



ANNUAL 2021 REPORT

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62nd AGM

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the 62nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Employers' Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA), will be held, as follows:

Friday, 8th December 2023 | 9:30 a.m.

Location: Online

(Further details to be posted on the ECA's website, www.ecatt.org)

AGM AGENDA

- Reading of the Notice Convening the 62nd AGM
- Chairman's Remarks
- Confirmation of Minutes of the 61st AGM
- Chief Executive Officer's Report
- Auditor's Report
- Overview of Financial Statements
- Appointment of Auditor
- Election of Directors
- Other Business
- Vote of Thanks

by Order of the Board of Directors, ECA
Mr. Ronald Ramlogan, Secretary

For Registration, please contact:

Mr. Nirmal Maraj | 675-9388/5873 ext. 257
Email: nmaraj@ecatt.org | communications@ecatt.org
or **Register Online:** www.ecatt.org



OUR MANDATE

To provide employers with informed innovative and transformational representation at the organisational, national, and international levels in order to ensure the strength and success of the employer community for the socio-economic well-being of the nation.



Chairman's Message

Resilience and Renewal: Navigating Adversity

Esteemed colleagues and valued Members of the ECA.

It is indeed a distinct honour and privilege for the opportunity to serve this organization in my capacity as Chairman of the ECA. Success is an uphill task and the greater the success the steeper the climb. As I pen this message, I am extremely proud of the significant amount of work we have been able to accomplish during this time as we continued to build on the foundation that has been set for us in years past. In this regard, consistent with commitment of the Board of Directors to uphold the highest standards of integrity and corporate governance, I am pleased to share some brief reflections on behalf of the Board on the performance and activities of our Association for the year 2021.

It is no secret and certainly not a surprise that 2021 remained a trying period for us, both as an organisation, as a business community, but also as a nation. We entered the second year of an ongoing pandemic and despite our best efforts as a national community to curtail the spread of COVID-19, there were some sobering moments where we saw infections soar, which required certain responses to mitigate the impact on our healthcare system and to save lives. This in turn had a substantial impact on business activity to varying degrees as public health measures and restrictions were reintroduced.

Despite these challenging circumstances, we also witnessed moments of profound tenacity, resilience, and innovation. I therefore want to take this opportunity to especially commend the business sector, and the many associations and organisations who recognised the need to step up and played a crucial role in adding support to the various public health campaigns at that time with the objective of

moving the wheels of the economy and restarting economic activity once again. I also want to acknowledge and congratulate the ECA team for their contributions and insights in shaping social dialogue and public awareness as it pertained to the implementation of health measures within the workplace and the management of attendant workplace issues.

As the national conversation increasingly shifted towards the topic of vaccination, we advocated for a collaborative approach with all stakeholders – Government, business, labour and civil society, with fair and balanced consultations in the interest of getting people back to work and reopening businesses in the safest and most practical way possible. In fact, we demonstrated our commitment to such an approach by engaging in bi-partite discussions with Trade Union Federations to find an appropriate and mutually beneficial pathway to achieve these objectives. I therefore extend a special thanks to our social partners for their willingness to engage in dialogue, no matter how difficult it became at times.

Consistent with the need for resilience and tenacity, which seemed to permeate many areas of the national landscape, we also sought to further accelerate and embed some of the innovative measures we embarked on in 2020. In this regard, our hybrid system of work and the increased usage of digital platforms remained a core feature of the manner in which work and services were delivered, and you can expect more innovations in the short term.

We sought and established strategic partnerships with local, regional and international organisations to assist with some of our priorities in 2021, and to meet the needs of employers at that time, which included the Caribbean Employers' Confederation (CEC), Bureau for Employers' Activities at the International Labour Organization (ACTEMP), German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), the ILO's Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean, the ILO's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), among others. I am particularly pleased with the work that was done to address the problem of gender-based violence, which we have long recognised as a pervasive issue in our society, and which can also manifest in several ways at the workplace. Through our collaboration with the ILO and UNFPA as an implementing partner of the Spotlight Initiative, we were able to take a multi-sectoral and multi-societal approach to develop communication campaigns and training workshops which targeted business organisations across Trinidad and Tobago. I must



From L-R: Spotlight Champion - Dominic Kalipersad, Chairman - Keston Nancoo, CEO (Interim) - Stephanie Fingal and Spotlight Champion - Khamal Georges

also take this opportunity to thank the various organisations who collaborated with us to make this happen, such as:

- University of the West Indies
- Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Equal Opportunity Commission
- Gender- Based Violence Unit of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service
- PEAPSL Consultancy
- Cipriani College of Labour & Co-Operative Studies
- National Trade Union Centre of Trinidad and Tobago

I am heartened by the efforts made to continuously engage, inform and sensitise our membership and the wider public as the ECA continued to weather the storm despite a twenty percent (20%) decrease in revenue compared to the previous year. On behalf of the Board, I must commend the ECA's staff for their hard work and commitment. There were many continued sacrifices that had to be made in 2021 and they were able to endure, relying on creativity and ingenuity, as they sought to ensure that services and support continued to be available to you, our members.

I also want to extend our deepest gratitude towards our long-standing partners, the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the ongoing support and guidance, with valuable developmental and engagement initiatives and activities allowing us to position the voice of our employers in international dialogue and decisions. Finally, and most importantly, I extend my deepest thanks to you, our membership, for your support during what continued to be a defining period in the long history of the ECA. I therefore look to the future with hope, even as the world is changing rapidly and crises are no longer contained to singular events. However, we must always remember that calm waters do not build robust organisations and robust leaders.

In this regard, we continue onwards, driven by the hope of prosperity and success. My promise to you remains the same. We will continue working on your behalf, and we will continue to be the voice for your interests with the ultimate goal of achieving national development for our society.

Yours Sincerely,

Keston Nancoo
CHAIRMAN




January 7th, 2021: ECA Chairman, Keston Nancoo, discusses the economic and labour market outlook for 2021 on TV6's Morning Edition

Board of Directors 2021



KESTON NANCOO, **CHAIRMAN**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Member Company: Guardian Group



FARZAN ALI, **VICE CHAIRMAN**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Member Company: Trinidad Tissues Ltd.



NEIL DERRICK, **DIRECTOR**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Chairman, Employers Solution Centre
Member Company: Replete Support Services



RUBEN MC SWEEN, **DIRECTOR**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Member Company: Eve Financial Services



GISELLE ESTRADA, **DIRECTOR**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Member Company: Republic Bank Ltd.



LENNON BALLAH-LASHLEY, **DIRECTOR**



GWENDOLINE MC LAREN, **DIRECTOR**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Director, Employers Solution Centre
Member Company: GCO Consulting Ltd.



NARENDRA KIRPALANI, **DIRECTOR**
Member Company: Interior/Exterior Decorators Ltd.



UMESH RAMPERSAD, **DIRECTOR**
Member Company: Westshore Medical



HAYDEN NEWTON, **DIRECTOR**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Director, Employers Solution Centre
Member Company: Airports Authority



NAIEMA MOHAMMED, **DIRECTOR**
Member Company: Chief Brand Products



EARL WILSON, **DIRECTOR**
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Vice Chairman, Employers Solution Centre
Member Company: BEI Ltd.



CHUCK STUART, **DIRECTOR**
Member Company: ICONS Co. Ltd.



MARIO AMOS, **DIRECTOR**
Member Company: Green Engineering



OLIVIA CONSTANTINE, **DIRECTOR**
Member Company: Bermudez Services Ltd.




STEPHANIE FINGAL, **CEO (INTERIM)**

The ECA's Board of Directors is constituted by professionals from its member organisations. They also serve on several sub-committees, each of which focuses on specific areas integral to the ECA's operations and its ability to execute its mandate to the membership and the wider national community.

2021

...IN NUMBERS

30+



Stakeholder consultations and online dialogue sessions on employer related areas ranging from Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), COVID-19 and workplace vaccinations, climate change and just transitions, business resilience and sustainable recovery, migration and migrant labour, the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work, and various legislative amendments/updates.



120+

Participation in digital meetings, conferences and sensitisation sessions with strategic partners from across local, regional and international organisations. Capacity was developed in areas related to social protection and decent work, the elimination of child labour, mental health and wellness within the workplace, youth development, apprenticeships, occupational health and safety, human trafficking and gender- based violence. Host and co-hosts institutions included: IOE, ILO, PAHO, TTMA, NTA, UWI and other training providers, various UN agencies, various Ministries and the CEC, among others.

Member companies representing all industries and sectors in Trinidad and Tobago

770+



24+

Media engagements, statements or engagements with media personnel to discuss a variety of world-of-work or socio-economic issues. A national campaign was launched via social media and national television to sensitise the employer community about GBV as an urgent workplace issue.

20+



Free membership engagement forums and dissemination of knowledge-sharing tools including advisory bulletins, summary reports of industrial court judgments, engagement/ consultation surveys and sensitisation sessions relating to COVID-19 and workplace vaccinations, business recovery and gender-based violence (GBV).



70+

Training sessions on various workplace topics, including retrenchment, remote work, employment contracts, supervisory management and leadership, business resilience, performance management, GBV in the workplace, writing IR letters, customer service, discipline and more.



20+

New members welcomed into the ECA family!



Chief Executive Officer’s 2021 Report

Reflecting on 2021, we saw a continuation of what has been described countless times as an unprecedented period in history. While this descriptive is now ubiquitous with 2020 and 2021, it is important to contextualise our operating environment during this time and all of the concomitant measures that became necessary to protect lives and livelihoods during a global pandemic, all of which directly impacted our business and a significant majority of our membership. Much of this impact was described in my 2020 report.

Notwithstanding, the ECA and its subsidiary, the Employers Solution Centre, continued to provide business operations guidance and people management support to its members and the wider employer community, not just in respect of the issues attendant with the COVID-19 pandemic, but in other employer-employee related areas. Together with you our members, the ECA team remained focused on its mission and mandate, advancing some of our policy priorities, while ensuring a continuity of service delivery and strengthening our engagement with local and international organisations, even during periods of mandatory lockdowns and an eventual state of emergency.

As the single largest representative Association of employers in Trinidad & Tobago, our powerful and balanced voice must continue to be heard in public dialogue on issues of national importance, which under the leadership of my predecessor, this drive for wider communication with targeted audiences also increased.

We recognise that business owners often find themselves on the frontline of critical issues of the day, and the support of the ECA is a necessary tool for empowering them as leaders and managers to take meaningful action towards addressing these

issues. A key highlight of 2021 was our partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Trinidad and Tobago for the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, a global multi-year programme funded by the European Union (EU) in collaboration with the United Nations, geared towards ending all forms of gender-based violence, which I will speak to further in this report.

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the ECA team for their enthusiastic contributions and dedication to the work of the organisation during such a crucial moment in the history of our existence, and what continued to be a very difficult year for so many of our members in many ways. I am also thankful to the members of the Board of Directors whose valuable guidance was instrumental in seeing the organisation through “stormy waters”. Lastly, but most importantly, I wish to express our deepest gratitude to you our members for your continued belief in us and your tangible support of all the work and projects we undertook with you in mind. As we look ahead, the ECA remains committed to representing you with excellence to build a stronger employer community and a more resilient society.

I am now pleased to present to you a brief report on our activities and operations for 2021.

ADDRESSING GBV IN THE WORKPLACE: THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE

In 2021, the ECA commenced official work on a partnership started in 2020 between the UNFPA and the ILO under the ambit of the Spotlight Initiative. The Spotlight Initiative is a joint EU-UN Global project that was launched in 2020 within the Caribbean Region, recognised as the single largest globally funded project aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Throughout the years, the ECA has recognised the ongoing threat posed by various forms of gender-based violence (GBV) within the workplace and has advocated for workplaces free from all forms of violence. Regional and national data show that one in three women stand to be impacted by GBV within their lifetime and further data has highlighted that almost fifty per cent (50%) of women who experience this type of violence are employed.

There have been some commendable efforts made at the national level to introduce related policies and guidelines in Trinidad and Tobago, such as the Equal Opportunity Commission (Guidelines on



Employers'
Consultative
Association



Spotlight
Initiative
To eliminate violence
against women and girls



STOP
GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE

#SpotlightEndViolence
#TTEmployersAgainstViolence



If you or someone you know may be a victim of violence or harassment at work or at home, there is support available. Talk to a Supervisor/Manager, or contact the following hotlines:

Domestic Violence Hotline
800-SAVE (7283)

Gender-Based Violence Unit (TTPS)
555, 999, 911
WhatsApp: 482-4279

Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Day: 624-0204
Night: 324-8606

Families in Action
628-2333



More Info



Employers'
Consultative
Association

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace) and the Ministry of Labour (A National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment in Trinidad and Tobago), however, policies relating to GBV at workplaces are not commonplace, particularly among small and medium businesses that operate in rural communities or in close proximity to them.

It was within this context through the Spotlight Initiative that the ECA sought to increase awareness and implement policy level change among the employer community within Trinidad and Tobago through a national sensitisation campaign, workplace training for the business community and the development of a Model GBV Workplace policy.

National Sensitisation Campaign
“CHANGE D CULTURE”

The ECA sought to build momentum within the private sector by issuing a call to action against GBV and VAWG. The first phase of the ECA's national campaign entailed the launch of a series of images on social media, which were developed around key themes pertaining to increased sensitisation, measures to manage GBV within the workplace, and resources that exist at the national level. These messages were designed as a call to action and Employers were encouraged to engage in real time with our campaign via the hashtag #TTEmployersAgainstViolence.

These messages were also accompanied by further resources for learning about GBV as a societal and workplace issue. Employers were also made aware of the various national agencies they can reach out to seek further aid.

The second phase of the ECA's campaign involved the production of two (2) videos which were aired on national television and disseminated via our social media platforms. These videos sought to raise awareness about GBV as both a national and workplace problem and the measures employers can put in place to address this. In designing and developing these videos, we utilised two “Spotlight Champions” which allowed for a higher degree of visibility to our campaign.

Samples Images from our Social Media Campaign



Addressing and Managing
GBV in the Workplace
AN EMPLOYER’S WORKSHOP

Our second intervention activity under the Spotlight Initiative entailed free sensitisation training to employers across Trinidad and Tobago. This training was delivered via a two-part online workshop which offered employers training in a variety of areas, such as recognising signs of GBV and its manifestation within the workplace, how to implement relevant policies, procedures and support systems, as well as other innovative methods to promote a violence free workplace.

Participants were able to benefit from the expertise of facilitators drawn from various

organisations, including the University of the West Indies, the Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago, the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Equal Opportunity Commission, the ILO's Caribbean Office, PEAPSL Consulting, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the Employers' Solution Centre.

These workshops targeted small, medium and large organisations across the breadth of Trinidad and Tobago, with over sixty (60) participating organisations and over 8,000 employees benefitting from the knowledge shared or measures that were implemented by these organisations.

Policy Intervention
A MODEL WORKPLACE POLICY
ON GBV, IPV & SH

Finally, our third intervention entailed the development of a Model Workplace Policy on

Gender- Based Violence, Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Sexual Harassment (SH). This policy was unique in several ways. Firstly, it is the first workplace policy of its kind in Trinidad and Tobago to make specific reference to Gender-Based Violence. Secondly, it was developed in a collaborative manner with the National Trade Union Centre of Trinidad and Tobago, with additional technical support from the International Labour Office and the T&T Office of United Nation's Population Fund. Finally, this policy was promoted as a “tool for change” outlining a standard of behaviour for all stakeholders within organisations, the respective rights of employees, along with guidance to supervisors and managers in addressing GBV in compliance with relevant national laws and other existing standards.

This policy was rolled out to the ECA's membership during a free workshop, where participants received training on the contents of the policy as well as guidelines for implementation



TOP LEFT: Members of the ECA's team who were featured in our sensitisation video [L-R] - Keston Blake, Nirmal Maraj, Stephanie Fingal, Natasha Samms, Shantala Reece-Whiteman.

TOP RIGHT: ECA's Spotlight Champion, Khamal Georges, recording his message to “Change d Culture” in studio.

BOTTOM RIGHT: ECA's Spotlight Champion, Dominic Kalipersad, preparing for a video shoot.



within their organisations. This was further complemented by two additional guided training sessions, where members were able to seek further guidance on their specific implementation strategies.

Engagement with Other Stakeholders

The ECA collaborated with several stakeholders throughout the duration of this project. These stakeholders consisted of other Spotlight Implementing Partners, independent organisations, consultants and designated Spotlight Champions.

Implementing Partners:

- Institute for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies
- Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- The National Trade Union Centre of Trinidad and Tobago
- Cipriani College of Labour & Co-Operative Studies

Independent Organisations and Consultants:

- Equal Opportunity Commission
- Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Gender-Based Violence Unit
- PEAPSL Consulting
- Full Circle Animation Studio
- CariWebs Ltd
- ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean

Spotlight Champions:

- Mr. Khamal Georges
- Dr. Dominic Kalipersad

As an implementing partner, the ECA was able to further advance its advocacy efforts towards

addressing GBV as a workplace issue. Furthermore, we were able to engage with our membership through various interventions as well as forge and deepen relationships with local and international stakeholders. Our project saw targeted training being offered to over sixty (60) organisations across Trinidad and Tobago, including some in rural communities such as Rio Claro/Mayaro, many of whom did not have prior existing policies which specifically spoke to addressing GBV within the workplace.

ILO Convention 190 (C190) and Recommendation 206 (R206) establishes the right of everyone to a world of work, free from violence and harassment, inclusive of gender- based violence. C190 requires governments to adopt laws, regulations and policies ensuring the right to equality and non-discrimination in employment and occupation as part of the measures to prevent and eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work. We believe that our work with the Spotlight Initiative now creates a pathway for us to further advocate for the ratification of C190 in our ongoing efforts to make the workplace a safe space for both employers and employees across Trinidad and Tobago.

All of the materials and resources from the ECA's Spotlight Project is accessible via our website, inclusive of a free copy of our Model Workplace Policy.



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The ECA remained steadfast in its commitment to assist our member companies in navigating the ongoing challenges, threats and adjustments brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and in mitigating the spread of the virus nationally.

Following a gradual lifting of restrictions, which commenced in May 2020, this easing of activities in respect of certain types of businesses and public gatherings continued into 2021. However, much of what existed in 2020 eventually returned in 2021 as restrictions to operations in several sectors were once again implemented in April and restrictions on movement and non-essential activity were reintroduced in early May in response to the growing rate of infections and the rise of several variants such as Delta and Omicron. These developments led to the introduction of a State of Emergency (SoE) in mid-May with an effective curfew from 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., and this SoE continued in varying degrees until its eventual lifting some six (6) months later in November 2021.

Quite naturally, the impacts on employers and businesses were significant and many required particular guidance relative to the management of leave requests, individual quarantine orders, the introduction of remote or hybrid systems of work, occupational safety and health, temporary layoffs, retrenchment, or simply managing the economic fallout of the pandemic, among other people management and workplace issues. The ECA provided support through its series of COVID-19 Membership Advisory Bulletins, Membership Q&A sessions, and the provision of tools and guidance information via its online Membership Portal, all of which brought much-needed clarity or support to much of the uncertainty that existed on these issues.

One of the most contentious matters that inevitably arose in 2021 was that of the COVID-19 vaccination. Developments in late 2020 and early



August 4th, 2021: Vice Chairman, Farzan Ali (bottom left) and Interim CEO, Stephanie Fingal (bottom right) discussing vaccination and workplace vaccination policy on TV6's Morning Edition

2021 found employers caught between the possibility of mandating vaccination in the workplace while contending with individual employee and wider public demands to respect privacy or personal decisions in relation to vaccination. The ECA was continuously engaged on this issue via the media and other third-party forums to lend its expertise and insights within the context of the principles of good industrial relations and the rights and duties of employers and employees under the Occupational Safety and Health Act. In June, we held a discussion forum on mandatory vaccination, featuring health, legal and industrial relations experts, which attracted representatives from close to one hundred (100) companies as employers sought answers and information on this new and in many ways, untested workplace issue.

Business Resilience

The results of the second of two (2) COVID-19 impact surveys, which started in 2020 was completed, compiled and released in the first quarter of 2021, which gave important insights to policy-makers and the ECA itself about the real challenges facing businesses at the time. This included the impact of the pandemic on operations and business continuity during periods of restrictions, the ability of businesses to restore their operations following the lifting of restrictions, the impact on employment and the support needed

to move forward in the recovery process. One of the concerning facts that emerged from this exercise was that at least seventy percent (70%) of respondents did not have a written business continuity plan in place.

This situation needed to be addressed and so, arising out of the ECA's active support to the work of the International Labour Organisation, Trinidad and Tobago was invited to participate as one of three (3) countries worldwide in what was at that time a Business Resilience pilot project being finalised for launch in partnership with the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), dubbed the Sustainable and Resilience Enterprise Programme, SURE. The ECA, as an employer association was initially invited by the ILO to join its global review committee as part of a peer review process for this new product, along with professionals from Bristol-Myers Squibb, the Connecting Business Initiative, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the University of Stellenbosch. However, realising the value-adding participation of the ECA in different ILO initiatives as an employer's association, Trinidad & Tobago, through the ECA, was added as a third participant of the pilot for the train-the-trainers validation together with South Africa and Iraq.

SURE is a six (6) week training journey spread across six (6) modules and sixteen (16) learning units taught in a fully online, blended format via instructor-led webinars and self-guided e-Learning modules. Throughout the programme, business leaders explore three (3) core business resilience competencies:

- 1. Leadership & Culture: to provide clear direction and purpose when faced with crises and to engage staff in achieving business resilience objectives.
- 2. Risk Analysis & Management: anticipate risks, withstand crises, and continue delivering core products and services while responding to changing market and consumer pressures.
- 3. Networks & Partnerships: engage with third parties that are important to your business such as suppliers, competitors, government agencies, and others to achieve common business resilience objectives.

At the end of the training programme, participants will have developed a comprehensive business resilience strategy that is customised to the needs of their business. SURE continues to be offered by the organisation through its subsidiary, the Employers Solution Centre (ESC).

PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPANY

Following a 20% decline in consolidated revenue in 2020, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health measures continued to restrict revenue generation in 2021, resulting in a further decline of 20%. This loss of revenue was spread across almost all revenue generating units within the ECA and its subsidiary, but with the ECA experiencing an overall 27% decline compared to 14% for its subsidiary. Interestingly, although total revenue from membership subscriptions decreased slightly, this was due in part to an uptick in new member subscriptions from micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and a reduction in new subscriptions from medium and large companies. In some ways, this development was also reflective of the business environment at the time and the particular impacts to many MSMEs.

To mitigate the impact of revenue losses, a cost management strategy continued to be adopted in 2021 through negotiated cost reductions with suppliers, operational adjustments and management of staff by attrition. This led to an overall reduction in expenses for 2021, allowing the organisation to realise a small operating profit.

ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION

Held under the auspices of the ILO, the series of bi-partite conversations with trade union federations which started in 2020, continued in 2021, with the objective of collectively and collaboratively finding solutions and pathways for acceptable workplace protocols in response to the issues facing employers. The objective of these meetings, which included representatives from Federation of Independent Trade Unions and NGOs (FITUN), Joint Trade Union Movement (JTUM), National Trade Union Centre of Trinidad and Tobago (NATUC), and the ECA, was to discuss national economic recovery efforts with the need for the safe re-opening of businesses and the safe return to work for workers, being of utmost priority.

It was agreed that this objective required a practical approach towards workers returning to work safely, and businesses opening and remaining open in the best interest of the society as a whole, to enable the economy to rebuild quicker, stronger and better. Workplace vaccination was also discussed based on approaches recommended by global health and business organisations as well as the safety, health and welfare of workers and the general public, in order for businesses to operate and remain open. It was agreed that a risk-based approach was most appropriate as this was critical for ensuring that businesses stood a chance at survival and were able to continue providing employment for citizens.

At the national level, the Industrial Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC) also convened a series of discussions on COVID-19 vaccination in the workplace, resulting in the development of a position paper. The ECA was pleased to be a contributor to these important discussions and the outcome paper, as well as recommending refinements to the text in respect of the needs of businesses.

The ECA also continued its representation of employers at various consultations and conversations at the national and international levels, with participation in different forums by members of the Board of Directors, management, or staff from the ECA. Some of these included:

- Bilateral Stakeholder Consultation: Development of a Just Transition Policy | Ministry of Planning and Development
- Consultation: National Consultations with Civil Society and Private Sector Organisations as part of the 9th Summit of the Americas Process | Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
- Digital Conference: Opportunities and challenges in Digital Wage Payments: Lessons Learned | International Organisation of Employers (IOE)
- Regional Discussion: The Role of Social Partners during COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond | ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACTEMP)
- Focus Group: Evaluation of the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF) | UN MSDF
- Submission of Comments to the ILO: Information on measures to promote objective job evaluation in the private sector | Ministry of Labour

- Global Conference: Covid-19 - What Employers Need to Prepare for Next | International Organisation of Employers (IOE)
- Panel Discussion: ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (C190): Implication and Imperatives for the Caribbean | Cipriani College, NATUC, Caribbean Congress of Labour
- Panel Discussion: Countering the regressive impact of COVID-19 on gender equality | International Labour Organization
- Discussion Forum: Promoting Decent Work in Platform Work | International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization of Employers (IOE), World Employment Confederation (WEC)
- Consultation: Consultation with UN Working Group on Business & Human Rights | International Organization of Employers (IOE)
- Consultation: Rapid Assessment of the Impact of Covid-19 on Employment and Industrial Relations in the Tourism Accommodation Sector | Ministry of Labour
- Digital Discussion: EBMO Resilience & Sustainability in times of COVID-19 | International Organization of Employers (IOE), International Labour Organization (ILO), Caribbean Employers Confederation (CEC)
- Virtual Symposium: From Recovery to Resilience- Decent Work for a Resilient Caribbean | International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Consultation: IOM Port of Spain Country Strategy - Private Sector | International Organization for Migration
- Consultation: Manpower Planning – Skills Needs Assessment | Ministry of Planning and Development

- Virtual Dialogue: The Future of Work | Ministry of Labour
- Caribbean Dialogue: COVID-19: Prevention, vaccinations and the world of work | International Organization of Employers (IOE), International Labour Organization (ILO), Caribbean Employers Confederation (CEC)
- Virtual Discussion: Workplace policy regarding COVID-19 vaccinations for Trinidad and Tobago | Ministry of Planning and Development
- Consultation: Draft Policy for the Creation of Welfare Regulations | OSHA T&T
- Consultation: Climate Change & Human Rights | International Organization of Employers (IOE), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), Global Business Initiative (GBI)
- Caribbean Validation Workshop: Labour/Employment legislative gaps exposed by Covid-19 | International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Webinar: Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work in the Caribbean - Convention No. 190 | International Labour Organization (ILO)
- General Discussion: Employers' briefing on International Labour Conference General Discussion - Inequalities and world of work | International Organization of Employers (IOE)
- Virtual Dialogue: Climate Change, Human Rights and the Implications for Business - Launch of the Business & Human Rights Climate Change Paper | International Organization of Employers (IOE)

In addition to participation in the aforementioned, the ECA represented its members at over one hundred and twenty (120) local, regional, and

international discussions, knowledge-sharing forums, conferences, and capacity-building sessions, much of which continued to focus on mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic both nationally and in respect of business and employment, as well as creating a context for a sustainable recovery, while continuing to address traditional workplace issues and areas of concern. The ECA's membership benefitted from invitations to some of these sessions or representations made by the Association on behalf of its membership, to local authorities and international bodies.

In particular, the ECA was an active participant in several global policy working groups of the IOE contributing to policy conversations and decisions in matters relating to business and human rights, labour migration, industrial relations standards, workplace equality and diversity, and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The organisation was able to lend its voice as a youth advocate for SDGs during the 10th anniversary of the United Nation's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum as a panellist for a conversation on Prosperity and Thriving. This session explored how the socio-economic COVID-19 recovery can be financed, including which sectors can yield the best response, particularly for a youth inclusive and responsive recovery. Among other things, the ECA underscored the need for innovative policy

approaches, as well as upskilling, reskilling and tripartite cooperation, particularly given the impact of the pandemic on young people.

The ECA also continued to advance the interest of its members and the wider employer community through ongoing representation on several key state Boards and Committees. Some of these included:

- Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT)
- ILO 144 Tripartite Consultative Committee
- Industrial Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC)
- Minimum Wages Board
- National AIDS Coordinating Council (NACC)
- National Insurance Appeals Tribunal
- National HIV/AIDS Advocacy and Sustainability Centre (HASC) Advisory Board
- National Productivity Council (NPC)
- National Training Agency (NTA)
- National Tripartite Advisory Council (NTAC)
- Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA)
- PAN Caribbean Partnership Against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP)
- Pesticides and Toxic Chemical Control Board
- Registration, Recognition and Certification Board (RRCB)
- Standing National Labour Market Council (SNLMC)



April 7th, 2021: Ronald Ramlogan, then Team Leader, PR & Research, presenting at a Panel Discussion on Prosperity and Thriving at the ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM 2021



Bipartite Dialogue: ECA and Trade Union Federations discuss next steps for COVID-19 recovery

Finally, we are pleased to report that the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) was successfully convened in 2021, having been deferred from 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time in its history, this Conference was held in a fully virtual format, with some of the discussions covering the following:

- 1. **COVID-19 Response Committee.** The outcome of this Committee was a Resolution concerning a global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable, and resilient, which was adopted by the Conference. Among other items, this Resolution highlighted the importance of supporting business continuity, creating an enabling environment for innovation, productivity and sustainable enterprises, encouraging entrepreneurship, promoting skills development opportunities and addressing the informality of work and employment.
- 2. **Social Protection.** This was a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security), under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008, with an eventual Resolution adopted by the ILC.
- 3. **Committee on the Application of Standards.** A tripartite assessment and discussion of how ILO Member States uphold

the International Labour Standards that they have ratified. This committee discussed a list of individual cases of concern with recommendations for addressing areas of concern.

The ECA was an active participant in committee meetings, as well as the pre-conference preparatory work with the IOE and its global membership to discuss the baseline reports and identify key positions, perspectives and strategies of the employer group at the ILC.

MEMBERSHIP

We are pleased to report a net increase in the organisation's total membership. For those that chose to discontinue their membership, we recognised that financial constraints were particularly commonplace. Once again, this was consistent with the plight of many businesses, particularly SMEs. Notwithstanding, the organisation took a decision to extend some of its engagement activities to all employers, and not just member organisations, recognising that recovery must be inclusive, among other factors, in order for it to be sustainable.

We extend a special acknowledgement to those organisations that joined the ECA family in 2021:

- ABC Distributions Limited
- Branford General Contracting Services Company Limited
- Caribbean Ideas
- Caribbean Information & Credit Rating Services Ltd (CariCris)
- Elder Associates
- Genesis Insurance Brokers
- Grace Kennedy Trinidad & Tobago Limited
- Green Equipment Supplies and Services
- Guardia Security Advisors
- Institute of Banking and Finance/ BATT
- JA.XA Consulting

- J-Mac Industries Limited
- Kairi Blooms Ltd
- Maraj Air Conditioning Limited
- Max Grill House
- O.B.C Limited
- Pan Trinbago Inc
- Peake Credit Union
- Precision Cataract Surgery
- Pro Smile
- RFS Trinidad Limited
- ROSE Environmental
- St. Augustine Surgical Center Limited
- Superior Hotels Trinidad and Tobago
- Umbrella Security Services Ltd.

Membership appreciation and engagement activities in 2021, included:

- Three (3) free Question & Answer sessions
- OSH and COVID-19
- Investing in Employee Assistance (EAP) Programmes
- Launch of the IOE's Business Coalition for Trade, Employment & Sustainable Development
- Webinar: COVID-19, vaccination and the workplace

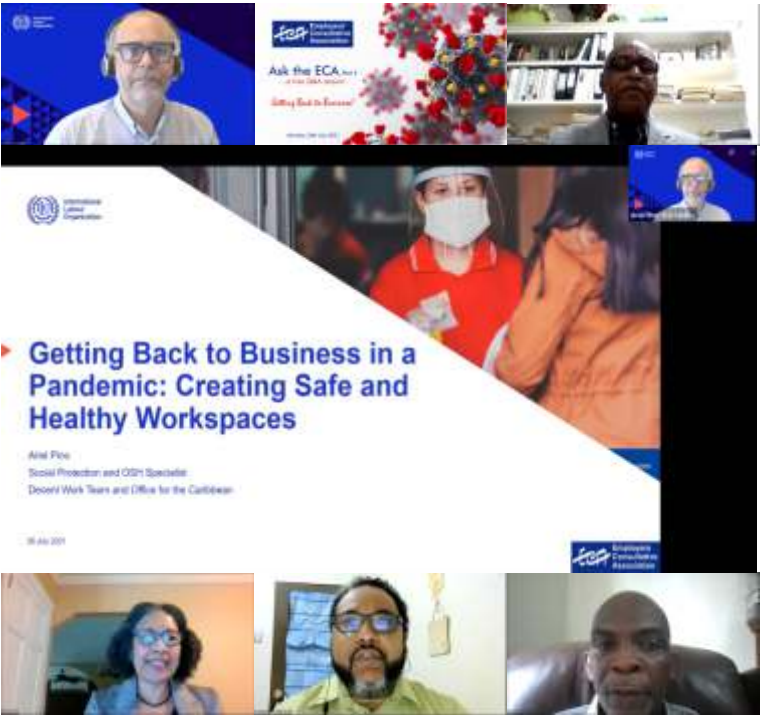
PR DEPARTMENT

Press statements issued in 2021: 18

Once again, these releases primarily focused on many of the workplace issues arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as mandatory vaccination, adherence to and management of public health measures, and the treatment of COVID-19 related sick leave and quarantine issues. In addition to these releases, the ECA provided perspectives on other workplace and socio-economic matters such as migrant labour, the national Roadmap to Recovery report, the retirement age, industrial relations action, social dialogue institutions, OSH, and gender-based violence, among others.

For our 2021 Labour Day message, we chose to focus on the theme “Futuristic Leadership for Sustainable Recovery”, which was written within the context of the prior and continuing impacts of the pandemic, the rebuilding process before us, and the critical role of strong, competent, and responsible leaders in driving this process forward in a meaningful way. We renewed our call for greater cooperation, collaboration, and a commitment to act with urgency to seize available opportunities, and address the challenges in the world of work, to build a better society that is fair, inclusive, and fully productive.

This was especially pertinent given prior developments during the year at the National Tripartite Advisory Council (NTAC) and the withdrawal of representative Trade Union Federations from this important social dialogue institution. In this regard, we also continued to advocate for a return to the table by all social partners in the interest of advancing solutions and responses to our national issues and priorities.



July 26th, 2021: Membership Q&A

2021 REPORT

EMPLOYERS
SOLUTION CENTRE
LIMITED

The Subsidiary of the Employers Consultative Association

The Employers Solution Centre (ESC) is the subsidiary and business arm of the ECA. The ESC was incorporated in January 2008, just before the so-called “global financial crisis” began to take effect in many economies across the globe, including Trinidad and Tobago. The organisation was formed to provide services to all Employers, members and non-members of the ECA, in the following areas:

- Industrial Relations Services
- Human Resource Products and Services
- Professional Training and Development
- Payroll Outsourcing



Vision

To be the leading authority on all business solutions.

Mission

To deliver customized solutions that are best practice and will significantly improve business organisations particularly in the areas of Industrial Relations, Human Resource Management and Training and Development.



ESC’s SERVICES

Industrial Relations Solution Centre (IRSC): Equal Justice for Employers

Geared towards resolving workplace conflict between employers and workers, this centre is committed to mitigating risk by identifying problems, clarifying perspectives and concerns, while reaching mutually satisfactory agreements. It also encourages the right to justice by providing high quality dispute resolution and the promotion of the principles and practices of good industrial relations.

The IRSC offers a comprehensive suite of industrial relations services, chief of which include:

- Daily Advice and Consultancy on employer-employee issues
- Industrial Relations Retainers
- Industrial Relations Audits
- Drafting Industrial Relations Correspondence
- Drafting Employment Contracts

- Review of Workplace Policies
- Conducting Disciplinary Hearings
- Representation at Ministry of Labour
- Representation at Bi Lateral Meetings
- Representation at Collective Bargaining
- Representation at the Registration Recognition and Certification Board
- Representation at Industrial Court

The IRSC’s performance at the Industrial Court continues to be noteworthy, by maintaining an average “positive result rate” of over 90% in matters for which representation is provided. This means that on average, 90% of disputes were either dismissed in favour of the employer or settled at amounts that were significantly less than what was initially being asked of the company.

Performance for 2021

Though the IRSC experienced a further decrease in revenue in 2021, the Unit maintained its contribution of approximately 24% of overall revenue for the ESC, consistent with its 2020 results. In the main, this decline in revenue generated was due to a general price reduction in industrial relations services implemented in 2021 as a support mechanism for employers at that time, particularly those significantly impacted by the prevailing conditions and operating environment. In addition to reduced service prices, the Unit continued its support of the ECA’s membership through the provision of free telephone advisory services, the development of advisory bulletins, and participating in the open Q&A sessions held throughout the year.

Training and Development Solutions:
Building Resilient Organisations and Professionals

The Training and Development Solutions Centre focuses on increasing the competitiveness of businesses by improving the competencies and capacity of its human talent. It’s all about gaining a

competitive advantage and continuous training is an important tool for improving the performance and productivity of your staff by ensuring that they have the right skills to meet the needs of your business and the ever-changing world of work.

The Training Department currently offers training and development solutions under three (3) main Units:

National Training

National training is conducted every month on various workplace issues of topical interest. The goal is to offer you the best training experience possible by ensuring you have:

- Courteous and Friendly Training Coordinators
- Experienced Facilitators and Industry Practitioners
- Current and Relevant Topics
- Training that is Practical and Immersive
- Individual Attention
- Feedback and Follow-up
- Networking Opportunities

In-House Training

Do you prefer to train your staff onsite? Our in-house training solution allows you to conduct training where you want, when you want and how you want. This solution is highly customisable so organisations can make important training interventions that are specific to their business and organisational structure. Whether it is skills development, human resource training, industrial relations solutions, customer service, leadership development, OSH training and sensitisation, general institutional strengthening, or other specialised intervention, you are assured a perfect mix of theoretical and practical training delivered by our highly qualified professionals and facilitators.

The Academy of Industrial Relations

The Academy of Industrial Relations is an internationally accredited, intensive, 11-week programme, which immerses participants in the fields of industrial relations and labour laws in

Trinidad and Tobago. This programme is an excellent option for human resource practitioners, professionals, administrators, students and business owners who wish to gain knowledge and develop their industrial relations skills. The following accredited certificates can be attained via the Academy:

- Advanced Certificate in Industrial Relations Management, EduQual Level 3
- Advanced Certificate in Labour Laws in Trinidad and Tobago, EduQual Level 3
- Professional Certificate in Labour Laws in Trinidad and Tobago, EduQual Level 4

Performance for 2021

The Training Department performed relatively well in 2021 and was able to reverse much of the decline experienced in 2020, recording 38% increase in revenue for the year which represented just over 61% of the ESC's total revenue.

This was due in large part to the reintroduction of the Academy of Industrial Relations in 2021, following its hiatus in 2020 due to changes that needed to be implemented to offer this longstanding Academy as a virtual option. The organisation sought and was successfully able to complete its accreditation of the Academy in early 2021 with EduQual, a globally recognised national qualifications regulator in the UK, approved by SQA-Accreditation. This, together with support received from the ILO via its Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACTEMP) to implement an e-campus, proved instrumental in allowing the department to successfully run three (3) cohorts of the Academy, benefitting more than 70 students who received accredited certificates.

In total, the Department offered just over seventy (70) training and professional development programmes, whether nationally available or as in-house training interventions, in traditional areas related to human resource management and

industrial relations, but much of which focused on the management of workplace issues arising out of the pandemic, as well as the development of organisational leaders and business resilience through our ILO certified Sustainable and Resilience Enterprise (SURE) training.

Human Resource Solutions: Practical Solutions, Exceptional Results

Improved business performance ultimately depends on enabled, engaged and capable people. In this regard, investing in efficient and relevant Human Resources systems will significantly contribute to achieving your goals and objectives. We offer full consultancy in all areas relating to human resource management and practice, with an objective to optimise organisational performance through Human Resource Management strategies. Whether you are a Human Resource Specialist within a multi-national corporation, a Human Resource Generalist at a mid-sized company, or an Owner or Manager of a small business or start-up venture, you'll find that our solutions can fit all of your needs.

The ESC's people management solutions and services include:

- Strategic Planning Consultation
- Performance Management systems
- Change Management Initiatives
- Reward and Recognition Programmes
- Recruitment and Selection
- Policy and Procedure Review and Development
- Job Analysis, Job Evaluation and Job Descriptions
- Complete outsourcing of the HR function
- HR Audits

Payroll Processing

Do you find yourself overwhelmed when payroll time comes around? Let the ESC take care of your complete payroll processing needs from start to

end – inclusive of benefits management, overtime pay and other allowances.

Whether you are a small business or large corporation that simply wants to take the hassle and uncertainty out of processing weekly, fortnightly or monthly payrolls, we encourage you to speak with us at the Employers' Solution Centre. This service is also ideal for employers who are planning to start operations in T&T and need a solution for navigating and correctly applying the country's labour laws, custom and practices, taxation laws, statutory requirements and best practice.

Our experienced team will provide optimal support and a hassle free, low cost and efficient solution, ensuring that you have more time to build your business and grow your bottom line.



Daryl Joseph



Ronald Ramlogan



Stephanie Fingal



adapt
/ə'dapt/ Verb. Become adjusted to new conditions



Employers' Consultative Association

MEMBER'S DAY 2021

Session One
10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
The OSH Act and COVID-19

Session Two
11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Membership Q&A

Session Three
1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.
The Value of Investing in EAP



FRIDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER

CONSOLIDATED **2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** OF THE EMPLOYERS CONSULTATIVE ASSOCIATION AND SUBSIDIARY

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of Employers
in Trinidad and Tobago**

Our Affiliates



A powerful
and balanced
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