

MITICCA

NEWS



May - 16th, 2023



TRADE AT A GLANCE

THE MINISTRY OF
INTERNATIONAL TRADE,
INDUSTRY, COMMERCE
AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

INDUSTRY &
COMMERCE



INDUSTRIAL FACTORY

MITICCA

ST. KITTS NEVIS
BUREAU OF
STANDARDS



CONSUMER AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT
ST. KITTS & NEVIS

CONSUMER AFFAIRS

THE OFFICIAL QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS.

NEWS

● TRADE AT A GLANCE ●

THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS HAS STARTED OFF 2023 IN A VERY PROACTIVE MODE . A QUICK RECAP OF THE FIRST QUARTER IS TESTIMONY TO THE FACT THAT WE UNDERSTOOD THE ASSIGNMENT .

Some of our major engagements involved cross training of staff . Cross-training for us at the Ministry is about developing employees to improve and develop their skills and knowledge on the job. It can be considered the most effective method of improving both the individual employee and the team's performance.

Some of the topics covered were : Understanding the CSME, Preparing Cabinet Submissions, (scope , content) and the relationship between International Trade and E-Commerce, Supply Chain Management, The role of Consumer Affairs and Effective Communication.



Who Can Qualify For a Skills Certificate?

CARICOM nationals who qualify under any of the approved categories and wish to work in a participating Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME) Member State must obtain a Certificate of Recognition of Caribbean Community Skills Qualification, commonly referred to as a Skills Certificate. A CARICOM national can apply for the Skills Certificate in any Member State and will be granted indefinite stay in that country, subject to requirements by the Immigration Department. Skills Certificate Holders would be required to verify his/her Skills Certificate with the respective Competent Authority in the Member State in which he/she wishes to work. For example, the holder of a Skills Certificate issued in St. Kitts and Nevis would be required to present the Skills Certificate for verification upon entering Jamaica.

The presenters for these sessions were from the Ministry of International Trade. The feedback from staff was very encouraging as staff saw this initiative as useful and rewarding.



EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

NEWS

● TRADE AT A GLANCE ●

CROSS-TRAINING SESSIONS



E-commerce Session



Cabinet Submission Sessions



General Cross-Training Session



Effective E-commerce Session

Over the past weeks we engaged in rigorous and strategic sessions with each department within the Ministry of Trade with the aim of identifying the skills and tasks needed in the workplace to fill the gaps. These exercises were very successful and should continue during the next quarter. Cross-training helps you build insurance against the inevitable. At some point, you'll have to cover for an absent employee.



Presentation of The Manufacturing Strategy

INTER-MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE – I.M.C.C

NEWS

TRADE AT A GLANCE

What is the IMCC and how is it important?

The IMCC (Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committee) is expected to provide a forum for networking or collaborating and information dissemination among public officers. This is also meant to eliminate duplication of efforts and wasting of government's resources. This includes the dissemination of information on all matters related to the Ministry's mandate as it relates to regional and international trade relations, which covers every aspect of government's operation. In doing so, the IMCC provides participation with technical advice and ways to collaborate to achieve common objectives. The IMCC is under the rubric of the Ministry of International Trade et al and is chaired by the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Jasemin Weekes.



I.M.C.C with Sustainable Development

This committee also examines the various policies and programs across Ministries and Departments and identifies areas of convergence, to determine where the cross-cutting areas can be streamlined to avoid duplication of efforts. This approach helps to curtail already limited resources.



I.M.C.C with Port, Maritime and Tourism et al

The formulation of the committee is in keeping with the Ministry's mandate to initiate economic transformation and to develop an enterprising culture in the Federation. International Trading Agreements and Partnerships form the structure that enables and drives policy prescriptions and guidelines for trading partners.

When countries enter into these agreements there is the expectation to receive national benefits and grow the economy. Our commitment is to honor the obligations and responsibilities that are enshrined in these agreements.



I.M.C.C with Labour Department

THEME: OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS GROWTH THROUGH BETTER SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT.

NEWS

● INDUSTRY & COMMERCE ●



The Facilitators for The Symposium

Covid-19 has dictated that the way we do business must change. This was one of the observations that prompted the Department of Industry and Commerce to initiate a symposium on Supply Chain Management during the first week in March. Participants in this symposium lauded the event and considered it very timely. Some of the topics covered included, procurement, planning techniques, transportation among others. The department will continue its efforts to support the business community as we seek to promote enterprising culture and foster job creation.



INDUSTRY & COMMERCE FIELD VISITS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

At the Ministry of International Trade, we remain mindful of the importance of the Manufacturing Sector and its contribution to the economy. Whilst it has been one of the hardest hit sectors during the Covid19 pandemic it also demonstrated resilience and rebounded pretty quickly. We believe however there is need to pay close attention to this sector and address some of the stark challenges they face.



Sun Island Clothes Visit



Industrial site visit - Demerara Distillers



Demerara Distillers

In this regard, the Department of Industry and Commerce has launched a rigorous series of site visits to meet with businesses in the manufacturing sector to listen to them and to address their concerns. The Minister of International Trade et al the Right Honourable Dr. Denzil L. Douglas is spearheading this drive.



Demerara Distillers

THEME: EMPOWERING CONSUMERS THROUGH CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITIONS.

NEWS

● CONSUMER AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT ●

The Department of Consumer Affairs kicked off its "Week of Activities" by worshipping at the Roman Catholic Church. The Permanent Secretary along with the Director were joined by the Minister with oversight of the Consumer Affairs Department.



The month of March in particular was very busy for the Department of Consumer Affairs as it commemorated World Consumer Rights Day and engaged in a week of activities to bring awareness to consumers. One of the most significant activities was the introduction of a consumer education programme in schools. This indeed was an historic event. The usual annual school's quiz was also one of the highlights of the week's engagement.

THE LAUNCH OF "CONSUMER EDUCATION FOR KIDS" PROGRAM



Consumer Education aims to encourage individuals to analyze and make value base decisions at a personal level in terms of needs and wants.

Providing consumer education in schools is an excellent opportunity to enhance their ability to think critically and increase their awareness.



Consumer education focuses on both functional skills and rights. These two elements are inseparable in the sense that awareness of several rights leads to functional skills. There are also instances when consumer education is conducted for the purpose of changing consumer perceptions, such as the educational drive to increase consumer confidence in for example e-commerce.

THEME: EMPOWERING CONSUMERS THROUGH CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITIONS.

NEWS

● CONSUMER AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT ●

A SNIPPET OF "KIDS QUIZ" FOR CONSUMER EDUCATION



On March 15th, 2023 the Consumer Affairs Department held the finals for the "Kids Quiz" on the topic Consumer Education at the Cuna Conference room where five (5) schools were engaged. The schools that participated were: George Moody Stuart School, Saddlers Primary School, Irish Town primary school, Seventh Day Adventist School and Beach Allen primary school.

The winner of the quiz competition was the Irish Town Primary School who soared high and did miraculously well.

Why is Consumer Education Important?

We live in a consumer society. Consumption is an important part of our everyday life and uses a significant proportion of our money and our time. The consumer society is changing rapidly. Consumers need information and education. They need to develop an awareness of the difference between real and perceived needs. They need the skills to be selective to truly obtain products and services that meet their needs, whilst at the same time taking care of the environment for the future.

The topics that were covered are:

- Need & Wants
- Consumer Rights & Responsibilities
- Money & Budgeting
- Food Safety
- The Smart Shopper
- Consumer Complaints
- The Economy

SKNBS Upgrades from Correspondent to Full-Paying Member.

NEWS

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS BUREAU OF STANDARDS

SKNBS – NOW FULL MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION (ISO)

The St. Kitts and Nevis Bureau of Standards is pleased to announce that as of January 2023 it's acquired full member status in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Our upgrade from correspondent to full-paying member was achieved with the help of governmental support. The

SKNBS became a correspondent member in 2016 with some rights and privileges within ISO. However, our new status allows us all rights, benefits, and obligations within the ISO system in accordance with clause 2 of the ISO Rules of Procedures.

Additionally, we are the only national entity with the authority to represent ISO and to locally adopt, promote, and sell ISO standards and to use the ISO name, copyright, and trademarks.

Furthermore, we now have the right to participate in the development of ISO policies and in the governance of the ISO organization.



Our membership in ISO allows the SKNBS to continue to adopt internationally recognised standards that meet the needs of our local communities. Our membership also demonstrates our commitment to the quality, safety, and efficiency of our local goods and services.

As full members of ISO, we have the right to participate in the development of ISO standards by nominating local experts to a greater range of ISO technical committees. This ensures our equal voice in the ISO international standardisation process where we can influence how and what standards are developed and how our Federation participates in international trade through our ability to propose and vote on standards and to sit on various ISO governing bodies such as ISO Council.

Our new full-paying member status in ISO further allows the Federation to meet our international obligations, build capacity of our local experts and other national organisations, and effect greater international market penetration as we develop our standardisation strategy to meet local and global economic, social, and environmental challenges.

The SKNBS remains committed to standards and quality.

SKNBS SUBMITS APPLICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL LABORATORY ACCREDITATION AUDIT FOR ISO 17025

NEWS

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS BUREAU OF STANDARDS

The St. Kitts and Nevis Bureau of Standards and Multipurpose Laboratory has achieved another milestone by being the first laboratory in the Federation to apply for accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025.

The laboratory submitted its application in April 2023 to the Jamaica National Agency for Accreditation (JANNAC), an internationally recognized accreditation body. The submitted documents have already been reviewed and a JANNAC audit team is expected shortly to conduct a formal audit of the facilities before awarding accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025 in air quality.

The SKNBS recognizes the importance of accreditation not only for its impact on trade, but also on the credibility and reliability of our conformity assessment systems. This is precisely why SKNBS has pursued accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025.

ISO/IEC 17025 is one of the most internationally recognized standards for testing and calibration laboratories and this standard is regarded as the gold standard for such laboratories. Additionally, accreditation status to such an esteemed standard demonstrates that SKNBS has the technical competence to consistently generate valid and reliable results, thereby promoting confidence in our work nationally and internationally.

International recognition and confidence mean that SKNBS generated test reports and certificates will be accepted globally as credible, removing the need for further testing, which improves international trade. This is a significant boon for our local businesses as our international partners will know that results coming from St. Kitts and Nevis can be trusted because they are valid and come from a laboratory that has been accredited to an internationally recognized and accepted standard. This can translate to removal of technical barriers to trade, which can increase economic growth.

Further, being awarded accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025 also means that SKNBS, as the national competent body, will be able to offer accreditation support to all other testing laboratories within the Federation, whether private or public, by 2024.

SKNBS is a customer focused organisation with an objective of continuously achieving customer satisfaction by promoting confidence in our work. Therefore, our anticipated accreditation further demonstrates our commitment to quality and excellent customer service.