Annual

Report for

2013

Presented by Ms. Alicia Primo, Officer in Charge/

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Date: 7th April, 2014

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# Background

The Competition Commission was established on the 7th May, 2006 with the enactment of the Competition and Fair Trading Act (CFTA) of 2006. The Competition Commission later became known as the Competition and Consumer Affairs Commission (CCAC) with the passing of the Consumer Affairs Act (CAA) in 2011.

The CCAC hereby submits this Annual Report in keeping with section 7 (1) of the First Schedule of the CAA of 2011.

# Role of the Competition and Consumer Affairs Commission

The CCAC operates under two Acts, namely the CFTA of 2006 and the CAA of 2011. According to the CAA of 2011, the objective of the CCAC is to:

“*…promote and protect consumer interests in relation to the supply of goods and services.”*

Similarly, section 3 of the CFTA sets out the objectives of the CFTA namely:

 *“(a) promote, maintain and encourage competition and enhance economic efficiency in production, trade and commerce;*

*b) Prohibit anti-competitive business conduct which prevents, restricts or distorts competition constitutes the abuse of a dominant position in the market; and (c) Promote the welfare and interests of consumers.”*

# Description of Sections of the Commission and Update of Staffing

The CCAC is headed by a Director and comprises of two units, namely a Competition Policy Unit and a Consumer Affairs Unit. Each unit is headed by a department head. Support staff provides support to both units and the Director.

 As of the 1st January 2013, the professional staff of the CCAC comprised of a Director, Competition Policy Officer, Consumer Affairs Officer, Legal Officer and two Economists. Support staff of the CCAC comprised of the Financial Officer, Administrative Officer and Driver. See below a description of the professional staff of the CCAC and update of staff recruitment for support staff in 2013:

Ms Seema Rambaran, the Director was appointed on the 1st November, 2011. Her contract was renewed in 2013 and she later tendered her resignation effective 12th July 2013.

Mr. Imran Khan, the Competition Policy Officer was appointed on the 5th September 2011. He later tendered his resignation ion the 1st November, 2013. This was effective on the 31st October, 2013.

Mr. Clifford Zammett, the Consumer Affairs Officer was appointed on 5th September, 2011. His contract was renewed in 2012 and he has continued in this position.

Ms. Alicia Primo, Legal Officer was appointed in June 11, 2012. Her contract was renewed in 2013 and she has continued in this position.

Ms. Haroon Khan, Economist/ Analyst was appointed on 26th September, 2011. His contract was renewed in 2012 and he has since continued in this position.

Mrs. Yogwattie Sookram Financial Officer/ Analyst was appointed on 6th August, 2012. Her contract was renewed in 2012 and she continued in this position.

## Staff Recruitment in 2013

On September 25th, 2013 the CCAC received the Government of Guyana’s no-objection to employ the Commission’s first ranked candidate, Mr. Kevin Murray. Mr. Murray assumed the role of Driver/Office Assistant on the 1st February 2013.

On February 25th, 2013 the Commission received the Government of Guyana’s no-objection to employ the Commission’s first ranked candidate, Ms. Karissia Couchman. Ms. Couchman assumed the position of Administrative Assistant on April 2nd, 2013.

# Newly Appointed Commissioners in 2013

As of January 2013, the CCAC was currently comprised of 4 (FOUR) Commissioners who were originally appointed by the Government of Guyana in August 2006, and were subsequently re-appointed and functioning, they were: Mr. Ramesh Dookhoo (Chairman), Mr. Keith Burrowes, Mr. Adrian Anamayah and Mr. Patrick Dial.

 On February 6th, 2013 new Commissioners were appointed by Honourable Minister Ali and approved by Cabinet Decision as mandated by the Competition and Fair Trading Act, 2006 (CFTA) and the Consumer Affairs Act, 2011 (CAA). The Commissioners appointed are as follows:

* Mr. Ramesh Dookhoo, Chairman of the Commission
* Mr. Adrian Anamayah
* Mr. Nizam Ali
* Mrs. Sharon Roopchand-Edwards
* Mr. George Seales

# CDB Grant

On January 5th, 2010 the Government of Guyana and the Caribbean Development Bank signed a CART Fund Grant Agreement (No. 21/GUY) – Establishment of the Competition and Consumer Affairs Commission (CCAC) of Guyana. The objective of the project is to assist in strengthening the regulatory and institutional frameworks on competition in Guyana to ensure effective and sound competition policies and rule enforcement. This will ensure that trade liberalisation benefits to be gained by Guyana from CSME, EPA and other trade processes are not undermined by the anticompetitive behaviour of firms. This project’s scheduled terminal date of disbursement was the 31st August, 2013. In December, 2013 the Caribbean Development Bank further extended the terminal date of the grant to be the 31st March, 2014.

Activities under this grant included the employment of two Consultants namely a Consumer Affairs/Lead Technical Advisor and Competition Policy Advisor. These two consultants were responsible for the production of the Rules of Procedure for both the Competition Policy Unit and the Consumer Affairs Unit.

In addition to the engagement of the two consultants, a number of other activities were to be undertaken under the CDB grant agreement, including: (i) procurement of a vehicle, (ii) design and implementation of a database, (iii) training and development activities for the staff as well as a wide range of stakeholders and (iv) public relations activities.

Below is an update of complete and incomplete activities under the grant for 2013:

# Completed Activities

## (i) Technical Assistance for the CCAC

The Commission employed the services of two Consultants in March 2012, namely the Consumer Affairs/Lead Technical Advisor and Competition Policy Advisor. The payments for the Consultants were met by the CDB Grant. The services for the Consultants came to an end in May and June 2013 respectively. The total sum of $31,897,045 was expended for this.

During the Consultancy, the Commission’s staff was trained by both Consultants in regard to the Consumer Protection Act of 2011 and the Competition and Fair Trading Act of 2006. Also, as a requirement of the Consultancy, the Consultants both prepared Rules of Procedures to be used as guidelines for the Commission. The Competition Unit’s Rules of Procedure, was approved by the Minister of Tourism and the Ministry of Legal Affairs. The Consumer Unit’s Rule of Procedure is yet to be approved by the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

###  (ii) Procurement of a Vehicle

As part of the CDB Grant, approval was given for the purchase of a vehicle, which totalled $3,200,000. The sum of $900,000 was disbursed for the maintenance and purchase of gas for the vehicle, and this sum was utilized in 2013.

## (iii) Training and Development of Guyanese Judiciary

On the 1st November 2013, the Commission hosted a Training Seminar for High Court

Judges in Guyana. Consultant K L Menns delivered a presentation based on the “High Court Judges Handbook” prepared by her. The sum of $3,068,000 was expended. The Commissioners of the Commission were not trained at this seminar.

The CDB Grant came to an end in August 2013. At the date the grant was ended, the Commission did not complete following projects in its proposed program.

# Incomplete Activities

There are a number of activities under the Grant that are incomplete due to periodic progress recommendations by the CDB not to proceed with these activities among other things. In December 2013 the CDB announced to the CCAC that it is only willing to accommodate a further extension to the grant agreement that terminated on the 31st August, 2013 to accommodate the design and implementation of a Database and training and development activities by UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) for the Guyana Judiciary and Staff/ Commissioners of the CCAC.

##  (i) Design & Implementation of a Database

The Electronic Database to be developed under the CDB grant agreement is intended to store and make accessible CCAC case information, statistics, and general data relevant to the CFTA and CAA for agency use in investigations and report preparation.

In August 2012, the then Director of the CCAC Ms. Seema Rambaran and Mr. Williams, Economist, National Competitiveness Strategy Unit, drafted and presented to the CDB a Terms of Reference for an IT Consulting Firm to carry out the following main tasks:

1. *A preliminary meeting with the CCAC Director, employees, consultants and IT service provider to map out the business requirements/needs of the CCAC and to advise the CCAC on that basis of the various types of software architecture that can deliver the information system needs as described; and to further consult with the approved CCAC Information and*

*Communication System Protocol document*

1. *Evaluate user needs and existing IT functionality and capabilities of the CCAC and provide advice on the type of machinery and equipment that will be needed to support the*

*CCAC’s information and communication systems;*

1. *Support the CCAC in the procurement and installation of the approved equipment; this shall include a technical specification document that outlines the various equipment and equipment specifications to support the type of information system designed for use by the*

*CCAC*

1. *Design and develop data models and database architecture for the management of cases to facilitate competition and consumer protection investigations*
2. *In the post-implementation period, for an agreed time frame, monitor server logs to see the most popular pages and downloads and generate regular reports for CCAC; consult with users to assess system performance and make modifications as required.*
3. *Design, construct, test and implement the database system and modify accordingly as user needs become more clearly defined for case management*
4. *Design, construct, test and implement an internal knowledge management system to store and maintain a library of legal and non-legal resources; and modify accordingly as user needs become more clearly defined*
5. *Prepare user manuals to guide users of the ICT system*
6. *A post-implementation review of all ICT systems, to ensure compliance with database architecture, including anti-virus software, any other potential security threats and print services*
7. *Provide training and technical support in the use of newly developed applications and IT systems designed by the IT Consultant;*

This TOR was developed based on discussions with the Barbados Competition Commission,

Jamaica Competition Commission and Competition Policy Advisor, K.L. Menns. It was developed as outlined above in order to encompass not just the database but a wider range of IT strengthening activities, based on the experiences of counterpart regional bodies.

It was estimated that the above TOR would cost about USD 100,000 – USD 150,000. The CDB has budgeted USD 55,000 for database design and operationalization.

The CDB agreed that the CCAC needs a pre-feasibility or needs assessment done in order to determine the type and specifications of the database it will require. However, they are of the opinion that this can be done for free through one of Guyana’s Government counterpart agency’s IT Departments.

Mr. Williams and then Director of the CCAC (Seema Rambaran) engaged IT specialists identified in the Ministry of Finance and Guyana Revenue Authority. Both sets of specialists indicated that such an assessment would incur a cost.

Mr. Williams and then Director of the CCAC (Seema Rambaran) had advised the CDB of same and they have indicated they would speak to the donor agency, Department for International Development (DFID) and attempt to justify using more funds to carry out the assessment, database design and operationalization.

During a meeting in January 2013 with representatives of the CDB in Guyana, the then Director of the CCAC (Seema Rambaran) and Mr. Williams reminded the CDB representatives of their commitment to discuss this matter with DFID.

The Electronic Database to be developed under the CDB grant agreement is intended to store and make accessible CCAC case information, statistics, and general data relevant to the CFTA and CAA for agency use in investigations and report preparation.

In March 2013 a needs assessment was conducted by Digital Architecture. A report, produced at no cost to the Commission, outlining a proposed database structure, including hardware, software, technical specifications and training needs is being prepared and was be submitted to the Commission to assist it in moving along the process of the database development.

On the 31st March, 2014, the CDB revised the draft TOR submitted by the Commission and estimated the cost of the consultancy to $38,967 with 10% contingency.

## (ii) Training and Development Activities for Stakeholders

The CDB noted in the meeting of January 2013 the importance of ensuring that the legal fraternity, the judiciary and parliamentarians are trained in competition law in Guyana.

It was discussed that external training facilitators from the United Nations Council for

Trade and Development’s (UNCTAD) Department of Competition Law and Consumer Protection should be sought for training of these stakeholders.

Then Director of the CCAC (Seema Rambaran) was tasked with writing to UNCTAD to establish the cost of having such training done in Guyana. At the close of 2013 this training was not able to be completed. In December, 2013, Ms. Alicia Primo Legal Officer of the CCAC was reassigned this task of providing a cost estimate to CDB on this training. UNCTAD has since provided a cost estimate for this, with proposed dates in April 2014. The suggested dates submitted by UNCTAD were not approved by the Chancellor of Judiciary as of the 31st March, 2014.

## (iii) Antitrust Economist Course

At the close of 2013, the Staff/Commissioners of CCAC were not able to complete the Antitrust Economics Course hosted by Competition Policy International (CPI), as a result of delay in the final two lectures. In January, 2014, the final two lectures were completed and the Staff / Commissioners namely, Alicia Primo and Sharon Roopchand-Edwards became eligible for the Certificate of Completion. Ms. Alicia Primo and Mr. Eusi Anderson from Ministry of Legal Affairs were subsequently awarded the ‘Certificate of the Subject,” for their successful completion of an examination in Antitrust Economics in February 2014.

# Public Relations Activities

With funds from the National Budget allocation 2013, the Commission executed a number of public relations activities. Below is a description of a number of activities conducted by the Commission from January- December, 2013.

## January 2013

**Auto Seminar-**On January 16th, 2013 the CCAC hosted its first public awareness seminar for the year. This seminar was geared towards the Auto Industry and sought to highlight the provisions of the Consumer Affairs Act, 2011 (CAA), most applicable to the industry, namely the duties of suppliers-including providing information to consumers, offering refunds, warranties, in addition to unfair contract terms and unfair trade practices.

It is apparent to the CCAC that further work must be undertaken with the Auto Industry in order to ensure compliance with the legislation.

## March 2013

**TV and Radio Programs -** From March 11 through 15th, 2013 the Commission participated in eight television interviews and one radio interview to discuss the mandate of the Commission in relation to consumer protection. The Commission was able to raise awareness about Guyana’s Consumer Affairs Act and World Consumer Rights Day (March 15th, 2013) through such mediums.

On March 11th, 2013 the Commission began a process of informing businesses and consumers of their rights and responsibilities in relation to return of goods and the return of defective goods. A Circular containing all the relevant information was presented as a public service announcement- in all of the local newspapers. It was also sent to numerous businesses throughout Georgetown and the surrounding regions. The dissemination of information related to return of goods in Guyana is an ongoing process.

**Adoption of Guidelines-** On March 15th, 2013 Honourable Minister Ali launched the Commission’s Guidelines on Return of Goods and the Return of Defective Goods at a press conference held at the International Conference Center, Lilliendaal. This Guideline was drafted by the Consumer Affairs Advisor, Massimiliano Gangi, in collaboration with the Commission. The information in the Guidelines builds upon the circular and details, in plain language, the requirements of a supplier of goods in Guyana.

**World Consumer Rights Day-** On March 15th, 2013 the Commission also took part in a Symposium presented by the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce related to World Consumer Rights Day. In addition to the Commission’s presentation, there were presentations by representatives of the Guyana National Bureau of Standards and Food and Drug Administration, about fifty representatives participated in this informative session.

**Public Procurement Seminar**- On March 20th, 2013 the CCAC hosted an awareness raising seminar for public procurement officials. This seminar focused on the Competition and Fair Trading Act, 2006 (CFTA), bid rigging in public procurement, its economic impact, favourable conditions for bid rigging to occur within and how to detect such anticompetitive practices. It went on to discuss the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) Guidelines for Fighting Bid Rigging in Public Procurement.

The session was attended by about twenty representatives involved in public procurement throughout the various Ministries within the Government of Guyana.

## April 2013

**Laparkan Training-** On April 10th, 2013 a training session was presented by the Commission to staff of Laparkan Holdings Limited on the Consumer Affairs Act, 2011 (CAA) specifically the duties of suppliers. This session was attended by about fifteen senior staff of Laparkan Holdings Limited and the feedback after the training was positive.

## May 2013

**Linden Town Week-** During a public awareness seminar held May 2nd through 5th, the Commission’s Consumer Awareness Newsletters were disseminated to participants in Linden, during Linden Town Week, apprising them of their rights as consumers and responsibilities as suppliers of goods and services.

The Commission had sought to undertake a public awareness seminar at the University of Guyana. This session would have been presented to students of the faculty of social science and law. The topics to be covered would have included an overview of the Commission, the main provisions of the Competition and Fair Trading Act, 2006 (CFTA) and the Consumer Affairs Act, 2011 (CAA). This seminar was supposed to be early May 2013, however, as a result of final examinations, the University decided they would prefer for it to take place either later in May or early June 2013. This event was however not completed at the close of 2013. The CCAC has, however, itemized this event for 2014 and also several follow up sessions with the University of Guyana.

The first follow-up session will expand its discussion to delve more deeply into the provisions of the legislations.

This second session will also seek to discuss the economic analysis that is involved in conducting competition law investigations.

These two sessions will serve a dual purpose; one to sensitise the public about the work of the Commission, the laws that the Commission administers, and how it affects the general public. The Commission will also use this forum to increase the pool of candidates qualified for potential employment with the Commission.

## June 2013

**Lethem Outreach-** A visit was made to Lethem during the period of June 20 – 22, 2013 by the CCAC along with the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) and representatives of the Department of Industry (MINTIC).

The objective of the outreach was:

* To educate residents and the members of the Lethem Chamber of Commerce about the Goals of the Competition Law and to examine infringements under the CFTA.
* To educate the residents and members of the Lethem Chamber of Commerce about their rights and responsibilities under the CAA.
* To follow-up on an investigation initiated by GNBS and forwarded to the CCAC with regard to defective shoes supplied to a retailer in Georgetown.

Interactive sessions were conducted with the residents of Lethem via a public meeting and seminar with the members of the Lethem Chamber of Commerce. Approximately sixty (60) residents were in attendance at the public meeting.

Commissioner of the CCAC, Mr. George Seales, made a presentation to the residence about the history and importance of consumer protection in Guyana and the region. He also encouraged the residence to renew efforts to form a Lethem Consumer Association, an initiative that was initiated by Consumer Rights Activist, Ms. Eileen Cox. He emphasized that this will better enable them to access the services of CCAC and other organizations in Georgetown.

 An extensive presentation was made to the Lethem Chamber of Commerce with regard to the Goals of the Competition Law and an examination of infringements under the CFTA. Hypothetical scenarios were used to explain and illustrate the various anti-competitive conduct prohibited by the CFTA. The nature of the investigations and principles and procedures used by the Commission was also discussed.

## July 2013

**Laparkan Training-** At the request of the Laparkan Group of Companies, the CCAC conducted a training focused on Consumer Protection that targeted the management staff of the company. The CCAC representatives comprised of Mr. Clifford Zammett (Consumer Affairs Officer), Mr. Haroon Khan (Economist /Analyst) and Ms. Alicia Primo (Legal Officer). Approximately thirty-five persons were in attendance. The team presented on the following topics: 1) Misleading Advertisement, 2) Unfair Trade Practices, and 3) Unfair Contracts.

## October 2013

**GuyExpo 2013*-*** During 3-6th October 2013, the CCACparticipated inGuyExpo 2013 at the National Exhibition Site Sophia. The CCAC designed pens and two banners for this activity. The total cost of participation in this event amounted to $472,146 (GYD).

## December, 2013

**Live Call in Programs-** On the 17th and 19th of December, 2013 the Commission hosted two live ‘call in’ programs on NCN under the theme ‘What Consumers Need to Know.’ Moderator Andrea Joseph and members of the panel, namely Ms. Alicia Primo and Mr. Clifford Zammett spoke on general consumer protection issues and basic rights covered under the Consumer Affairs Act of 2011. Consumers got an opportunity to call in and ask questions on the discussion both evenings.

# Capacity Building

## July 2013

**Competition Law and Policy Seminar, Geneva, Switzerland attended by Mr. Ramesh Dookhoo Chairman -** The Thirteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Groups of Experts on Competition Law and Policy (IGE) was held from Monday July 8th to Friday July 12th, 2013. The IGE held a special session on Thursday and Friday 11th and 12th July, to discuss a draft proposal for the revision of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection. The IGE is an annual meeting which brings together representatives of Governments and in particular Competition and Consumer Agencies and other stakeholders interested in the issues being discussed, including academia, civil society and the business community.

The consultations during the Thirteenth Session of the IGE focused on the following topics:

* The Impact of Cartels on the Poor
* Prioritization and resource allocation as a tool for agency effectiveness
* Modalities and procedures for international cooperation in competition cases involving more than one country
* Voluntary Peer Reviews of Competition Law and Policy of Nicaragua, Pakistan and Ukraine
* Review of capacity building activities extended to young competition agencies

These topics were relevant to Guyana’s Competition and Consumer Affairs Commission (CCAC) in light of Competition Policy and Law, being a new area of interest within Guyana and the CARICOM region.

The discussions on the topics identified guidelines and practical ways to feed experiences into capacity-building activities for interested competition agencies in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on Consumer Protection will assist countries in achieving or maintaining adequate protection for their population, encourage high levels of ethical conduct for those engaged in the production and distribution of goods and services to consumers, assist countries in curbing abusive business practices by all enterprises at the national and international levels which adversely affect consumers, and further international cooperation in the field of consumer protection. Discussions held will help to establish a relationship between Guyana’s Competition and Consumer Affairs Commission (CCAC) and other Commission’s sharing similar experiences, providing for an open dialogue and possible solutions to some of the problems faced.

## June 2013

**Contract and Procurement Fraud workshop attended by Economist/Analyst, Ms. Sherifah Hussain-** This workshop was held for the period June 5th 2013 to June 6, 2013 at Grand Coastal Inn. The workshop was hosted by the Caribbean Institute of Forensic Accounting (CIFA) located in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The facilitator, Mr. Stephon Grey is a Certified Fraud Examiner, Certified Internal Control Auditor and Forensic Certified Public Accountant (CPA). The workshop focused on bid rigging and forensic compliance testing in contracts.

## June 2013

**Procurement workshop attended by Finance Officer/ Analyst, Mrs. Yogwattie Sookram-** On 28 June, 2013 the Ministry of Tourism, Industry & Commerce held a Procurement Workshop, based on the Procurement Act of Guyana that governs procurement in the Government Sector. This workshop was hosted by Christopher Vandeyar, Procurement Officer attached to the Small Business Bureau. The training was primarily focused on the process of procurement of goods using the Request for Quotation (RQF) method. The areas covered in the training were:

* Theory of Public Procurement
* Procurement Act 2003
* Threshold of Public Procurement (GoG)
* Example of Procurement Activities (RFQ)

The training dealt primarily with the procurement of goods, in accordance with the Procurement Act 2003.

## July 2013

**Seminar on Building National Economies through Local Content** - Demeter Developmenthosted a webinar on “*Building National Economies Through Local Content*”. The seminar was delivered by Ms. Jillian Lilico. Local content is the total spend retained in host countries through products made and services provided by local resources and companies. As companies interested in drilling for Oil and Gas in the Guyana Basin, come to Guyana, policy makers, NGOs, financiers and local businesses are well placed to examine emerging themes in global local content development and management so that local capability to supply the Oil and Gas industry and the wider region is promoted and developed. The seminar focused on:

* The economic rationale for local content
* The structure and operating models for the Oil and Gas supply chain.
* Legal and organizational infrastructure used to regulate local content.
* Maximizing local content in contracting and procurement
* Overview of supplier development approaches
* Components of an effective local content infrastructure

**Seminar on Utility Regulation**

Demeter Developmenthosted a webinar on “*Principles of Utility Regulation: A short*

*Overview of methods used by utility regulators while examining the implications of their approaches*”. Demeter Developmentis a UK-registered consultancy company which specializes in the provision of expertise to countries, multinationals and other agents that are committed to realizing local economic development. The Presentation was made by Dr. Andrew Lilico. The objectives of the webinar were:

* To set out the key principles of utility regulation, as practiced in Europe and the UK in particular;
* To explain when and why utility regulation is needed; and
* To discuss the central thought experiment and key building blocks of a price control.

## August 2013

**National Economic Forum -**The then Director (ag) Mr. Imran Khan, Legal Officer Ms. Alicia Primo and Economist Ms. Sherifah Hussain attended the National Economic Forum on 14th and 15th August 2013, under the theme “*Promoting Economic Growth Through Innovation, Diversification and Partnership*”. The Legal Officer and Economist participated in meetings leading up to the forum, in the capacity as rapporteurs for the groups; Human Resource and Manpower Planning, and Manufacturing and Standards.

## October, 2013

**M& A Legislation Seminar-** On the 31st October, 2013, the then Director (ag) Mr. Imran Khan and Legal Officer Ms. Alicia Primo participated in a seminar hosted by the Support for Competitiveness program of the Ministry of Tourism on the proposed draft Mergers and Acquisitions Legislation prepared by Consultant, Ms. K L. Menns. The CCAC was requested to prepare its comments on the proposed draft legislation which it did on the 10th December, 2013.

## December 2013

**Website Training-** On the 30th December, 2014 Digital Architecture commenced training on content development for the proposed CCAC website. All staff participated in this training.

# Other activities 2013

**Holiday Dinner-** On the 16th December, 2013 a Holiday Dinner was held by the CCAC at the New Thriving Restaurant. This event saw attendees from the CCAC, Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Legal Affairs.

**Rehabilitation of Building**- the National Budget allocation 2013 to the CCAC to undertake the rehabilitation of the Commission’s Building and the purchase of 1 Server amounted to the total sum of **$7,500,000**. The Server will be used to network all of the computers, printers and provide a portal for internet access for the staff of the Agency. It will also house the Database and provide access to confidential case related information. The rehabilitation was completed and the defects period was subsequently completed on 31st March, 2014. The CCAC was able to complete the purchase of a the server in February 2014.

# Consumer Complaints

The total amount of consumer complaints received by the CCAC for 2013 amounted to **seventy three (73)**. Below is a description of the cases received and status. Cases were closed by the CCAC as a result of insufficient evidence presented and complainants taking their matters to court.

## Description of Cases

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Automobile  | Household Items  | Personal Effects  | Service  | Miscellaneous   |
| 19  | 21  | 14  | 6  | 13   |
|  **Status**  |  |  |  |
| Resolved  |  | Ongoing  |  | Closed   |  |
| 34  | 28  | 11   |

**Pie Chart Showing Percentage of Resolved**

**Cases Etc.**

Resolved

Ongoing

Closed

# Competition Complaints

The total amount of competition complaints received by the CCAC for 2013 amounted to **three (3)**. These cases are presently ongoing.

The Competition Unit has a number of outstanding complaints for 2011 and 2012 which are also still ongoing.

Below is a description of the new complaints received for 2013.

## Description of Cases

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Flour Industry  | Beverage Industry   | Aviation Industry  |
| 1  | 1   | 1  |

# Issues and Challenges in 2013

The Commission faced a number of challenges in 2013, the most significant of which was the resignation of key senior staff members. Another challenge faced was the nonattendance of one Commissioner at a number of administrative meetings.

The high voltage to the CCAC building is of serious concern to the safety of staff members. During the year sparks were noticed by staff in the kitchen area. The high voltage has additionally caused all air conditioning units, one server and two desktop computers and several UPS batteries to be damaged. Thus the CCAC’s only has five working computer systems that are in full use. The high voltage to the CCAC building had resulted in the CCAC resorting to the use of fans. This was later found to be inadequate and the CCAC with permission from the Hon. Minister Ifaan Ali moved to the bottom flat of the building in the latter part of 2013.

The CCAC’s website was hacked which caused it to be taken down by the wedsite developer, Digital Architecture. Thus the CCAC is unable publicized information as it relates to the CFTA and CAA, Circulars for the Competition Policy Unit and Consumer Affairs Unit respectively. Additionally, consumers are unable to access the website to file a complaint.

# Issues to be addressed in 2014

The major issue that needs to be resolved in 2014 is the appointment of a full complement of junior and senior staff to the Secretariat of the Commission. Without these appointments the Commission will not benefit from adequate technical and support services in order to carry out its mandate. As mentioned earlier, the Director, Competition Policy Officer and Economist have resigned. The low compensation packages offered by the Commisson is an area of concern, therefore, reviewing the salary structure, filling the present vacancies and possibly creating new positions with better compensation packages is a high priority item. A local human resource expert has been hired in January 2014 by the Commission, to set strategic Human Resource policies, procedures, emoluments and other aspects.

A larger headquarters is needed to facilitate staff increase at the Commission. During 2014, Mergers and Acquisition Act is expected to be gazetted and CCAC is the recommended agency appointed to regulate this Act, hence the need for additional staff and the creation of new positions. The Commission therefore needs to deliver by additionally equipping itself in the areas of wider human resource personnel and physical infrastructure.

With the appointment of the new Commissioners, the CCAC has been able to have a quorum for administrative meetings and hearings. However, improved attendance of the one absentee Commissioner is a high priority item.

Digital Architecture has commenced its training on content development for the CCAC’s website on the 30th December, 2014. Thus the CCAC is expected to produce its website in 2014.

To address the high voltage to the CCAC building Guyana Power and Light had recommended that a transformer be bought and installed on an electricity pole in the compound, outside of the CCAC’s building. This will ensure that CCAC receives a direct breakdown of electricity that will be able to accommodate both 110 &240 electrical equipment throughout the entire building. The CCAC has commenced addressing this very important issue in 2014.

Additionally continuious training is an area of concern and needs to be available and provided to all staff members.

# Statement of audited Accounts January- December 2013

See Annex See Annex

ANNEX