

REVENUE NEWS



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Limitations
live only in
our minds



Guyana Revenue Authority

Mission

To promote compliance with Guyana's tax, customs and related laws through quality service and risk-driven enforcement programs supported by a cadre of competent staff.



Guyana Revenue Authority

Vision

The GRA aims to be an outstanding revenue administration that plays a vital role in promoting the economic stability and prosperity of the people of Guyana.



Guyana Revenue Authority **Core Values**

I	M	P	A	C	T
INTEGRITY	MUTUAL RESPECT	PROFESSIONALISM	ACCOUNTABILITY	CUSTOMER DRIVEN	TEAMWORK
Act ethically; create trust among stakeholders	Be courteous; be considerate	Be confident, competent, resourceful and effective	Be responsible; take ownership of your actions	Meet and exceed service expectations; assume a "can do" attitude	Promote a collaborative work environment; be innovative; listen and support



"Your Partner in Development"

TAXATION SIMPLIFIED

CG's Message

TAXATION SIMPLIFIED



Taxation needs to be administered in a fair and consistent manner; this is beyond any doubt. Fairness and consistency are not catchwords; it is what an overwhelming majority of Guyanese expects from the GRA.

Our tax systems need to elicit trust from our taxpayers, with trust being the operative word. Trust that everyone pays their fair share of tax. The tax system itself must be supportive of investments and empower citizens to take up jobs or set up and run innovative businesses. In other words, tax systems need to be designed to meet the dual goals of fairness and consistency on the one hand and economic growth on the other hand. There must be no contradiction between both goals.

A simplified tax system will result in fairness in taxation, so that there is a level playing-field for all taxpayers; citizens and businesses alike are on an equal footing with no one being unduly privileged or disadvantaged.

The GRA's mandate for a fairer and more effective tax system cannot be static. The economy is not static and taxation should not be static. My goal is to create a simplified tax system to facilitate tax compliance while at the same time tackle non-compliance, thereby increasing the tax base and ensuring consistency and fairness.

Digitalization, in conjunction with globalization and dynamic changes in society and businesses, are emerging factors that has and will continue to test the sustainability of our tax systems. As a result, the GRA continually reviews our systems to ensure they are in line with best practices on the ground. We are required to react quickly and decisively to new challenges as they arise. This means that as the leader of the GRA, I have to continually widen the way we think about taxation, and consider how it can incentivize to promote voluntary compliance.

My true belief is that technology is our ally in the pursuit of a modern and simplified tax system. To uncover this potential, over the past three years, GRA has invested in key technology / ICT initiatives including; paying taxes online / automatedly, e- filing of tax returns and the implementation of a modernize Customs software (ASCUYDA) that allows for ease of lodging and tracking entries from virtually anywhere in Guyana that has internet connectivity. ASCUYDA will be the foundation of the trade facilitation and Single Window systems thereby improving the "ease off doing business in Guyana". Additionally, with Guyana being on the cusp of oil production, the GRA has partnered with Data Torque, to design a Revenue Management System to achieve revenue optimization and enable the GRA to become an efficient and effective tax administration akin to that of the developed nations.

Though enhancing voluntary compliance to safeguard tax revenues is at the core of the GRA's mission, the GRA also wants to make it easier for taxpayers to respect and honor their tax obligations. The simplification of the tax system and its effective administration will create an appropriate service oriented environment for our taxpayers and result in the reduction of red tapes and bureaucracies, while at the same time provide for fairness and consistency in the administration of our tax laws.

The simpler the rules and the system, the more taxpayers are likely to comply with them.

Thank you.

Godfrey Statia,
Commissioner General, GRA.

EDITORIAL

Taxation Simplified



A paperless, automated taxation system, sub offices with centralized services, online transactions and payments, ASYCUDA World and OPTIMAL – where is the link? It's simple, it all leads to a simplified taxation system. However, the journey to simplifying the taxation system in Guyana is not easy and is often met with both internal and external resistance.

In order to achieve this simplification, much emphasis needed to be placed on advancing the technological capabilities of the Revenue Authority as well as its physical infrastructure. But that is not enough. To truly move from a manual to a completely automated system there is need for a complete 'buy-in' from all stakeholders. To achieve this, we need to collectively, as

an agency, deliver products that would encourage taxpayers to make the transition. This would require a massive sensitization campaign designed and delivered by the Public Relations Unit with collaboration from the Tax Advisory Services Unit and the Information Technology Division.

A campaign of this magnitude requires careful and strategic planning, a process which has already begun. According to Sese Jones, Head – Information Technology Division, "in the first year, we are totally replacing our tax administration software and introducing the first year of the online services. In the first year, you will be able to file individual income tax, corporation tax and several other return filing."

This may seem overly ambitious to some, but having commenced preliminary work in June 2019, January 2020 will see the actual configuration of the software, change management systems and staff training.

Ceteris paribus, the Guyana Revenue Authority is set to deliver the first phase of the project by July of 2020.

Taxation Simplified!

Melissa

Regional Tax Campaign Captions



Communication Officer Fabian Clowes addressing business men and women from New Amsterdam and the Corentyne during a meeting at the Corentyne Chamber of Commerce.



Engaging taxpayers of West Berbice at the Rosignol Stelling.



Manager of the Public Relations Unit Melissa Baird



Engaging taxpayers from the North Rupununi at a meeting held in Annai.

Regional Tax Campaign Captions



Mayor of Lethem, John Macedo, engaging GRA's team during meeting.



GRA's team went live on Radio Paiwomak.



Engaging taxpayers from the village of St Ignatius during final leg of Region Nine tax campaign.



Students of the St. Ignatius Secondary School engaging GRA's booth during a career fair held in observation of National Youth Week.

Fifth regional tax campaign updates taxpayers outside Georgetown on new tax laws and policies.

The Guyana Revenue Authority commenced its fifth Regional Tax Campaign in May with the aim of educating taxpayers on legislative tax changes which took effect at the start of 2019 and the passage of the 2019 National Budget last year in November 2018.

Manager of the Public Relations Unit Melissa Baird noted the campaign was designed after the realisation that most of the GRA's programme may not be reaching taxpayers outside of the coastland.

"We decided that we want everyone to know what is going on and we expanded. We took the campaign regionally. We have been all over with it and we have been getting really good responses and that is why we are continuing," Baird said.

This year the campaign was taken to Regions Three, Five, Six, Nine and 10. The first campaign was held in the town of Lethem and the villages of St Ignatius and Annai, Region Nine. In Annai, residents came from villages across the North Rupununi to engage the GRA's team.

Taxpayers were educated on new measures such as the reduced cost for the re-printing of TIN certificates, the new income threshold and tax exemptions for the tourism sector, re-migrants and persons with a disability.

Tourist operators in the North Rupununi welcomed the measures targeted to the tourism sector. Colin Edwards, the founder of Rock View Lodge, said the session was "extremely welcomed".

"They are certainly welcomed because tourism is a no-brainer for Guyana. One of the major constraints is the cost to the market so whatever measures are taken to help reduce that cost and to help the industry invest in tourism as a business is extremely welcomed.

The GRA collaborated with stakeholders, including the various chambers of commerce in the targeted regions, to spread awareness of the outreach. The GRA team also made live radio appearances on Radio Paiwomak, located in Bina Hill and Radio Lethem.

The business community of the town of Lethem was also engaged during the three day visit to the Region. The meeting was facilitated in collaboration with the Rupununi Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor of Lethem, John Macedo, pointed out that many persons in the Region would like to be more compliant with the GRA. He speculated that a significant population of the Rupununi is not compliant and propositioned an amnesty and assistance from the GRA to the Region to encourage greater compliance.

GRA completed its Region Nine Tax Campaign in St Ignatius. There residents used the opportunity to seek clarity on issues outside of the presentations.

Johnathan Joseph, a Village Councillor in St Ignatius, expressed the hope for regular community interaction from the GRA. "I think you need to come out more to the villages," he stressed. He added the introduction of an Integrated Regional Tax Office has made obtaining documents like the Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) easier.





Interactive and formative discussions

In early August, the Regional Tax Campaign was taken to Regions Five and Six. Taxpayers, small businesses and members of the various chambers of commerce in the Region were engaged during the outreach.

Taxpayers from New Amsterdam, Lower and Middle Corentyne converged at the Corentyne Chamber of Commerce building for the first meeting. The target audience did not hesitate to express their views about the pace at which refunds are released by the GRA and they inquired about various aspects of the Value Added Tax (VAT).

Former Manager of the New Amsterdam Integrated Regional Tax Office, Nandi Husbands, was part of the GRA team fielding queries and providing answers. Also present during the campaign were Selma Garnette, a Manager in the VAT Audit and Enforcement Unit and Tax Specialist Roopnarine Ramkishun.

President of the Corentyne Chamber of Commerce, Mohamed Raffik, commended the interactive session and recommended hosting the engagements twice a year. “We had a fair turnout and I think it was good and I must commended GRA for taking this initiative,” he said.

Haffeza Smith, a small manufacturer, said the meeting provided clarity on how to properly regularise her operations. “A lot of people are telling you different things, try to scare you about GRA. But from what I heard here today that’s not so. Getting registered and doing things the correct way can actually be beneficial for an individual and a business,” she said.

Meanwhile, small business operators from the West Bank of Berbice welcomed the introduction of the granting of provisional shop licences. The new policy affords businesses two years to acquire the necessary documents to meet the requirements for issuance of a trade licence.

During the engagement, which was held at the Rosignol Stelling, small business operator Bhoj Seeram commended the interaction. “It was nice that we could be able to explain what is depriving us from our functioning to comply with the law,” he said.

The GRA collaborated with the West Berbice Chamber of Commerce to host the tax campaign. Pradeep Bachan, a representative of the Chambers, noted interactions like these can lead to better working relationships between GRA and businesses.

“A lot of business have a very negative attitude to GRA. I think this is informative. I think GRA and the chambers and the business community can have a good working relationship once an understanding is established, he said.

The Tax Campaign concluded in the early part of September in Region 10. The GRA engaged taxpayers and business operators in Linden at the Linden Enterprise Network.

Concerns and queries raised by taxpayers during the outreach were documented and GRA facilitated feedback mechanisms for more sensitive issues. The Regional Tax Campaign is part of the GRA’s mandate to promote compliance through education.



Tax Stamps and Smuggling

-Time tested monitoring system implemented in Guyana

Text by: Melissa Baird

The most common definition states that a **revenue stamp**, **tax stamp** or **fiscal stamp** is (usually) an adhesive label used to collect taxes or fees on documents, tobacco, alcoholic drinks, drugs and medicines, playing cards, hunting licenses, firearm registration, and many other things. According to studies, tax stamps schemes are a well established and proven way of supporting and increasing government's duty collection. With proper implementation they are also expected to provide control and transparency to all stakeholders.

The recorded use of Revenue Stamps goes back to the early eighteenth hundreds (1800s) and by the 19th century their use had become widespread. However, due to the rise in computerization and the increased ability to use numbers to track payments accurately, the use of revenue stamps has become less common in the 21st century. Nonetheless, the use of revenue stamps has always been considered effective and still continues to prove effective in identifying whether the relevant excise tax has been paid in respect of a particular alcoholic beverage or tobacco product.

In many countries, tobacco and alcohol are taxed by the use of excise stamps. Those involved in the production process may buy the stamps from the government and have them affixed to each bottle of alcohol or packet of cigarettes as an indication that the tax has been paid to the government. These stamps are affixed in such a manner that once the pack or bottle is opened the stamp is destroyed.

For years Guyana has struggled with the issue of smuggling. Every year the state loses millions of dollars as a result of items smuggled through the country's porous borders. Through its revenue collecting agency, Guyana has, over the years, implemented various mechanisms with the aim of curbing the practice of smuggling. Coupled with the responsibility of effectively facilitating trade, the country, through the Guyana Revenue Authority, has executed its plan to implement the use of Tax Stamps to hopefully curb the blight of smuggling.

As with the implementation of any new system, it was expected that many stakeholders were concerned. Some questions included: What measures were in place to ensure the process maintained its integrity? Was there any guarantee that revenue collection would increase once the scheme was implemented? How will companies be held accountable for failing to adhere to the stipulations outlined in the agreed guidelines?

While answers were readily available to some of these questions, many were answered after the actual implementation. However, based on the scheme utilized by many other countries, certain variable factors were clear. At the top of the list was the increase in government revenue. When one takes into consideration the amount of revenue lost annually to smugglers, any significant amount that is stemmed will go a far way towards economic development.

Additionally, the implementation of such a scheme has by extension, promoted a safe and lawful trade. The use of tax stamps provides a sense of security to consumers. No one wants to purchase items for consumption and pause to question the authenticity of the product. Wondering if a product is safe for consumption is not on the forefront of the minds of consumers when they are out for example in a social gathering or shopping. By virtue of tax stamps consumers are assured that they are purchasing genuine products that have passed the requisite health and safety checks. They are also assured of purchasing genuine products from legitimate manufacturers.

Manufacturers have also benefitted significantly because their products are recognized as genuine merchandise. These companies are also seen as complying with government regulations and tax laws.

According to the **De La Rue Position Paper: Duty Evasion – The Advantages of Tax Stamps**, all parties involved in the chain, i.e. from production to consumption, would “need to appreciate that



smuggling and counterfeiting are serious criminal offences as well as being dangerous to health and bad for the global economy, all of which have direct and serious consequences for these stakeholders.”

Another key point in the De La Rue Paper states that “if a clear Tax Stamp regime is introduced, this will act as a significant point of clarity both in legislation and in enforcement. It can be summarized as: **No Stamp means No Tax which means Illegal and potentially Unsafe Product.**”

Further, “a visible Tax Stamp which further carries a unique serial number not only helps enforce the correct duty payment, but can also act as a secure method of tracking the movement of product through the supply chain and assist in the detection and identification of product diversion.”

The Guyana Revenue Authority, as the main revenue collecting body of Guyana has successfully implemented its Tax Stamp scheme. What has been clear from the get go is the fact there will be a significant improvement in the monitoring of the supply chain thereby resulting in a significant reduction in the smuggling of alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and other commonly smuggled goods. With an increase in the legal trade channel and a decrease in illegitimate trade, the benefits for revenue collection and the development of the country can only be seen as positive.



GRA's Bursary & Workstudy Programmes are a hit!



Progressing to a new phase of life is exciting. There are so many skills to learn, people to meet and qualities to discover in yourself. However, all this unfamiliarity, with its new responsibilities and challenges, can be daunting. The students who left Grades 6 and 11 to join secondary school and the world of work this September know this all too well.

This year, the Guyana Revenue Authority helped in making this transition a little less jarring for 25 top National Grade Six Assessment Performers and 82 Secondary School and Technical Institute graduates with its sixth annual Bursary Awards and 44th Workstudy Programme.

The 25 bursary awardees were selected from among the employees' children who performed exceptionally well in their examinations. They were celebrated and presented with a small token intended to help with acquiring the necessary materials for starting secondary school.

According to this year's top awardee, Christine Sukhdeo, "This will surely aid with our transition from Grade 6 to Grade 7." Notably, the top awardee from 2013 Samuel Haynes went on to be among the top CSEC performers this year.

The 82 workstudy students had a little more hands on assistance. In two phases of 5 and ten weeks, starting on June 17th and July 22nd, they got the opportunity to work directly with GRA's staff and learn the organisation's daily operations firsthand.

Attached to the various departments at the GRA's Camp Street Head office and at the Integrated Regional Tax Offices located at Anna Regina, Parika, New Amsterdam, Corriverton and Linden, they were exposed to the real life world of work. According to a survey conducted by students attached to the Human Resource Management and Finance Departments of the main branch, 75% of students were satisfied with the workstudy experience. The students described their experience as eye-opening, interesting, adventurous, phenomenal, occasionally boring and sometimes tiring. However, they all shared that their experience was positive and many expressed a desire to continue working at the GRA.



Workstudy 2019

- The Student's Perspective



Chad Attah - Huston Secondary "I was fortunate to be a part of both phases of the workstudy programme, and I could say without doubt it was nothing short of a great pleasure. In retrospect, the ten weeks I spent here were very much worthwhile. I obtained a pleasant level of experience. I understand a little better about the revenue system, and I met some great people."



Georgiana Vyphius - School of the Nations - "In my department, I was assigned to bookkeeping, mailing and media monitoring. The people around me, my colleagues, they really inspired me and pushed me to do more reading, especially when it comes to my country, and they're very supportive. They basically made my workplace feel very comfortable. It really changed my perception of the work environment, from being, working is boring and tiring to working is fun and tiring."

The students attached to the branch offices described their experiences similarly and several expressed the desire to continue working at the GRA.



Torency Thom, a former student of the Berbice High who was attached to the New Amsterdam Integrated Regional Tax Office had the following to say, "Even though it wasn't much, it was still challenging. I was one of the persons that had to prepare the PAYE forms and it was kinda cool to see what it's like, someone's actual PAYE form...Actually, it's kind of weird to transition from school to a workplace, but it was actually fun and I have learned a lot and I really plan on putting that knowledge into my work."

The GRA extends congratulations to the new Seventh Graders and to all those entering the adult world through work or further studies.



Driver's licence upgraded with more durable & secure features



In December 2019 the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) surprised the nation by introducing an upgraded version of the plastic card driver's licence. At first glance it looks fancy and colourful. Unfortunately, the naked eye is not sharp enough to notice the sophisticated details embedded on the new card. This edition of Revenews therefore undertook to provide a little insight into those inconspicuous feature.

The upgrading project was spearheaded by the Information Technology Division of the GRA following the initial launch of the first phase of the plastic card driver's licence in March of 2014. The objective then was to phase out the former cardboard cover (red book) driver's licence.

It is anticipated that this new licence will be in the hands of many drivers within a short time span given that the GRA recently decentralised the licence revenue service to all of its Integrated Regional Tax Offices (IRTO).

FRONT

Security Background
Anticopy pattern with linewidth modulation.

Micro Text
"...REPUBLIC OF GUYANA REPUB..." with deliberate error.

Gilloche
Background variation line work in rainbow printing.

Coat of Arms
National emblem printed in 4 colours.

Photograph area
Background printing which overlap the photograph.

BACK

Micro Text
"...REPUBLICOFGUYANAREPUBL..." in rainbow printing.

Security Background
Anticopy pattern with linewidth modulation printed in rainbow.

Pantera Onca
The jaguar, the national animal of Guyana, is printed with modulated linewidth within the anticopy pattern.

Security background
anticopy pattern with linewidth modulation printed in rainbow.

Micro text
"...REPUBLICOFGUYANAREPUBL..." in rainbow printing.

Coat of Arms
National emblem printed in IR transparent light grey colour as "ghost image" into the background design.

FAREWELL TO FOUR STALWARTS OF THE REVENUE AUTHORITY



Robert James



Kirby Cantzlaar



Joy Joseph



Ingrid Griffith



Farewell to four stalwarts of the Revenue Authority

The Guyana Revenue Authority said goodbye to Ms. Ingrid Griffith, Mr. Robert James, Ms. Joy Joseph and Mr. Kirby Cantzlaar who would have given 140 years of combined service. The Authority sincerely thanks them for their loyalty and wishes them well in their future endeavours.



Ingrid June Griffith aka Ms. 'G'

Customs and Excise Department
February 1, 1983 - May 30, 2009

- Customs Trainee
- Investigator I & II
- Assistant Director (ag)
- Director (ag)
- Deputy Commissioner
- Commissioner (ag)

Assistant Director (ag), Training
· January 2, 1992 to June 13, 1993

Director (ag), Enforcement
· June 14, 1993 to July 19, 1993

**Head, Communication and Tax
Advisory Services**
· June 1, 2009 to September 14, 2010

Coordinator (ag) Corporate Services
· September 15, 2010 to September 30, 2012

Head, Operational Support Services
· October 1, 2012 to August 2, 2015
· 25 July 2016 to 31 March 2018

Deputy Commissioner-General (ag)
· August 3, 2015 to December 16, 2015

Commissioner General, (ag)
· December 17, 2015 to July 24, 2016

**Deputy Commissioner, Integrated
Regional Tax Offices**
· April 1 to November 15, 2019



Mr. Kirby Cantzlaar aka 'Kirby'

Customs and Excise Department
October 23, 1984 – September 30, 2008

- Customs Trainee
- Customs Officer I
- Customs Investigator I
- Customs Investigator II
- Manager

Manager, VAT & Excise Tax Division
· October 1, 2008 to October 26, 2008

**Senior Manager (ag) Customs and Trade
Administration, Regional Offices**
· October 27, 2008 to February 1, 2009

Senior Manager (ag) Debt Management
· February 2, 2009 to August 16, 2009

**Manager, Customs and Trade
Administration Customs Boathouse**
· August 17, 2009 to May 13, 2012

**Manager, Faculties Management
& Operational Support**
· May 14, 2012 to December 8, 2013

**Principal Manager (ag), Integrated
Regional Tax Offices**
· December 9, 2013 to August 31, 2014

**Asst. Commissioner, Customs
Excise & Trade Operations**
· September 2014 to September 19, 2019



Ms. Joy Joseph, aka "Judge Judy"

Customs & Excise

October 11, 1979 - January 27, 2000

- Temporary Clerk II
- Customs Officer I
- Customs & Excise Officer II & III

Customs and Trade Operations

January 28, 2000 - January 20, 2008

- Assistant Director (ag)
- Director
- Assistant Commissioner (ag)
- Assistant Commissioner (ag) Regional Offices, Wharves and Warehouse

Tax Operations and Services

October 2008

- Assistant Commissioner (ag) Revenue Accounting
- Senior Manager (ag) Revenue Accounting

Debt Management August 2009

- Senior Manager (ag)

Communication and Tax Advisory Services

August 17, 2009 - October 5, 2012

- Senior Manager (ag)
- Senior Manager, Tax Advisory Services, Public Relations, Publication & Operational Procedures Head (ag)

Customs and Trade Administration, 2014

- Senior Manager, Commercial Operations & Private Warehouse

Integrated Regional Tax Offices

February 26, 2014 - May 12, 2015

- Senior Manager

Revenue Protection

May 13, 2015 to May 31, 2017

- Senior Manager

Tax Exemptions Processing and Verification

June 1, 2019 - October 12, 2019

- Assistant Commissioner



Mr. Robert James aka 'Mr. James'

Inland Revenue Department (Companies)

November 06, 1989 - July 3, 2000

- Inspector of Taxes
- Senior Inspector (ag)

Examination & Investigations, Internal

Revenue July 4, 2000 - August 14, 2004

- Assistant Commissioner

Audit and Verification

August 15, 2004 - May 31, 2008

- Assistant Commissioner
- Deputy Commissioner (ag)
- Head (ag)

VAT & Excise Tax Operations, Tax Operations and Services

May 16, 2011 - February 1, 2015

- Deputy Head (ag)

Tax Audit

February 2, 2015 - November 1, 2019

- Deputy Commissioner (ag)
- Deputy Commissioner, Inland Revenue

Customs and Trade Administration

June 1, 2009 - May 15, 2011

- Head (ag)



GRA upgrades its IT Structure with **Optimal**

REVENUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

With the aid of a new integrated tax administration system on the horizon – Optimal: Revenue Management System (RMS), the level of tax administration as well as the ease of doing business in Guyana are set to improve.

New technologies are necessary for proficient and efficient tax collecting in the 21st century, especially in an environment where various compliance challenges are faced and expectations from taxpayers continue to rise. With the advent of oil production in the coming months, Guyana's economy is on the cusp of change. The country is projected within a decade to pump nearly a barrel of oil per person a day, more per capita than Saudi Arabia.

The market will change significantly and Guyana will soon adopt a futuristic shape in its technological advancement. International firms will expect a high level of automated service and the manual system will no longer be able to withstand the pace of transactions.

Guyana can also anticipate additional sources of revenue and the amendments to tax policies will change to cater for its taxpayers. The GRA refuses to be left behind and has teamed up with Data Torque to completely replace its existing TRIPS II software.

For years, the Revenue Authority scouted software developers with an understanding in Tax

Administration and a good working relationship with its clients during the project phase. According to Head of the Information Technology Division, Mr. Sese Jones; the GRA was pleased with Data Torque's detailed and discipline project execution in Barbados. Additionally, the fact that the Project Lead is knowledgeable of taxation and grew up in a Commonwealth country was a plus. He believes the GRA has acquired an all in one "tax consultant and technology firm".

The team recently concluded its 2nd mission to Guyana where they focused on Registration, Revenue Accounting and processing Tax Returns. Rules were formulated regarding data sharing, etc. This will give the GRA the opportunity to consider where irrelevant procedures can be removed and align operations with modern and international best practices.

Before Optimal is launched in 2020, the agency will conduct a number of tests and integration. In the coming months, staff will be trained not only on navigating the software but also managing performance and escalating issues. Knowledge transfer is also a major issue within the agency that RMS is likely to rectify. The system will give the GRA the opening to develop modules/courses outlining the correct procedure in completing a task. Staff will be able to learn at their own pace without a formal classroom setting and it also augments the need for further discussion and possible

certification after completion of each course.

With the incoming oil production, threats are high on the agency's radar as such, staff will be sensitized and drilled accordingly.

The GRA foresees the following advantages resulting from the implementation of Optimal:

- Compliance rate will improve significantly
- Tax rate reduces
- More resources used to capture non-compliant taxpayers
- Eradication of log books
- Less reliance on paper based documents
- Repetitive cycle of doing tasks removed
- More data stored on software: Once transaction is keyed correctly, there will be no need to access files thereafter.

After the rollout, Data Torque will continue working with the GRA to produce a web portal for taxpayers. This portal will give taxpayers access to their tax information such as outstanding taxes (similar to a Statement of Account). Online return filing will also continue allowing all taxpayers to file their applicable tax returns.

By the end of 2020, the GRA is set to be compliant with international standards.

ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS/PROMOTIONS

Name	Previous Position	Promoted Position	Department	Effective Date
Thanza Wright	Clerk II	Clerk III	Tax Operations and Services	3-Jun-19
Lois Ambrose	Finance Officer	Group Leader	Finance Division, OSSD	24-Jun-19
Sunildev Birbal	System Administrator	System Engineer	Information Technology	3-Jun-19
Marika Miller	Customs Officer I	Supervisor	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	26-Jun-19
Rodlyn Moe	Customs Officer II	Customs Officer III	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	26-Jun-19
Karen Bobb-Semple Weatherspoon	Clerk III	Supervisor	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	26-Jun-19
Amos Singh	Clerk II	Trainee Tax Auditor	Tax Operations and Services	3-Jun-19
Candace Williams	Clerk III	Trainee Tax Auditor	Tax Operations and Services	3-Jun-19
Candice Andrews-Ewing	Supervisor	Tax Auditor	Tax Operations and Services	15-Jul-19
Nermalla Gendalall	Trainee Tax Auditor	Junior Tax Auditor	Tax Compliance and Enforcement	29-Jul-19
Rhonda Smith	Senior Clerk	Supervisor	Input Verification, Tax Operations and Services	25-Jul-19
Andre Tong	Clerk I	Clerk II	Operational Support Services	2-Jul-19
Loknauth Mangroo	Clerk I	Clerk II	Operational Support Services	2-Jul-19
Amelida Bowen	Clerk I	Clerk II	Operational Support Services	2-Jul-19
Alicia Nelson	Clerk II	Clerk III/ Cashier	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	8-Jul-19
June Crawford	Tax Auditor (resp)	Senior Auditor	Large Taxpayers	22-Jul-19
Anuradha Singh-Porter	Tax Auditor (resp)	Auditor	Large Taxpayers	22-Jul-19
Xuxa Chan	Customs Officer II	Customs Officer III	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	17-Jul-19
Shawnette Dougals	Good Examination Officer (ag)	Customs Officer III	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	17-Jul-19
Bibi Waleema Persaud	Customs Officer I	Junior Risk Management Officer	Customs, Excise and Trade Operations	29-Jul-19
Tinannia Atkins	Senior Clerk	Supervisor	Licence Revenue Operations	2-Aug-19
Michael Simmons	Junior Enforcement Officer	Supervisor	Law Enforcement and Investigation	2-Aug-19
Accacia Kirton-Goodchild	Trainee Tax Auditor	Tax Auditor	Tax Audit Department	15-Aug-19

CONDOLENCES



GRA pays Tribute



To
*Garfield
Patrick Scott*



June 15, 1963 – August 18, 2019

In the midst of life, we are in death, but death is never easy, it is often the hardest thing to accept, those left behind are filled with varying emotions. When we lose someone we love, we sometimes struggle to find the words to express just how much that person meant to us or the impact their existence had on our lives.

Tributes speak to the life a deceased person led, as well as the relationship you had with him. 'Scotty' as we fondly called him was someone we can truly say dedicated his life to the Agency. His career began on January 27, 1981 in what was then the Customs and Excise Department. Nineteen years later, ironically on January 27, the Customs and Excise Department merged with the Inland Revenue Department to form the Guyana Revenue Authority and it was following this merger that Garfield truly began his rise through the ranks within the Agency. Having started his career as an Office Assistant within the Customs and Excise Department, Mr. Scott would later ascend to that of Junior Enforcement Officer, Supervisor and finally Group Leader within the Surveillance and Anti-Smuggling Section of the Law Enforcement and Investigation Division.

Scotty was the embodiment of a dedicated and committed Officer. No task was too hard, no placement too far, no assignment too hard. He knew the risk his job entailed and he stood bravely in the face of danger. Many would recall him leading a team on an assignment in Mahaicony only to be met with a hail of bullets. Those on the assignment with him speak of how he bravely directed them to take cover. Many are the stories told of him always looking out for those he worked with. He was relentless in his efforts to curtail smuggling and spent many years overseeing the Anti-Smuggling operations in Berbice, one of the hottest hubs for such activities, and many were the seizures made on account of his vigilance. He was an astute leader and led by example. He easily corrected and guided those he worked with and was always willing to share his knowledge with those Officers under his guidance. The Law Enforcement and Investigation Division and the Revenue Authority by extension has suffered a tremendous loss with the passing of Mr. Scott, but his example will always be exemplified.

Every once in a while we are blessed to have a beautiful, genuine soul dwell among us. If we are lucky, we sometimes get to call that soul a friend, acquaintance or even a colleague. To many of us that was what Garfield Patrick Scott represented. His untimely demise is a painful reminder of how fleeting life is, but the memories shared and the contributions made will never be forgotten. Garfield, your battle is over and your victory won. ***Continue to Sleep on in Perfect Peace.***

The Commissioner-General, Management and Staff of the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) recognize the thirty-eight (38) years of sterling contribution made by Garfield Patrick Scott and extend condolences to his family and friends. Yours is a pain that is shared by all who had the honour of working with Scotty.

Mr. Eton London passed away on Tuesday, September 17, 2019. He served the Authority for 18 years and contributed in various capacities. he will be missed dearly.



October 4, 1970
to
September 17, 2019.

• Date of Employment - May 2, 2000 to June 10, 2018.

• Areas worked:

- Inland Revenue
- Taxpayer Services
- Refunds Verification and Processing-Tax Operations
- Refunds and Liabilities-Tax Operations
- Refunds Verification and Mortgage Interest Relief Unit
- Communications and Tax Advisory

• Committees that he served in: Secretary and Chairperson of the Occupational, Safety & Health Committee. In addition he was instrumental in forming the now disbanded GRA Toastmasters' Club.

RECIPE CORNER

PEPPERPOT



Guyanese Pepperpot recipe

The epitome of Guyanese cuisine, pepperpot is a beautiful, aromatic meat stew dish cooked using cassareep. Unmistakably Caribbean in flavour and smell, pepperpot is a symbolic national dish of Guyana.

Ingredients

4 lbs of meat- (beef)
1 cup cassareep
2 cinnamon sticks
2 inch piece orange peel
4 cloves garlic
4 wiri wiri peppers
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp salt
8-12 cups water
4 springs thyme
6 cloves (optional)
2 small onions
*tablespoon veg oil



Instructions

In a large/deep pot, heat the oil and add the pieces of meats (wash and drain first) and try to brown a little. Then add all the other ingredients (except the water) and give it a good stir. Next up add the water (make sure everything is covered) and bring to a boil.

You will note that I kept the peppers whole so I get the flavor and not the raw heat (you can remove them before serving and try your best not to break them open)

As it comes to a boil you'll need to skim (and discard) the sort of scum at the top of the pot and during the 3 hr braising process, you'll want to do the same for any oily fats you see on the surface. Now that it's boiling, reduce to a very gentle simmer, cover the pot and let it go for 3 hrs. Yes, you can use a pressure cooker to help with the lengthy cooking time, but to be quite honest.. you'll loose some of that lovely flavor you ONLY get with slow cooking.

After 3 hours the liquid would have reduced by about 3/4, so it will be intense in both color and flavor, for what I believe is one of the most tasty Caribbean gravy you'll ever enjoy. Guyanese pepperpot is something cooked a couple days before Christmas and remains on the stove, gently heated every time you need a fix.





MERRY
Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



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