearings, seminars, yearly regional visits etc.

- **FINANCE**

All financial aspects of the Commission are carried out by this unit and any other duties to support the work of the Commission. The unit is responsible for processing and effecting payments, monthly financial statements for submission to Ministry of Finance, maintaining all financial records, preparation and payment of salaries and statutory deductions, preparing schedules and making timely payments to GRA and NIS and purchasing of supplies. For the period September 2012 to December 2015, all financial transactions with respect to salaries for the Rights Commission were performed.

- **PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

This is the proactive arm of the Commission which operates from the perspective that an informed and educated society is more disposed to tolerate, respect and accommodate the unique ethnic diversity that constitutes the Guyanese society.

Consistent with its mandate under Article 212D of the Constitution, the Commission sought to foster a sense of security among all ethnic groups by engaging in several outreach programmes aimed at educating and creating public awareness on the need for tolerance of diversity in all aspects of national life.

- **LEGAL AND INVESTIGATIVE**

This Unit has a responsibility to serve all Guyanese and persons living or working in Guyana who believe himself or herself to be discriminated against because of some ethnic reason. The aim is to receive and ensure that all complaints to the ERC are investigated thoroughly, efficiently and to seek to resolve matters through Conflict Resolution, thus maintaining harmony and good relations in the society.

- **MEDIA AND CAMPAIGN MONITORING UNIT (As is needed)**

This Unit is usually set up on a temporary basis (or as is needed) to monitor the media (print, television and radio) and political public meetings to identify language that incites or excites ethnic/racial animosity and to utilize such information to deter its repetition and to enforce compliance under the Representation of the People's Act and the Racial Hostility Act.

Its purpose is to help create an environment that encourages all ethnic groups to participate in the electoral process in an environment free from fear, violence and intimidation and to ensure ethnic security.

In June 2011, the Commissioners of the ERC were served with an injunction. The injunction and a Conservatory Order which was granted by the High Court, directed and ordered the chairman and two Commissioners from “holding themselves out as Chairman and members” of the Ethnic Relations Commission. The matter was dismissed on November 22, 2011 by Justice Diana Insanally. However, the Secretariat had continued its operations but not to its full capacity during the period of the injunction.

Later that year in December, the Chairman, Bishop Juan Edghill tendered his resignation. In 2012, Commissioners John P. Willems and Carvil Duncan both resigned. Hence, the Secretariat was placed on a hiatus. The Secretariat had continued to carry out minimal programs and in some years, there were no program activities executed.

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Your Honour,

In accordance with Article 212E (1) of the Constitution of Guyana, the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) hereby submit its 2011-2017 Annual Reports for your further action.

# Annual Report 2011

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2011

## PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS UNIT

The Public Education and Awareness Unit was tasked with the execution of a number of activities during the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. Important to note is the fact that most of the planned programmes executed were geared at ensuring the environment remains peaceful before, during and after the General and Regional Elections. With that in mind, the following programmes were executed:

- Media Encounter 2011
- Culture Fest(s) 2011
- Monthly Lecture Series
- Workplace Meetings
- Film Festivals
- Berbice Expo
- Public Relations Activities
- 

The annual Constituency meetings were not hosted, since there were no Commissioners to meet with the representatives from ERC's seven Constituencies ie. Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Women, Youth, Labour and Private Sector organisations as named by the Parliament of Guyana. This was due to the injunction brought against the serving Chairman and Commissioners.

### 1. MONTHLY LECTURE SERIES

Among the strategic priorities of the Ethnic Relations Commission for the year 2011, was the hosting of a monthly Public Lecture. This was successfully realised with Lectures conducted in Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10.

A total of *two thousand and eighty (2080)* persons participated in the activity and an analysis of the attendance at all the lectures revealed that *three hundred and fifty-two (352)* communities were represented and *three hundred and ninety-five (395)* organisations.

The activity formed part of the Public Education and Awareness Unit work programme for the year 2011 and was executed with the objective of sensitising the Nation on the need to maintain ethnic harmony, especially during the elections period.

Importantly, the Lectures specifically targeted first time voters with the intention of providing a forum for the public to become more informed and responsible when dealing with issues of ethnic relations after participating in the Lectures. Notably, participants benefited from the Knowledge of expert personnel and prominent citizens who delivered vital information through the presentation of the Lectures. The information received stimulated open floor discussions which hopefully created a level of behaviour change where a culture of peace and national reconciliation can be realised.

Moreover, admissions to the Lectures were free and representatives from religious, cultural, political and social organisations and all interested individuals among others were in attendance. However, it should be noted that the careful coordinating, organising and execution of the activity was done through the compilation of a database, preparation of letters of invitation, telephone calls, arranging of transportation for participants from outlying communities and snacks for participants among others.

## **SYNOPSIS OF EACH PUBLIC LECTURE**

### **THE 1<sup>ST</sup> LECTURE (Region six)**

The ERC's first Public Lecture was held in Region 6 at the University of Guyana, Tain Campus, Corentyne, Berbice on January 27, 2011.

Approximately four hundred (400) persons attended and the participants hailed from eighty-five (85) communities and sixty (60) organisations. Among those present were representatives from the Regional Democratic Council, Religious and Cultural Organisations, State Agencies, Youth groups, Chambers of Commerce, Private Sector Organisations, Parents, Teachers and Students among others.

Representatives of the Ethnic Relations Commission comprised of the Chairman, Bishop Juan Edghill, Commissioner John Willems, Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Yvonne Langevine, Head of the Public Education and Awareness Unit, Ms. Yolanda Ward and other ERC staff members.

The activity commenced at 15:00 hours and the Lecture was presented by the late Mr. Charles Fung-A-Fatt, Deputy Chief Parliamentary Counsel on the topic ***“The Law and Discrimination: examining the Racial Hostility Act and the Representation of the People Act.”***

Mr. Charles Fung-A-Fatt, in his presentation explained that the Racial Hostility Act, Chapter 23:01 “Makes provision for preventing conduct intending to excite hostility or ill-will against persons by reason of their race”. He further stated that “any person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine of sixty-five thousand dollars and imprisonment for two years”.

The Speaker went on to explain that, “In Law, there is a legal presumption that every man is a reasonable man and is presumed to know what is right or wrong.” He emphasized that “A person is criminally liable at the age of fourteen.” Mr. Fung-A-Fatt continued by saying that “Guyanese with mature minds will understand exactly what constitutes conduct which tends to incite racial or ethnic hostility. In addition, Section 139D and 139E were inserted in the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 1:03 by the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001 to prohibit any person or Political Party from causing racial or ethnic violence or hatred”.

Mr. Fung-A-Fatt informed the gathering that once a person was convicted under section 2 of this Act, then irrespective of any punishment to which he/she may be sentenced in accordance with that section, he/she shall be disqualified for a period five (5) years from certain offices and



appointments including but not limited to being a member of the National Assembly or of any local government authority, the appointment of Editor of any Newspaper or any appointment on the Editorial staff of any Newspapers, staff of any Newspapers and any appointment on the managerial or Editorial staff of any broadcasting station.

The Deputy Chief Parliamentary Counsel reminded those gathered that there are provisions in sections 138 D and 139 E of the Representation of the People Act that sets out the procedure for the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) to take certain measures and issues instructions in consonance with its functions given under the Constitution.

The Presenter said that the ERC functions as an investigative body where if there is a complaint against a Political Party, of statements or actions by such party, on racial and ethnic violence or hatred it can be investigated. If the ERC finds that a political party has not publicly disassociated itself from the statement or the action, the Chairman of the ERC shall send the findings of the Commission to the Chairman of the Elections Commission. He said that the Chairman of the Elections Commission is required under subsection (7) not to accept any list of candidates from that Political Party.

He pointed out that in Guyana most people feel uncomfortable when discussing racial or ethnic issues. He inferred that this was possibly due to Guyana's turbulent history or the law itself that prohibits any person or Political Party from causing racial or ethnic violence or hatred.

He stressed that one must be circumspect before speaking and carefully edit any speech even with the help of others on this delicate subject. He added that it can lead to serious implications.

Following the presentation, the ERC Chairman, Bishop Juan Edghill explained to the participants that the Commission's Public Education and Awareness activities were being conducted with the hope that the public will be more informed and will act responsibly when dealing with ethnic relations especially during the elections period. He further stated that the information disseminated at the lecture should influence behavioural change, promoting a culture of peace and encourage national reconciliation.

He further emphasized that no one should be victimized because of their race, religion or culture, while pointing out that Guyana has a mosaic of cultures, races and religions and as such everyone should be treated equally and respected despite their differences.

An open floor discussion was then facilitated by the ERC Chairman where participants sought clarifications on the topic which was presented. Participants expressed sentiments that the lecture was very educational, informative and timely.

## **THE 2<sup>ND</sup> LECTURE (Region Ten)**

The second public lecture was held in Region ten at the Linmine Constabulary Recreational Hall on Monday, February 28, 2011 at 14:00 hours. The lecture was presented on the topic ***"Equal***

***Access and Equal Opportunities for all; ensures peaceful and developed societies”*** by Major General (Ret’d) Joseph Singh, MSS.

The event attracted approximately 232 persons who were representatives from 54 organisations in 35 communities across the Region.

Representatives from the Ethnic Relations Commission comprised of the Chairman, Bishop Juan Edghill, Commissioner John Willems, Commissioner Carvil Duncan, Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Yvonne Langevine, Head of the Public Education and Awareness Unit, Ms. Yolanda Ward and other ERC staff members.

Major General (Ret’d) Singh began his lecture with a quote from Article 13 of the Guyana Constitution which states: ***“The principal objective of the political system of the State is to establish an inclusionary democracy by providing increasing opportunities for the participation of citizens, and their organisations in the management and decision-making of the State, with particular emphasis on those areas of decision-making that directly affect their wellbeing”***.

He reminded the gathering of the events in the Arab States where citizens had taken to the streets in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain and Libya to demonstrate against authoritarianism, lack of freedom, self-serving systems of governance, corruption, lack of jobs and opportunities and the pervasive presence of state sponsored security.

He continued his presentation by noting that ordinary citizens should empower themselves to demonstrate against injustices by using the tools of technology, the social networks and the philosophy of moral persuasion of peaceful protest to unsettle the incumbent power and to bring about their removal from office and power.

He said that the chain reaction was brought about by systems of governance; socio-economics, justice, the rule of law and security have been manipulated to serve the interest of whoever exercises dominance.

Major General (Ret’d) Singh then went on to speak on the topic ***“Equal Access and Equal Opportunities for all; ensures peaceful and developed societies”***.

He believed that citizens who perceived that they were being discriminated against because of their inability to enjoy equal access and equal opportunities were unlikely to remain docile and agreeable under conditions that breed frustration, distrust, despair, disillusionment and hopelessness. The outward manifestations of their agitation and advocacy may, on deeper analysis, reveal more systemic issues as the root causes. He stated that local conversations with all stakeholders must be one of the first steps in defining the issues and identifying possible solutions.

He expressed the view that the implementation of a strategy to resolve such issues will require the establishment of a system of representative governance that executes agreed policy decisions in an equitable, transparent and just manner and one that delivers to the expectations of all

citizens. He affirmed that this will generate confidence among citizens in the future of a Guyana where they feel empowered, comfortable, respected and motivated, and will, more than likely, encourage the dismantling of those inhibiting obstacles to the peaceful development of our society.

Major General (Ret'd) noted that Region 10, and particularly Linden, had more than its fair share of challenges over the years.

He reflected that "Linden's evolution can be traced from the transient community of McKenzie, whose workers came from other parts of British Guyana, such as the West Coast of Berbice. Most commuted weekly via the RH Car and worked in a highly organized production-line system but also in a highly socially stratified environment. He noted that Richmond Hill, Watooka and Wismar were separated enclaves within the whole".

He recalled that "the transient accommodation for the bauxite workers of McKenzie morphed over time into the settled community of Linden that had expanded its activities from mining and shipping of bauxite, and prospecting for the mining of gold and diamond in the six Mining Districts of Guyana. Some were involved in agricultural production in the intermediate savannahs, chain saw logging in the forests and vending, tourism and hospitality skills in the townships and communities".

Major General (Ret'd) Joseph Singh concluded that such initiatives and their successful outcomes will promote the development of a citizenship where Guyanese are conscious of our history, proud of our country and excited about our collective future.

### **THE 3<sup>RD</sup> LECTURE (Region Three)**

The ERC's third Public Lecture was held at the Aracari Resort in Region 3 on Thursday, March 24, 2011. This lecture commenced at 15:00 hours and was presented on the topic: ***"Respect and Tolerance for Ethnic Diversity in a Multi-Cultural Society, promotes National Development."***

The Lecture was presented by Captain Gerry Gouveia and attracted approximately 300 persons from 65 communities and 75 organisations in the Region.

Among those present were the Regional Chairman and other Regional Officials, Religious and Cultural Organisations, State Agencies, Parents, Teachers, Students and Civil Society among others.

Moreover, those present from the Ethnic Relations Commission were the Chairman, Bishop Juan Edghill, Commissioner John Willems, Commissioner Carvil Duncan, Head of the Public Education and Awareness Unit, Ms. Yolanda Ward and other ERC staff members.

Captain Gouveia commenced his presentation by urging persons not to allow the experiences of discrimination and/or neglect of the past to divide the country and advised that such actions in

society must be condemned. He opined that the perception in our society is that persons who occupy leadership positions use such experiences to segregate the various ethnic groups.

He further stated that Guyanese should be respectful and tolerant of each other and expressed the view that the ERC should be commended for its continuous work in promoting harmony and good relations over the years.

In concluding, Captain Gouveia advised the gathering that as a people, Guyanese from every facet of society need to stand together and work for national development.

At the end of Captain Gouveia's presentation, the ERC Chairman, Bishop Juan Edghill, explained that the Commission considers it important to educate the populace on matters of national importance.

Bishop Edghill stressed that no race of people are racists, it's the individual who is a racist and as Guyanese we should not tolerate 'hate mongers' in our society since this can have devastating implications. He advised the audience to learn more about each other's religious and cultural backgrounds adding that, "the more we learn about each other, the more we will love, respect and tolerate each other".

The Participants took the opportunity to express their gratitude to the ERC for hosting the activity and offered sentiments that there was need for more interactive sessions of that nature in the Region. It was emphasized by participants that Guyanese need to stop looking at the differences of each other and treat each other equally and as humans.

Commissioners John Willems and Carvil Duncan urged the gathering to continue to be respectful and tolerant of each other's ethnic differences and emphasized that the series of public lectures was to educate the public so that they are informed and act responsible when dealing with ethnic issues, especially during an elections period.

#### **THE 4<sup>TH</sup> LECTURE (Region Four)**

The fourth public Lecture was held in Region 4 at the Guyana International Conference Centre on Thursday April 28, 2011 at 13:00 hours. The Presenter was **Major General (Ret'd) Norman Mc Lean**. The Lecture was delivered on the "*The role Civil Society should play in improving race relations and encouraging good governance.*"

This lecture attracted approximately 600 persons who were from 74 communities and represented 90 organisations from within the Region.

Major General (Ret'd) Mc Lean reminded the gathering of Guyana's turbulent past especially around elections time. He explained that, "Our history prior to independence, was even more turbulent and unstable with such issues as the suspension of the Constitution in 1953, internecine strife and division, violence and killings in 1962 and 1964, manipulation by foreign powers followed by independence gained in 1966."

He said that the difficult race relations came out of the pre-independence struggle, especially after the split in the traditional PPP in 1955. He spoke about the race division of the leadership in 1962-1964. “We do not like to face that reality, but it is our history,” he added. “Every group in society today must look critically at itself and work on cementing racial harmony and building tolerance and respect for ethnic, cultural, colour and religious diversity.”

Major General (Ret’d) Mc Lean highlighted three areas for evaluating the state of the country:

1. **Politics** - He noted that Guyana is making a new electoral cycle with elections due this year (2011) and the continuation of free, fair and democratic elections which we are working to concretize.
2. **Economics** – He said it was noted that the World Bank has given the Government enormous praises for its development and performance, control of inflation and the reduction of debt and economic growth.
3. **Social** – He referred to the massive housing and infrastructural development, health, the devolution of Amerindian lands and information technology trust.

The Presenter then elaborated on the role of civil society in improving race relations. He first of all noted that civil society must be recognized as “all persons whether they come as individuals or as representatives of institutions”. He further explained that civil society should be seen as those civil organisations such as the Trade Union Movement, the Private Sector Commission, Non-Governmental Organisations and other concerned and pressure groups which make up our society. He pointed out that “We are all involved in the process of ensuring peace and harmony at this time and we have to include those organizations that seek to advocate rights based on ethnicity”.

Major General (Ret’d) Mc Lean acknowledged the large number of persons who had shown interest by attending the ERC lecture. This, he said, meant that something positive was happening and the media had missed it. He alluded to the efforts of the ERC during the elections period and continued by saying that the lack of racial tensions and violence around this time was not surprising given the track record of the ERC. He expressed the hope that the measures presently being taken will continue that trust.

He went on to address the role of the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) including that of voter’s education. He informed the participants that GECOM’s public education campaign was in progress and the implementation of its mandate could be compromised by elements creating an environment which was contrary and counter-productive to the smooth flow of its Elections Action Plan. The Presenter stated that “All of GECOM’s best and internationally lauded efforts can be affected by a setting which promotes social instability”.

Major General (Ret’d) Mc Lean pointed out that a problem arises every five (5) years around elections time. He said that in order to understand this, we have to target the cause in order to

address the remedy. He suggested that “The cause was in our genes as well as the focus on dividing us and heightening our divisions”.

The Major General (Ret’d) in his presentation pointed out that Civil Society must play its role in improving race relations in Guyana. He suggested as an initial step, various Civil Society Institutions, represented in different ethnic groups, collaborate and conduct all-embracing programmes of awareness on how to behave in a reasonable manner in the lead-up to the elections.

The Lecture concluded with an open floor discussion which was well executed in a respected manner.

Notably, one participant took the opportunity to question “how do citizens reach into the minds of civil society or grassroots people?” Hence, in response to the question, the Speaker said that this is something that has to come from within a person and it cannot be forced on anyone but can come through education and work with the minds of young people to make them understand that we are all one regardless if one’s hair is “straight or kingie.”

Further, Major General (Ret’d) Mc Lean offered an apology to a participant who alleged that he suffered injustices at the hands of the Army while Major General (Ret’d) Mc Lean was the Head of the Force.

Importantly, the audience was appreciative of the ERC’s Lecture and one participant criticized the media for not providing coverage of the Lecture, which he said was “something positive happening”.

The ERC’s Chairman Bishop Juan Edghill took the opportunity to inform those gathered that the Media had been sent an advisory inviting them to attend and to provide coverage of the Lecture. He further informed the participants that Major General (Ret’d) Mc Lean was a former Commissioner and Deputy Chairman of the ERC who represented the Private Sector until he tendered his resignation.

Bishop Edghill then expressed appreciation on behalf of the Commission to the participants for attending the Lecture and charged them to promote harmony and good relations.

## **THE 5<sup>TH</sup> LECTURE (Region Five)**

The ERC held its fifth public Lecture on Tuesday, May 24, 2011 in Region 5 at the Winner’s Circle Pools Hall Compound, No. 22 Village, West Coast Berbice. The activity commenced at 14:00 hours and attracted approximately 350 persons who represented 28 organisations and were from 43 communities.

The Lecture was delivered by Justice Donald Trotman who spoke on the topic: *“How can arbitration, conciliation, mediation and like forms of dispute resolution secure ethnic harmony and peace”*.

Remarks were delivered by Commissioner John Willems who informed the gathering that the ERC was not politicking, but striving to make a better Guyana.

Justice Trotman then commenced the Lecture by expressing his belief that “reconciliation is very important, especially when it comes to racial and ethnic conflict”. He explained that his belief was a result of the “things” of the 1960s and 1970s that are affecting this country today and contributing to rifts between the East Indians and Africans, and causing old hurts to still fester, and are being taught to the younger generation. He stated that “We need to sit down and deal with these things sensibly and responsibly.”

Justice Trotman opined that the Government and Non-Governmental Organisations need to form some kind of an agency to encourage people to reconcile the past so the future can be better. He made reference to other countries that have established such agencies which includes South Africa, Grenada, Ecuador, Ghana and Liberia. The retired Judge explained that “Without reconciliation there can be no peace and without peace there will be no development.” Hence, he noted that oaths and pledges of loyalty to country, such as those mentioned in the National Anthem and National Pledge will be meaningless.

He went on to outline the types of disputes including those with racial element where racial slurs are used to incite/excite racial disharmony and conflict. The speaker explained that he recognized that some politicians are guilty of instigating this type of dispute. He continued to outline the other types of disputes which were:

- ✓ between people in a community and their local government authority.
- ✓ those at the neighbourhood level where political conflicts arise because supporters of one political party argue with supporters of another party.

Justice Trotman noted that disputes are bound to arise but people should try their best to avoid them and very often this means walking away.

He advised the participants that where the dispute cannot be avoided, a third party can be brought in to help mediate a peaceful solution.

Moreover, the retired Judge said that he did not know much about the work of the ERC and have never been involved. Hence, he was hesitant to agree to the ERC’s request to deliver a presentation on the topic, ***“How can arbitration, conciliation, mediation and like forms of dispute resolution secure ethnic harmony and peace”***.

He then went on to explain that notwithstanding his preconceived ideas based on things he had heard and read, “He was persuaded that the ERC is doing a good job and the job which they have been commissioned to do”. He commended the remarks made by the Chairman stating that “they were very impartial, objective, honest and sincere”.

After the conclusion of the presentation, the ERC Chairman said “once people are sufficiently enlightened and informed, they can make better decisions”. At that point the Chairman took the opportunity to inform the participants about the Region 5 Culture Fest to be held in the Region.

The floor was then opened for the participants to offer any comments/questions. The following sentiments were echoed:

- A youth from the audience called on adults to stop talking down to young people but help/guidance should be given to them instead.
- Another youth called for a change in mindset of young people who should be given opportunities, especially since they are recognized as the future of Guyana.
- Another participant urged that there be more youth groups which can bring together the young people in the region so that they can interact and stop racism.
- A religious leader suggested that Religious leaders come together in the region to discuss the effects of gambling and music with negative messages that are negatively affecting the youth.

Further, a participant asked whether there is a possibility for the ERC to train persons to be counselors in arbitration, conciliation, mediation. The ERC Chairman responded to the questions by explaining that the ERC can assist in organizing training. He advised that contact should be made with Justice Donald Trotman who heads the United Nations Association of Guyana and are developing communities in Peace Council and can do a lot on community work and has funding.

The ERC Chairman appealed to the participants to get registered in order for them to vote at the upcoming general and regional elections and to check the lists and make use of the claims and objections period that was taking place to have any corrections made. He also made an appeal to the men of Region 5 to treat the women better. He said that “We have too many instances of domestic violence and we have to stop it.” He added that no woman, no matter what she says, no man has a right to be shot, chop, beat or otherwise abuse her. He urged the men to encourage each other to treat women the same way they would treat themselves.

The ERC Chairman further called on the residents to address the high rate of suicide in the Region. He highlighted some of the statistics regarding the high level of suicide in Region 5 to the participants. The ERC Chairman called on Religious Leaders and Non-Governmental Organisations to address the suicide problem noting that there are mechanisms, including a person’s faith and spirituality, which can help.

## **THE 6<sup>TH</sup> LECTURE (Region Two)**

Justice Cecil Kennard, CCH, OR, delivered the ERC’s sixth lecture which was held at the Anna Regina Town Hall on June 30, 2011 at 14:00 hours. The topic explored was ***“All Stakeholders working together to combat crime; ensures ethnic security and harmony”***.

This lecture attracted some 260 persons who represented 61 organisations and were from 41 communities.

Ms. Yolanda Ward, Head of the ERC’s Public Education and Awareness Unit, welcomed the participants and called the activity to order. She then went through the handouts and encouraged everyone to read them whenever time permitted. Ms. Ward then invited the Town Clerk, Mr. Ganga Persaud to deliver some remarks on behalf of the Regional Administration.



Mr. Ganga Persaud, in his remarks welcomed participants and the visiting team from Georgetown. He brought greetings from the Regional Chairman, Regional Councillors and Mayor and Councillors of Region two.

He urged those present to make their contribution and to query what they did not understand. He also reminded the gathering that the Ethnic Relations Commission is a Constitutional Body and advised everyone to live in peace and harmony in order for Guyana to move forward.

Ms. Ward then introduced Mr. Peter Persaud, Commissioner representing the Women and Gender Equality Commission to introduce the speaker.

Commissioner Persaud took the opportunity to welcome the participants to the Public Lecture and informed them that the lecture series formed part of the ERC's work programme for 2011. The Commissioner reiterated to the participants that the ERC is a Constitutional and non-political body that was established in 2002 to promote ethnic harmony and security regardless of race, colour or creed.

Commissioner Persaud said it was the unshakable belief of the ERC that an informed and educated society stands ready to tolerate and accommodate the diverse cultures, religions and ethnicities that constitute the Guyanese society. He then introduced the Speaker for the afternoon, Justice Cecil Kennard and invited him to deliver his lecture.

Justice Kennard began by clarifying the Court Order against the ERC Commissioners. He said that the Court Order was against three of the Commissioners and it did not prevent the ERC Secretariat from functioning and that the Secretariat must continue until the matter was resolved in Court. He noted that the holding of the lecture should not be seen as a breach of the Court Order.

The Presenter emphasized the need for everyone to work together to combat crime since we are all subjected to criminal activities every day. He referred to Article 32 of the Constitution of Guyana which stated ***"it is the joint duty of the state, the society and every citizen to combat and prevent crime and other infractions of the law and to take care of and protect public property"***. He made mention of the Police Act, Section 18 which stated, ***"for members of the Police Force to enlist the assistance of any person in the execution of these duties"***. He continued by noting that "any person refusing to render such assistance can be charged in the Magistrate Court".

He said that Police and civil society must come together to fight crime and citizens shouldn't feel it is the duty of only the Police to fight crime. He noted that the Police cannot be everywhere and as such citizens have a civic duty also to assist the Police.

He acknowledged that there are Police who would receive information and relate it to the criminal. He said that those Police are not worthy to be in the Police Force. He also acknowledged that the majority of our Police Force is hard working and honest and stated that people should join the Police Force to protect and serve and to combat crime. He said that crime affects us all.

Justice Kennard agreed that there are ‘umpteens’ cases of Police harassing civilians but people are afraid to come forward because they fear victimization. He lauded those brave ones who have come forward.

He went on to say that Guyanese are approaching a very important period in our country; referring to the upcoming Elections and the need for peace and harmony. He advised that Guyanese should not practice race vote but should vote for policy and one who will bring the races together so there can be a new beginning for Guyana. Hence, “let bygones be bygones”.

He recognized that the unemployment and migration rate was affecting Guyana and jobs have to be created for young people. In his opinion persons resort to crime when they cannot find jobs.

The Speaker asked that the elders in the village teach the youngsters that race has no part to play in Guyana, and if race has a problem in offices this must be reported to the ERC.

Participants were concerned about disturbances during the elections period which in most cases are confined to Georgetown (Region 4) and seldom spill over to other Regions.

An open floor discussion was also facilitated where participants endorsed the work of the ERC and suggested that the Commission holds a special session for Politicians, The Army and the Media.

Notably, a participant took the opportunity to ask what the ERC was doing about a Newspaper article that was published where an individual made terrible racial statements. Ms. Ward assured the participant that the matter was under investigation at the ERC.

After listening to the participant’s comments, Justice Kennard agreed that elections problems are mostly within Georgetown. He noted that the majority of Guyanese are illiterate or semi-illiterate and cannot rationalize things for themselves and the Politicians use this to their advantage. He said that the Politicians should be more mature and tell the people how to behave so there will be no have street protests.

He assured Mrs. Yvonne Pearson, Chairperson of the National Toshao’s Council who participated in the open floor discussion that he will follow-up with her complaint that was lodged with the Police Complaint Authority. He added that he will make it his duty to take every concern raised at the lecture to the Police attention because the Police are here to protect and serve.

Ms. Yolanda Ward then thanked the participants for attending the lecture and urged the gathering to have a peaceful Guyana. She then called on Commissioner Persaud to give the closing remarks.

In his closing remarks Commissioner Persaud said that he was impressed with the attendance of the Region two residents at the Lecture. He praised the ERC for delivering its mandate and commended the Region two residents for promoting peace and harmony. Mr. Persaud also thanked the youths for attending the lecture and finally Justice Kennard for his lecture on crime. He said without harmony, Guyana cannot move forward.

## THE 7<sup>TH</sup> LECTURE (Region Seven)

On July 28, 2011 the Ethnic Relations Commission held its seventh public lecture in Region Seven at St. John the Baptist Primary School Auditorium. The activity commenced at 14:00 hours and was presented by Pandit Chrishna Persaud on the topic “*Encouraging a culture where politics is about issues and not personality will promote ethnic security in Guyana*”. Approximately **70** persons attended from communities and represented **27** organisations.

Pandit Persaud informed the participants that he was starting the Lecture with hope. He told them that persons should not lose hope because where there is hope, people will prevail and individuals will triumph.

According to Pandit, in society we often hear about ethnic or racial conflict or racial insecurity. He explained that such behavior began with the split of the PPP and PNC, and then people were told, “vote for your own.”

He said because of the colonization, we the people saw an instituted type of racial insecurity that led to ethnic conflict in Guyana. Then came the plantation system that brought African labourers from the continent and when the African slaves got away from the plantation it was the Amerindians who was made police to capture the slaves. He pointed out that immediately one race was at conflict with the other and as a result there was inter-racial conflict.

Pandit Persaud said the same thing was replicated when the Africans achieved emancipation and the Indian indentured labourers were brought in and the freed Africans were co-opted into the Police Force and because of the governing system the Africans were the ones to bring out the Indians from their loggies when they did not report for work and this started a conflict between the Indians and Africans.

The Presenter further noted that in today’s society, Indians do not allow their children to join the Police Force since they see it as “dog work”. He said that this was a historical problem the Guyanese people are dealing with.

Pandit Persaud launched into the topic by saying that ethnic security was basic human needs and was tied to the desires for food, sleep, clothing, housing and relationships. These were the things that brought about levels of comfort in society.

In his presentation, he explained that insecurity gives rise to a number of responses and some emotional theorists say that insecurity is the product of an emotion that evokes particular responses depending on the character of a particular individual. He said when persons in society feel insecure, whether by fear or threat, they tend to group themselves together.

He made mention of the conflict in Guatemala between the Spanish Landlords and the Peasant Mayans which escalated into ethnic conflicts that resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of Indigenous Mayans. He continued by referring to the conflict between Rwanda, Darfur and the Guatemalan. He said these conflicts began with the issue of land, resource distribution and religion.

The Presenter expressed the view that in communities there will be scarcity of resources and he said this will cause dissatisfaction among sections of the community and individuals who feel that their needs are not satisfied or catered for. When there is inequality in the distribution of resources and opportunities there will be cries of discrimination and victimization. Here, he noted that many times people look to see who was getting, who was not getting and who deserved and this was a part of personalities, and once we look at personalities rather than issues, the threat of insecurity becomes manifested and there can be no peace.

He said that sometimes people used the media in a reckless manner that endangered other people's life. He continued by emphasizing that "This is where our politics fail to differentiate between issues and personalities". He added that in that case it was an instance where events take second place and personality takes first place. He said "I have witnessed on several occasions that in serious accidents or robberies where there is a loss of life, people do not concern themselves with the event, they make sure they enquire into the ethnicity of the victims and perpetrators".

He touched on the 1997 general elections in Guyana when the Guyanese population had difficulties with the elections results and the swearing in ceremony of the President elect. People were picketing and there were court cases. However, nothing was wrong with these exercises, he said, but it must be a genuine grievance.

Further he said, these exercises took a turn for the worse when the focus was placed on a person. He explained that what was portrayed were white dolls being beaten and trampled upon; people gathered around a white doll with eggs, candles and calabash and chanting "We wokin pon she". He emphasized that it was naked racism that was only comparable with the activities of the white supremacy and the Klu Klux Klan.

He then spoke about personalities and noted that in Guyana, ethnicity was not the driving force of conflicts, rather it was the instrument used by some Political Parties to mobilize support in their pursuit of power, wealth and resources; while ethnicity is a social means of identification. There was mistrust for each other and the only reason was the feeling of insecurities although persons met at churches and at clubs.

At the conclusion of his presentation Pandit Persaud called on Politicians to focus on issues and not personalities during the elections campaign so as to prevent ethnic insecurity which he said may very well prevent a large voter turnout on Elections Day.

**Figure 1: Depicting the Regions, date, time, venue, speaker and the topics presented at the lectures held**

<b>Reg.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Topic Presented</b>
6	31 <sup>st</sup> January, 2011	15:00 Hours	University of Guyana, Berbice Campus, Tain, Corentyne.	Deputy Chief Parliamentary Counsel Charles Fung -A-Fatt	“The Law and Discrimination: examining the Racial Hostility Act and the Representation of the People Act.”
10	28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	14:00 Hours	Linmine Constabulary, Mackenzie, Linden.	Major General Ret’d Joseph Singh	“Equal Access and Equal Opportunities for all; ensures peaceful and developed societies”.
3	24 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	14:00 Hours	Aracari Resort, Plantation Versailles, West Bank Demerara.	Captain Gerald Gouveia	“Respect and tolerance for ethnic diversity in a multi-cultural society; promotes national development”.
4	28 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011	14:00 Hours	Guyana International Conference Centre, Liliendaal, East Coast Demerara.	Major General Ret’d Mr. Norman Mc Lean	“The role Civil Society should play in improving race relations and encouraging good governance”.
5	24 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	14:00 Hours	Winner’s Circle Pools Hall Compound, No. 22 Village, West Coast Berbice.	Justice Donald Trotman	“How can arbitration, conciliation, mediation and like forms of dispute resolution secure ethnic harmony and peace”.
2	30 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	14:00 Hours	Anna Regina Town Council Hall, Essequibo Coast	Justice Cecil Kennard	“All Stakeholders working together to combat crime; ensures ethnic security and harmony”.
7	28 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	13:00 Hours	St. John - the - Baptist Primary School Auditorium, Second Avenue and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, Bartica, Essequibo River.	Pandit Chrishna Persaud	“Encouraging a culture where politics is about issues and not personality will promote ethnic security in Guyana”.

**Figure 2: Depicting the number of participants and communities**

<b>Reg.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>	<b>No. of Communities</b>
6	31 <sup>st</sup> January, 2011	University of Guyana, Berbice Campus, Tain. Corentyne.	<i>400</i>	85
10	28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	Linmine Constabulary, Mackenzie, Linden.	232	35
3	24 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	Aracari Resort, Plantation Versailles, West Bank Demerara.	300	65
4	28 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011	Guyana International Conference Centre, Liliendaal, East Coast Demerara.	468	74
5	24 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	Winner's Circle Pools Hall Compound, No. 22 Village, West Coast Berbice.	350	43
2	30 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	Anna Regina Town Council Hall, Essequibo Coast	260	41
			70	
7	28 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	St. John - the - Baptist Primary School		9

## 2. CULTURE FEST 2011

The Ethnic Relations Commission listed as part of its strategic priorities for 2011 to host Culture Fests in Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10.

The idea for this activity stemmed from the observation that cultural activities usually showcase the culture and art-form of one ethnic group and seldom do persons from other groups participate. Culture Fests 2011 was hosted under the theme *“encouraging and creating respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society.”*

Six (6) Culture Fests were successfully held on April 3, 2011 in Regions 2 and 3, May 22, 2011 in Region 4, August 7, 2011 in Region 5, August 28, 2011 in Region 10 and September 11, 2011 in Region 6.

An analysis of the six Culture Fests revealed that an estimated **22, 000** Guyanese attended and it is therefore believed that the objectives of the programme were fully realised. Culture Fests sought to bring together Guyanese cultures and religions into a single space where all groups would feel welcome and share in an opportunity to teach each other their way of life, to encourage interaction between persons of different ethnic groups and to create an environment for different ideas and beliefs to be expressed through speech without fear. Hence, with the Culture Fests well executed, it is the hope of the ERC that a higher sense of tolerance, respect and appreciation for Guyana’s diverse culture be achieved.

Importantly, all Culture Fest had four basic Components. These were:

1. **Exhibition** - The exhibition provided an opportunity for persons to become informed and learn about others religious and cultural practices. It was used as an important opportunity for Guyanese to build a sense of appreciation for the ethnic diversity that exists in Guyana.
2. **Sporting Competitions** - The competitions were intended to teach persons that regardless of ethnic differences, they can compete against each other and learn what it is to win and to accept defeat gracefully without a fight. It was also hoped that the level of interaction be transferred to national life where there will be harmonious relationships regardless of ethnicity.
3. **Impromptu Speech Competition** - This was intended to help people appreciate the expression of ideas without a fight. Since every person is entitled to their own opinions, it was essential to ensure that a culture where persons beliefs are accepted and respected.
4. **Cultural Programme** – The cultural programme showcased performances from religious and cultural organizations as a way to teach persons about others religion and culture. It was not a matter of agreeing but creating an environment where Guyana’s rich cultural diversity can be appreciated and respected.



## Culture Fest(s) 2011

Participants displaying their talents and cultural performances





Participants showcasing cultural artifacts, literature, clothing, craft and foods





Participants taking part in various sporting activities





Former Prime Minister of Guyana taking time out to play a friendly game of cricket



Participant taking part in the impromptu Speech Competition



A participant decked out in his ceremonial outfit





Participants sampling a meal of seven curry



The Discipline Forces displaying literature and other items





Participants receiving their prizes and certificates of participation and appreciation



### **3. MEDIA ENCOUNTER 2011**

The Ethnic Relations Commission considers the Media as an important Stakeholder since they have a responsibility to offer information that will help to create behavioural changes in society. Hence, in keeping with its Constitutional mandate of promoting harmony and good relations, the Commission outlined as part of its strategic priorities for 2011 to host “Media Encounter 2011” to engage the Media on their expected behaviour before, during and after elections which will ensure an environment that will remain peaceful and calm.

Media Encounter 2011 was held over a two-day period on February 25, 2011 and February 26, 2011 at the Georgetown Club. The Commission was successfully able to engage eighty (80) persons who comprised Media Owners, Journalists, Reporters, Programme Managers, Advertisers and Publishers among others from thirty-eight (38) Media, Advertising and Publishing companies.

Importantly, the Commission partnered with the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting, the Guyana Press Association, the Guyana Media Proprietors and Owners Association, University of Guyana Centre for Communication Studies and Government Information Agency to plan and execute the activity with the quest to fulfill the aim and objectives of Media Encounter.

Further, Media Encounter 2011 aimed at providing a discussion forum for the Media to agree on best practices to ensure responsible reporting on ethnic issues during the 2011 elections period as guided by the Representation of the People Act and the Racial Hostility Act. As such, the objectives were:

- To build the capacity of Journalists to provide accurate and objective reporting of ethnic related issues during the 2011 elections period.
- To promote an environment of robust self-regulation amongst Journalists during the 2011 elections periods.
- To develop an in-depth knowledge and understanding amongst Media practitioners on the representation of the People Act and the Racial Hostility Act in relation to reporting of ethnic related issues in the Media.
- To discuss and agree on the rules of engagement between the ERC and the Media during the 2011 elections periods.
- To encourage support for the ‘Watchdog’ role and functions of the ERC Media Monitoring Unit during the pre and post 2011 elections periods.
- To establish a system for feedback between the ERC and the Media during the 2011 elections period.

#### 4. WORKPLACE MEETINGS

Workplace meetings have been part of the Ethnic Relations Commission work programme over the past three (3) years. It is believed that the activity has been able to create a greater level of awareness on issues of ethnic relations and create an environment of harmonious relationship in the workplace. The objectives were specifically to:

- Sensitize workers on the formation, work and functions of the Ethnic Relations Commission.
- To engage employers and employees in discussions on how to build harmonious relationships in the workplace.
- To emphasize the need for tolerance, respect and acceptance of all ethnic groups within the work environment.
- To educate employers and employees on proper conflict resolution techniques.
- To ensure there is equality of opportunity between persons of different ethnic groups and to promote harmony and good relations between such persons within the work environment.
- To promote the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity within the work environment.

Moreover, despite challenges in 2011 due to the injunction against the Commissioners which caused some organisations to question the legality of the Commission, the Public Education and awareness Unit were still successfully able to execute *twenty-one (21)* workplace meetings.

The meetings were conducted in both public and private sector agencies where a total of *seven hundred and ninety- three (793)* employers and employees were engaged. The table below show the details of the meeting held.

No.	Organisation	Date	# of Participants
1	Ministry of Legal Affairs	8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	90
2	Banks DIH (Thirst Park)	2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2011	10
3	Qualfon	2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2011	68
4	Bank of Baroda	3 <sup>rd</sup> March, 2011	15
5	National Insurance Scheme (NIS)	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	60
6	Banks DIH (Linden)	5 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	25
7	Public Utilities Commission	7 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	12
8	Guyana National Bureau of Standards (GNBS)	17 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	39
9	New GPC Inc.	18 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	138
10	Guyana National Industrial Company Inc. (GNIC)	25 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	38
11	Guyana Lottery Company Limited	19 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011	9
12	Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED)	11 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	37
13	Federal Management Systems	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	15
14	Qualfon	9 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	38
15	National Insurance Scheme (NIS), Reg. #2	28 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	16
16	Caricom Rice Mills. Reg. #2.	28 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	14
17	Suddie Hospital. Reg. #2	28 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	17
18	Drainage and Irrigation Authority. Reg. #2	29 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	42
19	Regional Democratic Council Reg. #2.	29 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	45

20	Imam Bacchus and Sons Limited Reg. #2	29 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	35
21	Food and Drug Department	7 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	30
	<b>Total</b>		<b>793</b>

## 5. FILM FESTIVALS

Film Festivals became part of the Ethnic Relations Commission work programme in 2005. The activity was executed by the Public Education and Awareness Unit as a way of educating young people in schools, youth groups and tertiary institutions on the importance of ethnic harmony through the use of films.

Film Festivals commenced in February, 2011 and concluded in August, 2011 with a total of ***eighty-eight (88)*** such activities being conducted. Those activities were well executed and successfully attracted a total of ***seven thousand, six hundred and sixty (7660)*** participants. Film Festivals conducted at schools and tertiary institutions totaled ***six thousand, six hundred and fourteen (6614)*** participants. Those activities were conducted from February, 2011 to June, 2011 in ***sixty-four (64)*** institutions primarily in Regions two, three, four and five.

Moreover, the Film Festivals conducted at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports Summer Camps from July to August, 2011 attracted ***one thousand and forty-six (1046)*** participants, capturing ***Twenty-four (24)*** Summer Camps in Regions Three, Four and Six.

### ***Film Festivals Conducted at Schools and Tertiary Institutions***

<b><i>No.</i></b>	<b><i>Region</i></b>	<b><i>Schools / Tertiary Institutions</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Time</i></b>	<b><i>No. of Participants</i></b>
1	4	St. Georges High School	11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	09:30hrs –10:15 hrs	52
2	4	Ascension High School	11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	11:05hrs –12:05 hrs	25
3	4	Buxton High School	14 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	09:25hrs –10:15 hrs	158
4	4	Lodge High School	14 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	11:30hrs –12:10 hrs	80
5	4	Kingston High School	28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011	09:50hrs –10:40 hrs	143
6	4	Central High School	1 <sup>st</sup> March, 2011	10:30hrs –11:49 hrs	120
7	4	East Ruimveldt Secondary School	1 <sup>st</sup> March, 2011	13:50hrs –15:00 hrs	220
8	4	Dolphin Secondary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2011	09:33hrs –10:40 hrs	203
9	4	Cummings Lodge High School	2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2011	11:25hrs –12:00 hrs	153
10	4	Adult Education	3 <sup>rd</sup> March, 2011	10:30hrs –11:45 hrs	60
11	4	Bladen Hall Secondary School	3 <sup>rd</sup> March, 2011	13:00hrs –14:05 hrs	260
12	3	Zeeburg Secondary School	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	10:30hrs –11:45 hrs	226
13	4	Freeburg Secondary School	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	13:30hrs –14:45 hrs	43
14	4	Kuru Kuru Comprehensive College	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	16:15hrs –17:35 hrs	15
15	4	Kuru Kuru Training Centre	5 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	14:00hrs –15:05 hrs	246
16	4	Institute of Professional Education	7 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	13:35hrs –14:15 hrs	17



17	4	Richard Ishmael Secondary School	8 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	10:20hrs –11:50 hrs	240
18	4	Houston High School	8 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	14:00hrs –15:00 hrs	152
19	4	North Georgetown Secondary School	9 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	09:30hrs –10:45 hrs	71
20	4	Beterverwagting High School	9 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	13:00hrs –14:00hrs	199
21	4	Campbellville Secondary School	10 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	09:25hrs –10:40 hrs	198
22	4	Queenstown High School	10 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	14:15hrs –15:10 hrs	58
23	4	Sophia Training Centre	11 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	09:30hrs –10:25 hrs	50
24	4	Burrows School of Art	11 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	13:30hrs –15:50 hrs	20
25	4	Annandale Secondary School	16 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	13:50hrs –14:45 hrs	87
26	4	St. Winefride's Secondary School	22 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2011	10:45hrs –11:40 hrs	48
27	4	St. John's College	22 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2011	13:45hrs –14:30 hrs	108
28	4	Soesdyke Secondary School	23 <sup>rd</sup> March, 2011	10:50hrs –11:55 hrs	139
29	4	Brickdam Secondary School	24 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	10:40hrs –11:50 hrs	58
30	4	Tucville Secondary School	25 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	10:30hrs –11:35 hrs	66
31	4	St. Stanislaus College	25 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	14:30hrs –15:45 hrs	95
32	4	Lancaster Secondary School	28 <sup>th</sup> March, 2011	14:00hrs –15:10 hrs	125
33	5	Bygeval Multilateral School	11 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011	11:00hrs –12:15 hrs	258
34	4	Diamond Secondary School	12 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011	10:00hrs –11:15 hrs	120
35	4	Xenon Academy	18 <sup>th</sup> April, 2011	13:20hrs –14:35 hrs	33
36	3	David Rose Secondary School	12 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	10:00hrs –11:45 hrs	38
37	5	Novar Primary School	12 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:30hrs –10:30 hrs	173
38	5	Novar Secondary School	12 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011		
39	5	Calcutta Primary School	12 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	12:30hrs –13:20 hrs	43
40	5	Mahaicony Primary School	12 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	13:30hrs –14:30 hrs	202
41	3	St. John's Secondary School	13 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	10:00hrs –11:05 hrs	38
42	5	Belladrum Primary School	13 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:00hrs –10:05 hrs	65
43	5	Belladrum Secondary School	13 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:00hrs –10:05 hrs	95
44	5	Seafield Primary School	13 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	11:00hrs –12:00 hrs	27
45	5	Augsburg Primary School	13 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	13:00hrs –14:00 hrs	11
46	5	No. 5 Primary School	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:00hrs –10:00 hrs	45
47	5	Woodley Park Primary School	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	10:30hrs –11:30 hrs	127
48	5	Woodley Park Secondary School	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	10:30hrs –11:30 hrs	65
49	5	No. 29 Primary School	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	12:30hrs –13:20 hrs	103
50	5	Hopetown Primary School	17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	13:30hrs –14:30 hrs	49
51	5	Litchfield Primary School	18 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:00hrs –10:00 hrs	49
52	5	Bath Primary School	18 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	10:30hrs –11:30 hrs	86
53	5	No. 8 Primary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:30hrs –10:15 hrs	72
54	5	Latchmansingh Primary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	09:30hrs –10:15 hrs	88
55	5	Cotton Tree Primary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	10:30hrs –11:30 hrs	140

56	5	Rosignol Primary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	12:30hrs –13:15 hrs	64
57	5	Blairmont Primary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	12:30hrs –13:15 hrs	273
58	5	Ithaca Primary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	13:30hrs –14:30 hrs	83
59	5	Rosignol Secondary School	19 <sup>th</sup> May, 2011	13:30hrs –14:30 hrs	203
60	2	Suddie Primary School	28 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	09:00hrs –10:00 hrs	54
61	2	Queenstown Primary School	28 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	12:30hrs –13:30 hrs	35
62	2	New Opportunity Corps	28 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	14:00hrs –15:00 hrs	163
63	2	8 <sup>th</sup> of May Primary School	29 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	09:00hrs –10:00 hrs	50
64	2	8 <sup>th</sup> of May Secondary School	29 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011	13:00hrs –14:00 hrs	35
<b>Total</b>					<b>6614</b>

**Film Festivals Conducted at Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Summer Camps**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Venues</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
1	4	Graham's Hall Primary School	14 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	11:00hrs –12:30 hrs	34
2	4	Fourth Street Alexander Village	19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	10:00hrs –12:30 hrs	27
3	4	Redeemer Lutheran Church	19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	13:00hrs –14:25 hrs	18
4	4	Long Creek Primary School	20 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	10:00hrs –11:00 hrs	35
5	3	Sand Hill Primary School	21 <sup>st</sup> July, 2011	09:45hrs –10:50 hrs	30
6	3	Goed Fortune Primary School	21 <sup>st</sup> July, 2011	13:00hrs –14:25 hrs	13
7	6	Port Maurant Secondary School	22 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2011	09:30hrs –11:00 hrs	62
8	6	Liverpool Community Centre	22 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2011	13:00hrs –14:30 hrs	200
9	3	Bagotsville Primary School	26 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	14:30hrs –15:30 hrs	29
10	4	Annandale Secondary School	27 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	09:00hrs –10:00 hrs	58
11	4	F. E. Pollard Primary School	27 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	11:00hrs –12:00 hrs	22
12	4	Friendship Secondary School	28 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011	09:00hrs –10:00 hrs	25
13	4	Hope Chappell Church	4 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	10:00hrs –11:40 hrs	25
14	3	Mc Gillivray Primary School	4 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	13:45hrs –15:00 hrs	50
15	4	Mon Repos Garden Community Centre	9 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	10:30hrs –12:15 hrs	79
16	4	Providence Primary School	10 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	14:00hrs –15:15 hrs	52
17	3	Vive La Force Primary School	11 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	10:00hrs –11:00 hrs	25
18	3	Hague Back Primary School	11 <sup>th</sup> August, 201	10:10hrs –11:45 hrs	18
19	3	Parika Back Primary School	11 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	14:05hrs –15:10 hrs	15
20	6	No. 58 Swing Star President Youth Club	12 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	10:15hrs –11:30hrs	60
21	6	Cumberland Primary School	12 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	13:20hrs –14:45 hrs	85
22	4	Mocha Arcadia Primary School	16 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	10:00hrs –11:05 hrs	24
23	4	Plaisance Primary School	17 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	09:00hrs –10:05 hrs	35
24	6	Johanna Shining Star YFS	18 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011	11:00hrs –12:30 hrs	25
<b>Total</b>					<b>1046</b>

## **EAST RUIMVELDT SECONDARY SCHOOL**



## **DOLPHIN SECONDARY SCHOOL**



## **CUMMINGS LODGE SECONDARY SCHOOL**





# **KURU KURU TRAINING CENTRE**



# **INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**



# **CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**



## **6. PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES**

For the year 2011 a total of forty – one (41) Public Relations related activities were disseminated to the Media. These included twenty–three (23) Press Releases, seven (7) Media Advisories, four (4) Letters to the Editor, three (3) Messages, one (1) feature Article and three (3) television programmes. The details of the activities are outlined below.

### **Press Releases / Press Statement**

- ❖ ERC to commence countrywide Lecture Series this month end - First Lecture to be held in Region Six
- ❖ ERC first Public Lecture / Symposium commenced with an examination of the Racial Hostility Act and the Representation of the People Act in Region 6.
- ❖ Media to be engaged in discussions on race Laws.
- ❖ Freddie Kissoon must state his true intentions.
- ❖ Persons guilty of inciting Racial Hostility will not hold public office – ERC
- ❖ ERC to host Public Lecture/ Symposium in Linden, Region Ten.
- ❖ Media Operatives call for stronger penalties under the Racial Hostility Act-Advance calls for an end to stereotypical Indo, Afro – Guyanese reportage
- ❖ Preparations on stream for the successful hosting of ERC's Culture Fest(s) 2011
- ❖ ERC concludes two-day training for part time Media and Elections Campaign Monitors- Monitors to be deployed to political rallies/meetings to dissuade the use of language and action to incite/excite hostility.
- ❖ Media Encounter ends on optimistic note.
- ❖ ERC monthly Public Lecture/Symposium attracted hundreds in Region three-Commission congratulated for ongoing social cohesion programmes and urged to continue
- ❖ Approximately 60 trophies and other prizes up for grabs at ERC Culture Fest 2011 in Region two and three
- ❖ ERC launches investigations into statements allegedly made by ACDA's executive member, Mr. Tacuma Ogunseye
- ❖ Almost six hundred persons attended ERC's lecture on race relations and good governances
- ❖ ERC responds to statements made on Walter Rodney Groundings
- ❖ ERC responds to Tony Vieira's misleading statements
- ❖ ERC's Region Four Culture Fest well advanced
- ❖ Record number of participants force expansion of ERC Region four Culture Fest
- ❖ ERC focuses on Region five
- ❖ ERC Public Lecture Series goes to Region five
- ❖ ERC's Culture Fest sports competitions see keen competition among players
- ❖ Thousands turn out for Culture Fest
- ❖ Justice Trotman recommends Reconciliation Commission at ERC Public Lecture

## **Media Advisories**

- ❖ A Media Advisory was sent out inviting members of the Media to provide coverage of the Region six Public Lecture.
- ❖ ERC two-day training of Monitors
- ❖ ERC/Public Lecture/Symposium at Aracari Resort, Region three.
- ❖ Reminder for ERC Public Lecture/Symposium at Aracari Resort, Region three.
- ❖ ERC fourth Public Lecture/Symposium on April 28, 2011 at the Guyana International Conference Centre
- ❖ ERC Region Four Culture Fest
- ❖ The Ethnic Relations Commission continues to execute its work programme

## **Letters to the Editor**

- ❖ A letter was sent to the Editor of Kaieteur News and copied to all other Media Houses refuting inaccurate statements made by Columnist Mr. Freddie Kissoon in a Published article on January 11, 2011.
- ❖ ERC Responds to Anthony Vieira's Letter.
- ❖ Mr. Corbin does not have any role in naming the Chairman of the ERC
- ❖ Kissoon should publish his efforts to promote ethnic harmony and security

## **Messages**

- ❖ Message on the occasion of the 'International Year of People of African Descent'.
- ❖ ERC Republic Day Message
- ❖ Republic Day greetings during Flag Raising Ceremony Broadcast on NCN.

## **Features / Article**

- ❖ Laws prohibiting any person or political party from causing racial or ethnic violence or hatred – A lecture by Attorney-at Law Charles Fung-A-Fatt.

## **ERC and You Television Programme**

Three (3) "ERC and You" television programmes were held. The programmes were broadcasted on the National Communications Network at 20:00 hours on the following date:

- ❖ 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2011
- ❖ 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2011
- ❖ 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2011

## 7. BERBICE EXPO

The Ethnic Relations Commission, Public Education and Awareness Unit participated at the Berbice Expo 2011 which was hosted during the period July 22, 2011 – July 25, 2011. This trade fair was held at the Albion Sports Complex Ground, Albion, Corentyne, Berbice.

A number of interactive and informative activities were executed by the department as part of its Public Education and awareness responsibilities. The activities were:

1. **Distribution of Information Materials** – Informational materials such as “ERC What You Need to Know” which outlines the formation, work and functions of the Commission and fact sheets produced by the ERC were distributed. An approximate 1500 each of these materials were distributed.
2. **Peace Pledge** - Visitors to the booth were also given the opportunity to sign a Peace Pledge if they agreed. An average of approximately 300 persons signed the pledge.
3. **Slogan Slips** – These slips were given to persons who visited the booth to formulate and write a peace slogan to be used in future ERC messages.
4. **Quiz** - The quiz entailed questions formulated on the formation, work and functions of the ERC. This allowed for interaction with persons visiting the booth by testing how much they know about the ERC and an opportunity to educate them on what they were not familiar with. For the persons who answered correctly, they were given a book marker imprinted with peace messages.
5. **Musical CDs** – 300 CDs were prepared and distributed as tokens for persons who responded correctly to the quiz questions on the formation, work and functions of the ERC and those persons who took extra time to interact in the booth.
6. **A Map of Guyana mounted in the booth with the statement “In one word, describe the kind of Guyana you desire” written at the top** - This allowed visitors to the booth to write on that map using a marker the word they can use to describe the kind of Guyana they desire. It was averaged that approximately 1000 persons expressed their desire.

## LEGAL AND INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

Forty (40) complaints were brought forward from the year 2010 to 2011. The complaints were from the years 2006 to 2010 and dealt with during 2011 and subsequently closed.

### *Matters were closed by:-*

1. Not under ERC's mandate.
2. Complainant requesting no further action.
3. By referrals to Government Ministries, Agencies and State Co-operations for attention.
4. Alternative Dispute Resolution by the Commission.
5. On Advise by the Legal Consultant.

### **Complaints received for 2011**

Forty-five (45) complaints were received for 2011, thus giving a total of eighty-five (85) complaints that the Unit had to work with during the year.

The Unit successfully closed sixty-six (66) complaints for 2011 belonging to the years 2006-2010, leaving a remainder of nineteen (19) complaints; five (5) belonging to the year 2010 and fourteen (14) for 2011.

No.	Description	Number of Complaints
1.	Brought forward from 2010	40
2.	Complaints received for year 01-01-2011 to 31-12-2011	45
3.	<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>
4.	Complaints closed for 01-01-2011 to 31-12-2011	66
5.	Complaints on hand to carry forward to 2012	<b>19</b>

### **Matters that engaged the Commission**

During the year 2011 the Commission engaged the under mentioned complaints. Some were resolved and files subsequently closed. They were: -

<u><b>Respondent</b></u>	<u><b>Claimant</b></u>
a) Demerara River Speed Boat Association	Mr. Steve Narine
b) Air Services Ogle	Office of the President
c) University of Guyana	Office of the President
d) Tacuma Ogunseye	Ethnic Relation Commission
e) Freedom Life Ministry	Bibi Shadick
f) Guyana Revenue Authority	Reaz Khan
g) Anita Dabie (ERC employee)	Zoriena Narine



## Visits

The staff visited the under mentioned places to conduct preliminary investigations and to follow up on complaints made to the ERC.

<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Complaints</u></b>
1.	Boat House Stabroek	Steve Narine
2.	Maritime/Kingston	Steve Narine
3.	Chinese Jade Garden Restaurant, Better Hope East Coast Demerara	Roxanne Cadogan
4.	University of Guyana	Office of the President
5.	Air Services, Ogle	Office of the President
6.	Guyana Hospital Corporation	Staff of Blood Bank
7.	East Street/ Alberttown Police Station	Bibi Shadick
8.	Pike Street, Kitty and Beterverwagting, East Coast Demerara	Tacuma Ogunseye
9.	Chateau Margot and B.V Police Station	Zoriena Narine

# **COMPLAINTS MATRIX 2011**

NO.	DATE	COMPLAINANT	ADDRESS	NATURE OF COMPLAINT	ACTION TAKEN	REMARKS
<b>2006</b>						
1.	27-02-06	Rita Roopnarine	Block 19 Line Path "D" Lot 433, Corriverton, Corentyne, Berbice	She complained that her son Kaleshwar Roopnarine, age 22 years was killed on March 6, 2005 on the No. 19 Highway. He was thrown out of the car and no action was taken. She alleged racial discrimination.	Her complaint falls outside the Commission's mandate. It was sent to the Police Complaints Authority for attention and response. Information received from the Police Complaints Authority that the Police were not replying to the matter.	A reply was received stating that the Authority is still awaiting a response from the Police. No response to date. In view of the lengthy period. There has been no response for four (4) years. Despite reminders sent and follow-ups done. Matter closed in 2011.

2007						
2.	18-10-07	Rudolph Adams	Lot 81 Mocha Village, E.B.D	Complained of discrimination and Dismissal from the Guyana Forestry Commission.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter investigated and report submitted.	A round table discussion was held with ERC and the Forestry Commission. The file was sent to Legal Officer on 09-12-08 for advice. Decision was made to have the matter closed, hence this was done. Closed 2011.
3.	27-11-07	Dwarka Nauth	Lot 37 Bushby Dam, Craig EBD.	He complained against Woman Police Constable Melville who is attached to Grove Police Station that' she takes \$5000 to settle matters when the Policing Group of Craig/ Garden of Eden arrests Indo-Guyanese and take them to the Station; she would also use remarks such as 'when all u fight, I don't have a problem because I will be richer'.	This complaint was sent to the Police Complaints Authority for action to be taken.	Further information from Dwarka Nauth was forwarded to the Commissioner of Police as requested. In view of no response and the length of time the complaint was closed in 2011.

2009						
4.	22-10-09	Godfrey Bess	Clay Brick road, Canal No. 2 West Bank Demerara	Complained of discrimination by the Cabinet and the Government of Guyana.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter was under Investigation and it was further reviewed; found that it was not within the purview of the mandate of the ERC. He was written accordingly.	Hence it was closed in 2011.
5.	25-11-09	Godfrey Bess	Lot 160 Crane New Housing Scheme, West Coast Demerara	Complained against Klien/Pouderoyen NDC and Lands and Surveys Commission. He claims that he is being discriminated against.	Complaint acknowledged. Investigated. Matter further reviewed; found that it was not within the purview of the mandate of the ERC. He was written accordingly.	Closed 2011
6.	27-01-09	Veronica Bissessar	Parika, East Bank Essequibo	Complaint against the NDC Chairman at Parika.	Investigations done. Matter is presently in Court. Complainant said that the Court is still addressing her matter and requests no further action by the ERC.	Closed 2011
7.	31-07-09	Bretnol Brummell	Lot 123, 1 Mile Extension, Wismar.	Mr. Brummell complained that there are no roads at 1 Mile, Extension. The area is Sandy and uncomfortable.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under investigation. He failed to comply with ERC's request in providing added information. He was written accordingly.	Matter closed 2011

8.	03-08-09	Orin Gordon	Lot 167 Noitgedasckt, Linden.	His community needs Economic empowerment and infrastructure works to be done at Linden. Contracts were not structured to ensure residents benefited. Labour force not from Linden 5% billion worth of contracts awarded less than 1% Lindeners were being employed.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under investigation but he failed to comply with request by ERC for further information. Hence a closure.	Matter closed 2011.
9.	31-07-09	Lilian Kaiser	Coomacka Mines, Upper Demerara	Nursery School project was incomplete. Teachers not getting out of town allowances. No portable water.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under Investigation but she failed to comply with request by ERC for further information. She was written accordingly.	Matter closed 2011
10.	15-07-09	Chetram Kishun	176 'A' Rosignol Village, West Coast Berbice.	Complained of racial persecution by his neighbours.	Investigations completed. Report submitted. Civil action was brought by the Kishun's in Court against their neighbours. They are presently overseas. Parties migrated. No further information received. Hence a decision was made to close the complaint.	Matter closed 2011

11.	31-07-09	Donald Pierre	Aroima Mining Company, Ladensville Upper Berbice River.	Mr. Pierre complained that since the Russians took over the Aroima Company there is no access to television. The dish at Kwakwani was not providing television coverage for those residents.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under Investigation. Mr. Pierre failed to submit further information. Hence a closure. He was written.	Closed 2011
12.	23-10-09	Kurshid Sattaur	Lot 357 Lamaha and East Street, Georgetown	Mr. Sattaur complained that Mr. Deon Adams host of the television programme "Walter Rodney Groundings" used defamatory and racially comments against him while hosting the programme on 11-10-09.	Complained acknowledged. Investigation is ongoing.	Pending Commission's decision.
13.	28-10-09	JagdipSingh	Lot 12 Zeeburg North	Mr. Singh claimed that the Tuschen/Uitvlugt Neighbourhood Democratic Council Chairman, Mr. A.P. Mohammed was granting developmental contracts to his friends and family (nepotism).	Complaint acknowledged. Investigation was ongoing but he requested no further action in 2011.	Closed 2011
14.	03-08-09	Roxanne Smith	Lot 225 1 Mile, Wismar	There was a number of persons in that Community without Birth Certificates (Names provided)	Complaint acknowledged. Investigated. She failed to produce further information to the ERC. When contacted, requested no further action.	Closed 2011

15.	28-10-09	Julian Wessels	Lot 9 Ocean Gardens, Meeten-Meer-Zorg, West Coast Demerara	Mr. Wessels, claimed that he was religiously discriminated against when Tuschen/Uitvlugt (NDC) Chairman Mr. A.P. Mohammed et al., for constructing an additional living space to his home, to be utilized as a Church.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter was investigated. Report submitted. Decision was taken to close the matter as it did not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011
16.	30-11-09	Noah Yahshuarun	91 Side Line Dam, Buxton, East Coast Demerara	Complained that the REO, Region # 4 was discriminating against his organization in giving the finances approved by the Regional Chairman Region #4 for the African Emancipation Celebrations.	Complaint acknowledged. Was investigated. REO was interdicted, hence further investigations were to be carried out. Reviewed but no further information received. Hence it was put away.	Closed 2011
17.	31-07-09	Wendy Yaw	Coomacka Mines, Upper Demerara River.	Residents in Coomacka Mines are being marginalized. Ministry of Education has no interest in their area. No school uniform vouchers. Discrimination on the grounds of Political Affiliation. Lack of jobs in Coomacka Mines. The bus for the area was being misused. No accountability.	Complaint acknowledged. Under Investigation. Failed to comply to request for further information from ERC to proceed with its investigation. She was written accordingly.	Matter closed 2011



18.	07-01-10	Guyana Bauxite & General Workers Union- Carlton Sinclair.	Lot 262 Bulletwood Street, Mc Kenzie, Linden	Mr. Carlton Sinclair- President of the Aroaima/ Kwakwani Branch, of The GB&GWU complained against RUSAL, Minister of Labour & the Government of Guyana of discrimination to the Bauxite workers.	Complaint acknowledged and it was engaged by the Commission. Was put on hold	Put away 2011
19.	24-01-10	Perry Birbal	Lot 9 Melville, Wakenaam, Essequibo Island.	Complained of discrimination to his son by the Wakenaam Transport & Harbours Department.	Complaint acknowledged. No discrimination was found. Investigations closed. He was written accordingly on the matter.	Closed 2011
20.	28-05-10	Gonsham Singh	Lot 67 La Retraite, West Bank Demerara.	Complained of discrimination by the Wales Sugar Estate.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter was sent to the Sugar Industry for a response. Reply received. No discrimination found. He was informed.	Closed 2011
21.	17-06-10	Joseph Cummings	Lot 22 Hague Jib, West Coast Demerara.	Complained of discrimination against his Supervisor.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter was referred to Kisson's Group of Companies for a response. Response received. No discrimination found. He was written.	Matter closed 2011
22.	06-07-10	Balwant Persaud	Lot 57, Upper Robb Street, Bourda, Georgetown.	Complaint of discrimination against him by the DPP.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter under investigation.	Pending

23.	13-07-10	Francis Alphonso	St. Edwards Mission, Mazaruni River.	Complained of discrimination against the Guyana Elections Commission.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter referred to GECOM. Response received. Mr. Alphonso was assisted. Hence he was written accordingly.	Closed 2011
24.	14-07-10	Calvin Lloyd Sancho	Lot 705 # 28 Village, WCB	Complained of discrimination against the Mahaicony Rice Mill.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter referred to the Manager, Mahaicony Rice Mill for a response.	Pending
25.	19-07-10	Samantha Moonsar Khan	Lot 36 Garnette Street, Cambellville, Georgetown.	Complained of discrimination by Mrs. Gillian Dewar.	Complaint acknowledged. Investigation was done. She requested no further action.	Closed 2011
26.	16-08-10	Ralph Lewis Peters	Lot 6-7 Water Street, Kingston, Georgetown.	Complained of discrimination against the Proprietor of Nigel's Supermarket.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter investigated. Complaint denied. No evidence received. Does not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011

27.	19-08-10	Densbury Frantzen	Lot 293 Ithaca Village, WCB	Complained of racial discrimination against the Ministry of Agriculture claiming that they only visit the Indian Communities and not the African Communities.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter was under investigation when he requested no further action.	Closed 2011
28.	24-08-10	Moonadai Salik	Lot G 21, Bath Settlement, WCB	Complained of racial discrimination against Senior Staff of the Fort Wellington Hospital.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under investigation. No further information received, she has not been complying. Hence a closure.	Closed 2011
29.	27-08-10	William Pyle	Lot 5 Paradise Village, ECD	Complained of discrimination against Ms. Sita Ramlall, Registrar at the Supreme Court of Judicature.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under investigation. No evidence forthcoming. Matter was dealt with by the Court.	Closed 2011
30.	01-09-10	Wayne Robinson	Lot 52 Lima Sands, Essequibo Coast.	Complained of discrimination against the Department of Education, Region # 4.	Complaint acknowledged. Referred to the Teaching Service Commission for a response. Response received.	Pending decision by Commission.
31.	06-09-10	Hubert Winfield	Lot 6 'A' Belladrum Village, WCB.	Complained of discrimination against RK's Security Service.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under investigation, when he requested no further action.	Closed 2011

32.	02-09-10	Murshid Habeeb Yusuf	Lot 1 Lombard Street, Georgetown.	Complained of Religious Literature (booklets), that is discriminating to the Muslim Community that Pastor Noel Shrivnauth was distributing.	Complaint acknowledged. Round Table Meeting was held and another is scheduled.	Pending decision by Commission.
33.	14-09-10	Mohamed Sadik	Lot 1130 Parika, East Bank Essequibo.	Complained of noise nuisance against the Pastor of the Parika Wesleyan Church.	Complaint acknowledged. Round table meeting was held. Another meeting was scheduled to be held but Sadik is presently in Trinidad and has not been complying with the ERC.	Closed 2011
34.	21-10-10	Pamela Bassoo	111 Miles Mahdia, Region # 8.	Complained of not receiving wages for work done for NCERD on a Literacy Programme.	Complaint acknowledged. Matter referred to NCERD. She was written.	Closed 2011
35.	02-11-10	Evadne Francis	111 Miles Campbleton Mahdia, Potaro, Region # 8.	Complained of discrimination against the Head Teacher of Mahdia Secondary School.	Complaint acknowledged. She later requested no further action.	Closed 2011
36.	02-11-10	Pastor Minerva Roberts	Lot 48 Suddie Housing Scheme, Essequibo Coast.	Complained of racial discrimination on the Essequibo Coast against Afro Guyanese.	Complaint acknowledged. She later requested no further action.	Closed 2011
37.	02-11-10	Dale Wharton	111 Miles Mahdia, Potaro, Region # 8	Complained of discrimination by the Government.	Complaint acknowledged. Was under investigation. Ms. Wharton was contacted seven (7) times in respect of the matter but she was not co-operative. Hence a closure.	Closed 2011

38.	12-11-10	Clement Corlette	Triumph, East Coast Demerara.	Complained of discrimination against African Residents of North Vigilance, ECD by the Ministry of Housing for not issuing them their Land Titles since 2005.	Complaint acknowledged. A copy of the said complaint received was addressed to the Ministry of Housing, hence ERC cannot pronounce on it.	Closed 2011
39.	19-11-10	Ramnarine Mahadeo	Lot 1 'A' Dunkeld, Essequibo Coast.	Complained that himself and other workers attached to the Guyana Sea Defense Board, Anna Regina are not receiving an increase in wages since 2008. He claimed that they are being discriminated against.	Investigations were done but no discrimination was found. He was written accordingly. Following-up, information received that they were paid.	Closed 2011
40.	19-11-10	Godfrey Bess	Claybrick Road # 2 Canal Polder, WBD	Complained of blatant discrimination against the Regional Democratic Office, Region # 3.	The complaint was acknowledged, investigated and reviewed. It was determined that the matter did not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011

2011						
41.	03-01-11	Dr. Luncheon M.D. Re: Air Services Ogle Aerodrome.	Office of the President	Discrimination by the Ogle Aerodrome Board of Directors.	The Management of Air Services was written requesting that the Managing Director sign the Complaint Form.	To date there has been no response, despite several reminders. Closed 2011.
42.	03-01-11	Dr. Roger Luncheon M.D.	Office of the President	Discrimination. Re: Entry into the Faculty of Law at the University of Guyana.	Investigation was done. No basis for discrimination was found.	Closed 2011
43.	12-01-11	Steve Narine	Lot 100 Goed Fortuin, West Bank Demerara.	Complained of wrongful discrimination by his superiors of the Demerara River Speed Boat Owners Association.	The matter was investigated. No discrimination was found. He was informed accordingly.	Closed 2011
44.	12-01-11	Keon Merchant	Lot 45 New Road, Vreed-En-Hoop, West Coast Demerara.	Complained of being discriminated against by Mr. Lancelot Mosley, Vice- President of the Demerara River Speed Boat Owners Association.	Matter was investigated. Report submitted. The matter is also being dealt with by Maritime.	Closed 2011
45.	12-19-11	IAC	Lot 185 Charlotte & King Streets, Lacytown, Georgetown.	Racial remarks alleged to have been used at a meeting in Berbice by the AFC Presidential Candidate.	From investigation ERC found no evidence to support the complaint. However, the ERC has pronounced that the AFC Leader was only engaging the gathering in pursuing racial harmony.	Closed 2011

46.	20-01-11	Ronald Austin	Lot 15 Orchid Street, West Ruimveldt Garden, Georgetown.	Complained of a Flier that was circulated around Georgetown which he thought was discriminating against two Party Leaders of the PNCR 1G.	The Flier was sent to the Commissioner of Police with a letter for further action.	Closed 2011
47.	28-01-11	Antonio Gonsalves	Lot 40 Public Road, Zorg, Essequibo Coast.	Complained of discrimination against the Post Mistress of Anna Regina Post Office.	Investigation was done. Report was submitted.	Pending Commission's Decision
48.	04-02-11	Marline Cato	Lot 103 Section '3', Middle Walk, Buxton, ECD.	Complained of discrimination by Minister Robeson Benn.	Matter referred to the Minister for attention.	Closed 2011
49.	08-02-11	Ramdai Joseph	Blenheim, Leguan	Complained of discrimination at the RDC Region # 3 when she requested one (1) year extension of work.	No discrimination was found in the matter. She has however indicated that she needed no further action.	Closed 2011
50.	14-02-11	Marcelle Joseph	Lot 636 Tushen New Housing Scheme, West Coast Demerara.	Complained of discrimination and dismissal from OP by Dr. Nanda Gopaul, her supervisor.	Ms. Joseph has left Guyana and is presently overseas. No investigation was done as instructed by the Commission.	Closed 2011
51.	15-02-11	Prem Persaud	Lot 38 Fourth Ave, Bartica.	Complained about the Lyrics sung by Ras Marcus at the Calypso Competition which he claims was discriminating.	Investigation was done. The complaint was found to have no merit.	Closed 2011

52.	20-02-11	Ronley Kendall	Lot 30 Philadelphia Street, New Amsterdam, Berbice.	Complained of discrimination by Ministry of Health.	Mr. Kendall was invited to attend a meeting with the ERC Chairman but he never did. After a while he called via telephone and said he was no longer interested. Hence the matter was closed.	Closed 2011
53.	22-02-11	Jacky Connelly	La Bagatelle, Leguan Island.	Complained of discrimination by the Head Teacher of the Leguan Secondary School against African students.	Jacky Connelly is not cooperating with the ERC in respect of her complaint. Hence it was recommended that it be closed.	Closed 2011
54.	07-03-11	Brian Archer	Lot 50 Duncan Street, Cambellville	Complained of discrimination by Dr. Jain of Balwant Singh Hospital.	Not under mandate. He was informed.	Closed 2011
55.	08-03-11	Sean Turton	Lot 238 'D' Filed, South Sophia.	Complaint made against Debbie Tappin, his neighbour of using racial slurs towards his wife (East Indian).	Investigation was done. Report submitted. Complaint does not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011
56.	23-03-11	Roxanne Cadogan	Lot 726 Fifth Street, Paradise Housing Scheme, ECD.	Discriminatory practices by Chinese at 'New Jade Garden Chinese Restaurant', Better Hope, East Coast Demerara.	Investigation was done. Report submitted.	Pending Commission's decision



57.	24-03-11	Holda Poonai Employee of NARI	Lot 239 Block 'CC' Mon Repos, ECD.	Discrimination by the Director of NARI and Minister of Agriculture over a vacant post at NARI.	Both places were written for an explanation. Responses received. Awaiting pronouncement of Commission.	Pending Commission's decision
58.	24-03-11	Taitree Jaobin	Lot 466 Parika, West Bank Demerara.	Ms. Jaigobin complained of discrimination to the Vergenoegen Co-operative Society by the Ministry of Agriculture of neglecting to clean the Boerasirie Creek where 90% Africans use.	Complaint referred and she was written by the Ministry of Agriculture and copied to the ERC thus informing her that action will be taken by July 15, 2011.	Closed 2011
59.	01-04-11	Donor Staff/ Blood Bank. (Seven female Africans)	Blood Bank Georgetown Hospital.	Complained of discrimination by Ms. Shameeza Mangal, The Administrator of the Blood Bank.	Investigation was done. Report submitted.	Pending Commission's decision.
60.	04-04-11	Joseph Bishop	Lot 177 Section 'B' Block 2 Pattenson, Turkeyen, ECD.	He complained against his neighbour whom he alleged used racial remarks to him and also threatened to kill him.	Investigation was done. Does not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011
61.	15-04-11	Reaz Khan	Lot 37 Croal Street & Camp Streets, Stabroek.	He was discriminated against at an Auction Sale held by GRA.	Investigation to be carried out.	Pending
62.	19-04-11	Heeralall Deonarine	Lot 5 Success Railway Embankment, ECD	Complaint of discrimination against Pastor Patrick Dolichand.	He is not co-operating with ERC. Recommended that the matter be closed.	Closed 2011

63.	19-04-11	ERC	Lot 66 Peter Rose & Anira Streets, Queenstown.	Complained against Tacuma Ogunseye of Lot 107 Pike Street, Kitty. Alleged use of racial slurs at Beterverwagting, ECD.	Matter was investigated. Report Submitted.	Closed 2011
64.	29-04-11	Bibi Shaddick	East Street, North Cummingsburg, Georgetown.	Complained of noise nuisance by a Church at a rally on East Street	Report submitted	Closed 2011
65.	11-05-11	Charles Brown	Lot 60 Pike Street, Kitty, Georgetown	Complained of racial slurs being used by a Taxi Driver at GPHC.	Was under investigation. No forthcoming evidence.	Closed 2011
66.	17-05-11	Mohamed Hussain	Kitty Masjid, Sandy Babb Street, Kitty	Complained against Brother Mohamed Yaseen of using racial slurs about Brother Odo Bess (Muslim) at the said Masjid.	Was under investigation. This matter is engaging the Courts.	Closed 2011
67.	17-05-11	Justina King	Monkey Mountain, Potaro Siparuni, Region # 8.	Complained against the Head Mistress of the School.	Complaint was copied to ERC. More information needed. However, it does not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011
68.	18-05-11	Rainsford Benfield	Lot 99 Canterbury Walk, Beterverwagting, ECD.	Complained of racial discrimination against Dr. Leslie Persaud of Camp Street.	Under Investigation	Pending
69.	24-05-11	Mohamed Hassan	Lot 42 Shieldstown, Blairmont, Berbice.	Complaint of racial discrimination made against Mohamed Ayube of Shieldstown.	Referred to Commissioner of Police. He was written.	Closed 2011

70.	24-05-11	Devon Conway	Lot 168 Hosannah Street, Rosignol Village, West Coast Berbice.	Complaint of Justice from GPL and GPF.	Matter referred to COP and GPL. Reply received from GPL. He was written accordingly.	Closed 2011
71.	25-05-11	Zoriena Narine	Lot 20 Second Street, Chateau Margot, ECD.	Complaint made against Anita Dabie of ERC.	Investigation to be carried out.	Pending
72.	25-05-11	Andrea Skellikie	Second Street, Chateau Margot, ECD.	Complaint made against BV Police and Pastor Patrick Dolichand.	There was no evidence to substantiate her complaint.	Closed 2011
73.	27-05-11	Samuel Velaidum	Lot 16 'D' Albion Front, Corentyne.	Wrong spelling of name on Pension Book.	Does not fall under ERC's mandate. He was written accordingly.	Closed 2011
74.	31-05-11	Joycelyn Augustine	Lot 13 Melanie Damishana, ECD.	Discrimination by Managers attached to Bakewell.	Complaint has no merit	Closed 2011
75.	05-06-11	Abiola Garraway	Lot 69 Bush Lot Village, Essequibo Coast.	Complaint against the NDC Region # 2, Essequibo Coast.	To be investigated.	Pending
76.	11-06-11	Ismay Dalrymple	Lovely Lass Village, WCB	Complaint against the Attorney-at-Law, Marcel Crawford, Ministry of Legal Affairs.	This complaint does not fall under ERC's mandate. To be referred.	Pending
77.	14-06-11	Toreshnauth Nakhul	Lot 69 Section 'B' Non Pariel, ECD	Discrimination by his colleagues at workplace, Guyoil Gas Station, Victoria.	A copy was received but does not fall under ERC's mandate.	Closed 2011

78.	24-06-11	Phillip N. Paul	Lot 3 Bounty Hall, Essequibo Coast.	Complaint against the NDC Chairman & Councillors NDC-Evergreen to Paradise.	Acknowledgement letter done. For signature by CEO.	Pending
79.	22-07-11	Vishee Parishram	Lot 185 Third Street, Craig, EBD	Complaint against the Police at Grove Police Station.	This matter was referred to the Commissioner of Police.	Closed 2011
80.	25-07-11	Ezra B. Mc Pherson	Lot 1 Lichfield Village, WCB	Complained of discrimination/victimization by her Supervisor Staff Nurse Brummell & Dr. Khan, Chief Medical Officer at Enmore Guysuco.	This matter does not fall under ERC's mandate. However, it can be referred to the Human Resource Manager, Guysuco and Ministry of Labour.	Matter referred Closed 2011
81.	08-11	Winston Miller	Lot 13 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Bartica	Complaint of racism by the NDC of Bartica.	To be investigated.	Pending
82.	08-11	Ayube Katadeen	Lot 101 Jumai Street, No. 78 Village, Corriverton, Berbice.	Complaint of racial remarks by a Police Constable at Springlands Police Station.	Referred to Commissioner of Police.	Closed 2011
83.	08-11	Dexter Schultz	No. 41 Village, west Coast Berbice	Complained that his area No. 41 Village needs a Playground. RDC and NDC fort Wellington was not helping.	To be Investigated.	Pending
84.	15-11-11	Rahena Kamaluddin	Lot 331 Zeelugt Old Road, East Bank Essequibo.	Complained of noise nuisance against her neighbours Nirmala & Rambaran Churuman.	Acknowledgement letter done. To be investigated and refer to the Commissioner of Police.	Pending

85.	09-11-11	Milton Ragbeer	Lot 31-32 St. John Street, Hopetown, WCB.	Complained of racial discrimination by Meena Rachpaul and Paul Rachpaul.	Acknowledgement letter done. To be investigated.	Pending
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# MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

## Executive Summary:

The Ethnic Relations Commission in keeping with its constitutional mandate to promote social peace and ethnic harmony in Guyana [ref: Constitution (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 2000], advisedly set up the Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit (MCMU) as a Project on February 1, 2011, to boost its institutional capacity to monitor the country's mainstream print and broadcast media and all other forms of media (exclusive of the Internet) used in the communication of information likely to influence voter preference in the 2011 General and Regional Elections, for conformity with the Laws of the Guyana as stated in the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*.

The MCMU at its inception was comprised of a Media Monitoring section and a Campaign/Rallies sub-unit. The Media Monitoring section formed the core of the Unit and was staffed by full time Media Monitors, whilst, the Campaign/Rallies section was staffed by part-time Field-Monitors. Both sections of the Unit were concomitantly coordinated and managed by Mr. Remington Eastman.

Basically, the Media Monitoring section was tasked with monitoring the daily and Sunday newspapers, all local television channels and the three (3) channels of the country's lone radio station. Quite differently, however, the part-time Field Monitors employed with the Campaign/Rallies section of the Unit were exclusively engaged in the monitoring of political speeches, campaign billboards, leaflets and all other forms of traditional media used by political parties/groups in the lead-up to the country's 2011 Elections.

Informatively, all Monitors employed separately in the media monitoring and the campaign/rallies sections of the Unit, underwent extensive training in the implications of the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*, insofar as these Laws relate to the promotion and maintenance of the country's social stability; and, how to objectively detect for information conveyed through the media or otherwise communicated to the general public, which contravened the aforementioned Acts. To this end, official training programs sanctioned by the ERC and facilitated by Mr. Remington Eastman, were held for Monitors on four (4) separate occasions between February, 2011 and October, 2011. The timely initiation and completion of the training programs laid the foundation for a phased implementation of monitoring activities, beginning with the Unit's initial monitoring of the print and broadcast media from February 17, 2011 and subsequent monitoring of political meetings from May 14, 2011. Altogether, for the duration of the project, four hundred and forty-six (**446**) political meetings were recorded and monitored in eight (8) of the country's ten (10) regions (ref. matrix overleaf); over four thousand (**4000**) hours of television programs and seventy-five (**75**) hours of radio programming with political content similarly recorded and monitored; and, all daily and Sunday newspapers published during the project period were also assiduously monitored in keeping with the Unit's objectives.

The organizational structure of the MCMU varied within the two sections of the Unit, reflective of the emphasis and scope of each section's Work Programme, the number of Monitors

employed within each section, and the supervisory arrangements seen as necessary for the optimal effectiveness and efficiency of each section. Based on these criteria, the Media Monitoring section comprised three (3) Media Monitors, directly supervised and managed by the Head of the MCMU; whilst, the Campaign/Rallies section comprised forty-four (44) part-time Field Monitors, spread throughout eight (8) of the country's ten (10) administrative regions. Each region was supervised by a Lead Monitor drawn from amongst the part-time Monitors domiciled in that particular region. The Lead Monitor in turn liaised with and reported to the Head of the MCMU for the coordination of meetings schedules, Monitors work assignments, and on all administrative/logistical matters.

Also, all tape-recordings of political meetings monitored by the Unit's Field Monitors accompanied by a Monitoring Form giving details of the location, time, etc of each meeting, along with the Monitor's observations of any infringements of the aforementioned Laws of the Country in the speeches delivered, literature distributed, or any other activities publicly engaged in by candidates or supporters of political parties/civil society groups, were sent to the ERC, where they were re-checked by the Unit's Media Monitors for validation.

Importantly, the training given to all the Monitors (i.e. full-time and part-time) was standardized and uniform in nature. This allowed for a seamless interchanging of roles amongst Monitors in the two sections of the Unit. For example, The Unit's Media Monitors performed part-time duties as Field Monitors; whilst, the Lead Monitors for Regions 2, 6 and 10 recorded and monitored television programs aired in their respective regions, on behalf of the Unit, because the signals/frequencies are not accessible in Georgetown.

In summary, coming out of the monitoring activities implemented by the Unit for the afore-stated period, the following was accomplished:

- The recording, monitoring and archiving of more than **4000** hours of local television programming with political content broadcast in Regions 2, 4, 6 and 10.
- The recording, monitoring and archiving of more than **75** hours of local radio programming with political content.
- The monitoring and archiving of all the daily and Sunday newspapers that were published during the period 01/02/11 – 30/11/11.
- The taping, monitoring and archiving of more than **1000** hours of speeches delivered at political meetings/rallies held in the lead-up to the country's 2011 General and Regional Elections.
- The detection of **2** instances of the violation of the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*, in programs aired on national television.
- The detection of **5** instances of the dissemination of racially inciting/divisive/inflammatory remarks contrary to the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*, in the publications of two (2) Newspapers.
- The detection of **2** instances of the propagation of racially inciting/divisive/inflammatory remarks contrary to the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*, in political meetings recorded and monitored in the lead-up to the country's 2011 elections.



**List of Meetings monitored by the Unit's Field-Monitors for the period**  
**May 14– November 27, 2011**

<i><b>Party/Group</b></i>	<i><b>Region</b></i>	<i><b># of Meetings</b></i>
<b>PPP/C</b>	1	-
	2	23
	3	49
	4	82
	5	17
	6	27
	9	6
	10	15
<b>APNU</b>	1	1
	2	9
	3	20
	4	29
	5	11
	6	11
	9	3
	10	14
<b>AFC</b>	1	-
	2	7
	3	18
	4	58
	5	8
	6	21
	9	3
	10	4
<b>ACDA</b>	4	5
<b>EBDA</b>	6	4
<b>FSG</b>	4	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>446</b>

## Objectives of the MCMU

1. To monitor the local media for adherence to the tenets of the *Racial Hostility Act and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act*.
2. To bring to the attention of the Chairman and Commissioners of the ERC, any observed infractions of the Racial Hostility Act and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, by media organizations/practitioners; or political parties/politicians, and independent candidates/civil society organizations in the pre- and post-elections periods the 2011 General and Regional Elections.
3. To evaluate complaints sent to the ERC by members of public and organizations, and offer advice accordingly on the merits/demerits of same.
4. To influence a high level of sensitivity and decorum as it relates to the discussion/propagation of ethnic/race issues during political campaigning for the 2011 elections.
5. To promote the maintenance of the highest professional and ethical standards by local media practitioners in their communication of ethnic/race issues to the general public.
6. To make a measurable input into the realization of a peaceful electoral environment, by actively influencing the minimization of incidences of dissemination of racism (in all its forms) through the media and/or in campaign rallies/meetings, in the pre- and post-elections periods the 2011 General and Regional Elections.

## Findings

**Print Media:** Over the course of the project period, five (5) articles published in the newspapers were found to be in contravention of the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*. The publications in question were:

- (1) “Sempiternal light versus eternal evil: Memories of Diwali” – Frederick Kissoon - Kaieteur News, Wednesday, October 26, 2011 [Column].
- (2) “Ambitions of Forbes Burnham and Bharrat Jagdeo” – Mona Chaitram” – Kaieteur News, Friday, March 4, 2011 [Letter].
- (3) “Will another black cultural revolution finally solve the problem?” – Vassan Ramracha – Guyana Chronicle, Friday, February 11, 2011 [Letter].
- (4) “Pointed questions on grenade incident need to be answered” – Neil Adams – Guyana Chronicle, Saturday, February 5, 2011 [Letter].
- (5) “ACDA reads ‘riot act’ for power-sharing if opposition loses” – Monday, April 18, 2011 [News Report].

**Broadcast Media:** The two (2) programs which were aired on Television and found to be in contravention of the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*, are as follows:

- (1) “Commentary” – Anthony Vieira - CNS Ch. 6, Friday, May 6, 2011.
- (2) “Commentary” – Anthony Vieira – HBTv Ch. 9, Tuesday, August 9, 2011.

**Political Meetings:** The two (2) political meetings where contraventions of the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*, were recorded in the speeches made are as follows:

(1) African Cultural Development Association (ACDA) – Tuesday, September 13, 2011, Ann’s Grove Market Square, East Coast Demerara.

(2) African Cultural Development Association (ACDA) – Saturday, April 16, 2011, Beterverwagting Village, East Coast Demerara.

All pertinent information relative to violations of the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)* which were observed in the print and broadcast media and in speeches delivered at political meetings, were duly submitted with the corroborating evidence to the ERC, for follow-up action.

But, notwithstanding the reported instances of infractions of the two *Acts* that occurred in the media and on the hustings, there were numerous other instances during the period of the elections campaigning when politicians over-indulged in the espousal of racial messages, especially when addressing audiences made up predominantly of persons from their (the politicians) own racial grouping. However, in the main, these messages were subliminal and inferential and communicated through the use of coded language such as “we”, “they” and “us”. And, even though the racial undertones implicit in the language used resonated with and was well understood by the targeted audiences, because it was inferential in nature and thus open to various interpretations based on one’s perspective, the prevalence of this observed aspect (i.e. inferential racist language) in many of the political speeches delivered on the hustings, could not be faulted by law, since they fell tantalizingly short of violating either or both the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act* or the *Racial Hostility Act*, by razor thin margins. Nonetheless, for the record, three (3) of the major political parties that contested the elections, namely, PPP/C, APNU and AFC were equally guilty of such behavior. On the contrary, the violations of the two *Acts* on two separate occasions, by the grouping ACDA, was clear and unambiguous.

## **Challenges**

Some of the major challenges that the MCMU faced in implementing its monitoring program, particularly as it related to the monitoring of political meetings were as follows:

1. An inability to attract Field Monitors in some Regions – notably 7 and 8 – and a paucity of same in others – notably 1, 2, 5 and 6.
2. The high rates of attrition in some Regions – specifically 1 and 2.
3. The episodic verbal intimidation of the Unit’s Field Monitors by candidates and supporters of the major political parties that contested the elections – PPP/C, APNU and AFC. For the most part, the bulk of such reported attacks occurred at APNU meetings, resulting in Monitors of East Indian extraction exhibiting an understandable reluctance to monitor meetings held by that party.
4. The unpredictable and frequent malfunctioning of tape-recorders in the midst of the recording of meetings by Monitors, resulting in the loss of vital information.

In spite of the above enumeration of the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the Unit's field monitoring programme, the list is by no means an exhaustive litany, since it only reflects the more serious constraints which served to inhibit the Unit's effectiveness and efficiency.

## **Conclusion**

The MCMU Project was ostensibly intended to be temporary in nature, and as stated before, was established primarily to boost the ERC's institutional capacity to document, monitor and analyze mainly two (2) forms of media content for conformity to the country's Laws as spelt out in the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*: (1) Information disseminated through local television, radio and newspapers; and, (2) the content of political speeches made at campaign rallies/meetings in the lead-up to the country's 2011 General and Regional Elections.

The Project was measurably successful in delivering on its objectives despite the many difficulties that were encountered in the implementation of the field-monitoring programme. In fact, the success of the project can be evaluated quantitatively by the number of detected violations of the country's extant Laws relating to the communication of racism in any form to the general public that came out from the print and broadcast media and in political speeches made on the hustings, in the pre-elections period, which were referred to the ERC for deliberation. Moreover, the presence of the MCMU's Field Monitors at political meetings had an inhibiting effect on those politicians who were inclined to espouse overt racism as a means to achieve political office. This observation is drawn from the many tape-recordings submitted to the MCMU by Field Monitors, where politicians were audibly heard telling audiences that they felt constrained to freely express themselves, because they knew that the ERC's Monitors were around. Some politicians faced with the dilemma of the presence of Monitors at gatherings, conveniently deferred to the use of allegorical language to communicate racially-tinged messages to audiences.

Altogether, the positive impact that the MCMU Project had on the Guyanese society as a whole, is that the project was verifiably instrumental in minimizing the advocacy of ethnically inciting/divisive rhetoric via the media and in speeches made at political meetings in the lead-up to the 2011 elections. The instances of racial extremists and politicians using the media and political meetings as means to foment ethnic tensions in the society, which inevitably transmuted into ethnic violence, are well documented hallmarks of previous elections held in Guyana. No doubt, for the just concluded 2011 General and Regional Elections, a strong correlation can be drawn between the implementation of the MCMU Project and the virtual absence of reports of any serious racially instigated elections violence in the country.

Further, the implementation of the MCMU Project by the ERC for the country's 2011 elections was a national success story from the perspective that the project clearly underscored the critical nexus between the quality of political discourses allowed to be conducted in public spaces and the maintenance of the country's political and social stability. And, going by the positives that came out from this initiative, it can be held up as a model for emulation by other countries around the world, faced with similar ethnic dynamics as Guyana.

Incidentally, for the ERC, one of the major spinoffs of the project is that it has produced a skills base of trained Monitors who can be tapped into for future monitoring projects.

Finally, this project has the potential to become institutionalized as an important facilitator of the country's nascent democratic processes of which elections is just one aspect, once the recommendations made are pursued with vigor, leading to the strengthening of the identified weak links in the project's administration and implementation.

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### PERSONNEL

#### STAFFING

The Commission's staff supported the activities during 2011 and performed at high standards when called upon. The Commission started 2011 with twenty-one (21) persons as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
✓ Finance Officer	1
✓ Public Relations Officer	1
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	1
✓ Investigative Officer	1
✓ Jnr. Investigative Officer	1
✓ WEB-LAN Technician/Programme Officer	1
✓ Programme Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Admin. Asst to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Administrative Assistant to the Chairman	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Drivers	2
✓ Office Assistant/Driver	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	1

and concluded with twenty persons as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	1
✓ Investigative Officer	1
✓ Jnr. Investigative Officer	1
✓ Programme Officers	4
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Drivers	1
✓ Office Assistant/Driver	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	1

## **Vehicles**

- Vehicle No. PJJ 7328 which was assigned to the Chairman continued to develop various mechanical problems during the year 2011. This vehicle is presently recommended for sale and replacement.
- Vehicle No. PMM 5053 worked well with minimal problems during the year.
- Vehicle No. PJJ 4100 which was assigned to the CEO also had several problems during the year and is recommended for replacement.
- Minibus No. PNN 1641 had minor issues which were dealt with at reasonable costs.
- Motor cycle No. CE 4503 continued to have minor problems but is in working condition.

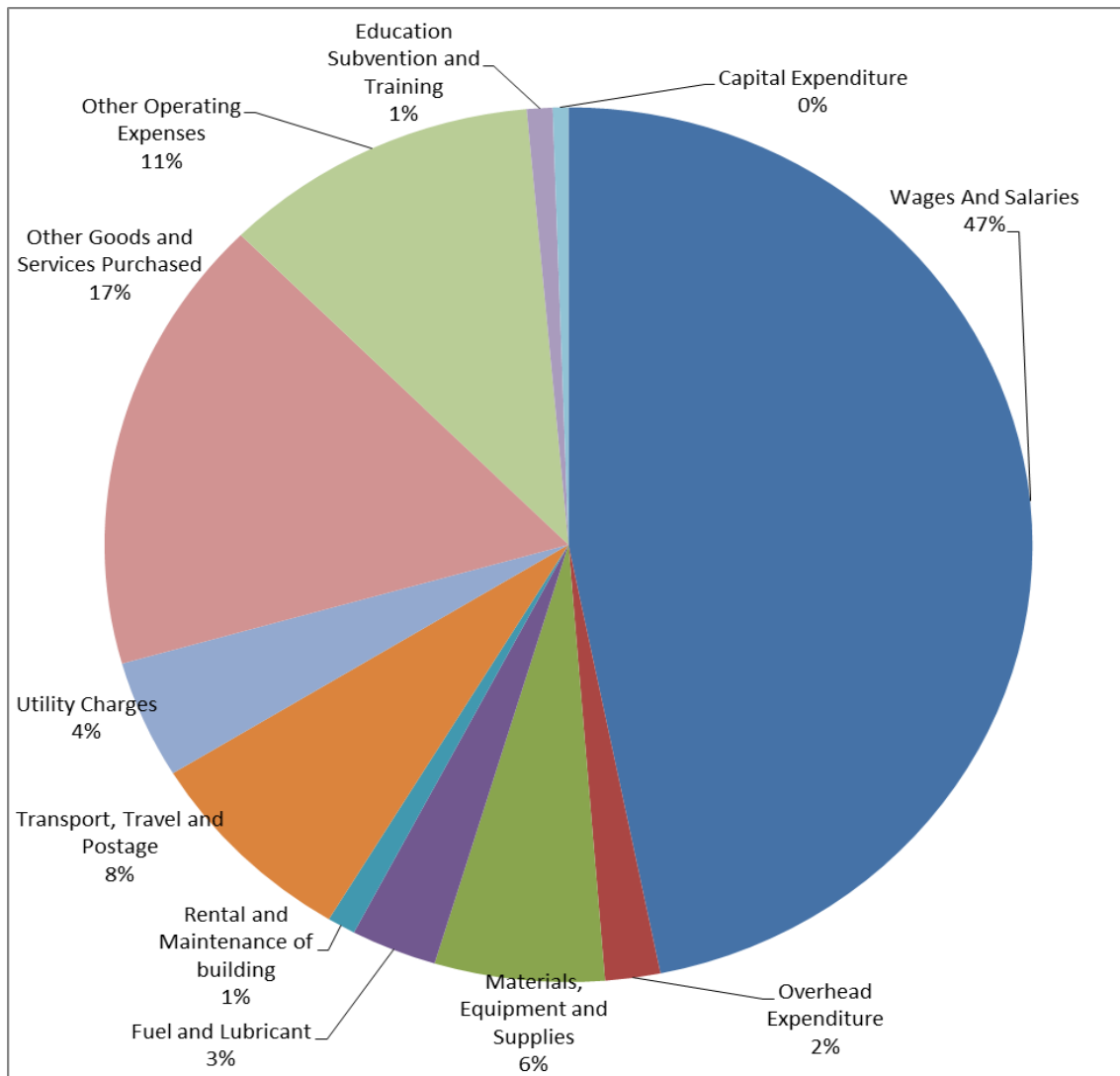
*All vehicles are in good working condition and outfitted with the necessary tools and accessories.*



## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission received the sum of ninety-three million five hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$93,550,000) for current expenditure and five hundred and ten thousand five hundred and sixty dollars (510,560) for capital expenditure for the year 2011.

A breakdown of the expenditure is as follows:



### **General Limitation**

- ❖ **Injunction** – An injunction was served to the ERC Commissioners in June 2011 restraining them from performing their functions. This adversely affected the work of the Commission to some extent since persons and organisations were questioning its legality. However, despite the challenges faced, the staff of the ERC's Secretariat was successfully able to execute various activities as outlined in its 2011 strategic plan of the Commission.

# Annual Report 2012

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2012

## Introduction

The Secretariat was forced to close its door and halt operations with effect from June 1, 2012. This was due to budgets cuts in April of the said year, in which the ERC was appropriated one (1) dollar to do its work by the combined Opposition Political Parties.

The matter was taken to the Court and it was later ruled by the Chief Justice that the money for the ERC be restored. Acting Chief Justice Ian Chang ruled that Finance Minister Dr. Ashni Singh be allowed to withdraw monies from the Consolidated Fund as it becomes necessary for the functioning of the Ethic Relations Commission (ERC) Secretariat.

The Chief Justice also ruled that the National Assembly can only approve and disapprove of the budget estimates, but not cut it. However, since the National Assembly has already approved the reduced estimates and President Donald Ramotar signed it into law, the court could not reverse that decision. Part of his ruling stated:

*“The court sees it fit to order the minister of finance to allow payment from the Consolidated Fund, such sums as may be necessary from time to time for that entity to establish and maintain a secretariat as mandated by article 212 B (Five) and to perform its constitutional duties as prescribed by article 212D until the determination of this action, or until such time as the National Assembly do fix a lump sum by way of subvention,...”.*

Hence, the staff of the Secretariat was recalled and there was a full resumption of duty on August 2, 2012.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS UNIT

### *Monthly Lecture Series*

Among the strategic priorities of the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) for the year 2012, was the continuation of its monthly Public Lectures. This was successfully realised with Lectures conducted in Regions 1, 8 and 9.

A total of *two hundred and fifty-seven (257)* persons participated in the activity and an analysis of the attendance at all the lectures revealed that *forty (40)* communities were represented and *thirty-seven (37)* organisations.

The activity formed part of the Public Education and Awareness Unit work programme for the year 2012 and was executed with the objective of sensitising the Nation on the need to maintain ethnic harmony.

Notably, participants benefited from the knowledge of expert personnel and prominent citizens who delivered vital information through the presentation of the Lectures. The information received stimulated open floor discussions which hopefully created a level of behaviour change where a culture of peace and national reconciliation can be realized.

Moreover, admission to the Lectures was free and representatives from religious, cultural, political and social organisations and all interested individuals among others were in attendance.

However, it should be noted that the careful coordinating, organising and execution of the activity was done through the compilation of a database, preparation of letters of invitation, telephone calls, arranging of transportation for participants from outlying communities and snacks for participants among others.

See the tables below:

<i><b>Regions</b></i>	<i><b>Date</b></i>	<i><b>Time</b></i>	<i><b>Venue</b></i>
1	4 <sup>th</sup> February,2012	10:15-12:55	Santa Rosa Secondary School
8	29 <sup>th</sup> March,2012	13:15-15:35	Mahdia Community Center
9	28 <sup>th</sup> February,2012	13:15-16:00	Amerindian Hostel Auditorium

<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>No. of Participants</i>	<i>No. of Communities &amp; Organizations Represented</i>
Toshao Yvonne Pearson Deputy Chairperson Indigenous Peoples' Commission (IPC).	<i>The role of Indigenous communities can play in promoting national reconciliation and ensuring ethnic security”</i>	115	23
Mr. Remington Eastman	<i>The role communities can play in creating and encouraging respect and tolerance for ethnic diversity in a plural society”</i>	72	25
Mr. Remington Eastman	<i>“Discourage and prohibit persons, institutions, political parties and associations from indulging in, advocating or promoting discrimination or discriminatory practices on the grounds of ethnicity.”</i>	70	29

### **Film Festivals**

Film Festivals became a part of the Ethnic Relations Commission work programme in 2005. The activity was executed by the Public Education and Awareness Unit as a way of educating young people in schools, youth groups and tertiary institutions on the importance of ethnic harmony through the use of films.

Unfortunately, the Commission had its own setback. Film Festivals came to a halt after February, 2012 where four (4) showings were conducted prior. It was well executed and attracted a total of three hundred and twenty-six (326) participants in **Region 9** and ninety-three (93) participants in **Region 8**. See table below:

<i>No.</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Schools / Tertiary Institutions</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No. of Participants</i>
1.	9	St. Ignatius Primary School	24 <sup>th</sup> February, 2012	62

2.	9	Arapaima Primary School	27 <sup>th</sup> February,2012	242
3.	9	Lethem Academy	27 <sup>th</sup> February, 2012	22
4.	8	Mahdia Primary School	27 <sup>th</sup> February,2012	93

### **Students' Forum**

The conceptualization of this programme was birthed out of the Ethnic Relations Commission's annual Film Festival activities. Film Festivals are aimed at educating on the formation, work and functions of the Ethnic Relations Commission and to promote harmony and good relations between persons of different ethnicities through short films. The activity is also to encourage the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and to advocate respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society.

However, Students' Forum focuses on educating young people on ways to improve ethnic relations, also to assess and analyze students' understanding, perception and experience of ethnic relations through interactive discussions.

Importantly, this activity was executed in keeping with the following functions of the ERC:

- Promote education and training programmes and research projects which provide for and encourage ethnic peace and harmony;
- Encourage and create respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society;
- Promote and encourage the acceptance and respect by all segments of the society of the social identity and cultural inheritance of all ethnic groups;
- Identify and analyze factors inhibiting the attainment of harmonious relations between ethnic groups, particularly barriers to the participation of any ethnic group in social, economic, commercial, financial, cultural and political endeavors and recommend to the National Assembly any other relevant public or private sector bodies how these factors should be overcome.

Cognizant of the fact that dealing with the subject of ethnic relations can be a challenge, more so to create behavioral change, the Public Education and Awareness Unit remains committed to working with young people to ensure that ethnic harmony is achieved to its maximum. Hence, Students' Forum.



### **Aim:**

To educate on ways to improve ethnic relations and to assess and analyze students' understanding, perception and experience of ethnic relations through discussion.

### **Target:**

Students of the fourth form in Public and Private Schools countrywide.

### **Objectives:**

- To assess students understanding, perception and experience of ethnic relations.
- To provide clarity on what is ethnic harmony and how it can be achieved.
- To analyze the level of ethnic harmony among fourth form students in Guyana.
- To educate on the formation, work and functions of the Ethnic Relations Commission.
- To sensitize on the importance of improving and maintaining ethnic harmony.
- To inform on the benefits of ethnic harmony.
- To ascertain recommendations for achieving ethnic harmony and eliminating discrimination.
- To facilitate discussions among peers on matters pertaining to ethnic relations.

### **Duration of each activity:** one hour (1hr)

Students' Forum commenced in February, 2012 and concluded in November, 2012. The programme was well executed and attracted a total of three thousand seven hundred and sixteen (3,716) students who participated in Regions 1,2,3,4, 8 & 9.

Table showing the number of Students' Forum conducted in 2012 and the number of participants at each school

No.	Region	Schools	Date	Time	No. of Participants
1	1	Santa Rosa Secondary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> February, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	105
2	9	St. Ignatius Secondary School	27 <sup>th</sup> February, 2012	13:00hrs-14:00hrs	128
3	8	Mahdia Secondary School	28 <sup>th</sup> March, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	23
4	3	L'Aventure Secondary School	15 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	123
5	3	Patentia Secondary School	15 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	148
6	3	West Demerara Secondary	16 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	102

		School			
7	3	Vreed-en-Hoop Secondary School	16 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	72
8	3	Leonora Secondary School	17 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	134
9	3	St. John's Secondary School	17 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	42
10	3	Fellowship PIC Secondary School	18 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:00-11:30hrs	47
11	3	Stewartville Secondary School	18 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	97
12	3	Zeeburg Secondary School	19 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	107
13	3	Leguan Secondary School	23 <sup>rd</sup> October, 2012	09:00hrs-10:30hrs	51
14	3	Essequibo Islands Secondary School	23 <sup>rd</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	59
15	3	Uitvlugt Secondary School	24 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:30hrs-12:00hrs	163
					<b>1145</b>
16	4	Coven Garden Secondary School	25 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	91
17	4	Friendship Secondary School	29 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	45
18	4	Diamond Secondary School	29 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	66
19	4	Soesdyke Secondary School	30 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	09:00hrs-10:00hrs	99
20	4	Dora Secondary School	30 <sup>th</sup> October, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	38
21	4	St. Cuthbert's Secondary School	31 <sup>st</sup> October, 20112	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	18
22	4	Buxton Secondary School	1 <sup>st</sup> November, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	35
23	4	Bladen Hall Secondary School	1 <sup>st</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	205
24	4	Annandale Secondary School	2 <sup>nd</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	206
25	4	Golden Grove Secondary School	5 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	10:00hrs-11:30hrs	99
26	4	President's College	5 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	102
27	4	Hope Secondary School	6 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	09:00hrs-10:30hrs	154
28	4	Lancaster Secondary School	6 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	10:30hrs-12:00hrs	55
29	4	Ann's Grove Secondary School	6 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	80
30	4	Plaisance Secondary School	7 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	10:30hrs-11:30hrs	87

31	4	Betervewagting Secondary School	7 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	127
32	4	Cummings Lodge Secondary School	8 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	10:30hrs-11:30hrs	106
					<b>1613</b>
33	2	Aurora Secondary School	19 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	09:00hrs-10:30hrs	67
34	2	Johanna Cecilia Secondary School	19 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	46
35	2	Charity Secondary School	20 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	09:00hrs-10:30hrs	67
36	2	Wakapoa Secondary School	20 <sup>th</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	26
37	2	Abrams Zuil Secondary School	21 <sup>st</sup> November, 2012	08:30hrs-10:30hrs	107
38	2	Cotton Field Secondary School	21 <sup>st</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	127
39	2	8 <sup>th</sup> of May Secondary School	22 <sup>nd</sup> November, 2012	09:00hrs-10:00hrs	42
40	2	Anna Regina Secondary School	22 <sup>nd</sup> November, 2012	13:00hrs-14:30hrs	220
					<b>702</b>
		<b>GENERAL TOTAL</b>			<b>3716</b>

### General results sheet for Students Forum

**Total number of Students: 3716**

Questions	Responses/options	Total number of Respondents
Which of the following best describes your opinion on the level of racial/ethnic harmony that you feel currently exists in your community/Guyana?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent/ very good</li> <li>• Good</li> <li>• Sometimes good/sometimes bad</li> <li>• Bad</li> <li>• Very bad</li> </ul>	402 359 2537 119 219
From your observations/experience, do you feel that in your community/ Guyana people are being discriminated against because of their race/ ethnicity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>	3557 159
If your answer to the above is <b>Yes</b> , how widespread do you perceive or think	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationally (or countrywide)</li> <li>• At the community level</li> </ul>	2837 407

racial/ethnic discrimination exists in your community/ Guyana. <b>(Choose the box which best summarizes or is closest to your answer).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>only</li> <li>At the personal level only</li> </ul>	313
Were you ever a victim of racial/ethnic discrimination?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> </ul>	2604 1112
Do you feel (or are of the view) that your race/ethnicity is superior (or better) than that of another person of a different race/ethnicity? <b>(Choose the box that fits or is the closest to your answer).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the time</li> <li>Most times</li> <li>Not sure</li> <li>Sometimes</li> <li>Never</li> </ul>	232 203 775 1202 1304
Do you feel (or are of the view) that your race/ethnicity is inferior (or worse) than that of another person of a different race/ ethnicity? <b>(Choose the box that fits or is the closest to your answer).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the time</li> <li>Most times</li> <li>Not sure</li> <li>Sometimes</li> <li>Never</li> </ul>	100 143 667 765 2041
Do you think persons of another ethnic group should be treated differently?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> </ul>	211 3505
Do you feel that persons who practice racial/ethnic discrimination against others should be charged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> </ul>	3176 540
Do you think there is a higher level of racism /Ethnic Discrimination in Guyana as compared to one year ago?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> </ul>	2597 1119
Based on your observation/s of race/ethnic relations in Guyana today, list some things that you would like to see the ERC do to promote racial/ethnic harmony in your community/Guyana over the next five (5) years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERC should provide counseling for persons affected by ethnic discrimination.</li> <li>Educate individuals on ways to prevent conflicts through workshops, distribution of brochures and role plays etc.</li> <li>Place a branch of ERC in each Administrative Regions of Guyana. So that</li> </ul>	Most common responses received from participants.

	<p>more citizens can be educated on the importance of ethnic harmony also for citizens to make complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make regular visits to more places so as to educate citizens.</li> <li>• Advertisements should be put in place to educate the public on ethnic discrimination and its consequences.</li> </ul>	
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## INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

In respect of dealing with Complaints, the Unit had some challenges for the years 2011 and 2012 that seriously affected its planned work programmes. Complaints were dealt with, within the first four (4) months of 2011.

On May 23, 2011 an Injunction was filed in Court by the Leader of the People National Congress Reform I-G (PNC) on the Legality of the Commission against the Chairman and two (2) Commissioners of the ERC. This matter was subsequently resolved on 2nd November, 2011. However, there were no pronouncements on matters because of not having the full complement of Commissioners. This resulted in nineteen (19) complaints being carried forward to year 2012.

During the year 2012, the situation remained the same; the work of the ERC was stymied. The Unit only received two (2) complaints on 08-02-2012 and 03-05-2012 respectively, thus the total of complaints was twenty-one (21). Two (2) complaints (unofficial) were made to the Unit during the period August to December 2012. These were dealt with immediately and because of the nature, advise was given to the complainants and the matters were resolved.

No complaints were closed for 2012. Follow- ups were done on some complaints but they were not resolved.

The table represents the number of active complaints:

NO.	Description	# of Complaints
1.	Complaints Brought Forward From 2011	19
2.	Complaints received for Year 01-01-2011 to 31-12-2012	2
3.	Total	21
4.	Complaints closed for 2012	Nil
5.	Complaints to be carried forward to 2013 (2009-1; 2010-4; 2011-14 and 2012-2)	21

### **Visits:-**

No visits were done by the Unit as was planned.

# MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

## Overview:

The ERC's Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit (MCMU) was established on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2011.

Operationally, the Unit is comprised collectively of two (2) sections – a media monitoring section and a campaign/rallies section. The media monitoring section of the Unit operates on a permanent basis, while the campaign/rallies section is temporal and is activated seasonally to coincide with the country's electoral cycles – General and Regional Elections (every five years) and Local Government Elections (bi-annually).

The Unit was made operational primarily to boost the ERC's institutional capacity to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to mitigate/prevent the spread of ethnic intolerance/racism in all its forms. To this end, the role of the MCMU is to scrutinize local media content (disseminated through television, radio and newspaper) and the content of political speeches made at campaign rallies/meetings during the pre and post-elections periods in this country, for infractions of the *Racial Hostility Act (1964)* and *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001)*, insofar as they relate to the communication of racist messages in the media to the general public, or the public advocacy of ethnic strife/discrimination as a platform for achieving political office, by any political party/group or candidate contesting elections.

Moreover, the setting up of the Unit fortuitously positioned the ERC to create and maintain its own archive of media information which can be used for its own research purposes, and which can also be easily accessed for reference, if and whenever complaints or allegations of ethnic discrimination/racism are received from concerned members of the public, aggrieved individuals or any organization which perceives that they have been ethnically/racially profiled in a negative way through the media.

Also, consequent upon the establishment of the MCMU in February, 2011, the appointed Head of the MCMU was contractually tasked with providing analytical assessments of the merits/demerits of topically contentious ethnic issues put before the Commission for deliberations and decisions.

As previously mentioned, the Unit is guided in its monitoring activities by the **Law** as spelt out in the *Racial Hostility Act (1964)* and the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001)*. And being so guided by the law, the Unit's mandate as set out by the Commission is to pursue and achieve the following objectives:

## Objectives of the MCMU:

1. To monitor the local media for adherence to the tenets of the Racial Hostility Act 1964 and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001).
2. To bring to the attention of the Chairman and Commissioners of the ERC, any observed infractions of the Racial Hostility Act (1964) and Representation of the People



(Amendment) Act (2001), by the print and broadcast media or by any citizen using a public space to influence public opinion.

3. To evaluate complaints sent to the ERC by members of public and organizations, and offer advice accordingly on the merits/demerits of same.
4. To influence a high level of sensitivity and decorum as it relates to the discussion/propagation of ethnic/race issues in public spaces.
5. To promote the maintenance of the highest professional and ethical standards by local media practitioners in their communication of ethnic/race issues to the general public.
6. To make a measurable input into the realization of a peaceful social environment, by actively contributing to the minimization of incidences of dissemination of racism (in all its forms) through the media and/or in campaign rallies/meetings during elections periods.

### **MCMU activities during 2012**

At the beginning of this year, the campaign/rallies section of the Unit was de-activated consequent upon the wrapping-up of the 2011 elections period in the country. However, the media monitoring section continued with its daily monitoring of the media - in the forms of television and newspaper - for compliance with the aforementioned *Laws of Guyana* pertaining to the purveying of ethnic/racial incitement. But, even more informatively, for the period under review, the MCMU engaged in the following activities:

- As of **December 15, 2012**, the MCMU had recorded approximately **5000** hours of television programming and monitored and stored in excess of **2000** cumulative hours of programming from the following stations: CNS Ch.6, WHRM Ch. 7, HBTv Ch. 9, NCN Ch. 11, TVG Ch. 28, MTV Ch. 65, HGTV Ch. 67 and NTN Ch. 69.
- From the print media, approximately 9 ½ months of daily and Sunday newspapers were monitored – namely, Guyana Chronicle, Stabroek News, Kaieteur News, Guyana Times.
- In a coordinated effort aimed at fostering inter-departmental synergies for the achievement of the ERC's work objectives, while at the same time broadening the skills/knowledge base of staff members in the operations of the various departments of the organization, Ms. Keisha Smith, Media Monitor, attached to the Unit, officially joined with staff from the Public Education and Awareness Department (PEAD) to execute community outreaches in regions 1 and 8, during the months of February and March, 2012, respectively. These exercises were implemented in keeping with that department's work-programme. In like manner, Head of the MCMU, Mr. Remington Eastman, gave guest lectures on behalf of the PEAD to audiences in regions 9 and 8, during the months of February and March, 2012, respectively.

### **Findings:**

The Unit's monitoring of the country's four (4) newspapers unearthed one extreme case of propagation of racism. This observation was made in the Friday, March 9, 2012 edition of the Guyana Chronicle newspaper, in a letter captioned "**Has Maxwell lost his mind in equating Green with Ramkarran**" written by Sultan Mohamed.

The offending parts of the letter were subsequently brought to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer of the ERC for appropriate follow-up action.

Outside of this observation - though it is not within the remit of the Unit to pronounce upon - the Unit took note of the strident political narratives assumedly reflective of the political temperature in the country which characterized the competitive exchanges of opinions between and amongst letter-writers to the Guyana Chronicle, Kaieteur News and Stabroek News newspapers, and which, on many occasions, came very close to violating the country's race laws.

On the contrary, programmes aired through the broadcast media – that is, television – were free of any attempted or actual incidences of ethnic/racist extremism in any of the various genres of programming monitored by the Unit's media monitors.

### **Limitations/Challenges:**

Some of the challenges faced by the Unit during this year included but were not limited to the following:

- Enforced leave – For two (2) months of this year (June – July, 2012) the Unit was unable to carry out any monitoring activities due to the fact that the ERC was forced to close its doors consequent upon the budget cuts executed by the country's parliamentary opposition parties. Incidentally, during the Unit's enforced hiatus, an **alleged** racist editorial was printed in the Guyana Chronicle newspaper which caused a public outcry. However, because of the extant circumstance at the time, the edition of the newspaper in which the editorial appeared is unfortunately not part of the ERC's media archive.
- Blackouts – The constant bugbear of an irregular supply of electrical current from the national grid affected the smooth functioning of the department in a very big way. Sometimes a whole night's programming was lost to the blackout syndrome - inclusive of critical programmes which, because of their unpredictable content, always warrant careful reviews.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that even though the ERC has a back-up generator, because of human frailties and occasional technical problems associated with the operation of the machine, it has proven not to be a dependable or reliable source of alternative energy.

- Signal strength – For the period under review, the Unit frequently suffered loss of television programmes due to fluctuations in the signals entering its television sets. This problem is traceable to the antennae splitting system currently in use by the Unit. Ideally, the cable carrying the signals from the external antennae to the sets should go into one splitter which, in turn, should service two (maximum three) television sets to ensure clear continuous signal strength. In contrast, what we have in operation at the Unit is the incoming antennae cable being split six (6) ways to service six television sets. This being

the situation, the problem can easily be resolved if another antennae system is set up to complement the existing configuration.

- Equipment failure – The routine use of VCRs by the Unit to record television programmes resulted in the frequent malfunctioning of the machines. This is because the mechanical system of the device is not designed to accommodate the kind of (unavoidable) heavy workload of daily recordings done by the Unit. Inevitably, over the past year, the Unit's stock of replacement VCRs has dwindled considerably due to many of the devices being rendered unserviceable from "overwork".

The permanent solution to the problem of equipment (VCR) failures within the Unit is to make a complete changeover from the current use of analog system of tape recordings to a digitized system of recordings. If consideration is given to this proposal, it would entail a major capital investment. However, the immediate and long-term benefits of such a move would be greater efficiency, lower maintenance costs of equipment and better quality video recordings (on DVDs). Additionally, the proposal to change over to a digital operating system is tied to an observation which, even though it may not be considered an immediate problem, will soon be in due course, and this has to do with storage of the VHS cassettes.

- Storage – During the year, the office of the former Chairman of the ERC was/is temporarily being used to store the recorded VHS tapes generated by the Unit. At some time in the very near future consideration will have to be given to constructing a permanent air-conditioned enclosure to store these tapes, which would require a considerable financial outlay. Alternatively, if perchance the proposal to digitize the Unit's operations is pursued, it will free up storage space within the Unit that can comfortably accommodate the tapes temporarily residing in the former chairman's office, while at the same time providing adequate space for the storage of DVDs and CDs.

### **Conclusion:**

In spite of the many challenges – technical and otherwise – faced by the Unit over the course of this year, it was still able to accomplish a fair amount of credible work with the limited amount of material resources it had at its disposal.

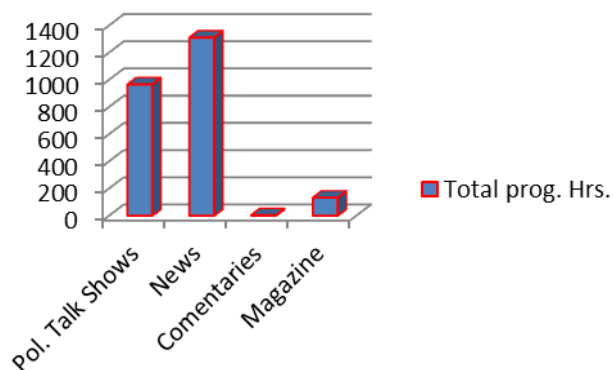
Furthermore, the MCMU in keeping with its mandate to scrutinize the print and broadcast media for adherence to the *Racial Hostility Act (1964)* and the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001)* has, in the process, compiled a voluminous storehouse of media files that can be referenced by the ERC for critical information if and whenever the need arises or accessed by external stakeholders for informational and research purposes– as is often done by the Guyana Information Agency (GINA) and Office of the President (OP).

Finally, in the coming year (2013), the work of the Unit will assume even greater importance if the country either heads into general or local government elections. Whatever the scenario, the Unit stands ready and capable of contributing meaningfully to the ERC's mandate to maintain social peace and to promote ethnic/racial harmony between and amongst all the country's ethnic/racial groupings.

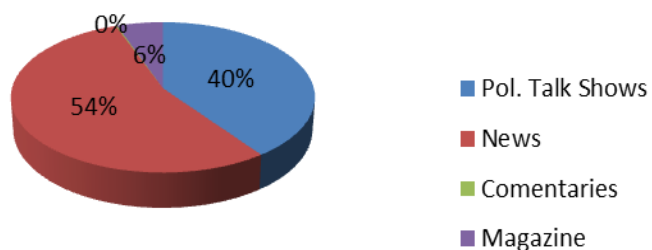
### Hours of Programming by Television Stations (2012)

<i>Types of Programming</i>					
Name of TV Station	Pol. Talk Shows	News	Commentaries	Magazine	Cum. total of Prog. Hrs.
	Amt. of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs	Amt of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs.	
CNS Ch. 6	190	Nil	4	Nil	<b>194</b>
WRHM Ch. 7	57	95	Nil	Nil	<b>152</b>
HBTv Ch. 9	282	114	Nil	Nil	<b>396</b>
NCN Ch. 11	228	266	Nil	133	<b>627</b>
TVG Ch. 28	114	532	Nil	Nil	<b>646</b>
MTV Ch. 65	38	304	Nil	Nil	<b>342</b>
HGP Ch. 67	19	Nil	Nil	Nil	<b>19</b>
NTN Ch. 69	38	Nil	Nil	Nil	<b>38</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>1311</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>2,414</b>

#### Total Programme Hours By All Television Stations



#### % of Total Programme Hours



N B: The above Table and Charts provide statistical information for hours of television programmes recorded, monitored and stored by the MCMU during 2012.

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### PERSONNEL

#### **STAFFING**

The Commission started the year 2012 with twenty-three (23) staff members as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Driver	1
✓ Office Assistant/Driver	1
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
✓ Programme Officers	4
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	1
✓ Investigative Officer	1
✓ Jnr. Investigative Officer	1
✓ Head, Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit	1
✓ Media Monitors	3

and ended the year with twenty-one (21) staff as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Office Assistant/Driver	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	1
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
✓ Programme Officers	3
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	1
✓ Investigative Officer	1
✓ Jnr. Investigative Officer	1
✓ Head, Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit	1
✓ Media Monitors	2

**EMPLOYMENT:**

*Ms. Allison Rose* - Cleaner/Maid  
With effect from January 2012

**VOLUNTARY TERMINATION:**

*Mr. Oliver John* - Programme Officer  
With immediate effect from February 2012  
*Ms. Lilloutie Ramdeo* - Media Monitor  
With immediate effect from August 4, 2012

**TERMINATION:**

*Mr. Rommel Khan* - Driver  
With immediate effect from August 23, 2012

**VACANT POSITIONS:**

➤ Administrative Officer	1
➤ Dispute Resolution Officer	1
➤ Public Relations Officer	1
➤ Finance Officer	1
➤ Investigative Officer	1
➤ Driver	2

**STAFF ATTENDANCE**

After being on a hiatus for a two (2) month period, the staffs' attendance for the remainder of the year was just about average as shown on attached report.

**STAFF PERFORMANCE**

For the year, the staffs' performances could have been better but were at acceptable standards. There was much discord among the staff after resuming duty on August 2 which contributed to barely average performances by some staff members.

## **OPERATIONS**

### ***STAFF COMFORT***

Almost all the necessary equipment and furniture were in place for the staff's comfort. However, there is need for at least two (2) monitors and three (3) back-up batteries in order to fully satisfy the requirements in some departments. All of the air condition units within the offices are in good working condition. Curtains were purchased and hung in the entire Commission as a result of the previous curtains falling to pieces when soaked to be washed.

### **STAFF UNIFORMS**

All staff were outfitted in uniforms. The female staff were issued five (5) sets of materials to sew uniforms. The male staff were issued with four (4) sets of uniforms.

### **EQUIPMENT**

The Commission started the year with eleven (11) computers located in the following areas:

• Chairman's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	2
• Investigation Department	2
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

During the year

- A monitor from Investigation Unit was relocated to the Public Education & Awareness Unit
- The CPU that was on loan to former Chairman, Bishop Edghill was returned.
- Two monitors from Public Education stopped working and were taken for repairs but were deemed unserviceable.

As at December 2012, the Commission has nine (9) working computers located in the following areas:

• Chairperson's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
• Investigation Department	1
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

At the beginning of 2012 the Commission had a total of seven (7) working printers located in the following areas:

• Chairperson's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	1
• Registry	1
• Investigation Unit	1
• Media Monitoring Unit	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	1

The following Printers were serviced during the first week in January 2012:

- HP OfficeJet Pro K8600 Printer – located in CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room
- HP 6540 – located in the Finance Officer's Room

During the year

- The HP OfficeJet Pro K8600 Printer attached to the CEO's Special Assistant developed a problem, was sent to be repaired but was deemed unserviceable.
- The Printer from the Chairperson's office was relocated to the CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room.
- The Canon 5200 Printer in the Public Education Unit is presently not working and to date it has not been identified who repairs Cannon printers.

As at December 2012 the Commission has a total of five (5) working printers located in the following areas:

• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	1
• Registry (Network Colour Printer)	1
• Investigation Department (Network Printer - Black	1
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

The Commission has one scanner which is located in the Registry Department.

### **Photocopy Machines/Risograph**

The Commission continues to own two (2) photocopiers and one (1) risograph machine. Both of the photocopiers are functioning well after being serviced during the year. The risograph was also serviced and parts purchased and replaced by Ainlim. Ainlim is to effect repairs to the black drum unit. The part to be replaced was already paid for but had to be imported.

### **Air Condition Units**

All of the air condition units were serviced twice for 2012 and are in good working condition. However, the air condition units in the Boardroom are to be repaired or replaced. Repairs were already effected to one of the units in September 2012 but within days it was no longer cooling. It is recommended that this unit be replaced.



### **Telephone System**

A number of instruments for the Commission's telephone system are still to be replaced and extensions provided for the Media Monitoring Unit. Instruments are needed for the following existing extensions:

✓ Ext. 224	-	Registry Department
✓ Ext. 226 & 227	-	Investigation Department
✓ Ext. 231	-	Finance Officer Room
✓ Ext. 233	-	Administrative Officer Room
✓ Ext. 234	-	Boardroom
✓ Ext. 235	-	Chairperson's Office

### **Vehicles**

The Commission is presently in the process of purchasing a new vehicle to support the work of the Commission. Details of the other vehicles are hereby outlined:

- Vehicle No. PJJ 7328 continued to have various minor mechanical problems during the year 2012 and the battery, which was under warranty, was replaced. This vehicle is presently recommended for sale and replacement.
- Vehicle No. PMM 5053 worked well with no problems during the year.
- Vehicle No. PJJ 4100 which was assigned to the CEO also had some minor problems during the year. This vehicle is still recommended for replacement.
- Minibus No. PNN 1641 had to have the transmission replaced and the air condition redone. This vehicle is now working well.

*All vehicles are in working condition and outfitted with the necessary tools and accessories.*

### **Building**

During the year, no repairs were done to the building of itself. However, on the ground floor it was necessary to for a complete replacement of the toilet facilities. Electrical works were also done on the ground floor as a result in fluctuation of the electricity. Further electrical work, in the form of changing the remaining ballasts from singly 110v to dual 110/220v to cater for the fluctuation will need to be undertaken, only three (3) ballasts were changed since these had burned.

### **Generator**

The Generator was repaired and is functioning well. Diesel is to be purchased.

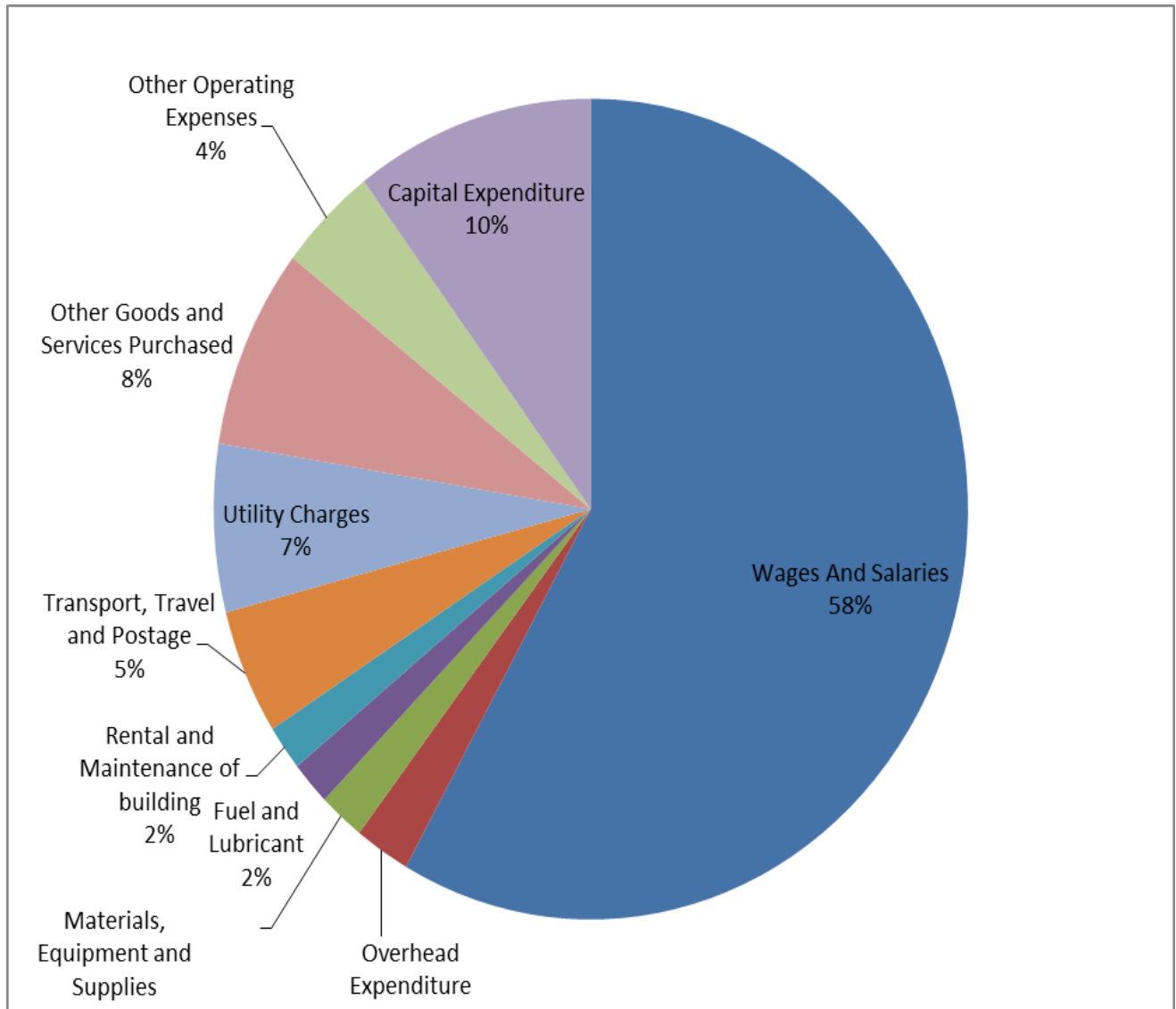
### **Water Pump & Tanks**

The water pump had to be repaired after it stopped working. The tanks were cleaned twice for the year. A float switch was placed in the main tank to prevent the pump from burning if the event that the water in the tanks were below a certain level.

## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission received a voted provision of ninety-nine million four hundred and nineteen thousand dollars (\$99,419,000.00) for current expenditure and six million five hundred thousand dollars (6,500) for capital expenditure.

A breakdown of the revised budget is as follows:



# Annual Report 2013

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2013

## PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS UNIT

The Unit was unable to conduct any programmes for the year 2013. However, the staff of the Unit had maintained its databases, complete reports, assist other departments when necessary, etc.

## INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

Twenty-one complaints were brought forward from the year 2013, as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i># of Complaints</i>
2009	1
2010	4
2011	14
2012	2

No complaints were closed as the Unit became inactive.

# MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

## **Introduction:**

February 1, 2013, marked two (2) years since the formation of the Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit of the Ethnic Relations Commission. More to the point, the Unit has been in existence for approximately 2 years and 10 months. In fact, if laid out in full, the history of the Unit, though brief, is quite an interesting one, from the standpoint of its *raison d'être* – role and functions.

A diligent retrace of the ERC's general history would show that the Commission in keeping with its constitutional mandate to promote social peace and ethnic harmony in Guyana [ref: Constitution (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 2000] advisedly set up the Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit (MCMU) on February 1, 2011. The Unit's primary function was to boost the organization's institutional capacity to monitor the country's mainstream print and broadcast media and all other forms of media (exclusive of the Internet) used in the communication of information likely to influence voter preference in Guyana's 2011 General and Regional Elections, for conformity with the Laws of the Guyana as stated in the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*.

From its inception, with the immediate focus being on the 2011 elections season, the MCMU was basically comprised of two (2) sections: an "in-house" Media Monitoring section and an externally linked fieldwork oriented Campaign/Rallies section. Both sections were/are coordinated and managed by the same person – Mr. Remington Eastman. The Media Monitoring section was tasked with monitoring and analyzing information coming out from the daily and Sunday newspapers, all local television channels, and the three (3) channels of the country's then lone radio station. On the other hand, part-time Field Monitors were employed within the Campaign/Rallies section of the Unit to exclusively engage in the monitoring of political speeches, campaign billboards, leaflets, and all other forms of traditional media used by political parties/groups in the lead-up to the aforementioned elections.

On completion of the 2011 elections period, the Campaign/Rallies section of the Unit was subsequently put into abeyance. Nevertheless, in order maintain the ERC's capacity to execute its constitutional mandate to contain the advocacy of ethnic/racial intolerance in the public sphere, the work of the Unit over the past 2 years (2012-2013), but more particularly for the current reporting period, has been exclusively media-related – confined to perusing the daily newspapers and television programs for instances of propagation of ethnically/racially inciting messages - in their varied forms - to the general public, and to bring same to the attention of the Commission. In this regard, the Unit, to date, has been measurably successful.

Additionally, the media monitoring activities of the Unit has allowed the ERC to compile and develop its own repository of stored media information - information of scrupulous integrity - which can be readily accessed at any time for investigatory purposes. In fact, it can be said that over time, the Unit's in-built capacity for record-keeping has obviated the need for the Commission to source pertinent media information necessary for its deliberations from external sources, since the credibility of same cannot be vouchsafed with any certainty.

Further, notwithstanding the fact that only the media monitoring section of the Unit operated during 2013, the general objectives of the MCMU remained unchanged and are as follows:

- To monitor the local media for adherence to the tenets of the Racial Hostility Act 1964 and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001).
- To bring to the attention of the Chairman and Commissioners of the ERC, any observed infractions of the Racial Hostility Act (1964) and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001), by the print and broadcast media or by any citizen using a public space to influence public opinion.
- To evaluate complaints sent to the ERC by members of public and organizations, and offer advice accordingly on the merits/demerits of same.
- To influence a high level of sensitivity and decorum as it relates to the discussion/propagation of ethnic/race issues in public spaces.
- To promote the maintenance of the highest professional and ethical standards by local media practitioners in their communication of ethnic/race issues to the general public.
- To make a measurable input into the realization of a peaceful social environment, by actively contributing to the minimization of incidences of dissemination of racism (in all its forms) through the media and/or in campaign rallies/meetings during elections periods.

### **MCMU Activity Record for 2013**

During the reporting period January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013, the MCMU embarked on and completed the following main activities:

- The recording, monitoring and storage of approximately **2340** cumulative hours of programming from the following television stations: CNS Ch.6, WHRM Ch. 7, HBTv Ch. 9, NCN Ch. 11, TVG Ch. 28, MTV Ch. 65, HGTV Ch. 67 and NTN Ch. 69.
- The monitoring and storage of all the daily and Sunday newspapers for the entire period under review, namely: Guyana Chronicle, Stabroek News, Kaieteur News, and Guyana Times.
- 

### **Findings & Submissions:**

Coming out of the Unit's monitoring of the print and broadcast media for the current reporting period, two (2) clear instances of racial incitement were detected in programs aired on television. The specific aspects of these programs that contravened the country's extant race laws as spelt out in the *Racial Hostility Act (1964)* and *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001)* were duly noted and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for evaluation and any follow-up action deemed necessary. The programs were as follows:

- **“Walter Rodney Groundings”** hosted by Deon Abrams and aired on HBTv Ch. 9, on Sunday, January 13, 2013. [Report submitted on January 18, 2013].
- **“Square Talk”** hosted by Kwame Mc Koy and aired on NTN Ch. 69, on Tuesday, March 26, 2013. [Report submitted on April 12, 2013].

In addition to the above submissions, the Unit also provided written analyses of the following matters which elicited much public comments because of their ethnic/racial imputations:

- (1) A controversial speech delivered by former president of Guyana, Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo – taken from the Stabroek News Editorial captioned “**Mr. Jagdeo’s statement at the funeral**” (published Monday, April 15, 2013). [Report submitted on April 23, 2013].
- (2) A controversial book on race-relations in Guyana, written by Mr. G.H.K Lall, titled “**Sitting on a Racial Volcano (Guyana Uncensored)**”. [Report submitted on July 18, 2013].

### **Limitations/Challenges:**

In relation to the past year, the major impediment that affected the smooth flow of the Unit’s operations was the curtailment of overnight recordings of television programs due to the perennial bugbear of scheduled and unscheduled power failures. In this regard, the major challenge of the Unit was the maintenance of a timely and predictable supply of electricity during periods of power failure, since the ERC’s standby generator oftentimes, for various reasons, failed to provide the expected service.

### **Improvements:**

Three (3) major problems outside of “black-outs” that had in the past stymied the efficient operations of the Unit, namely: inadequate storage facilities for the Unit’s VCR tapes; poor television antennae signal strength; and, inappropriate-sized television sets, were all positively addressed by management during 2013. As such, the problems that previously existed in the aforementioned areas were duly rectified. Also, over the course of the year in review, the Unit acquired the following equipment: four (4) new replacement TV sets; two (2) complete television antennas; and, a VCR/DVD converter. As intended, the equipment contributed immensely in boosting the overall technical capacity of the Unit to effectively perform its duties at an optimum level.

### **Conclusion:**

The MCMU’s monitoring of the print and broadcast media during 2013 revealed that there was general adherence to the applicable laws of the country relating to ethnic/racial incitement. Nevertheless, the two (2) instances highlighted in this Report of the media being used as a platform to communicate race-hate, underscores the reason why the ERC Secretariat in the absence of a fully constituted Commission, should, in the interim, be ever-vigilant and ever-mindful of having on file the evidence of such violations so that they can be easily retrieved if, in future, such matters are for whatever reason requested by a reconstituted Commission for deliberation.

Looking ahead to 2014, it is extremely positive to note that when all factors are taken into consideration, the MCMU stands well-equipped in the New Year to continue to robustly carry out its media monitoring activities and is also at the ready at all times to be part of and to support any initiative conceived by the Commission, which seeks to keep the organization relevant in national life.

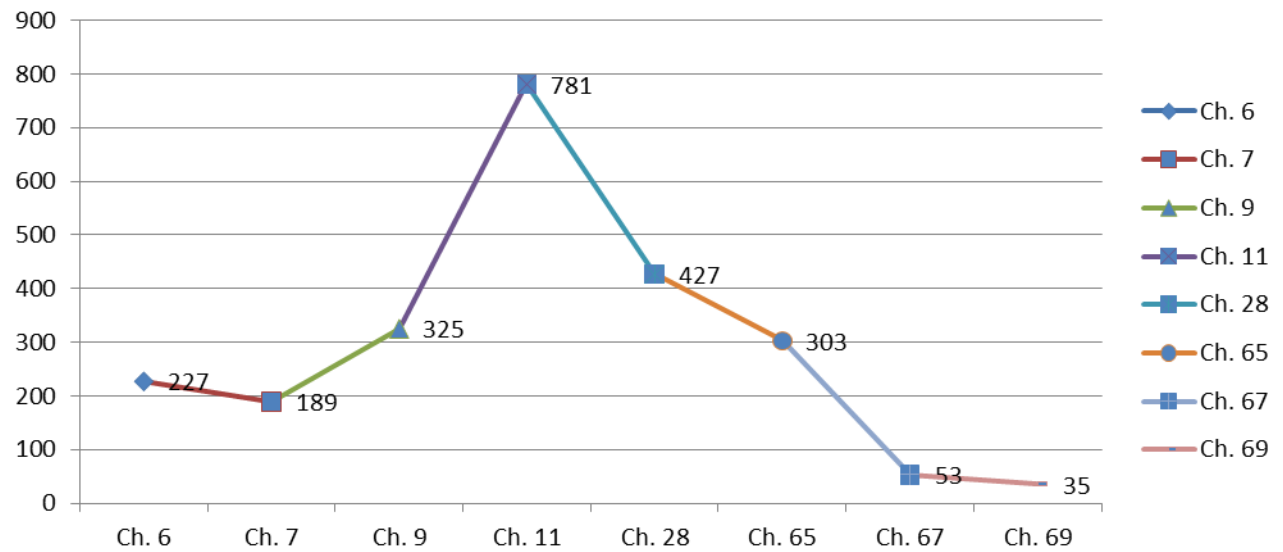
Lastly, with the present time signaling the start of a New year, the Unit would like to use the opportunity provided to further reiterate its commitment in 2014 to participate in the designing and implementation of programs by the Commission linked to the execution of its constitutional mandate to maintain social peace and ethnic/racial harmony between and amongst all the country's ethnic/racial groupings – especially during pre- and post-elections periods, when politics and ethnicity combine to threaten the processes of national cohesion.



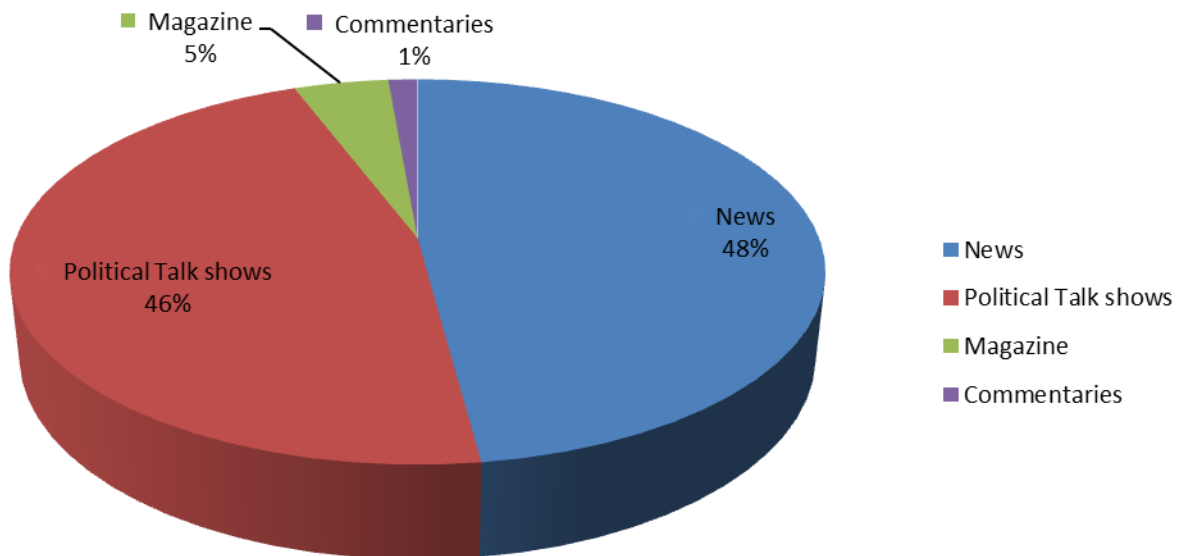
**Appendix 1**  
**Hours of Programming by Television Stations (2013)**

<i>Types of Programming</i>					
Name of TV Station	Pol. Talk Shows	News	Commentaries	Magazine	Cum. total of Prog. Hrs.
	Amt. of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs	Amt of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs.	
CNS Ch. 6	215	Nil	12	Nil	<b>227</b>
WRHM Ch. 7	64	125	Nil	Nil	<b>189</b>
HBTv Ch. 9	175	150	Nil	Nil	<b>325</b>
NCN Ch. 11	475	182	20	104	<b>781</b>
TVG Ch. 28	63	364	Nil	Nil	<b>427</b>
MTV Ch. 65	43	260	Nil	Nil	<b>303</b>
HGP Ch. 67	13	40	Nil	Nil	<b>53</b>
NTN Ch. 69	35	Nil	Nil	Nil	<b>35</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1083</b>	<b>1121</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>2,340</b>

**GRAPH SHOWING TOTAL Prog. Hrs. by TV CHANNELS**



**CHART SHOWING % of Total Prog. Hrs. by Type**



*N B: The Table and Charts provided above present statistical information for hours and types of television programs recorded, monitored and stored by the MCMU during 2013.*

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### PERSONNEL

#### STAFFING

The Commission started the year 2013 with twenty-one (21) staff members as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Office Assistant/Driver	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	1
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
✓ Programme Officers	3
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	1
✓ Investigative Officer	1
✓ Jnr. Investigative Officer	1
✓ Head, Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit	1
✓ Media Monitors	2

and ended the year with sixteen (16) staff as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	1
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	1
✓ Programme Officers	3
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	1
✓ Head, Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit	1
✓ Media Monitors	2

**EMPLOYMENT:**

*Nil*

**CONTRACT TERMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS:****VOLUNTARY TERMINATIONS:**

<i>Ms. Sherry Jagnarine</i>	-	Investigative Officer With immediate effect from March 2013
<i>Ms. Anita Persaud</i>	-	Accounts Clerk With immediate effect from August 2013

**RESIGNATIONS:**

<i>Mr. Massiah Gonsalves</i>	Jnr. Investigative Officer With effect from October, 2013
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**CONTRACT TERMINATIONS:**

<i>Ms. Yolanda Ward</i>	-	Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit With effect from January 2013
<i>Mr. Surujpaul Mathura</i>		Officer Assistant/Driver With effect from December 2013

**VACANT POSITIONS:**

➤ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
➤ Administrative Officer	1
➤ Dispute Resolution Officer	1
➤ Public Relations Officer	1
➤ Finance Officer	1
➤ Investigative Officers	2
➤ Driver	2
➤ Office Assistant	1

**ATTENDANCE****STAFF ATTENDANCE**

Staffs' attendance for the year was about average.

**STAFF PERFORMANCE**

For the year, some staffs' performances were seriously hindered due to the Commission's limited ability to function at full capacity. However, the overall performance was good.

## **OPERATIONS**

### ***STAFF COMFORT***

All the necessary equipment and furniture were in place for the staff's comfort.

### **STAFF UNIFORMS**

All staff were outfitted in uniforms. The female staff were issued five (5) sets of materials to sew uniforms. The male staff were issued with four (4) sets of uniforms.

### **EQUIPMENT**

The Commission started the year with eleven (11) computers located in the following areas:

• Chairperson's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	2
• Investigation Department	2
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

As at December 2013, the Commission has ten (10) working computers located in the following areas:

• Chairperson's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
• Investigation Department	2
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

At the beginning of 2013 the Commission had a total of six (6) printers located in the following areas:

• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	1
• Registry	1
• Investigation Unit	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

During the year

- The Lexmark C540 XL developed problems and was sent to be repaired at the Service Provider – Vishnu Panday. Upon its return, it was relocated to the office of the CEO's Administrative Assistant/Personnel Representative and Special Assistant.

- The Canon 5200 Printer in the Public Education Unit was sent to be repaired at Laparkan and was returned since the part that was damaged could not be sourced because it was an old model.

As at December 2013 the Commission has a total of five (5) working printers located in the following areas:

• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room (Both being Network Colour Printers)	2
• Investigation Department (Network Printer – Black)	1
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

The Commission has one scanner which is located in the Registry Department.

### **Photocopy Machines/Risograph**

The Commission continues to own two (2) photocopiers and one (1) risograph machine. Both of the photocopiers are functioning but will need to be serviced early in the year. The risograph will also need servicing by Ainlim by March 2014.

### **Air Condition Units**

All of the air condition units were serviced twice for 2013 and are in good working condition. However, the air condition units in the Boardroom are to be replaced.

### **Telephone System**

Four telephone instruments were replaced by instruments on loan from the Rights Commissions at the following extensions:

- 227 - Investigation Department
- 233 - Administrative Officer Room
- 235 - Chairperson's Officer
- 234 - Boardroom

An extension is to be installed in the Media Monitoring Unit.

### **Vehicles**

The Commission purchased a new vehicle, a Nissan Navara, PRR 1131 to support the work of the Commission. This vehicle is in perfect working condition.

Details of the other vehicles are hereby outlined:

- Vehicle No. PMM 5053 worked well with minimum problems during the year. The air condition had to be repaired and the vehicle needed repainting. Both jobs were done by Ainlim and the vehicle underwent a complete body spray, inside and out.
- Minibus No. PNN 1641 is to have the air condition repaired once again. This vehicle is in working condition.

- Vehicle No. PJJ 7328 continued to have various mechanical problems during the year 2013. The vehicle was recommended for sale and replacement. The sale was done by way of open tendering and a bid of one million, five hundred and nine thousand dollars was offered by a tenderer and accepted by the Commission.
- Vehicle No. PJJ 4100 which was assigned to the CEO also had minor problems during the year. This vehicle was recommended for sale and/or replacement. The sale was done by way of open tendering and a bid of seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars was offered by a tenderer and accepted by the Commission.
- Motor Cycle CE 4503 which was not working was sold by way of open tendering. A bid of sixty thousand dollars was offered by a tenderer and accepted by the Commission.

*All three of the Commission's vehicles are in working condition and outfitted with the necessary tools and accessories.*

### **Building**

In the last quarter of the year, minor works were done to the building of itself in the form of washing and minor repainting. A gutter on the eastern side of the roof was repaired. The overhang on the ground floor of the eastern side of the building was also repaired. Repairs to the ceiling inside the first floor had to be undertaken as a result of water seepage resulting in the collapse to a section of the ceiling.

Inside the ground floor of the building, an enclosure, inclusive of two doors was erected to accommodate the installation of two (2) air condition units. Electrical works continued to be a problem on the ground floor as a result of fluctuation in electricity. As such further electrical work in the form of changing ballasts from singly 110v to dual 110/220v to cater for the fluctuation was done.

### **Generator**

The Generator was repaired and is functioning well. Diesel is to be purchased.

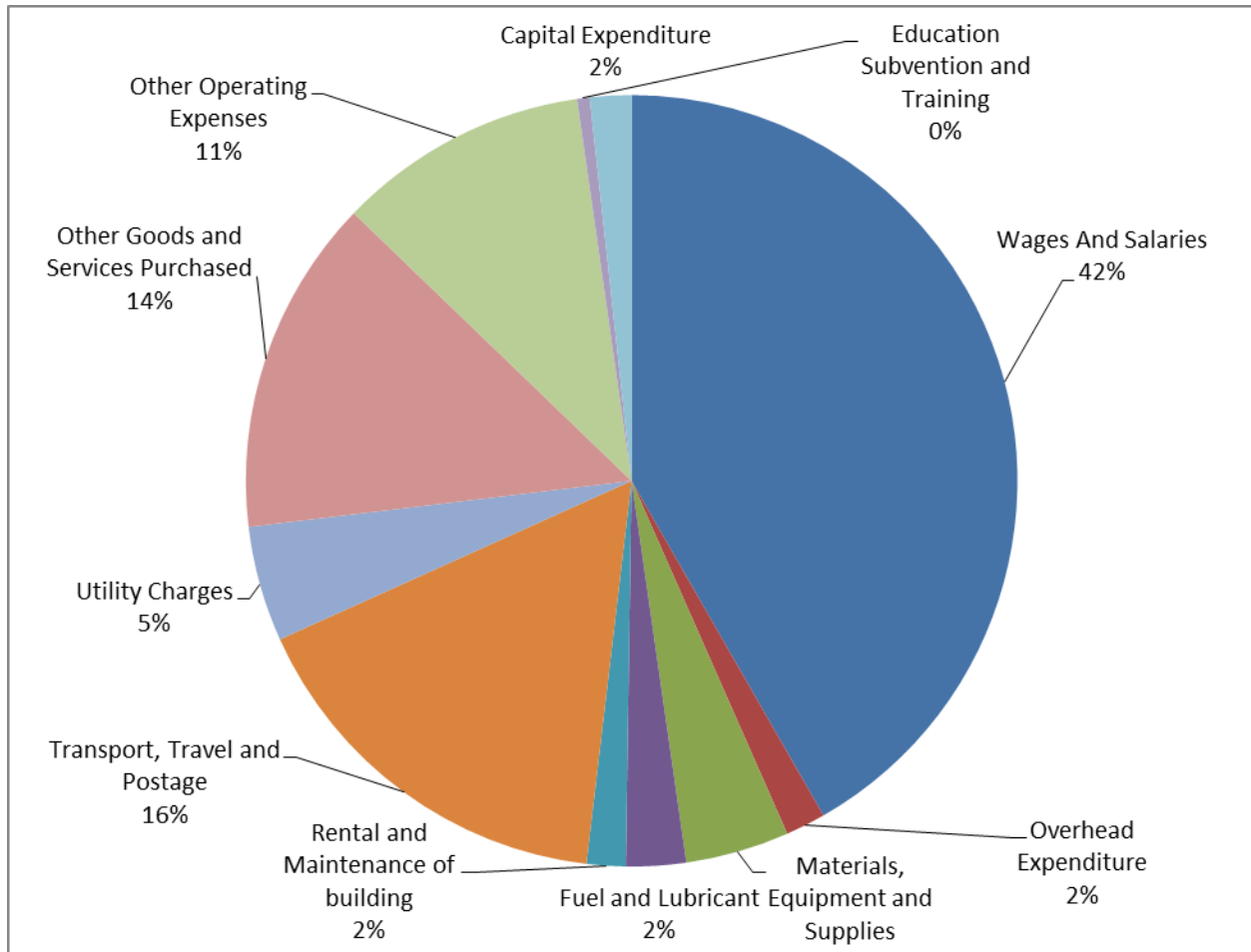
### **Water Pump & Tanks**

The water pump is in good working order. The tanks were cleaned twice for the year.

## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission received a voted provision of ninety-three million five hundred and seventy-eight thousand dollars (\$93,578,000.00) for current expenditure and one million six hundred and fifty-three thousand dollars (1,653,000) for capital expenditure.

A breakdown of the revised budget is as follows:





# Annual Report 2014

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2014

## PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS UNIT

This Unit is the proactive arm of the Commission which operates from the perspective that an informed and educated society is more disposed to tolerate, respect and accommodate the unique ethnic diversity that constitutes the Guyanese society.

The Unit is presently without a Head or Supervisor and the three (3) staff members within the Unit currently reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer. They had undertaken the following:

- putting together educational material for disbursement at Film Festivals, Work Place Meetings, Youth Organisations etc.;
- updating databases of Schools, Churches, Governmental and non-Governmental Organisations and various stakeholders countrywide; and
- ensuring that the equipment and other material necessary for the execution of the work of the Unit are in working order.

## INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

This Unit has a responsibility to serve all Guyanese and persons living or working in Guyana who believe him or herself to be discriminated against because of his or her ethnicity. As at the end of 2013, the Unit has a total of twenty-four (24) outstanding complaints pending decisions from the Commissioners.

**For the period January to May 2014**, three (3) complaints of discrimination were received and investigated. Two (2) were amicably resolved and one (1) is awaiting a decision from the Commissioners. The Unit is presently staffed with one (1) person due to the resignations of the other two (2) staff members.

## ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

This section was engaged in carrying out the daily administrative aspects of the Commission with respect to:

- ❖ the processing of annual leave, sick leave (for the ERC and Human Rights Commission), etc;
- ❖ all other administrative and staff matters;
- ❖ the general maintenance of the entire building, equipment, all fixtures and fittings
- ❖ general supervision of the daily activities of the Commission
- ❖ ensuring the care and maintenance of the vehicles

## **FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

This Department was engaged in carrying out the financial aspects of the Commission as follows:

- processing and effecting payments for all transactions of the Commission;
- preparing Monthly Financial Statements for submission to the Ministry of Finance on behalf of the ERC;
- preparing all financial records for the day to day running of the ERC;
- preparation and payment of salaries and statutory deductions for the ERC
- preparation and payment of salaries and statutory deductions for the Rights Commissions;
- preparation of Monthly Financial Statement pertaining to the Rights Commissions.
- preparing schedules and making timely payment to GRA and NIS for the ERC and the Rights Commissions.
- 2015 Budget preparation

# MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

## **Introduction:**

This Report has been compiled with the aim of presenting specific information about the activities of the Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit (MCMU) of the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) for the period 01/01/14 to 31/12/14, inclusive, and to give an idea of the Unit's planned activities for 2015.

Informatively, the MCMU consists of two sections, namely, Media Monitoring and Campaign/Rallies. However, this report presents information exclusive to the media monitoring section of the Unit, since the campaign/rallies section is only activated for elections purposes. Further, it should be noted that the central focus of the media monitoring section is primarily to monitor and analyze information coming out from the country's daily and Sunday newspapers and all the Georgetown-based local television channels that broadcast programs with political content, to ensure that they are in conformity with the extant Race Laws of the Guyana as stated in the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*.

Generally speaking, the work of the Unit is designed to buttress the capacity of the ERC to carry out its constitutional mandate of promoting social peace and ethnic harmony in Guyana, by bringing to the attention of the Commission all observed instances of breaches of the aforementioned Statutes, so that appropriate actions as specified by Law can be leveraged against erring parties.

The MCMU is guided in its operation by clearly defined objectives, which are as follows:

- To monitor the local media for adherence to the tenets of the Racial Hostility Act 1964 and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001).
- To bring to the attention of the Chairman and Commissioners of the ERC, any observed infractions of the Racial Hostility Act (1964) and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001), by the print and broadcast media or by any citizen using a public space to influence public opinion.
- To evaluate ethnic complaints sent to the ERC by members of public and organizations, arising from programs or articles broadcast or published in the media, and to offer advice accordingly on the merits/demerits of same.
- To influence a high level of sensitivity and decorum as it relates to the discussion/propagation of ethnic/race issues in public spaces.
- To promote the maintenance of the highest professional and ethical standards by local media practitioners in their communication of ethnic/race issues to the general public.
- To help promote a peaceful social environment, by actively contributing to the minimization of incidence of ethnic discrimination/racism (in all its forms) through the media and/or in political rallies/meetings during elections periods.

**MCMU Production Report for the period 01/01/14 – 31/12/14:**

For the period under review, the Unit taped in excess of **4000 hours** of television programs taken from the following stations: CNS Ch. 6, WRHM Ch. 7, HBTv Ch. 9, NCN Ch.11, TVG Ch. 28, MTV Ch. 65, HGP Ch. 67, NTN CH. 69 – of which approximately **1680 hours** of programming has been monitored, recorded and stored on video discs for future reference [see Appendix 1].

Also, for the period under review, copies of all four newspapers – Guyana Chronicle, Guyana Times, Stabroek News and Kaieteur News – were monitored and archived for future reference.

**Findings:**

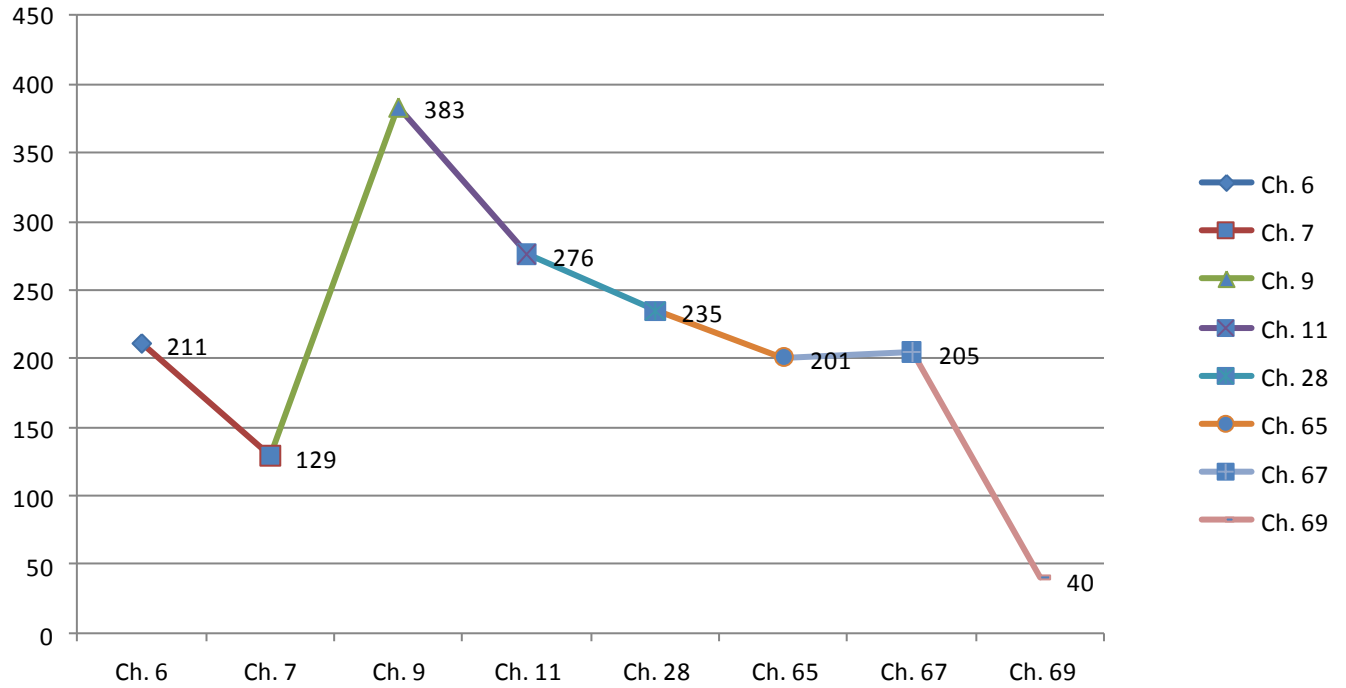
The Unit's monitoring activities unearthed two (2) instances of racist information being communicated to the general public via the print and broadcast media. The instances referred to were sourced from:

- Newspaper - Letter  
“Prisons, cemeteries, garbage and Mashramani should be privatized” Sultan Mohamed, Kaieteur News, Thursday, April 17, 2014.
- Television – Party Political Program  
“Walter Rodney Groundings” Deon Abrams, HBTv Ch.9, Sunday, October 26, 2014.

**Appendix 1: Hours of Programming by Television Stations (2014)**

<i>Types of Programming</i>					
<b>Name of TV Station</b>	[Sponsored] Pol. Party Programs	News	Talk Shows/Discussion Programs	Other (Govt. Press Briefings, Parliamentary Debates, etc)	<b>Cum. total Prog. Hrs.</b>
	Amt. of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs	Amt of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs.	
CNS Ch. 6	161	Nil	50	Nil	<b>211</b>
WRHM Ch. 7	Nil	115	14	Nil	<b>129</b>
HBTv Ch. 9	182	140	61	Nil	<b>383</b>
NCN Ch. 11	Nil	175	96	05	<b>276</b>
TVG Ch. 28	Nil	175	60	Nil	<b>235</b>
MTV Ch. 65	Nil	201	Nil	Nil	<b>201</b>
HGP Ch. 67	Nil	205	Nil	Nil	<b>205</b>
NTN Ch. 69	Nil	Nil	40	Nil	<b>40</b>

### **CUMULATIVE Prog. Hrs. by TV CHANNELS**



**Total**

**343**

**1011**

**321**

**05**

**1680**

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### PERSONNEL

#### STAFFING

The Commission started and ended the year 2014 with sixteen (16) staff members as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	<u>1</u>
	<u>7</u>
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	<u>1</u>
	<u>2</u>
✓ Programme Officers	<u>3</u>
✓ Senior Investigative Officer	<u>1</u>
✓ Head, Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit	1
✓ Media Monitors	<u>2</u>
	<u>3</u>

#### EMPLOYMENT:

*Mr. Frederick Ochoa*      *Driver*      With effect from April 1, 2014

#### CONTRACT TERMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS:

*Mr. Frederick Ochoa*      *Driver*      With effect from July 1, 2014

#### VACANT POSITIONS:

➤ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
➤ Administrative Officer	1
➤ Dispute Resolution Officer	1
➤ Public Relations Officer	1
➤ Finance Officer	1
➤ Investigative Officers	2
➤ Programme Officer	1
➤ Networking/IT Technician	1
➤ Accounts Clerk	1
➤ Drivers	2
➤ Office Assistant	1

## ***ATTENDANCE***

### ***STAFF ATTENDANCE***

Staff attendance for the year was good.

### ***STAFF PERFORMANCE***

Some Units within the Commission were seriously hindered due to the Commission's limited ability to function at full capacity. However, the staffs' overall performance was good.



## **OPERATIONS**

### ***STAFF COMFORT***

All the necessary equipment and furniture were in place for the staffs' comfort.

### **STAFF UNIFORMS**

Staff were issued four (4) sets of materials to sew uniforms to wear Monday to Thursday. Additionally, two (2) ERC T-Shirts were issued for wear on Fridays.

### **EQUIPMENT**

The Commission started the year with eleven (11) computers located in the following areas:

• Chairperson's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	1
• Public Education & Awareness Unit	2
• Investigation Department	2
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

As at December 2014, the Commission had ten (10) working computers located in the following areas:

• Chairperson's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	1
• Investigation Department	2
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

At the beginning of 2014 the Commission had a total of four (4) working printers located in the following areas:

• Finance Officer's Room	1
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	1
• Investigation Unit	1
• Media Monitoring Unit	1

During the year

- The Lexmark C540 XL developed problems and was sent to be repaired at the Service Provider – Vishnu Panday. This printer however is still not working.
- The Printers in Finance Department and CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room developed problems and stopped working. The Lexmark from Investigation Unit was relocated to Finance.

As at December 2014 the Commission has a total of two (2) working printers located in the following areas:

- Finance Officer's Room 1
- Media Monitoring Unit 1

The Commission has one scanner which is located in the Registry Department.

### **Photocopy Machines/Risograph**

The Commission continues to own two (2) photocopiers and one (1) risograph machine. Both of the photocopiers are functioning but will need to be serviced early in the year. The risograph will also need servicing by Ainlim by March 2015.

### **Air Condition Units**

All of the air condition units were serviced twice for 2014 and are in good working condition. New air condition units were placed in the Boardroom, Finance Department and the Chairperson's Office.

### **Telephone System**

All telephone instruments are in place as instruments were purchased by the Commission. An extension is to be installed in the Media Monitoring Unit and repairs is to be done on the Boardroom's extension.

### **Vehicles**

All of the Commission's vehicles worked well during the year and are in perfect working condition.

### **Building**

The interior walls of the building were repainted, work done on the roof, guttering, ceiling and flooring

### **Generator**

The Generator was repaired and is functioning well. Diesel is to be purchased.

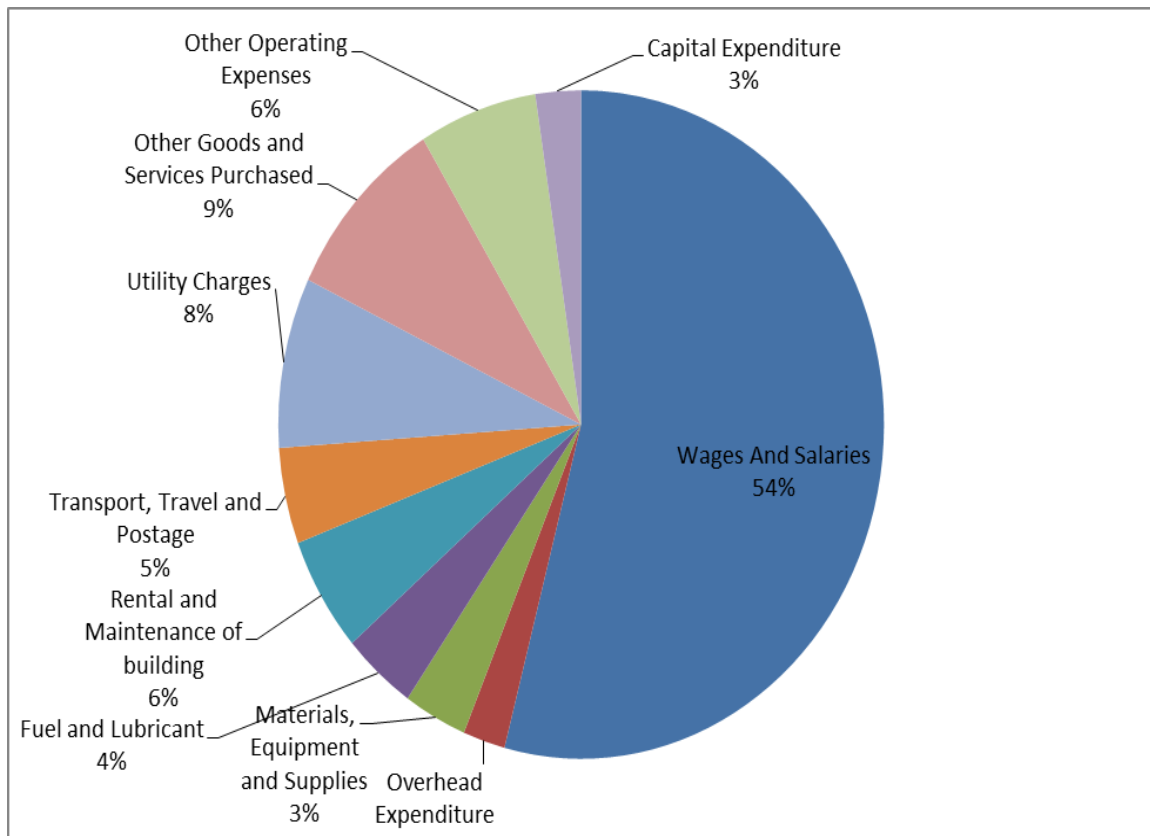
### **Water Pump & Tanks**

The water pump is in good working order. The tanks were cleaned twice for the year.

## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission received a voted provision of sixty-one million nine hundred and nineteen thousand dollars (\$61,919,000.00) for current expenditure and (1,537,030) for capital expenditure.

A breakdown of the expended budget is as follows:



# Annual Report 2015

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2015

## **Work carried out by the Ethnic Relations Commission for the period January to July, 2015**

For the first seven (7) months of the year the Commission continued to function within its limited capacity. The staff carried out daily routine work and performed in various capacities when called up to fill areas that were vacant. Below is a synopsis of the work by the Staff of the Commission.

### **Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit**

This Unit consists of two (2) sections: (a) Media Monitoring and (b) Campaign/Rallies Monitoring. The Unit is designed to implement the ERC's constitutional mandate to promote social peace and ethnic harmony by monitoring the country's mainstream print and broadcast media and all other forms of media (exclusive of the internet) used in the communication of information to the general public for adherence to the Laws of Guyana as stated in the Representations of the People (Amendment) Act 2001 and the Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01), and to bring documented instances of non-conformity to the attention of the Management of the Commission.

The Media Monitoring Section of the MCMU has been actively working on a daily basis monitoring both television and radio programs (mainly newscasts, talk shows and commentaries), and all four (4) of the country's daily and Sunday newspapers.

**For the period January to July 2015**, this Section has taped in excess of 4300 hours of television programs – taken from the following stations: SAFE TV Ch. 2; CNS Ch. 6; WRHM Ch. 7; HBTv Ch. 9; NCN Ch. 11; RBS Ch. 13; TVG Ch. 28; MTV Ch 65; HGP Ch. 67; NTN Ch. 69 and HJTV Ch. 72; - of which approximately 420 hours of programming has been monitored, recorded and stored on video discs for reference. All four (4) newspapers – Guyana Chronicle; Guyana Times; Stabroek News and Kaieteur News – were monitored and archived for reference.

Additionally, the Campaign /Rallies Monitoring Section of the Unit conducted a limited field monitoring exercise for the country's recently concluded General and Regional Elections which was held on May 11, 2015. The monitoring exercise began on Tuesday, April 7, 2015 and concluded on Saturday, May 10, 2015, a total of 34 days. Political meetings and rallies were covered in Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10 by field monitors which comprised **almost all of the staff members of the Commission** and two (2) external persons who had previous field monitoring experience. The two external field monitors work exclusively in Region 3.

### **Finance Department**

This Department was engaged in carrying out the financial aspects of the Commission as follows:

- processing and effecting payments for all transactions of the Commission;
- preparing Monthly Financial Statements for submission to the Ministry of Finance on behalf of the ERC;
- preparing all financial records for the day to day running of the ERC;
- preparation and payment of salaries and statutory deductions for the ERC
- preparation and payment of salaries and statutory deductions for the Rights Commissions;
- preparation of Monthly Financial Statements pertaining to the Rights Commissions.
- preparing schedules and making timely payment to GRA and NIS for the ERC and the Rights Commissions.

### **Administration and Operations**

This section was engaged in carrying out the daily administrative aspects of the Commission with respect to:

- ❖ the processing of annual leave, sick leave (for the ERC and Human Rights Commission), etc;
- ❖ all other administrative and staff matters;
- ❖ the general maintenance of the entire building, equipment, all fixtures and fittings
- ❖ general supervision of the daily activities of the Commission
- ❖ ensuring the care and maintenance of the vehicles

### **Public Education & Awareness Unit**

This Unit is the proactive arm of the Commission which operates from the perspective that an informed and educated society is more disposed to tolerate, respect and accommodate the unique ethnic diversity that constitutes the Guyanese society.

The Unit is presently without a Head or Supervisor and the three (3) staff members within the Unit currently reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer.

**For the period January to July 2015** they have done nothing which directly relates to that Unit. However, the staff have been assigned to alternately assist the Media Monitoring Unit and were actively involved in monitoring the Campaign Rallies and Meetings in the lead up to General and Regional Elections.

### **Investigative Unit**

This Unit has a responsibility to serve all Guyanese and persons living or working in Guyana who believe him or herself to be discriminated against because of his or her ethnicity. As at the end of 2014, the Unit has a total of twenty-five (25) outstanding complaints pending decisions from the Commissioners.

**For the period January to July 2015**, one (1) complaint of discrimination was received and is pending investigation. The Unit presently does not have any staff members.

## **PROJECTION**

Should the Commissioners be appointed by September 2015, and with their concurrence, the Commission proposes to embark on a project titled “Plural Society Engagement: A Mechanism to bridge societal divide”.

This is a robust community outreach, taking into consideration the current situation in some areas of the country. The ERC’s project proposes that Civil Society, represented by members of its constituencies and public service providers (health, education, security, housing and humanitarian and other social services) and Local Government Authorities, engage in dialogue to address concerns (real or perceived) that influence the division of communities.

The Project will also be a timely lead up to the Local Government Elections which, based upon information in the media, is expected to be held in December 2015.

Additionally, the Monitoring Unit of the Commission will be monitoring the media (print and electronic) as well as meetings that will be hosted by the interested candidates and organisations, so as to ensure that the contesting parties operate within the confines of the Laws of Guyana and do not incite or excite any individual or group to acts of aggression based on race, culture, religion or place of origin. For this to be possible the Commission will need to hire temporary monitors within the Regions, until the elections would have been held and official results discharged.

With the arrival of the new Commissioners, it is expected that the Investigative arm of the ERC will be staffed and as such regular monthly visits to the 10 Administrative Regions will be made by Investigative Officers so as to facilitate easy access to residents in the far out regions.

The Public Education and Awareness Unit will need to plan and implement programmes promoting peace and racial harmony by encouraging behavioral change.

When the Commissioners are on board the Unit will engage the mass media during one-hour television programmes which will serve to introduce the new Commissioners and educate on the work and activities of the Commission.

The Website Management is expected to commence with effect from September 2015. Workplace Meetings will also be a priority. These meetings allow for opinions to be shared and for workers to express their views as it relates to ethnic relations.

With the new Chairperson and Commissioners on board, and with the Commission functioning at full capacity, filling the existing vacancies will take precedence during the last quarter of 2015.

Training of staff and Commissioners will be an on-going process.

# MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

## **Brief:**

This Report has been compiled with the aim of presenting specific information about the activities of the Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit (MCMU) of the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) for the period 01/01/15 to 18/12/15, inclusive, and to give an idea of the Unit's planned activities for 2016.

Informatively, the MCMU consists of two sections, namely, Media Monitoring and Campaign/Rallies. The central focus of the Unit is to monitor and analyze information coming out from the country's daily and Sunday newspapers and all the Georgetown-based local television channels that broadcast programs with political content, to ensure that they are in conformity with the extant Race Laws of the Guyana as stated in the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act 2001*, and the *Racial Hostility Act (Cap.23:01)*.

Generally speaking, the work of the Unit is designed to buttress the capacity of the ERC to carry out its constitutional mandate of promoting social peace and ethnic harmony in Guyana, by bringing to the attention of the Commission all observed instances of breaches of the aforementioned Statutes, so that appropriate actions as specified by Law can be leveraged against erring parties.

More specifically, the MCMU is guided in its operation by clearly defined objectives, which are as follows:

- To monitor the local media for adherence to the tenets of the Racial Hostility Act 1964 and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001).
- To bring to the attention of the Chairman and Commissioners of the ERC, any observed infractions of the Racial Hostility Act (1964) and Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001), by the print and broadcast media or by any citizen using a public space to influence public opinion.
- To evaluate ethnic complaints sent to the ERC by members of public and organizations, arising from programs or articles broadcast or published in the media, and to offer advice accordingly on the merits/demerits of same.
- To influence a high level of sensitivity and decorum as it relates to the discussion/propagation of ethnic/race issues in public spaces.
- To promote the maintenance of the highest professional and ethical standards by local media practitioners in their communication of ethnic/race issues to the general public.
- To help promote a peaceful social environment, by actively contributing to the minimization of incidence of ethnic discrimination/racism (in all its forms) through the media and/or in political rallies/meetings during elections periods.

## **MCMU Activity Report for the period 01/01/15 – 18/12/15:**

- The Unit monitored, recorded and stored on video discs for future reference approximately **3163 hours** of programming – consisting of News, Talk Shows, Magazine, and other genres of programs - taken from the following stations: SAFE TV



Ch. 2, CNS Ch. 6, WRHM Ch. 7, HBTv Ch. 9, NCN Ch.11, TVG Ch. 28, MTV Ch. 65, HGP Ch. 67, NTN CH. 69 – [see Appendix 1].

- For the period under review, the Unit monitored and archived for future reference, copies of all four newspapers – Guyana Chronicle, Guyana Times, Stabroek News and Kaieteur News.
- The Unit coordinated a limited field-monitoring exercise during the period April 7, 2015 to May 10, 2015, in regions 2,3,4,5,6,7, and 10, in the lead-up to the country's general and regional elections held on May 11, 2015. [A Report on this activity was compiled and submitted at the end of the exercise].

### **Findings:**

The Head of the Unit had cause during the current period under review to submit comments in two instances where it was found that racist language was communicated to the general public via the print and broadcast media. The instances referred to are:

- Newspaper - Letter  
“In support of Mr. Jagdeo's comments at Babu John” Concerned Guyanese, Guyana Chronicle, Friday, March 13, 2015.
- Television – Party Political Program  
“PPP/C Memorial Ceremony for Dr. Cheddie Jagan” NCN Ch.11, Monday, March 9, 2015.

### **Proposed activities for 2016:**

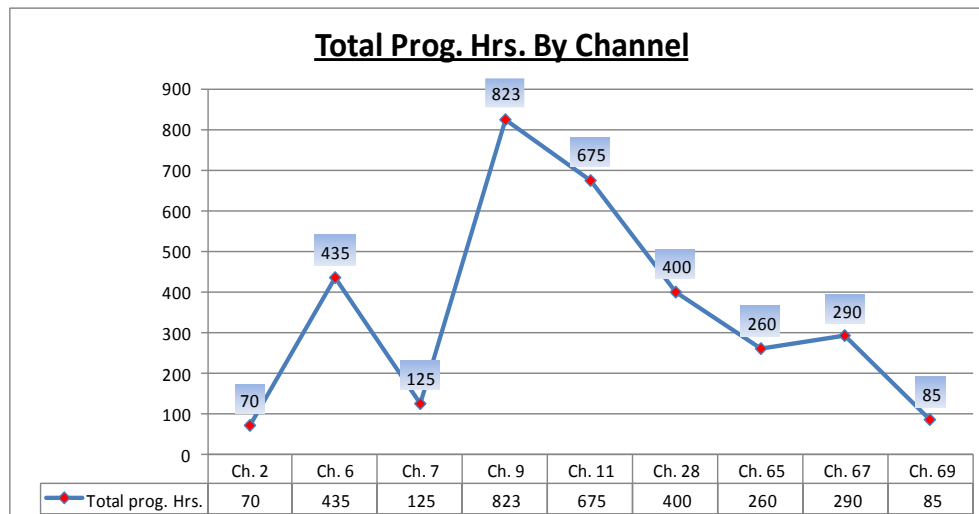
- During the course of the New Year (2016) the Unit will be purposely engaged in the daily monitoring, analyzing, and storage of television programming and newspaper reports deemed necessary as worthy reference material, while at the same time submitting to the Commission any material assessed to be in contravention of the *Racial Hostility Act (1964)* and/or the *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001)*.
- Local Government Elections are officially due to be run-off on Friday March 18, 2016. In keeping with the (Political) Campaign/Rallies remit of the Unit, it is hereby proposed that in similar manner to the field-monitoring exercise implemented for the 2015 general and regional elections, that a programme be implemented utilizing all available ERC staff members to monitor the hustings primarily in regions 3,4 & 5, with the concentration being on Georgetown, which has fifteen (15) constituencies and is likely to see robust and ‘heated’ electioneering by political parties, independent candidates, and civil society groups.

### **Conclusion:**

In light of the ongoing politically acrimonious post-general elections environment that persists and which coincidentally feeds into the upcoming Local Government Elections timetable, the MCMU avers that once all requested material resources are made available to the Unit in a timely manner, its staff stands poised and prepared to execute its Work-Plan for the coming year (2016) in a dedicated and professional manner, to ensure that the ERC's objectives of promoting social peace and ethnic harmony are realized.

**Appendix 1**  
**Hours of Programming by Television Stations (01/01/15 – 18/12/15)**

<i>Types of Programming</i>					
Name of TV Station	[Sponsored] Pol. Party Programs	News	Talk Shows/Discussion Programs	Other (Govt. Press Briefings, Magazine, etc)	Cum. total Prog. Hrs.
	Amt. of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs	Amt of Hrs.	Amt. of Hrs.	
SAFE TV Ch. 2	-	40	30	-	<b>70</b>
CNS Ch. 6	60	Nil	350	25	<b>435</b>
WRHM Ch. 7	Nil	105	20	Nil	<b>125</b>
HBTv Ch. 9	310	148	205	160	<b>823</b>
NCN Ch. 11	75	310	120	170	<b>675</b>
TVG Ch. 28	20	305	75	Nil	<b>400</b>
MTV Ch. 65	25	235	Nil	Nil	<b>260</b>
HGP Ch. 67	Nil	240	50	Nil	<b>290</b>
NTN Ch. 69	30	35	20	Nil	<b>85</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>3163</b>



## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### PERSONNEL

#### STAFFING

The Commission started the year 2015 with fifteen (15) staff members as under:

✓ Chief Executive Officer/Secretary	1
✓ Admin. Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative	1
✓ Special Assistant to the CEO	1
✓ Computer Operator	1
✓ Filing Clerk	1
✓ Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1
✓ Cleaner/Maid	<u>1</u>
	<b><u>7</u></b>
✓ Assistant Finance Officer	1
✓ Senior Accounts Clerk	<u>1</u>
	<b><u>2</u></b>
✓ Programme Officers	<b><u>3</u></b>
✓ Head, Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit	1
✓ Media Monitors	<u>2</u>
	<b><u>3</u></b>

#### EMPLOYMENT:

*There was no employment during this period.*

#### VACANT POSITIONS:

*At present the Commission has the following vacancies:*

➤ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
➤ Administrative Officer	1
➤ Dispute Resolution Officer	1
➤ Public Relations Officer	1
➤ Finance Officer	1
➤ Senior Investigative Officer	1
➤ Investigative Officers	2
➤ Programme Officer	1
➤ Networking/IT Technician	1
➤ Accounts Clerk	1
➤ Drivers	2
➤ Office Assistant	1

***ATTENDANCE***

Staff attendance for the period was very good.

***PERFORMANCE***

Some Units within the Commission are seriously hindered due to the Commission's limited ability to function at full capacity. However, when called upon to perform any task necessary, the staffs' overall performances were good and acceptable.

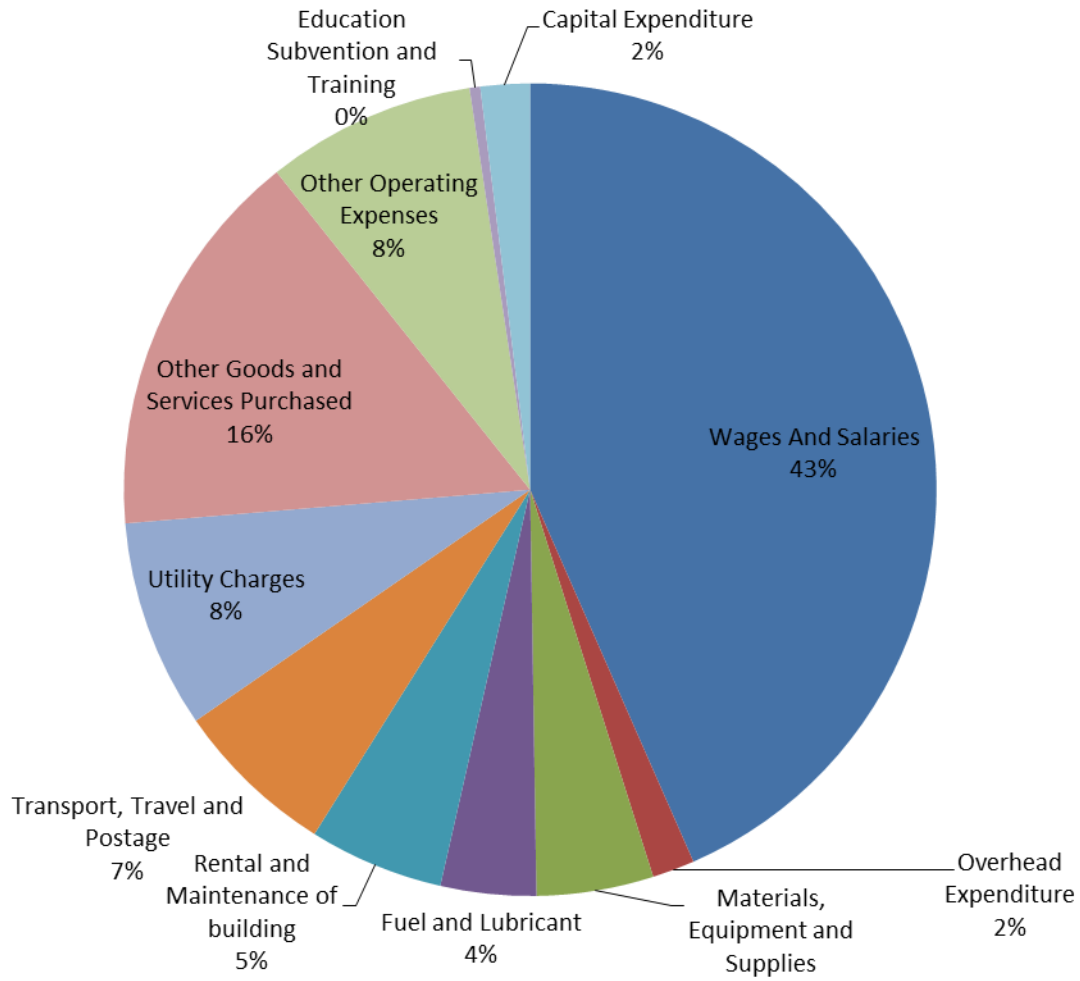
***ANNUAL LEAVE***

Staff members were required to indicate proposed dates for leave as per attached Leave Roster. However, the majority of staff have indicated dates starting from June to November, 2015.

## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission's (ERC) received a voted provision of sixty-nine million three hundred and ninety-three thousand dollars (\$69,393,000.00) for current expenditure and (1,390,000) for capital expenditure.

A breakdown of the revised budget is as follows:



# Annual Report 2016

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2016

For the year under review, the Public Education and Awareness Unit along with the Investigative Unit remained inactive. The Media Monitoring Unit, conducted minimal activity.

## MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

### MCMU Report for the period 01/01/16 – 30/06/16

#### Work Summary

- For the above-stated period, the Unit monitored, recorded and stored for future reference approximately **682 hours** of programming on **354 DVD's**, consisting mainly of local Political Parties programs, News, Talk Shows, Magazine, and other assorted genres of programs with political content taken from the following stations: SAFE TV Ch. 2, CNS Ch. 6, WRHM Ch. 7, HBTv Ch. 9, NCN Ch.11, TVG Ch. 28, MTV Ch. 65, HGP Ch. 67, NTN CH. 69.
- The Unit also monitored and archived for future reference, copies of all four newspapers – Guyana Chronicle, Guyana Times, Stabroek News and Kaieteur News.

#### Findings:

Coming out of the Unit's media monitoring activities, two (2) instances of breaches of the country's Laws against ethnic incitement were observed and noted. The observations were taken from both the print and broadcast media, namely:

- Newspaper - Letter  
“Are we returning to kick-down the door banditry” Vishnu Bisram, **Guyana Times**, Monday, May 2, 2016
- Television – Talk Show/Discussion  
“The Factor” **TVG, Ch. 28**, Sunday, May 29, 2016

## **ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE**

### **PERSONNEL**

The Commission started the year 2016 with fifteen (15) staff members and ended with thirteen (13) staff members as hereunder:

1. Ms. Yvonne Langevine	Chief Executive Officer/Secretary
2. Mr. Remington Eastman	Head, MMU
3. Ms. Nirmala Persaud	Finance Officer (ag)
4. Ms. Michelle France	Administrative Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative
5. Ms. Shallon Benn	Senior Accounts Clerk
6. Ms. Oma Devi Sukhu	Special Assistant to the CEO
7. Ms. Abiola Chappell	Programme Officer
8. Ms. Esther Robinson	Programme Officer
9. Ms. Yonette Mc Farlane	Filing Clerk
10. Ms. Vishwa Pooran	Computer Operator
11. Mrs. Keisha Smith-Adams	Media Monitor
12. Ms. Roslind Chandra	Receptionist
13. Ms. Allison Rose	Cleaner/Maid

### **VACANCIES**

1. Head, Legal and Investigative Unit
2. Dispute Resolution Officer
3. Administrative Officer
4. Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit
5. Finance Officer
6. Public Relations Officer
7. Programme Officer/IT
8. Senior Investigative Officer
9. Junior Investigative Officer
10. Investigative Officer
11. Programme Officer (2)
12. Administrative Assistant
13. Accounts Clerk
14. Driver (3)
15. Office Assistant

### **RESIGNATION**

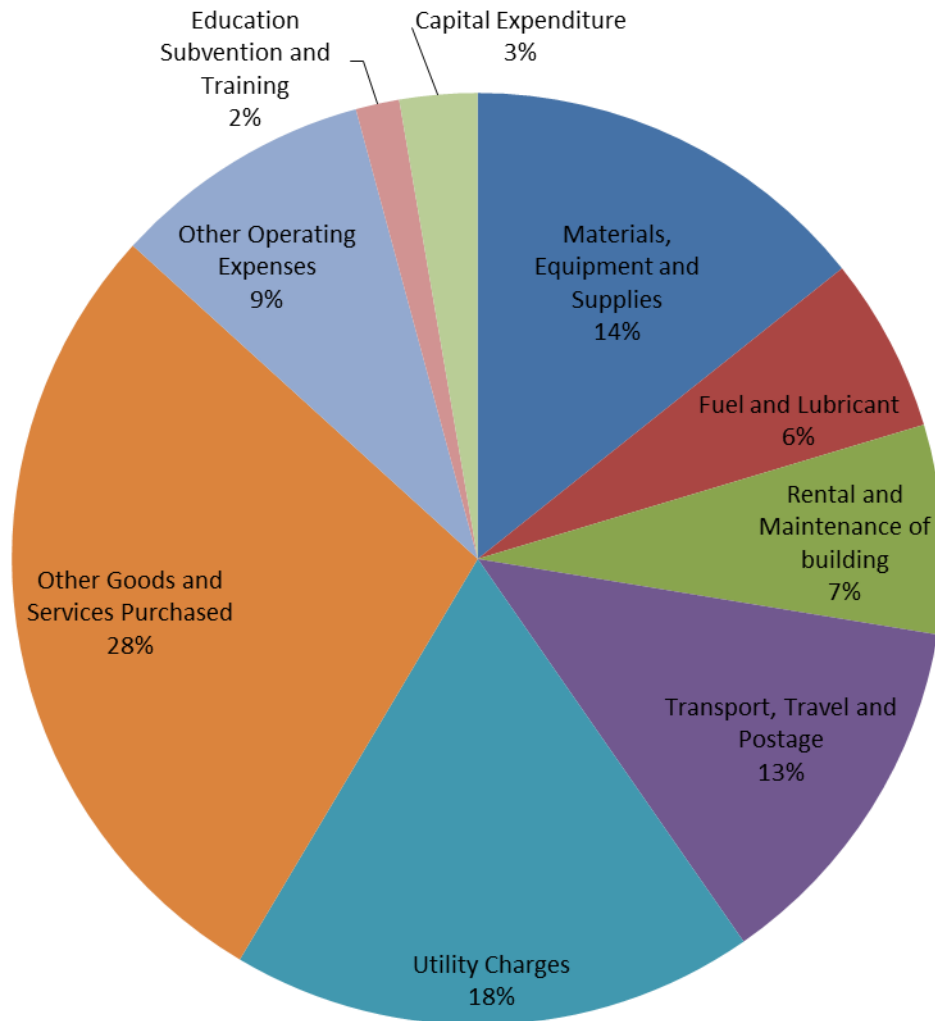
Ms. Renessa Madramootoo	Programme Officer	February 29, 2016
Mrs. Shaneeza Chester-Inniss	Media Monitor	August 22, 2016



## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission's (ERC) received a voted provision of eighty-one million four hundred and forty-six thousand dollars (\$81,446,000.00) for current and capital expenditures.

A breakdown of the revised budget is as follows:



# Annual Report 2017

# REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2017

The Public Education & Awareness Unit, the Investigative Unit and the Media Monitoring Unit were all inactive during the period under review.

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### PERSONNEL

The Commission started the year 2017 with thirteen (13) staff members as under:

#### **PRESENT STAFFING:**

1. Ms. Yvonne Langevine	Chief Executive Officer/Secretary
2. Mr. Remington Eastman	Head, MMU
3. Ms. Nirmala Persaud	Finance Officer (ag)
4. Ms. Michelle France	Administrative Asst. to the CEO/Personnel Representative
5. Ms. Shallon Benn	Senior Accounts Clerk
6. Ms. Oma Devi Sukhu	Special Assistant to the CEO
7. Ms. Abiola Chappell	Programme Officer
8. Ms. Esther Robinson	Programme Officer
9. Ms. Yonette Mc Farlane	Filing Clerk
10. Ms. Vishwa Pooran	Computer Operator
11. Mrs. Keisha Smith-Adams	Media Monitor
12. Ms. Roslind Chandra	Receptionist
13. Ms. Allison Rose	Cleaner/Maid

#### **VACANCIES**

1. Head, Legal and Investigative Unit
2. Dispute Resolution Officer
3. Administrative Officer
4. Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit
5. Finance Officer
6. Public Relations Officer
7. Programme Officer/IT
8. Senior Investigative Officer
9. Junior Investigative Officer
10. Investigative Officer
11. Programme Officer (2)
12. Administrative Assistant
13. Accounts Clerk
14. Driver (3)
15. Office Assistant

## **ACCOMMODATION**

The situation remains the same with regards to the rearrangements and inconveniences to staff in order to accommodate the Integrity Commission. The Public Education & Awareness Unit, the Legal and Investigative Unit and the Media Monitoring Unit were displaced. The staff were relocated to sit in other Units and the furniture and equipment packed away. However, in order for the Commission to be able to function optimally, there will be need for immediate additional staff and space. Notwithstanding, all the necessary equipment and furniture are in place to ensure that the staff were comfortable.

## **EQUIPMENT**

### **- Computers**

#### **- Eleven (11) working computers:**

• Chairperson's Office	1
• CEO's Office	1
• Finance	2
• CEO's Special Assistant and Admin. Assistant Room	2
• Registry	2
• Storage Room	3

#### **- Seven (7) not working Computers**

#### **- Five (5) Specialised Computers (for the Media Monitoring Unit)**

\* The working computers in the Storage Room will be allocated to the Public Education & Awareness Unit and the Investigation Department when those Departments are resumed.

### **- Printers**

#### **• Six (6) working printers:**

- Two (2) HP LaserJet (black and white)
- Two (2) Epson L210 Coloured
- One (1) Lexmark (black and white)
- One (1) New HP LaserJet 3-in-1 printer.

### **- Other**

- One (1) working CCTV Security System with thirteen (13) Cameras
- Three (3) Monitors for the Security System
- One (1) digital Camera (new)
- One (1) working Camcorder
- One (1) working Projector
- Three (3) Microwave Ovens; One (1) not working Microwave
- Two (2) working Televisions; Four (4) not working televisions
- One (1) working Telefax Machine
- One (1) Working Photocopier; Two (2) not working Photocopiers
- Two (2) working Scanners

- One (1) working Risograph
- Thirteen (13) working Air Condition Units
- One (1) working PBX Telephone System with fifteen (15) extensions
- Four (4) working sound Speakers
- One (1) working DVD Player
- One (1) working Inverter
- One (1) working Mixing Board
- One (1) working CD Duplicator/Burner
- Four (4) working Shredders
- One (1) working Coffee Maker
- Four (4) working Fans
- Six (6) working mini Fridges, 1 two-door Refrigerator, 2 not working mini fridges
- One (1) working surround System
- One (1) working Vacuum
- Two (2) working Binding Machines
- Two (2) Guillotines
- One (1) Pressure Washer

## **VEHICLES**

- One (1) working Nissan Navara
- One (1) working Nissan Frontier
- One (1) Minibus (in need of repairs)

## **UTILITIES AND SECURITY**

The ERC has the **sole responsibility** for the payment of charges for:

- Security Service
- Water
- Electricity
- Generator repairs and maintenance, and
- The Pressure Pump System repairs and maintenance on behalf of the ERC, the Rights Commissions and the Integrity Commission which are all presently housed in the Bidco building situated at 66 Peter Rose & Anira Streets, Queenstown.

## **Building**

The ERC maintains the building and its surroundings as well as can be expected.

- The northern, western and southern sides were repainted in the last quarter of 2017. It is expected that the eastern side will be done in the first quarter of 2018 since a proposal was made in the 2018 budget for monies to replace the existing awnings.
- The concrete fence around the building was repaired and repainted
- The car park on the eastern side was resurfaced.

- Work was also completed to raise the western sidewalk in the yard to prevent incidents as a result of the jutting edges from the base of the fire escape stairs.
- A proposal was also made for monies to facilitate the shed over the fire escape stairs to prevent deterioration.
- A new tank was purchased to replace the one that had burst

The building is presently occupied by the following Commissions:

- Ethnic Relations
- Integrity
- Human Rights
- Women & Gender Equality
- Rights of the Child
- Indigenous

**It should be noted that from the time the ERC has been housed in the Bidco Building, the Rates & Taxes were paid by NICIL. However, as advised, effective 2018 the Rates & Taxes are to be paid by the occupants of the building.**

## FINANCE

The Ethnic Relations Commission's (ERC) received a voted provision of eighty-three million four hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars (\$83,482,000.00) for current and capital expenditures. A breakdown of the revised budget is as follows:

