



NEWS LETTER

October 2011

Issue 2

Dear Colleagues,

Your Association, in keeping with its commitment to the members, is happy to send you this second issue of “The Newsletter”. We are, without doubt, living in exciting times and striving to meet the many challenges and opportunities facing the global business environment. Despite the beliefs of some, this global situation impacts us directly and thus, as Management Consultants, we have a dual role. **Firstly** we must ensure that we, as individual consultants and consulting companies stay viable and **secondly** we must work tirelessly to ensure our clients keep pace with the challenging business environment. In order for the consulting industry to stay credible, we must ensure that we offer a service that provides real value and delivers tangible results. The AMCS is committed to developing its members to meet both these goals.

◆ News Items

Consultations on the Legislation for Registering and Licensing Management Consultants.

The Association of Management Consultants (St. Lucia) Inc. (AMCS) hosted a consultation on September 29th 2011. The purpose of this consultation was to review the proposed registration and licensing legislation for management consultants. This legislation is being spearheaded by the CARICOM Secretariat. An Advisory Committee made up of practicing management consultants and representatives from regional agencies has been established to facilitate the consultation process. A first meeting of this Advisory Committee was held in Barbados in August. Pursuant to that meeting CARICOM and Caribbean Export are spearheading a series of consultations. The OECS consultation was held in St. Kitts and Nevis on the 11th and 12th of October.

Dr. Stephen Louis and Mrs. Agnes Francis represented the AMCS at the 2 day workshop to review the Draft MC Professionals Bill. Similar workshops have already been held for the northern and southern Caribbean and the OECS was the last. The three agencies behind this initiative are Caricom, Carib Export and CICMC.



The workshop was very productive and all the points raised in previous AMCS discussions were included. The meeting notes as well as a matrix containing the feedback from all three consultations will be circulated by Timothy Odle by next Friday. The general feeling was that existing similar legislation should be reviewed in order to guide this as the machinery and processes were not very well defined. Overall, there was no clear consensus and it will be a while before this legislation is ready for enactment.

The workshop agreed that the “**Next Steps**” were;

1. Consultations are to be held at the national level by the end of October among MCs to allow for their input. These consultations will include both AMCS members and Non-AMCS members.
2. Caricom will alert COTED at its next meeting scheduled for early November to the existence of the draft legislation (recognizing that it will not be ready for presentation).
3. Caribbean Export will seek to obtain financing for a follow up meeting of the Advisory Committee, on which we are represented by Dr. Chase,

It is clear that policy and legislation is just one component of the work ahead for MCs and the other MCs at the St. Kitts consultation agreed that we would need to work together. St. Kitts asked for our bylaws and they were also given a sample copy of our application package. Regarding the initial discussions for an OECS body, interest was shown and the AMCS awaits communication on this matter. Carib Export indicated that there may be some assistance under their new programme.

Meeting with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce

Representatives from the AMCS met with the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce and her staff on the 21st September 2011. The purpose of the meeting was to:

1. Familiarise the Permanent Secretary with the objectives and functions of the AMCS;
2. Identify mechanisms for the AMCS to remain engaged with the Ministry.
3. Discuss the suitability of the existing governance structure of the Saint Lucia Coalition of Service Industries to represent the professional services sector in Saint Lucia; and
4. Discuss the proposed Registration and Licensing Act for Management Consultants.

This was a successful meeting and produced the following results:

- ◆ The Meeting **Agreed** that the AMCS would provide the Ministry with a membership Application Package.

- ◆ The Ministry further **Agreed** that it will engage with the AMCS on a bilateral basis. To this end an officer has been identified to act as the focal point for Management Consultants. The AMCS **Recommended** that this Officer participate in all appropriate events of the AMCS and that quarterly discussions be held between the AMCS and the officer in order to share relevant information.
- ◆ The Ministry of Commerce **Noted** that it will be engaging all service providers in the formulation of a policy on Service Industries in Saint Lucia.
- ◆ The Meeting **Agreed** that the institutional and governance structure of the Coalition should be reviewed so that it reflected the needs of all service providers in Saint Lucia. To this end, the Ministry **Informed** the meeting that it will host a consultation between the Board of the Coalition and other professional associations in order to formulate a structure that was more responsive to the needs of the professional service providers.
- ◆ The Ministry also **Noted** that inasmuch as the restructured Coalition would act as the focal point for the services sector, the Ministry will continue to engage service industries on a bilateral basis.
- ◆ The Meeting **Agreed** that the Ministry will participate in the consultations that the AMCS was holding on the proposed legislation.

Vat Seminar

The VAT Implementation Office has agreed to collaborate with the AMCS in delivering a seminar on “VAT and Professional Services”. The AMCS has decided to pursue this activity to ensure that our members and other professionals are adequately prepared to comply with the new requirements of VAT introduction.

The seminar will focus on the issues particularly relevant to persons such as management consultants whose primary business is providing professional services. Topics to be covered include:

- ◆ VAT Registration (the registration process, threshold for registration, compulsory vs. voluntary registration, etc.)
- ◆ When VAT is to be charged and not charged on services provided
- ◆ Timing of remittance of VAT collected to the government, vis-à-vis collection of payment from clients
- ◆ Whether VAT affects or does not affect Income-related taxes

A specific date has not yet been set, but this is likely to be in November. We will advise members in due course.

The VAT office has also pointed out that at this stage, it is no longer enough to be aware of VAT – you must be prepared for VAT. We encourage all members to avail themselves of the opportunity to attend the seminar to find out what changes they may need to make to their current operations.

◆ Consultants Profiles

As an Association, it is important that we know about each other, so in this and each subsequent issue, we will profile two of our members and give you a brief insight into their professional life. This does not only keep us informed but also develops our networking capacity. If we, as members of AMCS, hear of opportunities that do not adhere to our specific areas of expertise, we have the opportunity to refer these to our fellow members who “fit the bill”. This is a valuable resource for us all.

In this issue we start with Our President, Dr. Vasantha Chase and with Mrs. Geraldine Lendor-Gabriel, a stalwart member and an invaluable asset to our Association.



Dr. Vasantha Chase



Mrs. Geraldine Lendor-Gabriel

Dr. Vasantha Chase is a senior Consultant and owner of Chase Consulting with strong analytical, strategic planning and policy formulation skills, and extensive experience in leadership and management in the Caribbean. She has specialized technical expertise in sustainable development of SIDS, natural resources management including energy management and integrated water resources management, disaster management, integrated development planning, international procurement; donor procedures, including EU procedures. Vasantha’s areas of specialization are Strategic Planning, Results Based Management, Sustainable Development; international donor procurement

Mrs. Geraldine Lendor- Gabriel is a Chartered Accountant (CGA) and an Accredited Director with the Institute of Chartered Secretaries. She also holds a Bsc. in Economics and Management and an Msc. in Environmental Management. Geraldine has throughout her career focused on governance and has sat on the Board of several organisations including the Civil Service Cooperative Credit Union , Folk Research Centre, St Lucia Cooperative League and the Cultural Development Foundation. She has extensive experience in the field of Accounting, Finance, Internal Auditing, Organizational Development, Strategic Planning and Environmental Management. In 2009 Geraldine co-founded BEEQ Investments Limited for the purpose of creating value for clients in the business, environmental, energy and quality management sectors.

◆ **Light Relief**



Smart Marketing Idea



"Thank God! Somebody to network with!"

◆ Is there a need for Management Consultants?

One persons view by Darron Roberts (practicing management consultant)

Is there a need for Management Consultants? Yes there is, but I would say that wouldn't I, as I am a Management Consultant!

I haven't always been a Management Consultant; I learnt my management skills through a mixture of experience from the shop floor and education. When I was a production manager in the steel industry, I thought that the first three letters of CONSultant summed up consultants, confidence tricksters to be avoided at all costs.

I had had previous dealings with consultants giving mixed results. Sorry I should clarify this; the consultants that I had contact with were Management Trainers in reality and not implementers. They taught the theory of strategic management and then abandoned you to struggle with putting theory into practice and get any sort of benefit from it.

My conversion from CON to PRO came from the realisation that as a company we never actually finished a project that we started. Research showed me that there was a need for someone to design, manage and complete a project, outside of the normal company positions, where the production targets and delivery performance take priority over the project. Thus there is the need for Management Consultants.

That stated, choose your Management Consultants carefully. Understand what you are looking for out of a project, look at their previous work, do not just go by reputation and view the case study results of the individual consultants who will be working with you. Appreciate the project management, project fees and what the results of the project will do for your business. Then sign a professionally written contract, including time frames, contracted days and expected minimum results.

This is my advice to you gained from over twenty two years of industrial experience. There are good and bad consultants as there are good and bad practitioners in every business. If you want to improve an aspect of your business or indeed a complete business transformation you will need Management Consultants to help you achieve the maximum results from the project.

To close, I implore you to keep committed and connected. Always remember that our Association has no life of its own. Its life force is only as great as the individual effort made by each of us.