EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT

FIAT JUSTITIA







2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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ECSC MESSAGES



ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE

It is my esteemed honour to welcome you to the 2024/2025 edition of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court's (ECSC) Annual Report. I am particularly delighted for the occasion to address you through this medium for the first time as Acting Chief Justice. Over the past year, the ECSC has been actively making strides through technological advancement, procedural reforms, public outreach efforts and continuing legal and judicial education events, among other initiatives.

I am elated to have this opportunity to update you on these exciting developments. This Report stands not only as a reflection of the Court's achievements for the 2024/2025 period, but also as an acknowledgement of the barriers and limitations which impact the Court's ongoing mission for advancement in justice administration. I commend and thank you for engaging with this Report, as this is a useful medium through which the Court is able to maintain transparency; keeping its stakeholders, including the public, abreast of the judiciary's efforts to fulfil its mandate to deliver justice not only with fairness but efficiency. Of course, my brief address to you cannot cover the full gamut of developments, and so I implore you to review the Report in full for a more detailed appreciation of the ECSC's work over the past year.

For the period 2024/2025, the ECSC continued to make significant strides in the technological advancement of the Court. In January 2025, the Court completed implementation of the third and final phase of the E-Litigation Portal (ELP) Project. This final phase oversaw the full onboarding of the criminal module of the ELP, where all criminal matters at all levels of the Court, including the Magistracy, can now be electronically filed and case managed across all the ECSC's Member States and Territories. This is certainly a milestone achievement for the Court, as it now boasts a fully electronic filing and case management system that is more cohesive and will allow for greater flexibility, efficiency and expansion of the Court's services. Indeed, we are now more strategically positioned to provide the kind of effective crisis management necessary for the unique organisational structure of a court such as the ECSC. I must express my sincerest thanks to the dedicated and hardworking members of the E-Litigation Portal Implementation Team for seeing the ELP Project through to completion. Their collective efforts have thrusted the Court further into a modern age of technological operations that are on par with global standards for justice administration.

Further technological advancements for the Court during the reporting period include greater integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications. The ECSC has expanded its implementation of the speech to text digital recording system FTR (Full Transcript Recording) software across its Member States and Territories. With the assistance of

one of our donors, the PACE project, the ECSC has acquired FTR licenses for civil courtrooms in Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Lucia, and criminal courtrooms in St. Kitts and Nevis and the Commonwealth of Dominica. It is anticipated that these improvements to the Court's transcription services will not only be more cost effective but will result in a significant reduction in the current backlog of transcripts and swifter access to court records for court users. The ECSC is also preparing to make further use of AI technology through the development of an AI powered Court judgment indexing and search tool. This tool will be integrated into the Court's website and will allow more precise cataloguing of judgments and provide advanced search capabilities. A development such as this will inure to the benefit of judicial officers, attorney-at-law, law students and other stakeholders who utilise the Court's website for research purposes.

The ECSC's continued technological transformation remails a central strategic priority, reflecting our unwavering commitment to modernising the administration of justice and enhancing access, efficiency, and service delivery across the sub-region. As we continue to embrace innovation and digital solutions, we are confident that this technological thrust will propel the Court to even greater heights of excellence in justice administration.

During the year under review, the ECSC also continued its efforts to strengthen court-connected mediation. Building on the progress already achieved, the Court continues to refine its mediation framework through the enhancement of policies and procedures, including the work to finalise ECSC's Court-Connected Mediation Practice Direction (Criminal Division). The final draft of this Practice Direction for criminal mediation is anticipated to be ready for public consultation by the next report period, and its final implementation is poised to ease the burden of the Court's criminal case backlog. Other efforts include continued training and development of mediators and regional promotion through mediation workshops facilitated by the Judicial Education Institute (JEI) and the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus. One of the more notable developments in the Court's mediation programme is the receipt of a Victim-Offender Mediation (V-OM) Toolkit from the UNDP and the PACE Justice Project in May 2025. The toolkit contributes a structured guide to

establishing victim-offender mediation protocols; vital training modules for building the skills of mediators, judicial officers, and other justice sector personnel; real-world experiences of pilot countries on the introduction of restorative practices within existing legal frameworks; and guidance on safeguarding victim rights. This is a significant step in the Court's efforts to focus on prioritising restorative justice in the criminal justice system through its criminal mediation programme. By continuing to invest in court-connected mediation, the Court reinforces its commitment to a justice system that is efficient, responsive, and centred on the needs of those it serves.

The Court has also made further strides in its procedural reform efforts with the long-awaited completion of the revised Criminal Procedure Rules. I take this opportunity to thank our stakeholders, particularly the legal practitioners at the criminal bar, for their valuable feedback which informed the finalisation of the Rules. I look forward to its final promulgation and the impact it will have in further streamlining criminal proceedings.

Through the JEI, the ECSC has also continued to facilitate several training sessions and conferences for its judicial officers and court staff during the year under review. I wish to highlight that several trainings focused on the development of the Court's Registrars. These trainings included a seminar on default judgment in November 2024, a workshop on managing conflict in the workplace in January 2025 and the Annual Registrars Conference held in July 2025. I wish to thank the JEI for its innovation each year in building capacity not just for judges, but for other judicial officers and court staff to ensure improved job knowledge, cohesion and efficiency across the board for those who serve the Court.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the Court's undertaking of its Public Education Programme during the reporting period. This programme has placed the people we serve at the forefront, focusing on a variety of methods through which the Court is able to increase its transparency to the public. Initiatives under this programme include the Justice in Schools Programme aimed at engaging students on important topics about the

Court to enhance their understanding of its structure and processes. At the end of the reporting period the Court completed visits to community colleges across all its Member States and Territories. Other initiatives include a publicly broadcasted Conversation with the Chief Justice, the ECSC's Public Lecture Series and its Youth Leaders Symposium. The Public Education Programme has been an impactful addition to the ECSC's outreach agenda, and I commend and thank the former Acting Chief Justice, the Hon. Mario Michel for spearheading its implementation. I look forward to playing my own part in its expansion.

Unfortunately, as I have intimated, my message is unable to cover all the notable work which was undertaken by the ECSC over the last year. However, I hope that it spurs your interest to dive deeper into the Report that you may gain a deeper appreciation of our accomplishments as well as our challenges over the last year.

Reflecting on the last year, I am proud of the many achievements of the ECSC despite challenging circumstances. I am also excited to see what new developments are to come for the next reporting period and trust that the ECSC will continue to grow in its capacity to serve the people of the Eastern Caribbean.

In closing, I wish to sincerely thank all the judicial officers, magistrates, registrars, management and staff at the various court offices of the ECSC for their unwavering commitment and stalwart service. On behalf of the Judges, Management and staff at the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Headquarters and the High Court Offices across the Member States and Territories, and on my own behalf, I would also like to thank you, the public, for your continued support. The ECSC remains committed to its mandate to promote a system of justice that is accessible, fair, efficient and accountable to the Eastern Caribbean citizenry which it serves.



COURT ADMINISTRATOR

Over the past year, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) has achieved significant advancements in improving its procedures and practices. These enhancements aim to ensure that justice is equitable and accessible to all individuals, regardless of their circumstances. This important process necessitates continuous evaluation and adaptation, and the ECSC remains committed to further enhancing its systems, policies and procedures.

This report contains information about initiatives that have been undertaken or are currently in progress to enhance the functioning of courts in each Member State and Territory in response to ongoing challenges faced by the justice system. These efforts are largely conducted in collaboration with the Ministries of Legal Affairs/Justice, Attorneys General Chambers, and external funding partners.

During this reporting period, the ECSC has reinforced its dedication to innovation by incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) into key operational areas. This forward-thinking approach aims to boost efficiency, improve service delivery, and enhance access to justice across the ECSC Member States and Territories.

AI-enabled tools have greatly enhanced legal research capabilities at the ECSC, allowing judicial officers, judicial research assistants, and the information services team to access, analyse, and synthesise legal information more swiftly and accurately. Platforms such as LexisNexis and vLex have facilitated more informed decision-making and improved the overall quality and consistency of judicial outputs.



The Court has also benefited from AI-driven advancements in case management and administrative processes. Tools like Google Gemini, Microsoft 365 Copilot, and Zoom Workspace AI companion have helped automate routine tasks, streamline document handling, and enhance case tracking, thereby reducing operational delays and improving workflow efficiency.

Moreover, the rollout of AI-supported digital services, such as the FTR speech-

to-text application, has notably improved the efficiency of the court's case transcription processes. This innovative tool employs advanced algorithms to convert spoken language into written text much more quickly than traditional methods. By automating this labour-intensive task, the application not only saves time but also produces more accurate and reliable transcripts.

While these advancements offer significant opportunities, the Court is committed to maintaining the highest standards of data security, ethical usage, and human oversight. We are also focused on ongoing training and capacity-building initiatives to ensure staff are well-prepared to utilise these technologies effectively.

The integration of AI represents a vital step in the Court's ongoing journey towards modernisation. It underscores our commitment to delivering services that are not only fair and impartial but also efficient, accessible, and responsive to the evolving needs of the dynamic communities served by the ECSC across all Member States and Territories.

The continuing education of Judicial Officers and staff within the ECSC Member States and Territories is crucial for the effectiveness and efficiency of the court system. The ECSC Judicial Education Institute (JEI) plays a pivotal role in this effort, providing tailored training courses for judicial officers, members of the Magistracy, and both professional and administrative staff across all Member States and Territories. These judicial officers and administrative staff need to participate in ongoing educational development to keep their skills up to date with the latest advancements in law, artificial intelligence, court administration, and innovative approaches to delivering court services.

The ECSC Mediation arm continues to offer exemplary service, providing an excellent alternative to litigation for citizens across the Member States and Territories. Recently, we held a mediation training workshop in Antigua and Barbuda, which saw participants from five different Member States join for the first time. Additionally, a one-day refresher workshop was held in Saint Lucia for practising mediators, facilitated by the ECSC Regional Mediation Coordinator, Ms Debra J. Maloney.

During this reporting period, efforts have continued to finalise the ECSC's Court-Connected Mediation Practice Direction (Criminal Division) and the Criminal Procedure Rules (CPR) for implementation in all the Member States and Territories. We expect to have a final draft of the Practice Direction and the CPR ready for public consultation by the next reporting period.

For more detailed information about the JEI and the ECSC Mediation programs, please refer to the respective sections of this report. I also encourage all stakeholders to review the full report to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Court's activities and the progress made over the past year.

In closing, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the judges, masters, registrars, and all staff members at the Court's headquarters and in each Member State and Territory. Your continued unwavering support, dedication, and hard work over the past year have been truly invaluable. I am optimistic about our ability to tackle the challenges that lie ahead and look forward to enhanced collaboration and remarkable successes in the years ahead.

Gregory Girard
Court Administrator



APPELLATE JURISDICTION– CASEFLOW MANAGEMENT



INTRODUCTION

The Court of Appeal registry, or the Central Registry is responsible for the processing and managing of appeals from decisions of the Magistrates' Courts and High Courts in the nine Member States and Territories, and from decisions of the Labour Tribunals in Montserrat and Antigua and Barbuda.

In this report we will delve into the composition of the Central Registry, and the work and the activities undertaken by the department and finally highlight some noteworthy judicial pronouncements during the period under review.

Staff Complement

The department is headed by the Chief Registrar, who is assisted by the Deputy Chief Registrar. Case Managers oversee the day-to-day processing of appellate matters, ensuring their progression from filing through to hearing and final disposition. Judicial Research Assistants play an integral role in case management, working closely with the Chief Justice and Justices of Appeal. Their responsibilities include head noting and vetting judgments, conducting research, preparing draft orders and judgments, and compiling digests of decisions after each sitting.

At the end of the period under review, the total staff complement of the department was seventeen (17) broken down as follows:

- 1 Chief Registrar
- 1 Deputy Chief Registrar
- 7 Case Managers
- 8 Judicial Research Assistants

Staff Changes

We are pleased to appraise you of the following staffing changes in the Court of Appeal Registry.

DEPARTURES

During the period we said farewell to **Ms. Michelle d'Auvergne, Ms. Jovelle Lewis, Ms. Krystal Sukra and Mr. Jason Barnes** who all held positions as Judicial Research Assistants with the Court.

These gifted attorneys played a pivotal role in the work of the department. We remain grateful to them for their hard work and diligence and wish them every success in their future endeavours.

APPOINTMENTS

During this period, the department was also strengthened with the increase in its complement in the following persons:

Judicial Research Assistants

- Ms. Shania Maharaj who was appointed as a Judicial Research Assistant on 16th September, 2024; and
- Ms. Diane Etienne who was appointed as a Judicial Research Assistant on 1st June 2025.

Workload

There were 409 appeals filed in total in the High Courts and Magistrates' Courts of the Member States and Territories

during the 2024 calendar year. This represents a decrease from the 454 cases filed in 2023.

There was a slight decline in the number of civil appeals filed from the High Courts and Magistrates' Courts in 2024, with a total of 216 civil appeals compared to 235 in 2023.

Similarly, the number of criminal appeals filed in 2024 decreased from the previous year, with 147 appeals recorded, down from 175 in 2023.

In contrast, there was an increase in the number of commercial appeals, rising from 35 in 2023 to 41 in 2024.

With respect to appeals filed in the Industrial Court/Labour Tribunal, there was a slight decrease from 9 matters in 2023 to 5 in 2024.

A detailed analysis of the 2024 caseload is provided in the Court Performance section of this report.

Court Sittings

In 2023 a total of 956 appeal matters were heard via Full Court sittings, Chamber Hearings, Case Management hearings and Status Hearings broken down as follows:

- There were twenty-one (21) scheduled full court sittings conducted for the year 2024 where 271 matters were heard. Territory of the Virgin Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia had three (3) sittings each; Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Anguilla, Montserrat and The Commonwealth of Dominica had two (2) sittings each.
- In addition to the above, there were six (6) Extraordinary Full Court Sittings held for the year outside of the scheduled Full Court sittings.
- For the year in review, The Court of Appeal conducted most of its sittings virtually via Zoom. The Court however did hold at least one in-person sitting for each Member State and the Territory of the Virgin Islands.
- There were eleven (11) scheduled Chamber Hearings, conducted on average at least once a month for the purpose of case management and dealing with interlocutory applications. There were also a number of other matters heard extraordinarily outside of the

scheduled Chamber Hearings. The matters scheduled for consideration in Chambers were largely dealt with as paper hearings. This led to the hearing of 212 such matters for the year.

- There were 8 Case Management Conferences held for the year.
- A total of twenty-one (20) Status Hearings were held, conducted by the Chief Registrar where 386 matters were heard.

Delivery of Judgments and Decisions

There were 72 written judgments delivered by the Full Court in 2024. These judgments provided the Court's written reasons for its decisions.

The Court's judgments continue to be published on its website upon delivery, unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

In 2024, the Full Court also delivered 372 oral judgments or decisions. These decisions are captured in the digests of decisions produced by the Court. The digests record summaries of all matters heard at sittings of the Court, as well as written judgments that were delivered. In addition to the oral decisions, the digests provide details of the issues considered, the orders made, and the reasons for those orders.

All digests, once approved, are also published on the Court's website and serve as a valuable research tool, particularly in cases where no written judgment is available.



HIGHLIGHTS

Case Management / Scheduling Conferences

The Court continued to conduct case management or scheduling conferences for matters listed on the preliminary cause lists at least four to six weeks prior to each scheduled sitting.

This process enabled the court office to identify matters that are not yet ready for hearing or where parties may agree to an adjournment due to lack of readiness or other reasons. As a result, only matters that are ready proceed to hearing, allowing the Court to make more efficient use of its time and to allocate appropriate time for each matter.

Legal Internship Program 2025

The Legal Internship Program remains a prominent feature of the Court's calendar. Each year, a 10-week internship is offered to two students from the regional law schools during the months of June to August. The Court was once again pleased to partner with the regional law schools to facilitate this programme.

The 2025 internship ran from 2nd June to 8th August 2025. The two students selected were **Mr. Timothy Roper** and **Mr. Kiandre Weeks**, both of the Norman Manley Law School. During the internship, the students attended court sittings and were engaged in a range of practical tasks, including preparing digests, writing legal opinions, drafting orders, and head noting and vetting judgments. A full account of their experiences can be found in this annual report.

Significant Judgments Delivered

Although over the 2024 calendar year the court delivered 72 written judgments, the following judgments are worthy of mention:

WARREN CASSELL v THE KING
MNIHCRAP2022/0003

Delivered : 27th February 2025
Coram: Price Findlay, Ward and Farara JJA

Criminal appeal – Appeal against conviction – Concealing the proceeds of criminal conduct – Section 33 (1) (a) of the Proceeds of Crime Act 1999 – Duplicity – Whether the indictment was duplicitous – No Case Submission – Whether the trial judge erred in rejecting the no case submission - Tendering Documents-Evidence – Whether the judge erred in not requiring the documentary evidence of the crown to be admitted and marked before allowing the jury to consider those documents - Whether the conviction was unsafe and unsatisfactory

In 1989, Owen Rooney ("Rooney") and one Walter Wood ("Wood") formed a company called Providence Estate Ltd. ("PEL") and purchased a lot of land comprising some fifty-three (53) acres of land in Providence Estate, St. Peters, Montserrat. Wood was the owner of sixty percent (60%) of the shares in PEL and Rooney owned the remaining forty percent (40%). The purpose of the company was to develop the land. Rooney and Wood eventually fell out and years passed with no activity being carried out with respect to the estate.

In 2006 the appellant formed a company, Cassell and Lewis Inc. The appellant acquired Wood's 60% share in PEL paying Wood US$300,000.00. Having acquired the shares, the appellant advertised several lots of land situated at Providence Estate for sale, including those reserved for Rooney. The appellant in September 2001 was recorded as a director of PEL at the Companies Registry and made a request to subdivide the property at Providence Estate. The appellant also petitioned the court for PEL to be restored to the Register and paid the relevant fees for this to occur.

The appellant started selling lots and receiving monies for those lots from prospective purchasers in September 2007. The monies received from those prospective purchases were placed into the account of Cassell and Lewis. All of this was done without consultation with or any involvement of Rooney, who still owned 40% of the shares in PEL. The appellant continued selling lots and executing transfers with respect to the lands at Providence Estate and received monies relative to those sales. All monies so received were deposited into the bank accounts of Cassell and Lewis. The appellant continued selling lands into 2008, by which time he had received in excess of EC$855,000.00 in revenue, all monies going into the account of Cassell & Lewis.

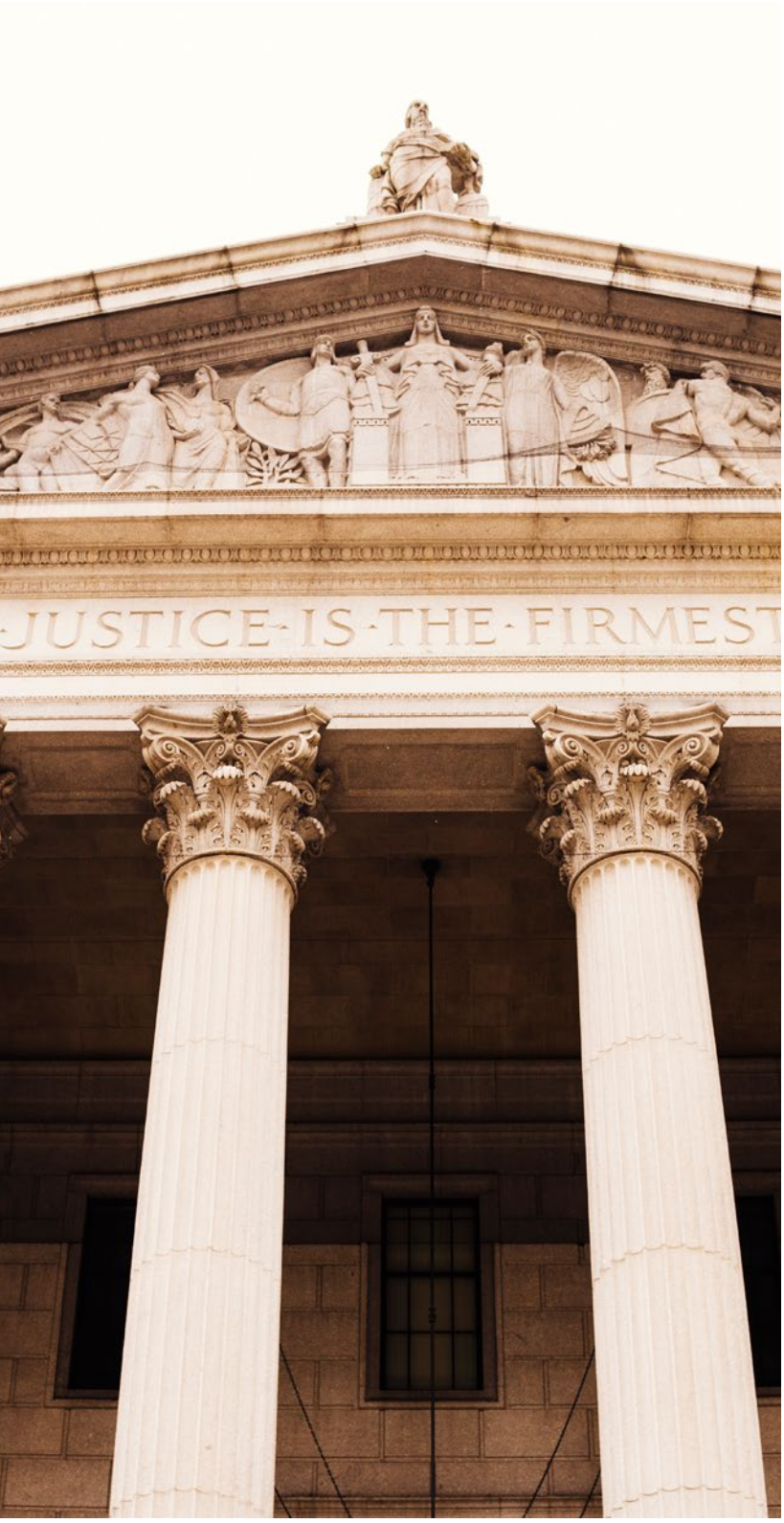
A complaint was made to the authorities by Rooney who became aware of the sale of the land without any consultation or involvement of himself who remained a 40% shareholder in PEL with entitlement to a portion of the proceeds of the sales and to certain lands within the development. As a result, the police arrested the appellant, and he was charged with the offence of concealing the proceeds of criminal conduct contrary to Section 33(1)(a) of the **Proceeds of Crime Act 1999.**

In the indictment, the prosecution alleged that the appellant had received the sum of EC$855,380.54, such sums having been transferred from investors into the account of Cassell and Lewis for sales of lands at Providence Estate. The indictment further alleged that the monies were in whole or in part, directly or indirectly the proceeds of criminal conduct, namely the fraudulent conduct of the appellant in dishonestly: (a) representing that he was a director of PEL and/or (b) representing that he was legally entitled to sell land at PEL and/or (c) filing a Change of Directors application with the Companies Registry regarding PEL and/or (d) receiving funds into the bank account of Cassell and Lewis for the sale of lands at Providence Estate , for the purpose of avoiding prosecution for an offence or the making of a confiscation order.

The appellant was convicted and sentenced to three (3) years and six (6) months imprisonment on 22nd June 2022 following a trial by jury. The appellant filed an appeal against conviction and sentence for the offence of concealing the proceeds of criminal conduct and filed 14 grounds of appeal by way of a notice of appeal filed on 5th July 2022 and an amended notice of appeal filed on 17th September 2024. The appellant did not pursue all the grounds of appeal at the hearing, but made representations with respect to inter alia: (i) the trial was a nullity as it had proceeded on an indictment which was duplicitous, (ii) the learned trial judge erred in wrongfully rejecting the no case submission made by the appellant and (iii) the verdict was unsafe and unsatisfactory having regard to the numerous errors made by the learned trial judge.

Held: allowing the appeal, quashing the conviction of the appellant and setting aside the sentence and no retrial ordered that:

1. If a charge contains more than one offence, it is defective and considered bad for duplicity. The stated purpose for the rule against duplicity is to enable a defendant to know the case he is being called upon to answer so that he will not be prejudiced or embarrassed in preparing his defence. Such prejudice or embarrassment could result if the defendant is uncertain as to the specific offence for which he is charged. This principle has been developed and designed to



ensure fairness. However, more than one incident of commission of the offence may be included in a count if those incidents taken together amount to a course of conduct having regard to time, place or purpose of commission. Thus, where a person is charged with a single offence which can be carried out in a multiplicity of ways a charge will not be bad for duplicity even where a number of separate criminal acts are implied.

Section 33(1)(a) of the **Proceeds of the Crime Act 1999** Laws of Montserrat applied; United Kingdom **Proceeds of Crime Act 2002** considered.

2. In the Montserrat **Proceeds of Crime Act** where an individual attempts to conceal criminal property, this may involve disguising, converting or transferring the said property once it is done for the purpose of avoiding prosecution for an offence. Upon examining the activity that the appellant was charged with, that is concealing, it is clear that this was a single activity covering a course of conduct by the appellant over a period of time. Therefore, the charge was not duplicitous. The particulars

of the indictment followed strictly the wording of the legislation in alternatively describing the nature of the offence and did not create separate offences. Therefore, this ground of appeal fails.

Proceeds of the Crime Act 1999 Chap 4.04 Laws of Montserrat; **Archbold: Criminal Pleading, Evidence and Practice 2024,** Sweet & Maxwell considered; **The Commonwealth Caribbean Criminal Practice and Procedure,** Dana S. Seetahal with updates with Roger Ramgoolam, Routledge, 4th Edition considered; **Blackstone's Criminal Practice 2025**, Oxford University Press, considered; **Ware v Fox** [1967] 1 All ER 100 considered; **Thomson v Knights** [1947] 1 All ER 112 applied.

3. The criteria which a trial judge ought to apply to a submission of no case to answer is whether there is material on which a jury could without irrationality be satisfied of guilt. Where there is such material, the trial judge must allow the trial to proceed. In a criminal trial, the judge has a supervisory role and in effect carries out a filtering process to decide what evidence is placed before the jury. The trial judge is tasked with and may be required to consider whether the prosecution has provided sufficient evidence to leave the case to the jury for decision.

   R v Galbraith [1981] 2 All ER 1060 applied; Daley v R [1998] 1 WLR 494 applied.

4. It is common ground that the proper approach to a submission of no case to answer can be found in the age-old test propounded by Lane CJ in the case of **R v Galbraith**. In considering the submission of no case to answer, the Court must have in mind the charge before the Court and its constituent parts in order to assess whether either of the two (2) limbs of R v Galbraith apply. The constituent elements as set out in the indictment in this matter required not only oral testimony but the necessary documentary evidence to prove to the satisfaction of the jury that the appellant had committed the offence for which he was charged. Failure by the Crown to properly tender the relevant documents was fatal to their case.

   R v Galbraith [1981] 2 All ER 1060 applied.

5. With respect to the second limb of **Galbraith**, the issue to be decided by the Court is, not whether there was some evidence but if what evidence existed was of such a tenuous nature that the case ought not to be left to the jury. This involves an assessment or evaluation of the quality and reliability of the evidence rather than the legal sufficiency of the evidence. Taken as a whole, the jury in this matter was faced with satisfying themselves to the standard of beyond a reasonable doubt, that in the absence of the relevant documentation, the appellant had committed the offence of concealing the proceeds of criminal conduct, as alleged by the Crown. In this matter, in the absence of documentary evidence, the case against the appellant was tenuous and the jury was in effect left with little or no evidence upon which to conclude that the necessary framework required for the essential elements of the charge were placed before them, in order to come to a conclusion of guilt to the required standard. The Crown's evidence taken at its highest, was such that a jury properly directed could not properly convict the appellant, and the learned trial judge ought to have accepted the no case submission and consequently had a duty to withdraw the case from the jury. Having failed to do so the learned trial judge erred. This ground of appeal therefore succeeds.

   R v Colin Shippey et al [1988] CLR 767 applied; **Edwin Gomez v The Queen** ANUHCRAP2014/0012 consolidated with Isaiah Benjamin v The Queen ANUHCRAP2014/0013 (delivered 17th August 2022, unreported) followed.

6. It is trite law that all documents, photographs and reports used as evidence must satisfy the requirements of the law to be admitted as evidence. During a trial, each piece of evidence should be marked and formally admitted. Such exhibits must be marked and formally admitted into evidence before they can be considered by the judge and jury. At no point in the transcript of the proceedings of the court below were any documents tendered and marked accordingly by the court as exhibits in the proceedings. In fact, the documents did not form part of the Record of Appeal. This procedure is highly irregular and unusual in

either civil or criminal matters. In the absence of agreement of the parties that the documents were not being challenged, the documents ought not to be shown to the jury unless and until they have been properly tendered and marked as exhibits. The learned trial judge therefore erred in allowing the jury to be shown documents relative to the matter during the Crown's opening address and further allowing the jury to highlight or identify certain portions of those documents before they were properly tendered as exhibits in the matter. Further, the jury was allowed to consider the documents during their deliberations. Failure to produce the necessary documents in support of their case left the Crown's case bare of the necessary proof required to show to the jury that the appellant did what the Crown sought to represent that he had done.

RvTroyChristianANUHCR2022/0062 (delivered 16th January 2024, unreported), applied; Paragraph 2.12 of Stone's Justices Manual 2024, Butterworths considered.

7. There was a material irregularity when the learned trial judge not only allowed the jury to be shown documents which were not admitted into evidence at the opening of the case for the Crown but further those documents remained with the jurors throughout the entirety of the trial and also during their deliberations, without ever having been admitted, tendered or marked as exhibits by the court. This Court is therefore left in doubt with regards to the correctness of the conviction of this appellant, and having considered all of the circumstances of the case, this Court cannot be satisfied that this conviction is safe and satisfactory and there is a real risk that this appellant was convicted on evidence which ought not to have been seen or considered by the jury, as it was not properly tendered at his trial. A miscarriage of justice has therefore occurred. This ground of appeal also succeeds.

FULL JUDGMENT >

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL v JAMES ST. PRIX
SLUHCVAP2022/0014

Delivered: 28th February 2025
Coram: Price-Findlay, Ellis and Farara JJA

Interlocutory appeal – Appeal against the learned master's refusal to strike out claim – Whether the learned master erred in the exercise of his discretion – Interpretation and application of Article 28 of the Code of Civil Procedure of Saint Lucia ("CCP") – Failure to serve Article 28 notice (giving one month's notice) on public officer before claim is issued – Whether the learned master erred in finding that an Article 28 Notice need only be served on the public officer if such public officer is named as a defendant to the claim – Whether the learned master erred in finding that the claim for vicarious liability against the Attorney General would survive where the Article 28 Notice is not served on the public officer who is not named as a defendant to the claim – Sections 4(4) and 13(2) of the Crown Proceedings Act ("CPA") – Whether the learned master failed to have regard to the legal effect of section 13(2) and section 4(4) of the Crown Proceedings Act of Saint Lucia

In March of 2022, the respondent filed a claim for damages against the appellant pursuant to section 13(2) of the Crown Proceedings Act ("CPA") alleging that while in police custody, a police officer/servant/agent of the Crown ("the public officer") compelled him to unlawfully and wrongfully transfer ownership of his motor vehicle to the second named defendant in the court below, thereby causing him damage and loss ("the claim"). As a result, the respondent claimed the sum of $47,850.00 in addition to a sum for aggravated and exemplary damages, interests and costs.

The public officer was not joined as a defendant to the claim in the court below and no relief was sought against her. The respondent served the appellant with a document entitled 'Notice of Intended Prosecution" ("Article 28 Notice"). However, the respondent did not serve the public officer with an Article 28 Notice as required under the the Code of Civil Procedure ("CCP"). Due to this failure, the appellant invoked section 4(4) of the CPA and filed an application to strike out the claim pursuant to Article 28 of the CCP ("the application").

In a judgment dated 5th July 2022, the learned master identified that the

central issue for determination was whether service of a notice of intended action on the police officer (the principal tortfeasor) is necessary (when she was not joined as a party to the claim) and, if so, whether service of the notice on the Attorney General (rather than the police officer), is sufficient for the purpose of Article 28 of the CCP. The master ultimately dismissed the application to strike out the claim.

Being dissatisfied with the learned master's decision, the appellant filed a notice of appeal disputing several of the master's findings on a multiplicity of grounds.

Held: dismissing the appeal, affirming the order of the learned master, ordering the appellant to pay the respondent's costs to be assessed by a judge of the high court if not agreed within 21 days of this judgment that;

1. Article 28 lays down the procedure where suits are brought against a public officer, and it clearly imposes a bar against the institution of any judgment against a public officer or other person fulfilling any public duty or function. The object of the notice required under Article 28 of the CCP is to inform the public officer, or other person fulfilling any public duty or function (the actual tortfeasor) before-hand of the nature of the action contemplated and to give him an opportunity to consider his legal position. It clearly affords a privilege to a public officer against whom legal proceedings are actually contemplated. Where the officer is not intended to be joined as defendant, Article 28 is not engaged. Where a claimant has taken the strategic decision to not sue the public officer or other person fulfilling any public duty or function for damages, there is no need to afford him or her notice of legal proceedings in which he or she will not be joined as defendant and where no legal remedies are being pursued against him or her.

Article 28 of the **Code of Civil Procedure**, Cap 22.08 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied; **Bryan James et al v The Attorney General** SLUHCVAP2013/0023, SLUHCVAP2013/0024, SLUHCVAP2014/0021 (delivered 10th February 2016, unreported) applied; **Bihari Chowdhary & Anr v State of Bihar and Ors** 1984 AIR 1043

considered; **Bhagchand Dagadusha Gujarati and Ors. v Secretary of State for India** (1927) 43 TLR 617 considered.

2. The wording in Article 28 of the CCP is clear and it must therefore be given its plain and ordinary meaning. Given the legislative context and the wording of Article 28, it is clear that the drafters did not intend to impose a similar pre-action protocol in regard to the Crown or the State because at the time the CCP would have been promulgated, the legal landscape in regard to liability of the Crown would have been quite different, that is, the Crown was immune from liability.

   Article 28 of the **Code of Civil Procedure**, Cap 22.08 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied; **Conseil des Ports Nationaux v Langelier** [1969] SCR 60 applied.

3. A claimant who sues the Crown for a tort committed by a public officer does not need to bring proceedings against the officer personally because the CPA makes clear that the Crown is subject to all those liabilities in tort to which, if it were a private person of full age and capacity, it would be subject in respect of torts committed by its servants or agents. Initially, one needed to identify an individual Crown servant who had committed a tort in the course of their duties or employment. However, this is no longer the case. Recognising that it may be difficult or impossible to positively prove which one of several servants was tortious (what may be described as "collective failures"), the court have nevertheless found employers vicariously liable. While primary liability of the primary tortfeasor/servant must be made out, it is therefore not always possible or necessary to join the primary tortfeasor as a defendant in order to prove his primary liability or in order to establish vicarious liability of the Crown. It therefore follows that it will not always be possible or indeed necessary to serve notice of intended action on the public officer who is the primary tortfeasor.

Hogg, Monahan, and Wright- ***"Liability of the Crown"*** (Carswell 4th edn, 2011) applied; **The Crown Proceedings Act**, Cap 2.05 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied; **The Queen v Levy Brothers Company Limited and the Western Assurance**

Company [1961] SCR 189 applied.

4. Procedurally, section 13 of the CPA makes clear that in a suit by or against the Crown, the authority to be named as claimant or defendant is the Attorney General. Section 13 does not prohibit or prevent suit being instituted personally against a public officer who is an alleged tortfeasor. Rather it simply codifies the position that the Crown may be vicariously liable for his actions.

Section 13 of the **Crown Proceedings Act** Cap 2.05 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied; **Basil Williams v The Attorney General of Guyana et al** [2023] CCJ 3 (AJ) GY applied; **Bryan James et al v The Attorney General** SLUHCVAP2013/0023, SLUHCVAP2013/0024, SLUHCVAP2014/0021 (delivered 10th February 2016, unreported) applied; **Bertha Compton v Dr. Nathaniel et al** SLUHCVAP2004/0012 (delivered 15th February 2005, unreported) applied; **General Aviation Services Ltd et al v The Director General of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority et al** SLUHCVAP2012/006 (delivered 11th September, unreported) applied.

5. Section 4(4) of the CPA essentially states that any legal provision which limits the liability of a government department or Crown officer in relation to a tort will also apply to the Crown when being sued under this section. This means that the Crown is treated as if it were that specific department or officer, in terms of liability limitations for that particular tort. The scheme of Article 28 is procedural in its wording and intent. The framers of Article 28 intended to encourage parties to consider their legal position and make amends or settle if so advised. The object is the advancement of justice and the securing of public good by avoidance of unnecessary litigation. This characterization is not consistent with an enactment which negatives or limits the amount of the liability of an officer of the Crown in respect of any delict or quasi-delict which he or she may have committed. Article 28 protections are therefore not captured by section 4(4) of the CPA.

Article 28 of the **Code of Civil Procedure**, Cap 22.08 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied; Section 4 (4) of the **Crown Proceedings Act** Cap 2.05 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied;

Matthews v Ministry of Defence [2007] 3 All ER 513 applied; **Vallayan Chettier v Government of the Province of Madras** AIR 1947 PC 197 considered. **Bryan James et al v The Attorney General** SLUHCVAP2013/0023, SLUHCVAP2013/0024, SLUHCVAP2014/0021 (delivered 10th February 2016, unreported) considered. Section 4(4) of the **Crown Proceedings Act**, Cap 2.05 of the Revised Laws of Saint Lucia applied.

FULL JUDGMENT >

GEORGE KIRNON v ATTORNEY GENERAL AND SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS
MNIHCVAP2024/0006

Delivered on 21st October 2024
Coram; Ward, Ventose and Farara JJA

Civil appeal - Judicial Review Proceedings – Section 22 of the Elections Act – Section 51 of the Constitution of Montserrat - Whether the Returning Officer exceeded her jurisdiction in purporting to invalidate the appellant's nomination paper on the basis that he had not satisfied the requirements of section 51(3)(c) of the Constitution

A general election was scheduled to be held in Montserrat on 24th October 2024. 10th October 2024 was appointed Nomination Day. The appellant duly submitted his nomination papers to the Returning Officer. No objection was made by anyone to his nomination papers and no indication was given to him on that day as to the status of his nomination papers, whether valid or invalid. It was previously agreed between the Electoral Commission and prospective candidates that if objections were taken to any prospective candidate's nomination paper, that candidate would be allowed 48 hours to respond. On 13th October 2024, the appellant received a letter from the Returning Officer, dated 11th October 2024, informing him that his nomination was being rejected because he did not meet the requirements of section 51(3)(c) of the **Constitution**.

On 14th October 2024, the appellant launched judicial review proceedings. The essential ground of the judicial review application was that the decision of the Returning Officer was arrived at in breach of the rules of natural justice insofar as she did not provide the appellant with the opportunity to be heard and in a manner inconsistent with the procedure established by the Elections Commission and/or the Supervisor of Elections whereby candidates were assured that in the event of any objection to their nomination, the candidate would be given 48 hours within which to respond before a decision is made.

In a judgment dated 15th October 2024 the learned high court judge dismissed the application. He held that the appellant was asking the court to mandate the Returning Officer to register him as a candidate for the elections and to include his name on the ballot paper. The judge further held that this was not the function of the court on an application for judicial review, and that the court's remit was to examine the manner in which the challenged decision was arrived at to determine whether the process adopted was fair. Having considered that the specific complaint made by the appellant was that he was not afforded an opportunity to be heard before the Returning Officer determined that his nomination paper was invalid, and the relevant evidence, the judge held that in the circumstances of this case, it was not unfair of the Returning Officer to arrive at her decision without first allowing the claimant to make representations to her as to the meaning of section 51 of the **Constitution**, as the appellant would not be deprived of an opportunity to have his interpretation of section 51 of the **Constitution** tested in the proper forum.

Being dissatisfied with the judgment, the appellant appealed to this Court. By Notice of Appeal filed on 17th October 2024 the appellant lodged six grounds of appeal. However, on 20th October 2024, the appellant filed a Notice of Application in which he sought leave to argue another ground, namely that the Returning Officer acted outside her jurisdiction when she invalidated the appellant's nomination paper pursuant to section 22(1)(d) of the Elections Act (the "Act") for failure to satisfy the requirements set out in section 51 of the Constitution. The appellant invited this Court to treat this as his primary ground

of appeal as, if successful, it would be determinative of the appeal.

The issue for resolution on this appeal therefore was whether the Returning Officer exceeded her jurisdiction in purporting to invalidate the appellant's nomination paper on the basis that he had not satisfied the requirements of section 51(3)(c) of the **Constitution**.

Held: declaring that the Returning Officer exceeded her jurisdiction when she invalidated the appellant's nomination paper pursuant to section 22(2)(d) of the Elections Act for failure to satisfy the requirements set out at section 51 of the Constitution by letter dated 11th October 2024 and making no order as to costs, that:

1. The Returning Officer's power to invalidate a candidate's nomination paper and the grounds on which she may do so are expressly set out in section 22(2)(d) of the **Elections Act**. The grounds on which the Returning Officer may do so are limited by the section. The Returning Officer may invalidate the nomination paper on the grounds either that (1) the particulars concerning the candidate or the persons subscribing to the nomination paper are not as required by law; or (2) that the nomination paper is not subscribed as required by law. The phrase "the particulars concerning the candidate... are not as required by law" is a reference to the Elections Act, which is the only law governing the form and content of nomination papers.

   Section 22 of **The Elections Act**, Chap. 1.04 Revised Edition of the Laws of Montserrat applied.

2. The function that the Returning Officer performs on nomination day is to scrutinise the nomination paper to ensure that it is compliant with the requirements of the **Elections Act**. If it is not, a candidate is disqualified from being nominated. In order to determine whether a nomination paper is valid the Returning Officer is confined to an examination of what appears on the face of the nomination paper.

   R v Election Court, Ex P Sheppard [1975] 1 WLR 1319 applied; Section 22 of the **Elections Act** considered; **Sanders and Another v Chichester and Anothe**r [1994] Lexis Citation 2028 considered.

3. It is of course possible to discern on the face of the nomination paper that a candidate is not qualified to stand for election. The Returning Officer can invalidate the candidate's nomination paper because the nomination paper itself alerts her to the fact that it is not subscribed by a duly qualified candidate. However, if, as in the present case, the voters subscribing the nomination paper certify that the candidate is qualified to be elected to the Legislative Assembly, and there is nothing on the face of the nomination paper to contradict this, the Returning Officer cannot go behind this to investigate whether this is so or not.

   Greenway-Stanley v Paterson [1977] 2 All ER 663 considered; **Re Melton Mowbray (Egerton Ward) Urban District Council Election** [1968] 3 All ER 761 applied; Section 52 (1) (b) of the **Constitution** of Montserrat, Chap 1.01 Revised Edition of the Laws of Montserrat considered; Section 22 of the **Elections Act** Chap. 1.04 Revised Edition of the Laws of Montserrat applied.

4. There is no rule that immunises from challenge the decision of the Returning Officer about the validity or invalidity of a nomination paper. This was an appropriate case for the appellant to have engaged the judicial review procedure as on the face of it the Returning Officer plainly acted unlawfully.

   R (on the application of De Beer and others) v Balabanoff (Returning Officer for London Borough of Harrow) [2002] EWHC 670 (Admin) considered.

FULL JUDGMENT >



CONCLUSION

The Court of Appeal Registry prides itself on the service it renders to the citizens of the Member States and Territories of the Eastern Caribbean. This report offers only a glimpse of the activities undertaken by the Registry, highlighting key initiatives, achievements and challenges during the reporting period.

It is not exhaustive, but intended to inform stakeholders of major trends and areas of focus. We hope however, that it has provided you with significant insight into the work that we do.

We wish to acknowledge our hard-working and diligent team, who consistently go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the Court fulfils its mandate with professionalism and excellence. We also record our profound thanks to the Registrars, Deputy Registrars and staff of the High Courts and Magistrates' Courts across the Member States and Territories, for the invaluable assistance they provided during the period. Our work is truly a team effort, and the support of these Registries and Magistrates' Court offices is pivotal to achieving our goals. We extend our gratitude as well to counsel, litigants and all court users.

In closing, we thank all users of the court system for their trust and partnership; your engagement strengthens our pursuit of timely, fair and accessible justice. We remain committed to continuous improvement, transparency and professionalism in every interaction, and we welcome your feedback as we work together to uphold the rule of law and serve our region with integrity.



COURT PROJECTS



CRIMINAL DIVISION

During 2025, the Criminal Division focused on strengthening institutional capacity, modernising court processes, and advancing procedural reform across the region. A key milestone was the handing over of the Victim/Offender Toolkit, which enhanced judicial officers' and court practitioners' ability to apply victim-centred and restorative justice principles consistently within criminal proceedings. The Toolkit represents an important step in embedding balanced and informed decision-making within the criminal justice process.

In response to persistent delays in criminal matters, a Criminal Justice Committee was established in Saint Lucia with a specific mandate to address the criminal backlog. The Committee brought together key justice sector stakeholders to develop coordinated, practical solutions aimed at improving case flow management and reducing systemic bottlenecks.

The Division also advanced its digital transformation agenda through the procurement of FTR (Full Transcript Recording) software for the courts. This initiative is expected to improve the accuracy, accessibility, and efficiency of court records, while reducing reliance on manual transcription processes.

Significant progress was made in procedural reform with the completion of the revised Criminal Procedure Rules. Following the conclusion of public consultations, stakeholder feedback was reviewed and incorporated into the draft. The revised Rules were subsequently submitted to the Attorneys General for formatting and final preparatory steps ahead of promulgation.

Additionally, the draft Practice Directions for Criminal Mediation were completed, providing a structured framework to support the use of mediation as an alternative mechanism for resolving appropriate criminal matters and promoting more proportionate and restorative outcomes.



FAMILY DIVISION

In 2025, the Family Division prioritised strengthening the governance and operational effectiveness of the Family Proceedings framework.

The Family Division Committee in Antigua established two specialised sub-committees to address critical policy and operational issues. One sub-committee was tasked with examining the suitability of the existing legislative environment to support the effective implementation of the Family Proceedings Rules, with a view to identifying gaps and areas requiring alignment.



The second sub-committee focused on reviewing practitioner feedback arising from the practical application of the Rules. This work resulted in the identification of targeted areas where amendments may be necessary to improve clarity, efficiency, and responsiveness to the needs of families and children.

In addition, the Committee prepared a legal opinion on the appointment and tenure of social workers within the Family Division. The opinion examined the issue within the broader operational context of the Family Division and clarified the role and functions of the Directorate of Social Services, thereby supporting greater institutional coherence and accountability.



COURT-CONNECTED MEDIATION



OVERVIEW

The year of our Lord 2025 heralded the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court's (ECSC) fifty-eighth (58th) anniversary of service excellence and the administration of justice to its nine (9) Member States and Territories (MSTs). For twenty-two (22) of those years, mediation has been a consistent stalwart supporting the Court's overriding objective of dealing with civil cases justly. Pivotal to the success of any alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism (in this case mediation), is the realisation by the parties that they have been empowered to resolve their disputes outside of the adversarial court system, and to arrive at agreed outcomes which best serve their unique interests and needs. Kenneth Cloke in **The Dance of Opposites Explorations in Mediation, Dialogue and Conflict Resolution Systems Design** states as follows:

After centuries of suffering and turmoil, we now have available the tools we require to produce radically different outcomes. Through the dramatically increasing power and reach of dispute resolution techniques, we can now begin to build the capacity of people around the world to resolve their disputes based on interests, rather than on power or rights; based on justice, and not merely on law (Cloke, 2013, p. 384).

The question then remains; how do we improve the uptick of the employment of mediation as a dispute resolution tool, designed to facilitate vastly different outcomes in the OECS and more particularly the nine (9) MSTs under the remit of the ECSC? In pursuit of the answer to this question, the following activities and initiatives were undertaken during the 2024/2025 reporting period.

Memorandum of Agreement between ECSC and UWISTA

The ECSC and the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus (UWISTA) have long enjoyed a healthy and fruitful partnership in respect of the training of new mediators. This relationship first established by Memorandum of Understanding in 2012, was bolstered by the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on 28th October, 2024. The signing of this MOA reinforces the lasting commitment both institutions share toward the advancement of mediation in the OECS and signals our intention to honour our shared goals for the foreseeable future.

Mediation Promotion - Dominica

Mr. Jeffrey Douglas-Murdock, Attorney-at-law, and Mr. Randy Rodney, Pastor, both mediators and members of the national Mediation Committee for the Commonwealth of Dominica, presented on mediation as a suitable means of settling disputes, during the local Bar Association's radio show, "Legally Speaking". Their presentation was broadcast over the airwaves of the Dominica Broadcasting Corporation's radio services on Monday September 30th, 2024 between the 8:00pm - 9:00pm time slot. The show was facilitated by co-hosts, Mrs. Noelize Knight Didier, President of the Dominica Bar Association, and Mr. Kimani St. Jean. During their presentation Messrs. Douglas-Murdock and Rodney shared information regarding inter alia the

difference between court-connected and private mediations, the purpose, philosophy and goals of ADR and mediation in particular, conduct of the parties and legal practitioners during a mediation session and practical issues, challenges and concerns related to the mediation process. This presentation was a follow-on from a previous radio programme held on 27th April, 2024. On that earlier occasion the listening public was enlightened by Her Ladyship Hon. Justice Jacqueline Graham about mediation, the newly introduced judicial settlement conference which had been piloted in Dominica and the differences between both ADR methodologies.

ECSC Mediation Programme: outside of the OECS

Mediation promotion continued in the respective Member States and Territories. Notable efforts were made to keep mediation fresh on the minds of citizens by the respective Mediation Committees. During the reporting period, the ECSC's Mediation Programme was once again showcased outside of the OECS sub-region. On 17th and 27th September, 2024 Ms. Debra J. Maloney, Regional Mediation Coordinator, presented at two (2) sessions of the Hugh Wooding Law School's (HWLS) ADR Webinar Series. The first presentation was under the theme 'ADR and Civil Litigation: A Regional Perspective'. The second presentation was based on the subject 'ADR and the Criminal Justice System/Criminal Practice'. The ADR Webinar Series was designed to expose the HWLS's Year 2 Legal Education Certificate (LEC) students to the various aspects of ADR and to equip them to support the various ADR methodologies which they would encounter as legal practitioners.

1-Day Workshop for Mediators – St. Lucia Mediators on the Roster of Mediators for the St. Lucia High Court were hosted during a 1-day workshop at the Finance Administration Centre, Castries. The workshop was held on 4th March, 2025 and facilitated by the ECSC's Regional Mediation Coordinator, Ms. Debra Maloney. The session was designed to bring rostered mediators together in one space to foster networking and shared experiences. It also aimed to illuminate key elements of the Court-Connected Mediation Practice Direction specific to the work of mediators, to address challenges related to the mediation process and to receive feedback from mediators on how the ECSC's Mediation



Representatives of UNDP, PACE JUSTICE, DPP's office, Probations and Parole Department, High Court Registry and ECSC

Programme could be improved. The day was indeed fruitful, edifying and well spent, with mediators requesting that the session be placed on the calendar as an annual event.

Handover of the V-OM Toolkit and Panel Discussions

Mr. Francis Letang, Deputy Court Administrator, and Ms. Debra Maloney, Regional Mediation Coordinator, were engaged by Mr. Brian Migowe, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to participate in the UNDP/ PACE JUSTICE technical consultations on criminal mediation and validation of the Pre-Trial Victim Offender Mediation Toolkit. Mr. Letang and Ms. Maloney attended bilateral meetings with representatives from UNDP and PACE JUSTICE as well as a joint plenary session held on 19th February, 2025 at the Ministry of Justice Conference Room.

UNDP and PACE JUSTICE's technical consultations culminated with the official handover of the Victim Offender Mediation Toolkit on 30th May, 2025 at the Bel Jou Hotel, Castries, St. Lucia.



The Hon. Chief Justice centre, holds the official copy of the V-OM Toolkit



The Hon. Chief Justice centre. From left: Mr. Dwaymian Brissette and Mr. Gregory Girard. From right: Mr. Francis Letang and Ms. Debra Maloney at the V-OM Toolkit Handover ceremony

The handover ceremony was opened by Jairo Acuña Alfaro, Team Leader Governance, UNDP Latin America and the Caribbean who warmly welcomed guests and stakeholders from St Lucia and the region. Welcome remarks were also delivered by Her Ladyship Madam Justice Margaret Price Findlay, Chief Justice (Ag.) who underscored that the handover ceremony was more than just symbolic. She stated further that the ceremony '...marks a commitment—a shared commitment to justice that heals, to systems that serve all parties equitably, and to processes that reduce harm and build trust within our communities. The Victim-Offender Mediation Toolkit represents a significant step toward embedding restorative justice into the heart of our criminal justice systems." During the second half of the ceremony Ms. Maloney served as a panelist and delivered a presentation on plans for the implementation of the ECSC's Criminal Mediation Programme.

Training of New Mediators – Antigua and Barbuda

The national Mediation Committee of the High Court for Antigua and Barbuda



Justice Rene Willimas (centre) flanked by participants who travelled to Antigua and Barbuda for the workshop



The opening ceremony of the ECSC JEI/UWISTA Mediation Workshop held in Antigua and Barbuda



Role play during the Mediation Workshop

hosted the training of a cohort of 31 new mediators during the period 30th June to 04th July, 2025. The mediation workshop was held under the auspices of the ECSC's Judicial Education Institute and was facilitated by the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus. The workshop began with an official opening ceremony with feature remarks from the Hon. Chief Justice. For five (5) full days participants were trained on the principles of mediation and exposed to roles plays and other exercises designed to provide opportunities for them to hone their new skills. Participants were also exposed to key elements of the ECSC's Practice Direction on Court-Connected Mediation No. 6 of 2020. At the conclusion of the workshop positive feedback was received from trainees in respect of the quality of the training and their interest in not only serving on the High Court's Roster of Mediators but applying their new skills in the execution of their professional duties and personal lives.

Criminal Mediation

During the reporting period, work continued on the finalisation of the ECSC's Court-Connected Mediation Practice Direction (Criminal Division). We anticipate that a final draft of the Practice Direction will be available for public consultation by the next reporting period.

Reports from Member States and Territories

The ECSC Statistician in consultation with the ECSC Regional Mediation Coordinator discussed and finalised a revised template for the data capture of mediation statistics. Meetings were held with Mediation Coordinators to sensitize them on the adoption of the new template as well as to obtain their input on any concerns/ recommendations before the new form was finalised. The revised template will be utilised by Mediation Coordinators in the ECSC's 9 Member States and Territories commencing from January, 2025. This new format is designed to record and analyse not only quantitative but now elements of qualitative data as well. It is expected that the information obtained from the new template will support improvements to the Court's mediation programme.

Data received from the Member States and Territories has been captured in the table below to provide a brief synopsis of mediation activities for 2024.

CRITERIA	ANG.	A&B	DOM.	NEV.	SKU	SLU	SVG	TVI
Number of matters referred to mediation (Pre-Action)	0		N/A			0	0	0
Number of matters referred to mediation (Pre-Case Management)	0	123	40		10	101	0	1
Number of matters referred to mediation (Post-Case Management)	2		22	3	0		61	18
Out of the total number of mediations referred, in how many cases were the mediators selected lawyers	2	86	19		0	74	32	
Out of the total number of mediations referred, in how many cases were the mediators selected non- lawyers	0	37	43		10	27	29	
Out of the total number of mediations referred, how many were not held	1	35	17		2	60	22	3
Total number of mediations held (# of initial sessions)	1	88	45		8	51	39	16
Out of the mediations held how many were conducted by lawyers	1	59	14		0	46	18	14
Out of the mediations held how many were conducted by non - lawyers	0	29	31	3	8	17	21	6
Number of cases settled before mediation	0	1	3		0	0	0	0

CRITERIA	ANG.	A&B	DOM.	NEV.	SKU	SLU	SVG	TVI
Outcome: number of mediations settled out of total mediations held	1	32	12	2	2	14	12	6
Outcome: number of mediations partially settled (some issues settled) out of total mediations held	0	4	2		0	1	2	1
Outcome: number of mediations not settled out of total mediations held	0	33	31	1	6	17	25	16
Number of further mediations to be held out of the total mediations held	0	19	9		0	33	5	
Number of further mediations actually held	1	41	14		0	18	0	2
Number of settled cases which were settled within and up to 45 days	1	18	12			0	10	5
Number of settled cases which were settled after 45 days	0	14	1	2	2	14	2	1



THE JUDICIAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE



OVERVIEW

During the reporting period, the Judicial Education Institute (JEI) undertook a comprehensive program of virtual seminars and training activities aimed at strengthening the knowledge, skills, and professionalism of judges, magistrates, registrars, and judicial research assistants across the OECS jurisdictions. These initiatives were designed to address emerging challenges, promote best practices, and foster a culture of continuous learning within the judiciary.



HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY EVENTS

Virtual Seminars for the Judiciary (Q4 2024)

Recording of Evidence and Reasons for Decisions (October 10, 2024):
Facilitated by Retired Justice of Appeal, Her Ladyship Hon. Gertel Thom, this session underscored the critical importance of meticulous evidence recording and the articulation of clear, reasoned judgments. Participants explored techniques for ensuring accuracy in documentation, which is vital for appellate review and judicial accountability. The seminar also addressed challenges in maintaining consistency and transparency in decision-making processes.

Litigants in Person (October 24, 2024): Led by Master Evan Bell, this seminar focused on the unique considerations when presiding over cases involving self-represented litigants. Emphasis was placed on fostering fairness, managing courtroom decorum, and applying procedural fairness to ensure access to justice for all parties. Practical strategies for judicial officers to effectively communicate and manage such cases were highlighted.

Seminar for Registrars on Default Judgments (November 21, 2024): Facilitated by Justices Kimberly Cenac-Phulgence and Alvin Pariagsingh, this training provided a comprehensive overview of default judgment procedures. Topics included the legal foundation and procedural requirements for granting default judgments, safeguards against wrongful defaults, and the processes for setting aside defaults. The session aimed to enhance consistency and fairness in judicial decision-making, reducing errors and delays.

Coroners Inquests (December 18, 2024): Targeted at Magistrates across the OECS, this seminar was facilitated by His Lordship Hon. Brian Cottle. It provided an in-depth exploration of coroners' roles, responsibilities, and the importance of inquests in public health and safety. The session covered relevant legislation, procedural steps, and different types of inquests, equipping magistrates with the knowledge to conduct thorough and lawful inquiries.

2025 Training Programs and Seminars

Managing Workplace Conflict (January 23, 2025): Designed for Registrars and Deputy Registrars, this session was facilitated by Mr. Justice Vashiest Kokaram, Justice of Appeal of Trinidad and Tobago, along with Mrs. Michelle Theobalds, Chief Registrar of the ECSC. The training focused on conflict resolution techniques, emotional intelligence, and fostering a positive workplace culture. Participants gained practical tools for managing interpersonal conflicts, de-escalating tensions, and promoting teamwork within judicial offices.

Active Case Management in Civil Litigation (February 17, 2025): Judges and Masters engaged in this session, facilitated by the Honourable

Mr. Justice Peter Jamadar of the Caribbean Court of Justice and Mr. Justice Devindra Rampersad of the Trinidad and Tobago High Court. The focus was on implementing effective case management strategies, including 'projectising' cases—breaking down complex civil matters into manageable phases—to enhance efficiency, reduce backlog, and improve case disposition times.

Preparation of Chamber Hearing Orders (April 30, 2025):
Facilitated by acting Justice of Appeal, His Lordship Justice Gerard Farara, this workshop stressed the importance of drafting clear, precise, and enforceable court orders. Best practices in language use, detail, and judicial reasoning were discussed, with an emphasis on how high-quality orders contribute to judicial efficiency and reduce subsequent litigation or confusion.

Judgment Delayed is Justice Denied (May 29, 2025):
Led by Honourable Mr. Justice Denys Barrow of the Caribbean Court of Justice, this seminar tackled systemic delays in delivering judgments. Participants examined legislative and procedural reforms, explored common causes of delays, and discussed innovative solutions such as case management, technological advancements, and performance standards. The session aimed to instill a proactive approach to reducing delays and improving access to timely justice.

Court Staff Training and Capacity Building

In addition to virtual seminars, JEI continued its commitment to strengthening court staff capabilities through targeted soft skills and Case Flow Management training sessions. These initiatives were held in March for staff in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Kitts and Nevis, and in July for Anguilla and the British Virgin Island



Magistrate Court Training in Saint Kitts and Nevis



Magistrate Court Training in Saint Kitts and Nevis

Soft Skills Development:
Facilitated by Dr. Dianne Douglas, this training covered critical interpersonal skills including emotional intelligence, team building, assertiveness, de-escalation, and effective communication. The program aimed to foster a resilient and harmonious working environment, enabling staff to better serve the public and support judicial functions.

Case Flow Management:
Presented by Master Tamara Foster, this session provided practical strategies for managing caseloads efficiently. A large part of her session provided the Magistrates' Court staff with an overview of the New Criminal Procedure Rules and how these new rules will impact the court's work in promoting efficiency and accountability. Emphasis was placed on resource allocation, prioritisation, and innovative case management techniques to ensure timely adjudication and reduce backlogs.

Registrars Conference 2025

From July 2 to 4, 2025, the JEI hosted its flagship event—the **Annual Registrars Conference**—at the Coco Palm Resort in Rodney Bay. This three-day professional development forum brought together court registrars and deputy registrars from across the OECS for a comprehensive program aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, procedural knowledge, and leadership skills.

The conference was officially opened by Chief Registrar Mrs. Michelle John-Theobalds, with welcoming remarks from His Lordship Hon. Justice Eddy Ventose, Chair of the Judicial Education Institute. Justice Ventose emphasized that the event was more than a series of presentations; it was a vital platform for engagement, knowledge exchange, and community building among judicial administrators.

Her Ladyship Hon. Margaret Price Findlay, Acting Chief Justice of the ECSC, underscored the pivotal role registrars play in the justice system and set the tone for the discussions, highlighting the importance of a holistic approach to registrar responsibilities—administrative, procedural, managerial, and interpersonal.



Judges and Participants at the 2025 Registrars Conference held in Saint Lucia

Key Topics Covered:

- The Registrar and the CPR 2023: Scheduling of Matters, Including Status Hearings
- Emotional Intelligence in the Registrar's Role: Tools for Ethical Decision-Making and Wellness Strategies to Manage Stress
- Non-Contentious and Contentious Probate Matters
- Criminal Practice and Procedure: Jury Selection and Empaneling
- Criminal Procedure Rules: Interpretation and Practical Application
- Effective Customer Service in the Court Office: Enhancing Stakeholder Interactions
- Leveraging Technology to Work Smarter – Addressing IT Concerns: Data-Driven Decision-Making and Digital Tools
- The Importance and Role of Statistics in Judicial Administration
- Handling Ex Parte and Urgent Applications: Service and Processing
- Fixed Date Claims and Time Calculations

Esteemed presenters included High Court Judges such as Her Ladyship Hon. Justice Kimberly Cenac-Phulgence, Hon. Justice Agnes Actie, His Lordship Justice

Alvin Pariagsingh, and Her Ladyship Justice Georgis Taylor-Alexander, along with subject matter experts like Mr. Tyrone Buckmire, a clinical psychologist.

Interactive sessions incorporated role-playing exercises, case simulations, and managerial scenario analyses to reinforce practical skills. The final day featured a wellness session on emotional intelligence, facilitated by Ms. Shakey Cornwall, emphasizing resilience and personal accountability in demanding judicial environments.

The conference fostered a spirit of collaboration, encouraging peer-to-peer learning and open dialogue among registrars to address common operational challenges. Participant feedback highlighted the event's success and its potential to serve as a model for ongoing professional development across the judiciary.

Looking Ahead

Building on this year's success, JEI is preparing to host its premier event, the Annual Judges Conference, which will focus on the criminal trial. Additionally, plans are underway to organise the Orientation Programme for Newly Appointed Judicial Officers and the Magistrates Conference early in 2026, alongside continued webinar series that garnered positive engagement last year, ensuring ongoing access to high-quality judicial education.

JEI remains committed to fostering a well-equipped, knowledgeable, and resilient judiciary that upholds the highest standards of justice and service to the public.



LEGAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



KIANDRE WEEKES

On 2nd June 2025, I began my 10-week internship at the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Headquarters, an experience that concluded on 8 August 2025 but continues to shape me well beyond its end.

If I were to distill my greatest takeaway, it would be captured in the words of Maya Angelou: “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

This placement was, without question, a defining moment in my legal journey. As an aspiring judge, it offered me a rare and invaluable opportunity to engage in the work of the Court at a meaningful level. I conducted legal research in support of judgments and rulings, drafted digests, court orders, and headnotes, and observed proceedings that deepened my understanding of appellate practice. Each task not only sharpened my technical skills but also enriched my appreciation for the complexity, discipline, and responsibility inherent in judicial decision-making.
However, what distinguished this experience was not only the work, but the environment in which it was undertaken.

Transitioning to a new country could easily have been daunting. Yet, from the outset, I was welcomed into a professional space that was both rigorous and remarkably supportive. I was not treated merely as an intern, but as a young professional whose presence and contributions were valued. That sense of belonging allowed me to approach each responsibility with confidence and purpose.

The experience is marked in my memory not only by the work I completed, but by the people who made it meaningful: the daily greetings that set a warm tone for each morning, the candid and intellectually stimulating conversations with members of the bench, the Chief Registrar, Deputy Chief Registrar and the Judicial Research Assistants and the willingness of staff, particularly, of the Human Resource Department, to guide and support me through uncertainties. These interactions affirmed that professionalism and kindness are not mutually exclusive, but rather essential complements within the legal field.

As I reflect on this internship, I recognise that while I gained practical skills and substantive knowledge, its lasting impact lies in how it shaped my perspective. It reinforced the importance of humility, respect, and human connection within the practice of law, values I intend to carry forward as I pursue my goal of becoming a judge.

I may, in time, forget certain details of what was said or done, but I will not forget how this experience made me feel: respected, supported, and inspired. For that, I remain deeply grateful.



TIMOTHY ROPER

Looking back on my ten-week internship at the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Headquarters, I find myself reflecting not only on what I learned, but on what I came to understand about the nature of judicial work itself. When I first applied for this opportunity, I knew it was prestigious. However, I was unaware of just how much it would reshape my appreciation for the Judiciary and the people who sustain it.

Assigned to the Court of Appeal, I had the privilege of working closely with the Honourable Justices of Appeal. My tasks were demanding: drafting critical sections of judgments, composing headnotes, analysing submissions, preparing legal opinions, and ensuring that every judgment meticulously complied with OSCOLA standards. Even so, what struck me most was the quiet, relentless diligence required behind every document. I observed firsthand the care dispatched by court staff in vetting judgments, checking not only for legal accuracy but consistency and coherence as well. It was not easy work. It demanded patience, focus, and an unwavering commitment to getting it right, qualities I soon came to admire.

A significant highlight during my internship was attending the Annual Registrars' Conference, where Registrars from across the OECS gathered to discuss critical issues such as judicial efficiency and the practical application of the Civil Procedure Rules (CPR). The experience provided me with deep insight on the work of registrars and court staff, who often balance competing requests with professionalism under sustained pressure. I grew to appreciate how procedural instruments like the CPR and Practice Directions serve as essential guides, ensuring uniformity of practice and procedure across the nine Member States and Territories. However, I also came to understand that while procedure may unify, substantive law varies significantly across jurisdictions. The ECSC's does not adjudicate for a single territory, but for multiple distinct legal systems, each with its own body of substantive law, a concept which I soon came to admire and appreciate.

Being at the headquarters, the pace was often intense. The building was consistently busy, and yet what I observed was an institution operating as one cohesive unit. I also took note of the rich diversity among the officers, many hailing from different islands across the region, which created something of a cultural melting pot. That diversity, I believe, enriches the Court's perspective and strengthens its capacity to serve a multijurisdictional community.



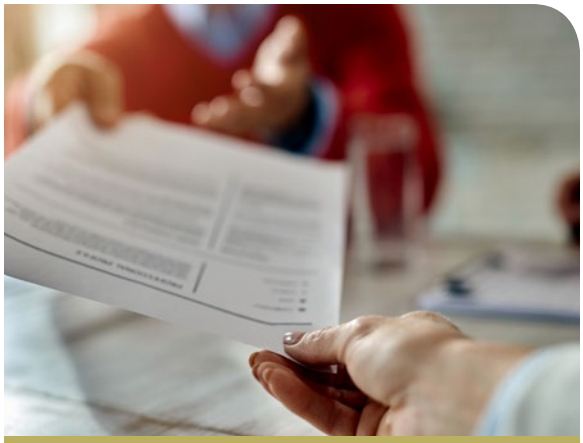
SUPPORTING THE COURT



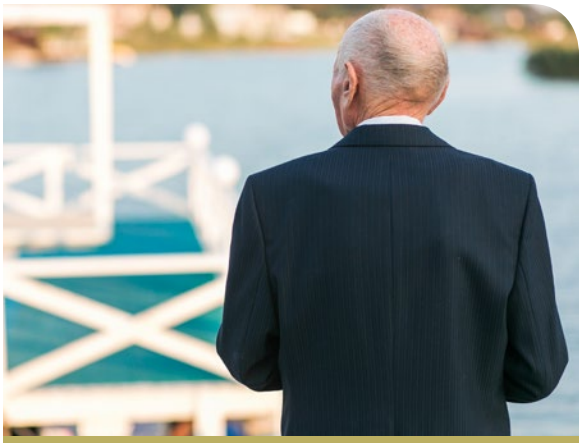
OUR HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resource Department serves as a strategic partner in advancing the mission and long-term objectives of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. Our mandate extends beyond operational support to shaping a workforce that strengthens institutional capacity, enhances organisational resilience, and drives performance.

YEAR IN REVIEW



RECRUITMENT & SELECTION



STAFF RETIREMENT

Recognising the evolving nature of work, the Department accelerated the integration of digital solutions to enhance workforce analytics, and data-driven decision-making. The expansion of HR technology infrastructure has improved operational efficiency, enabled more workforce insights, and strengthened our capacity to support senior leadership with timely and strategic management.

Looking ahead, the Department remains committed to deepening its advisory role by advancing workforce analytics, strengthening succession planning, and driving innovation in people management practices.

"Human capital is the cornerstone of institutional resilience, innovation, and sustained excellence"

Employee Recruitment and Organisational Support

During the year under review, six new employees were appointed to strengthen key operational areas of the Organisation. Three individuals joined the Court of Appeal Registry, enhancing the team's capacity to

effectively manage case administration and related functions. Additionally, three individuals were recruited to the Accounts Department to support the implementation of the Accounts Peach Tree Project and updating of the audit records. These appointments underscore the Organisation's continued focus on operational efficiency and institutional development.



Employee Transitions and Workforce Movement

During the reporting period, the ECSC recorded the departure of three employees, reflecting the progression and changes that occur within the organisation's workforce. These transitions were managed in a structured and professional manner to ensure operational stability and continuity within the respective departments. Exit interviews were conducted to capture valuable feedback, identify emerging themes, and support ongoing workforce planning and organisational improvement efforts to plug any gaps identified.

The Human Resource Department continues to analyse insights gathered from these engagements to strengthen retention strategies, enhance employee experience, and support effective succession planning. The ECSC expresses its appreciation for the contributions made by the departing employees during their tenure with the Court. We wish them every success in their future professional and personal endeavours and look forward to their continued growth and achievements.

ECSC Legal Internship

In 2025, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court welcomed two outstanding law students as part of the Legal Internship. Mr. Timothy Roper of Jamaica and Mr. Kiandre Weeks of St. Kitts & Nevis. The programme provided participants with practical exposure to judicial

processes, legal research, and court operations, thereby strengthening regional legal capacity and fostering the next generation of Caribbean legal professionals. This initiative reflects the Court's continued commitment to talent development, regional collaboration, and institutional succession planning.

Staff Retirement

During the reporting period, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court recognised the retirement of Ms. Elizabeth Sandra Augier who concluded 22 years of dedicated service to the organisation. The Court expresses its sincere appreciation for her years of service and extends best wishes to Ms. Augier for a fulfilling and rewarding retirement.

Administrative Professionals' Day

In recognition of Administrative Professionals Day, the Administrative Team participated in a dedicated day of rest and rejuvenation outside of the office environment. This initiative was intentionally designed to foster team cohesion, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and reinforce a culture of appreciation and collaboration. The Human Resource Department views such engagements as an essential component of employee wellbeing and organisational effectiveness, recognising that opportunities for connection and renewal contribute directly to morale, productivity, and sustained high performance across the Court.



Breast Cancer Awareness

In observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Human Resource Department led a simple but meaningful awareness initiative to mark the occasion. The observance served as a reminder of the importance

of early detection, health education, and collective support within the workplace.

Observance of International Women's and Men's Day

The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court continued to recognise and observe both International Women's Day and International Men's Day as part of its commitment to employee engagement and an inclusive workplace culture. These observances provide important opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements, contributions, and diverse experiences of both women and men across the organisation.

The occasions were marked through meaningful initiatives, including staff engagement activities and small tokens of appreciation, which encouraged reflection, dialogue, and mutual respect. These efforts support the Court's ongoing commitment to promoting gender equality, employee well-being, and a positive, balanced, and respectful work environment.

Employee Staff Retreat

During the reporting period, the Human Resources Department hosted an Employee Staff Retreat aimed at strengthening team cohesion, promoting employee engagement, and supporting overall staff well-being. The retreat featured a full day of meaningful discussions, interactive team-building exercises, and opportunities for staff to connect in a relaxed and supportive environment.

We were honoured to welcome Ms. Constance-Ann Paul-Akuffo of Uplift St. Lucia, who facilitated a dynamic and impactful session with the team. Her engagement encouraged reflection, enhanced interpersonal connection, and reinforced the importance of personal and professional development. The retreat formed part of the Organisation's continued commitment to fostering a positive workplace culture and investing in its people.



OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Funding of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court

The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) is financed primarily through contributions from nine of the members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, based on agreed percentage allocations of the approved annual budget. These percentage allocations are established by agreement among the Governments of the Member States and Territories and form the basis for the Court's annual funding framework.

Several factors are taken into account in determining the percentage contribution payable by each Member State and Territory. These include, among other considerations, the number of resident judges assigned to each jurisdiction and the frequency of Court of Appeal sittings scheduled within each Member State and Territory.



Table 1: Percentage Contribution by Member State and Territory

MEMBER STATE/TERRITORY	PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION (%)
Anguilla	8
Antigua & Barbuda	13
British Virgin Islands	13
Dominica	11
Grenada	13
Montserrat	5
St. Kitts & Nevis	11
Saint Lucia	13
St. Vincent & the Grenadines	13

Within this framework, the Accounts Department is responsible for the financial administration of the Court, including the coordination of the budget preparation process, the monitoring of Member State contributions, and the management of the Court's financial resources. The sections that follow outline the Accounts Department's report on budget preparation, funding received, and key financial-related developments for the financial year ended 31 August 2025.

Budget Preparation

As part of its core responsibilities, the Accounts Department coordinates the preparation of the ECSC's annual budget under the direction of the Chief Justice and the Court Administrator. The budget is developed using historical expenditure patterns, approved staffing levels, and information provided by Department Heads based on their respective annual work plans.

Following internal review, the draft budget is submitted to the Budget Committee, comprising representatives from the Ministries of Finance of the Member States and Territories, for their consideration. The budget is subsequently presented to the OECS Authority for final approval. Approval of the ECSC budget requires unanimity of the Heads of Government, after which it becomes a treaty obligation of each Member State.

Approved Budget – Financial Year 2024/2025

The approved budget for the financial year 2024/2025 amounted to EC$18,364,260, representing an increase of EC$685,810 or 3.88% when compared to the approved budget for the previous financial year.

The table below summarises the approved budgets for the financial year under review and the preceding financial year:

COST CENTRE	BUDGET 2023/2024	BUDGET 2024/2025	INCREASE / (DECREASE)
	$	$	%
Personal Emoluments	14,120,480	14,533,832	2.93
Administrative Expenses	2,444,187	2,530,642	3.54
Capital Expenditure	429,000	297,500	-30.65
Judicial Education	534,358	693,397	29.76
Judicial and Legal Services Commission	150,425	308,889	105.34
Total	17,678,450	18,364,260	3.88

Although the approved budget did not fully provide for all identified operational and developmental requirements, the Court continued to discharge its core functions during the year through prudent financial management, and prioritisation of essential activities.

Member State Contributions

During the financial year ended 31 August 2025, the ECSC received cash contributions totaling EC$11,099,248. These contributions represented approximately 60% of the approved budget for the financial year, with the balance supported through a combination of local expenditure, filing fee revenues and prudent cash-flow management.



Timely Funding

The Court continues to face challenges with the timely receipt of contributions from certain MSTs. While improvements were observed in the consistency of payments from several MSTs that regularly support the Court, delayed remittances from others continue to affect cash-flow planning and the timely execution of approved programmes.

Principal Developments and Accomplishments – 2024/2025

During the financial year, the Accounts Department supported the implementation of several key institutional initiatives undertaken by the Court through the provision of financial and administrative services. This support included the processing of payments, monitoring of expenditure against approved budgetary provisions and the management of cash-flow requirements to facilitate programme delivery by other departments.

Enhancements were introduced to the E-Litigation Portal (ELP) during the year which enabled users to directly top up their law firm escrow accounts using debit and credit cards, contributing

to improved efficiency within the Accounts Department for the collection and application of filing fees. These initiatives also contributed in a general way to improved efficiency in revenue collection and financial administration during the year.

The Accounts Department also provided financial support for initiatives including completing the implementation of the ELP in all courts of all Member States and Territories, the pilot deployment of Speech-to-Text transcription technology in selected courtrooms and the increase of in-person sittings of the Court of Appeal. In addition, support was provided for public education activities and training programmes coordinated by other departments, including the Judicial Education Institute.

All support activities were undertaken within the approved budgetary framework and in accordance with established financial procedures, contributing to the effective execution of the Court's programmes during the financial year.



OUR INFORMATION RESOURCES

Law Library

The ECSC Law Library has maintained its commitment to support the information and research needs of the Court by offering a wide range of resources and services tailored for Judicial Officers, Judicial Research Assistants (JRAs), and court staff. Throughout the year, the library has provided access to relevant publications and electronic databases, ensuring current and comprehensive information on legal topics.

The library dealt with a multitude of enquiries, varying significantly in complexity and scope. Requests ranged from straightforward inquiries for case-law reports, academic journal articles, and relevant legislation to more intricate research projects that sometimes possessed an international dimension. This adaptability underscores the library's dedication to meeting diverse research needs. Furthermore, the ECSC Library extended its services beyond its in-house clients to include members of the legal community and registered students from academic institutions. These services primarily revolved around research assistance and photocopying, facilitating broader access to legal information for those who seek it.

In light of recent developments, the library team has successfully adapted to providing a real-time service model for most of its core functions, which were traditionally offered within an office setting. As a result, during the review period, the library was able to fulfil a significant majority of research requests, both internally for court personnel and externally for members of the wider legal community. The team also leveraged its connections



within Caribbean and International networks to fulfil requests for materials not available in our existing collection, thereby enriching the scope of information available to its users.

Moreover, the Library Team has remained actively engaged in the international and regional law library community. Notably, it was represented at the 39th Conference/Annual General Meeting of the Caribbean Association of Law Libraries (CARALL), held in Kingston, Jamaica, in July 2025. The Information Services Manager attended the conference in person to engage in discussions and share insights, while the Information Services Officer participated virtually, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the library's interests and initiatives. This participation highlights the library's dedication to professional development and collaboration within the wider law library sector.

Records Management Unit

During the reporting period, the Records Management Unit continued to strengthen its operations through improvements in collection development, service delivery, and ongoing modernization initiatives.

The unit completed the following key activities:

- 28 file requests were received from various departments
- 1,643 ECSC photographs were added to the unit's collection
- 47 entries were added to the Court Training Database
- 51 vital records were digitized for the Records Unit
- 27 boxes of inactive JEI and Administration records were processed

Additionally, the unit continues to advance its efforts to enhance its technological capacity, with the automation of the Records Management Unit remaining a key strategic priority. Accordingly, the ECSC IT Department and Records Unit staff are working closely with key stakeholders to implement essential upgrades to the current records management system (Versatile). Given the recent relocation of the Records Unit, the increased distance between departments, and the length of time since the system was implemented, this enhancement is both timely and essential.

Site visits to the Records Centre identified a backlog of records needing accessioning and labeling. The unit will also continue to prioritize this work. Overall, the reporting period reflects steady progress in the operations of the Records Management Unit. The developments made in both daily activities and long-term initiatives will contribute to supporting the broader mission and operational requirements of the ECSC.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

ECSC E Litigation Portal Implementation

During the 2024–2025 reporting period, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) achieved a major milestone with the full deployment of the Criminal Module of the ECSC E Litigation Portal (ELP) across both the High Courts and Magistrates' Courts in the Member States and Territories (MSTs). This phase of implementation was successfully completed in January 2025.

The implementation of the Criminal Module in Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Anguilla, and Montserrat marked the final stage in the comprehensive rollout of the ELP. As a result, the ECSC now operates a fully integrated electronic system for the filing, management, and processing of all case types across all MSTs. This achievement represents a significant advancement in the modernisation of court administration, enabling greater efficiency, consistency, and accessibility across the region's judicial systems.

Case Migration and Digitisation Initiatives

With financial and technical support from the Programme for the Administration of Justice (PACE), the ECSC has been actively exploring alternative and scalable approaches to the migration of data from the legacy Judicial Enforcement Management System (JEMS) to the E Litigation Portal. Recognizing the complexity and volume of historical case data, a phased and carefully managed strategy has been adopted.

PACE is currently assisting the ECSC with the development of a Digitisation



Project focused on the migration of criminal matters in four PACE project jurisdictions—Antigua and Barbuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia. This initiative will serve as a pilot phase for the broader migration of all case types to the ELP. Lessons learned from this pilot will inform the approach, timelines, and resourcing required for a comprehensive, system-wide digitisation of court records across the ECSC.

System Optimisation, Enhancements, and User Experience

Throughout the year under review, the ELP Team continued to engage closely

with the system vendor, CrimsonLogic, to resolve operational challenges reported by users and to enhance the overall functionality of the Portal. This collaboration has focused on both bug resolution and continuous system improvement, including the implementation of approved change requests and functional enhancements. These activities are essential to improving system reliability, usability, and performance, thereby supporting judicial officers, court staff, legal practitioners, and other stakeholders in their daily operations. Ongoing system optimisation remains a priority to ensure that the Portal evolves in line with operational needs and international best practices in court technology.

Planned Enhancements to the E Litigation Portal

With continued support from PACE, the ECSC plans to implement two major enhancements aimed at expanding public access and strengthening data driven decision making:

1. **Web Based Case File Public Search Facility**

   The proposed Web based Case File Public Search Facility will provide a secure and user friendly online platform through which members of the public and law firms can conduct permissible electronic searches of court case information hosted within the ECSC E Litigation Portal.

   The project entails the development of a registration based system, allowing users to create and manage individual accounts. Access will be provided on a subscription or fee for service basis, ensuring sustainability and appropriate use of system resources. The platform will enable authorized users to search case records and view, print, or save key public documents, subject to access controls and statutory limitations. This initiative is expected to significantly enhance transparency, public access to justice, and service delivery within the ECSC.

2. **Enhanced ELP Reporting Module**

   The Enhanced ELP Reporting Module is intended to deliver a robust, flexible, and scalable reporting solution for the ECSC. The module will enable both basic and advanced querying of the ELP database and support the generation of a wider

range of operational, managerial, and statistical reports, in line with institutional reporting requirements. Incorporating AI enabled tools, the module will allow designated staff at ECSC Headquarters and national courts to:

- Perform structured and ad hoc data queries.
- Generate standard and customized reports.
- Analyse trends to support policy formulation, workload planning, and judicial performance monitoring.

The development of this reporting capability will significantly strengthen evidence based decision making across the ECSC.

Development of an AI Powered Court Judgment Indexing and Search Tool

The objective of this project is to improve access to ECSC judgments by developing an AI powered indexing and search tool integrated with the ECSC website. The tool will leverage artificial intelligence to catalogue judgments and provide advanced search capabilities, allowing users to search by keywords, case attributes, and legal principles.

This initiative will support judicial officers, attorneys, researchers, and members of the public by enhancing the discoverability, accessibility, and utilization of ECSC case law, thereby contributing to greater legal certainty and consistency across the jurisdiction.

ECSC Transcription Preparation Program

Following the implementation of the Speech-to-Text Digital Recording and transcription Systems - FTR in one courtroom each, in St. Kitts-Nevis, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica last year, one License was installed in the Montserrat High Court and two in the Anguilla High Court during the year in review (2024-25). The PACE project has assisted with the acquisition of FTR licenses for the following member states: (i) two Courtrooms in Antigua & Barbuda, (ii) two Courtrooms in St. Lucia, (iii) a criminal Courtroom in Dominica and (iv) a Criminal Courtroom In St. Kitts – Nevis. These implementations are expected for the coming law year.

It is noteworthy that the High Court in Saint Kitts and Nevis has made significant use of Microsoft Azure AI



technologies to transcribe Liberty court recordings. The ECSC continues to encourage other MSTs to adopt this approach as a cost effective means of reducing transcription backlogs and improving access to timely court records.

Jury Management System

Plans for the implementation of the electronic Jury Management System (Avenu | Jury) at the High Court Office in the Territory of the Virgin Islands did not materialize during the previous year as anticipated. Despite this, there has been renewed and heightened interest in advancing this initiative during the current period.

Accordingly, arrangements are underway for a vendor led demonstration of the system to a broad range of judicial stakeholders in the Territory. This will be followed by the development of a structured roadmap outlining the requirements, timelines, and resource commitments necessary for the successful implementation of the Jury Management System in the Territory.

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The ECSC Public Education Programme is designed to strengthen public understanding, trust, and engagement with the justice system across its Member States and Territories. Acknowledging that access to justice is closely tied to access to information, this initiative aims to ensure that citizens receive clear, accurate, and timely insights into the Court's role, processes, and services.

The primary objective of this plan is to demystify the Court's operations while fostering greater transparency and accountability. By enhancing individuals' understanding of their rights, legal procedures, and available remedies, it actively promotes better access to justice. Tailored educational initiatives will target key audiences, including students, media professionals, court users, and the general public, utilising a mix of community outreach, digital platforms, and partnerships with educational institutions.

In essence, this Public Education Plan positions public engagement as a core function of the institution, ensuring that the Court is not only a guardian of justice but also a visible, approachable, and trusted entity within the communities it serves.

During the year under review, the court undertook the following public education initiatives

Justice in School Programme

This programme aims to foster students' deep appreciation for the Court's rich history, major milestones, and operations across all nine Member States and Territories, presenting information in an accessible manner.
As part of this inspiring educational initiative, the Honourable Chief Justice and other esteemed judicial officers and professional staff of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court visited all Community Colleges in each of the court's Member States and Territories, as well as select primary and secondary schools, to engage with students. These visits aimed to illuminate the structure of the court and clarify the differences between the court and the legal system within each Member State and Territory.

Such meaningful engagements aim to foster a deeper understanding of the vital role played by the judiciary, the courts, and the judicial branches within the Eastern Caribbean legal system. By encouraging these early interactions, we seek to cultivate a positive perception of the judiciary and offer invaluable career guidance. Engaging students on these important topics is intended to build trust in the judiciary and improve its public image for the future.

The following photographs capture the former Acting Chief Justice during his lordship's visit to various Community Colleges across the Member States and

Territories of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC). These images of each visit reflect a commitment to strengthening the ties between the judiciary and the educational sector, emphasising the role of law in society.



Students from the Dominica State College and His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, in the centre, surrounded by students and staff of the Dominica State College.



Students from the Anguilla Community College and His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, in the centre, surrounded by the students of the College.



Students from Antigua State College with His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, who is in the centre, surrounded by the college students.



Students from The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in Saint Lucia are with His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, and Dr. Madgerie Jameson-Charles, the College Principal, who are seated in the front.



Students from the Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College and His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, in the centre, surrounded by students and staff of the Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College.



Students from The Nevis Sixth Form College are photographed with His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, ECSC Senior Officers, and senior staff of the college seated in the front.



Students and staff from The Montserrat Community College are photographed with His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, in the centre, and Mr Collin Meade, Registrar of the Montserrat High Court.



Students and staff from The T.A. Marryshow Community College are photographed alongside His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, who is in the centre.



Students and staff from The Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Community College pose for a photograph with His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, who is in the centre. They are joined by Mrs. Lekeicha Caesar-Toney, Registrar, and Ms Nakita Charles, Deputy Registrar of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines High Court.



Students and staff from The H. Lavity Stoutt Community College in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) gathered for a photograph with His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, who is situated in the centre. They were also joined by Mrs. Vareen Vanterpool-Nibbs, Registrar of the BVI High Court.



A Conversation with the Chief Justice

A Conversation with the Chief Justice is a proposed televised programme by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court aimed at enhancing public understanding, trust, and engagement with the justice system. Through candid and informative discussions led by the Chief Justice, the programme will demystify court processes, address public interest issues, and highlight key developments within the judiciary.

By making the Court more visible and accessible, the initiative seeks to strengthen transparency, promote civic education, and reinforce confidence in the rule of law across the Eastern Caribbean.

The first edition of the Conversation with the Chief Justice was recorded in December 2024 and was broadcast in late January 2025. The Government

Information Services (GIS) assisted the court in coordinating production logistics, and the finalised programme was circulated across every ECSC Member State and Territory, ensuring broad access to shared information.

ECSC Lecture Series

Establishing the ECSC Lecture Series is an important initiative to enhance understanding and appreciation of the legal system among various stakeholders. This series will highlight the unique characteristics of each of the court's nine Member States and Territories.

The proposed structure includes three lectures per year, scheduled to coincide with each court term. These lectures will take place in person in a selected Member State or Territory and will be live-streamed, ensuring accessibility for participants across all Member States and Territories.

The ECSC Lecture Series places a strong emphasis on inclusivity, welcoming all stakeholders to take part in this enriching educational experience. The initiative will be promoted under the theme **"Enriching, Educating, and Engaging."** Each presenter will focus on a topic that aligns with the aim of their scheduled lecture.

Please find on the subsequent pages photographs from the lecture series that were held during the year under review.



His Lordship, the Hon. Mr. Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, made a presentation to Senator the Honourable Garth Wilkins, Minister of Legal Affairs and Attorney General of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The Honourable Minister delivered the first lecture in the ECSC lecture series entitled “Justice Without Borders: The Legal Practitioner’s Perspective and The ECSC Reality”.



His Lordship, the Hon. Mr Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, made a presentation to His Lordship, the Hon. Justice Vasheist V Kokaram, Justice of Appeal, Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago. Justice Kokaram delivered the second lecture in the ECSC public lecture series in the Territory of the Virgin Islands. Justice Kokaram's topic was "ADR and You".

The ECSC Youth Leaders Symposium

The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) hosted an exciting Youth Symposium in celebration of Saint Lucia's Youth Month! This vibrant event empowered young leaders with a deeper understanding of the court system in the Eastern Caribbean and Saint Lucia. Attendees discovered the judiciary's important functions and learned about various court programs, including mediation and judicial settlement, all designed to promote peaceful conflict resolution and informed civic involvement.

The symposium featured dynamic presentations on several practical topics that resonate with youth today. Participants explored the significance of making a will, the essentials of registering a business, and the vital roles played by the probation and parole services department. They also gained insights into the functions of land, community policing, and civil status registries.

In addition to these topics, the symposium included interactive workshops in which attendees engaged in role-playing scenarios to understand the court process better.

Overall, the event successfully inspired and equipped the next generation to navigate the legal landscape with confidence and knowledge! Attendees left feeling empowered to advocate for themselves and their communities, fostering a sense of responsibility and civic engagement that will benefit Saint Lucia and the wider Eastern Caribbean region.



His Lordship, The Hon. Mr .Mario Michel, former Acting Chief Justice, seated in the centre of the photograph, is joined by other Judicial Officers and participants at the ECSC Youth Symposium held at the Financial Administrative Centre, Castries, Saint Lucia.

Conclusion

As we reflect on the past year, it's clear that it was a remarkable one for the Court's Public Education Programme. We made strides in all nine Member States and Territories, and we're excited about the progress we've achieved. Many of our initiatives were brought to life through the dedication of local High Court judges and registrars, who played pivotal roles in engaging their communities. We are proud of our accomplishments and eagerly anticipate expanding the Court's visibility among all stakeholders across these regions. Together, we can continue to foster awareness and understanding of our important work!



COURT PERFORMANCE



SYNOPSIS

This report provides information on the cases managed in the High Courts, Magistrates Courts and Family Courts/ Divisions within the OECS Member States and Territories for the calendar year 2024, with trends for the past three years highlighted in certain instances. Some aspects of Court performance are also discussed including clearance rates, time to disposition and pending cases. A few of the main points are indicated in the flow chart below:

Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court: 2024 Performance at a Glance

COURT OF APPEAL

- **956** — Total Appeals and Applications heard
- **72** — Written judgments
- **372** — Oral judgments
- **89** — Extraordinary appeals and applications heard with orders given

HIGH COURTS

- **80.13%** — Overall clearance rate
- **8,089** — Total filed cases
- **6,482** — Total disposed cases

MAGISTRATES COURTS

- **106.47%** — Overall clearance rate
- **31,466** — Total filed cases
- **33,501** — Total disposed cases

FAMILY COURTS/DIVISION

- **95.13%** — SVG clearance rate
- **102.04%** — SLU clearance rate
- **77.94%** — A&B clearance rate (applications)
- **100%** — A&B adoption clearance rate
- **105.10%** — A&B matrimonial clearance rate



SECTION 1: COURT OF APPEAL

Part A: Appeals Filed

There were 409 appeals filed in total in the High Courts and Magistrates Courts during the year 2024, for which the breakdown is given below:

PART A: APPEALS FILED

189	91	41	27	56	5
High Court Civil	High Court Criminal	High Court Commercial	Magisterial Civil	Magisterial Criminal	High Court Industrial/Labour

The total number of appeals filed fluctuated from 2022 to 2024 with a decrease observed from 2023 to 2024. Total Civil and Criminal appeals averaged 50.10% and 35.70% respectively of total filed appeals over the three-year period. The most prevalent case type for appeals filed in the High Courts was Civil. Criminal appeals were higher than the Civil appeals in the Magistrates Courts in all three years being reviewed.

Table 1 (a) Total Appeals Filed by Case Type, 2022 to 2024

TYPE OF APPEAL	2022			2023			2024		
	HIGH COURT	MAGISTRATES COURT	TOTAL	HIGH COURT	MAGISTRATES COURT	TOTAL	HIGH COURT	MAGISTRATES COURT	TOTAL
Civil Appeals	163	27	190	176	59	235	189	27	216
Criminal Appeals	78	57	135	92	83	175	91	56	147
Commercial Appeals	82		82	35		35	41		41
Industrial/Labour	10		10	9		9	5		5
Total	**333**	**84**	**417**	**312**	**142**	**454**	**326**	**83**	**409**

Figure 1 (a) Total Appeals Filed by Case Type, 2022 to 2024

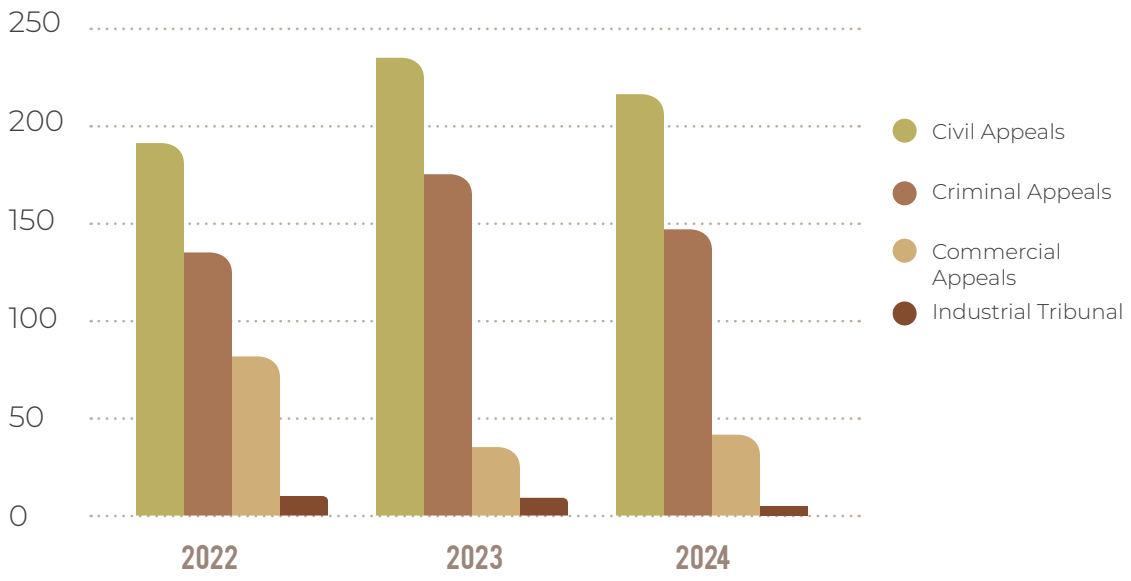
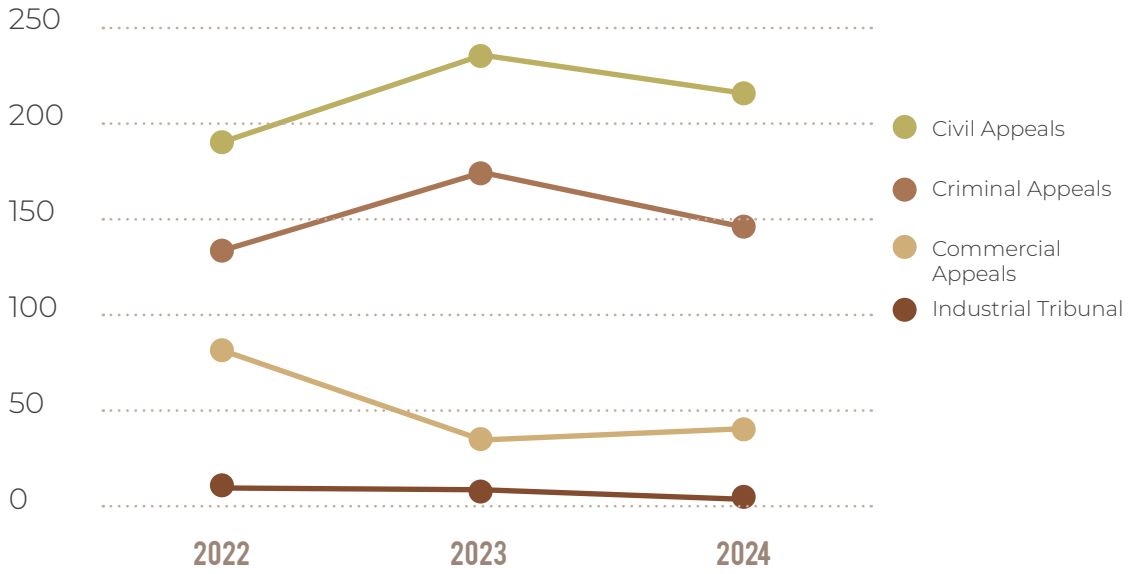


Figure 1b: Total Appeals Filed by Case Type, 2022 to 2024



The numbers of filed appeals by case type and jurisdiction from 2022 to 2024 are given in Tables 1(b) to 1(g) following:

1(b) High Court Civil Appeal Cases Filed from 2022 to 2024

HIGH COURT CIVIL APPEAL CASES FILED	2022	2023	2024
Anguilla	4	9	3
Antigua and Barbuda	28	41	40
Commonwealth of Dominica	3	13	27
Grenada	30	37	25
Montserrat	25	10	7
Saint Lucia	22	29	27
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3	6	7
St. Kitts and Nevis	33	25	37
Territory of the Virgin Islands	15	6	16
Total	**163**	**176**	**189**

1(c) High Court Criminal Appeal Cases Filed from 2022 to 2024

HIGH COURT CRIMINAL APPEAL CASES FILED	2022	2023	2024
Anguilla	5	0	0
Antigua and Barbuda	13	10	13
Commonwealth of Dominica	1	5	3
Grenada	19	22	16
Montserrat	6	2	6
Saint Lucia	7	5	7
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	15	28	27
St. Kitts and Nevis	7	15	13
Territory of the Virgin Islands	5	5	6
Total	**78**	**92**	**91**

1(d) High Court Commercial Appeal Cases Filed from 2022 to 2024

HIGH COURT COMMERCIAL APPEAL CASES FILED	2022	2023	2024
Territory of the Virgin Islands	74	31	37
Saint Lucia	8	4	4
Total	**82**	**35**	**41**

1(e) High Court Industrial/Labor Appeal Cases Filed from 2022 to 2024

HIGH COURT INDUSTRIAL/LABOR APPEAL CASES FILED	2022	2023	2024
Antigua and Barbuda (Labor Tribunal)	10	9	5
Total	**10**	**9**	**5**

1(f) Magisterial Court Civil Appeal Cases Filed from 2022 to 2024

MAGISTERIAL COURT CIVIL APPEAL CASES FILED	2022	2023	2024
Anguilla	0	1	0
Antigua and Barbuda	6	14	2
Commonwealth of Dominica	2	12	3
Grenada	2	3	2
Montserrat	1	3	6
Saint Lucia	1	0	2
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	4	8	4
St. Kitts and Nevis	8	14	8
Territory of the Virgin Islands	3	4	0
Total	**27**	**59**	**27**

1(g) Magisterial Court Criminal Appeal Cases Filed from 2022 to 2024

MAGISTERIAL COURT CRIMINAL APPEAL CASES FILED	2022	2023	2024
Anguilla	1	2	1
Antigua and Barbuda	2	6	5
Commonwealth of Dominica	11	14	11
Grenada	2	13	7
Montserrat	2	2	2
Saint Lucia	3	3	4
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	24	29	20
St. Kitts and Nevis	7	10	6
Territory of the Virgin Islands	5	4	0
Total	**57**	**83**	**56**

Table 1 (h) shows the numbers of written judgments by jurisdiction from 2022 to 2024. These written judgments included oral judgments reduced to writing and reasons for decisions. The total number of these judgments fluctuated over the 3 years with a decline from 2023 to 2024. The Territory of the Virgin Islands recorded the greatest percentage share of written judgments in 2022 and 2023 and was slightly surpassed by Saint Lucia in 2024.

Table 1(h): Written Judgments delivered by the Court of Appeal, by Member State for 2022 to 2024

Total Written Judgments Delivered (including oral judgments reduced to writing and reasons for decisions)

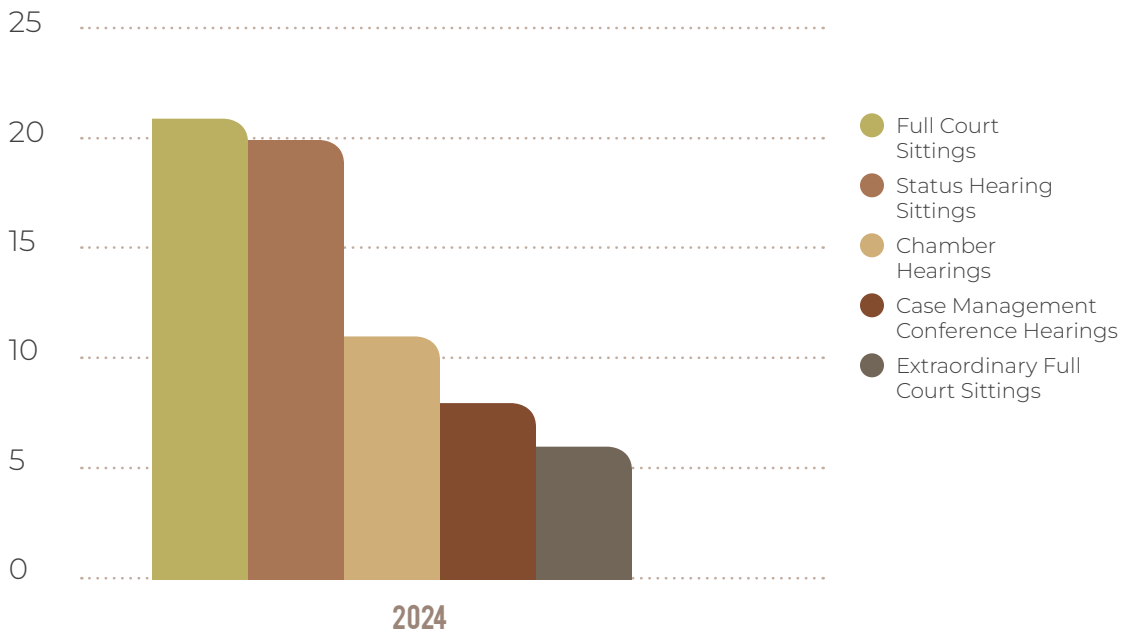
MEMBER STATES	2022 TOTAL	2022 (%)	2023 TOTAL	2023 (%)	2024 TOTAL	2024 (%)
Anguilla	1	1.27	7	7.22	0	0.00
Antigua and Barbuda	15	18.99	9	9.28	14	19.44
Commonwealth of Dominica	3	3.80	5	5.15	6	8.33
Grenada	7	8.86	2	2.06	2	2.78
Montserrat	9	11.39	6	6.19	1	1.39
Saint Lucia	9	11.39	15	15.46	19	26.39
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2	2.53	6	6.19	3	4.17
St. Kitts and Nevis	9	11.39	6	6.19	10	13.89
Territory of the Virgin Islands	24	30.38	41	42.27	17	23.61
Total	**79**	**100.00**	**97**	**100.00**	**72**	**100.00**

The numbers of the various Court of Appeal Sittings held in 2024 are shown in Table 1(i) following. Most of these sittings were Full Court Sittings and Status Hearings. The Extraordinary/Special Sittings were held during periods in which the Full Court was not ordinarily scheduled to sit ("non – sit weeks"). The Court also schedules Case Management Hearings from time to time as needed; these are done by either a single judge or the Chief Registrar.

Table 1 (i) Activities of the Court of Appeal: 2024

ACTIVITY	2024
Full Court Sittings	21
Status Hearing sittings	20
Chamber Hearings	11
Case Management Conference Sittings	8
Extraordinary Full Court Sittings	6
Total	**66**

Figure 2: Activities of the Court of Appeal, 2024



Part B: Appeals And Applications Heard

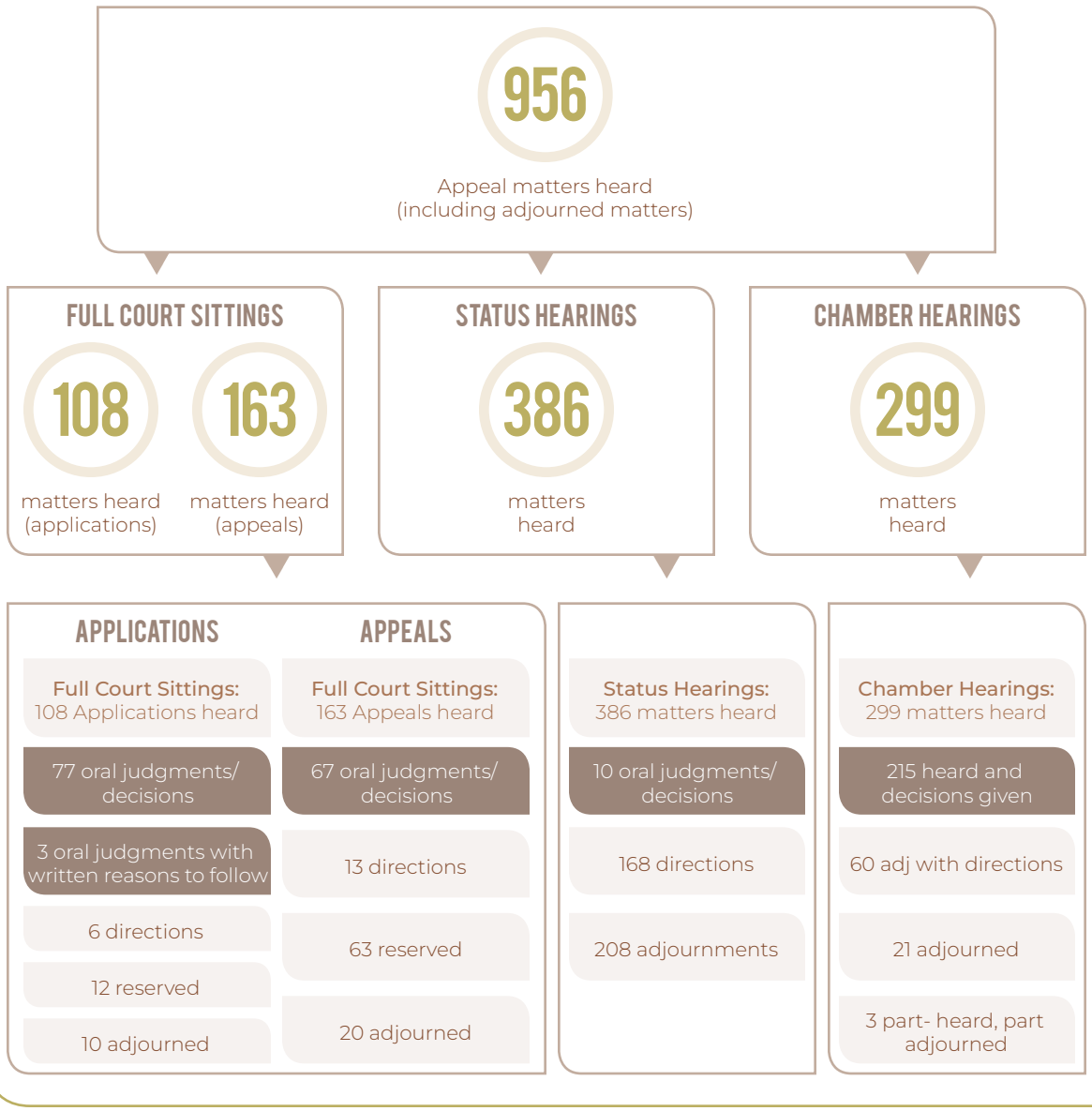
Table 1(j) shows the total numbers of applications and appeals heard during Full Court Sittings, Status Hearings and Chamber Hearings, during the year 2024.The matters heard can include those which were filed in 2024 as well as previously filed matters. Also, of note is that more than one application can arise from an appeal before the substantive appeal is heard. There were 956 appeals and applications heard in total, and this includes adjourned matters.

Table 1 (j): Numbers of applications and appeals heard during Full Court Sittings, Status and Chamber Hearings scheduled during the CoA Sittings in 2024

TYPE OF MATTER	MATTERS HEARD 2024 (INCLUDING ADJOURNMENTS)
FULL COURT SITTINGS	
Applications/Motions	108
High Court Civil Appeals (including 23 Commercial)	96
High Court Criminal Appeals	22
Magisterial Civil Appeals	16
Magisterial Criminal Appeals	29
Total appeal matters for Full Court Sittings	**271**
STATUS HEARINGS	
Applications/Motions	11
High Court Civil Appeals	111
High Court Criminal Appeals	99
Magisterial Civil Appeals	57
Magisterial Criminal Appeals	108
Total for Status Hearings	**386**
CHAMBER HEARINGS	
Total for all Chamber matters	**299**
Total for all Sittings	**956**

The outcomes of the matters heard [shown in Table 1 (j)] are included in Figure 3 with the last tiers in brown indicating outcomes which reflect dispositions. Status Hearings are geared more towards determining the status of matters which at the time have not progressed to the stage of hearing and hence not many matters, if any, are disposed of during these hearings.

Figure 3: Outcomes of Appeal matters heard during Full Court Sittings, Status Hearings and Chamber Hearings, for those scheduled on the CoA calendar for 2024



Additionally, the Court of Appeal also conducts Extraordinary Sittings to hear Urgent Appeals, as well as determine Urgent Applications on paper or orally by a Single Judge or the Full Court. There were a total of 89 applications and appeals heard during the year 2024 which were urgent matters or additional applications where an oral hearing by the Full Court was not necessary such as Final Leave Applications to Privy Council. Table 1(k) which follows gives the breakdown of these matters.

Table 1 (k): Numbers of Extraordinary Applications and Appeals Heard as well as additional Applications; 2024

EXTRAORDINARY APPLICATIONS	NUMBER HEARD
Consent Orders	49
General and Urgent applications during Extraordinary Full Court Sittings	19
Applications Heard before a single judge	13
Final Leave to Privy Council applications	2
EXTRAORDINARY APPEALS	
General and Urgent appeals heard during Extraordinary Full Court Sittings	6
Total	**89**



SECTION 2: HIGH COURTS

The total numbers of filed cases in the High Courts steadily increased over the period 2022 to 2024, while total disposed cases initially increased over the first two years then declined from 2023 to 2024 by 19.81%. The increased filed cases and the decreased disposed cases resulted in a reduced clearance rate of 80.13% in 2024.

Table 2 (a) Comparison of clearance rates in the High Courts: 2022 to 2024

COUNTRY	2022			2023			2024		
	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)
Anguilla	164	130	**79.27**	178	157	**88.20**	224	152	**67.86**
Antigua and Barbuda	1,121	3,041	**271.28**	1,101	2,823	**256.40**	1,076	669	**62.17**
Comm. of Dominica	582	344	**59.11**	673	233	**34.62**	634	199	**31.39**
Grenada	1,327	407	**30.67**	1,490	985	**66.11**	1,404	712	**50.71**
Montserrat	97	68	**70.10**	113	59	**52.21**	99	52	**52.53**
Saint Lucia	1,716	1,494	**87.06**	1,697	1,593	**93.87**	1,810	1,822	**100.66**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	562	535	**95.20**	600	696	**116.00**	610	1,256	**205.90**
St. Kitts and Nevis	770	690	**89.61**	830	685	**82.53**	797	449	**56.34**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	967	802	**82.94**	1,060	852	**80.38**	1,435	1,171	**81.60**
TOTAL	**7,306**	**7,511**	**102.81**	**7,742**	**8,083**	**104.40**	**8,089**	**6,482**	**80.13**

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the total numbers of filed and disposed cases from 2022 to 2024 as well as the overall clearance rates. The continuous climb exhibited by the trend line for total filed cases over the three years compared to the initial increase and subsequent plunge for total disposed cases are observed in Figure 4. The marked drop in the overall clearance rate from 2023 to 2024 is seen in Figure 5.

Figure 4: Total Filed and Disposed cases in the High Courts: 2022 to 2024

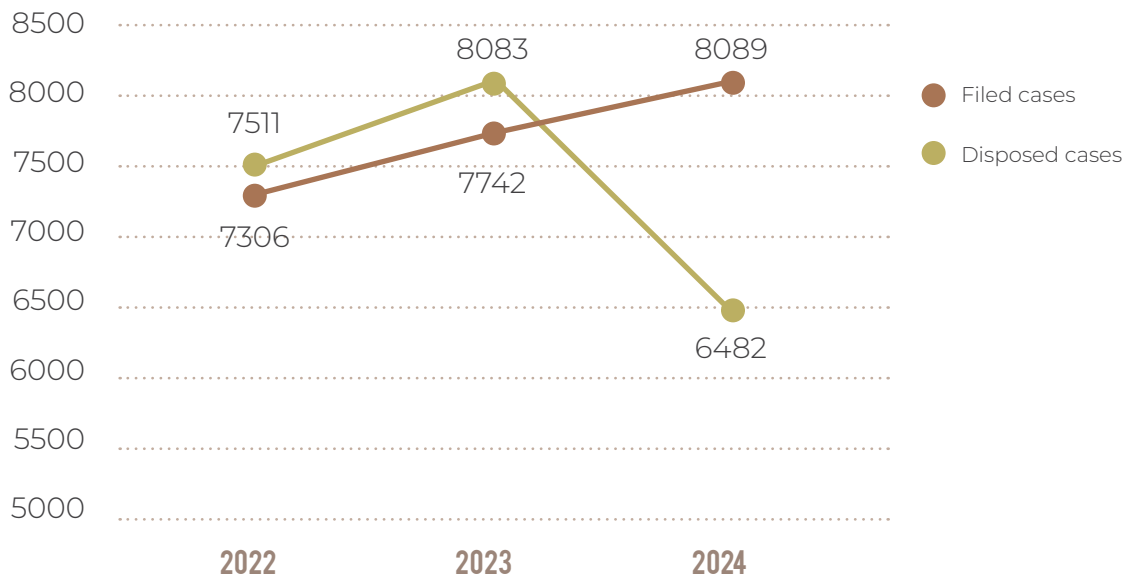
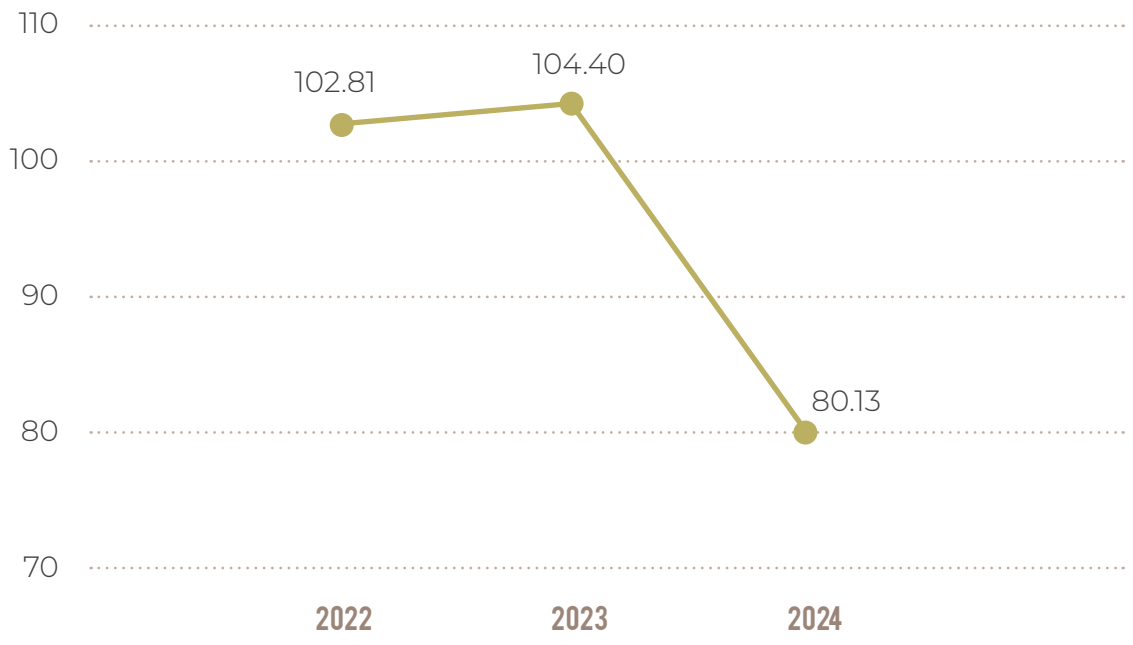


Figure 5: Overall Clearance Rates (%) of cases in the High Courts: 2022 to 2024



Civil and Probate cases were the most filed and disposed cases in the High Courts in 2024, as seen in Table 2(b). These two case types represented 69.21% and 64.95% of total filed and disposed cases respectively. Admiralty, Adoption and Criminal cases all recorded clearance rates above 100% although it is noted that the numbers for the former two case types were much fewer compared to others.

Table 2 (b) Clearance Rates of cases by Major Case Type in the High Courts: 2024

CASE TYPE	2024				
	FILED CASES	% OF TOTAL FILED CASES	DISPOSED CASES	% OF TOTAL DISPOSED CASES	CLEARANCE RATES (%)
Admiralty	7	0.09	13	0.20	**185.71**
Adoption	52	0.64	54	0.83	**103.85**
Civil	2,876	35.55	2,556	39.43	**88.87**
Commercial	717	8.86	610	9.41	**85.08**
Criminal	651	8.05	668	10.31	**102.61**
Matrimonial	1,063	13.14	927	14.30	**87.21**
Probate	2,723	33.66	1,654	25.52	**60.74**
TOTAL	**8,089**	**100.00**	**6,482**	**100.00**	**80.13**

The data in Table 2 (c) points to the following:

- Civil and Probate cases were 35.55% and 33.66% respectively of total filed cases. Together, these two case types were the majority of total reported filed cases.
- Saint Lucia recorded much higher numbers of filed Criminal cases compared to the other jurisdictions. Although it has been noted over the years that the Saint Lucia High Court manages a much higher volume of Criminal cases, it should be taken into consideration that in some instances, cases with multiple offences are counted as separate cases. This in effect unnecessarily inflates the volume of cases being filed as, for example, an incident where there are 10 or 20 charges will result in this number of cases being created on the system.
- Saint Lucia, the Territory of the Virgin Islands, Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda had the highest total filed caseloads; each had over 1000 filed cases in 2024.

Table 2 (c) Cases Filed in the High Courts by Case Type and Member State: 2024

MEMBER STATES	2024								COUNTRY TOTAL AS A % OF TOTAL
	ADMIR.	ADOPT.	CIVIL	COMM.	CRIM.	MATRI.	PROBATE	TOTAL	
Anguilla		1	85		19	44	75	224	**2.77**
Antigua and Barbuda	1	8	511		42	157	357	1,076	**13.30**
Commonwealth of Dominica		1	256		38	69	270	634	**7.84**
Grenada	1	7	532		59	245	560	1,404	**17.36**
Montserrat			36		10	11	42	99	**1.22**
Saint Lucia		24	512	66	390*	238	580	1,810	**22.38**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		3	193		23	135	256	610	**7.54**
St. Kitts and Nevis		4	370		50	117	256	797	**9.85**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	5	4	381	651	20	47	327	1,435	**17.74**
TOTAL	**7**	**52**	**2,876**	**717**	**651**	**1,063**	**2,723**	**8,089**	**100.00**
Case Type as a % of Total	**0.09**	**0.64**	**35.55**	**8.86**	**8.05**	**13.14**	**33.66**	**100.00**	

*Approximate figure provided for SLU Criminal filed.

The following main points are observed from the data in Table 2(d):

- Civil and Probate cases together accounted for 64.95% of total disposed cases (Civil; 39.43% and Probate; 25.52%).
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines High Court disposed of 984 Civil cases. This was due to a special project undertaken by the Court in 2024 to dispose of cases in JEMS with a particular focus on Civil cases. Saint Lucia also had a relatively high number of disposed Civil cases (537). These two jurisdictions accounted for 59.51% of total Civil disposed cases.
- 66.17% of total disposed Criminal cases were from Saint Lucia.
- Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines in addition to Territory of the Virgin Islands each recorded over 1000 disposed cases and had the greater share of total disposed cases.

Table 2 (d) Cases Disposed in the High Courts
by Case Type and Member State: 2024

MEMBER STATES	2024								COUNTRY TOTAL AS A % OF TOTAL
	ADMIR.	ADOPT.	CIVIL	COMM.	CRIM.	MATRI.	PROBATE	TOTAL	
Anguilla	1	1	33		14	42	61	152	**2.34**
Antigua and Barbuda		8	158		34	165	304	669	**10.32**
Commonwealth of Dominica			40		29	53	77	199	**3.07**
Grenada		1	387		29	140	155	712	**10.98**
Montserrat			11		3	6	32	52	**0.80**
Saint Lucia	1	19	537	52	442*	255	516	1,822	**28.11**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	8	22	984		53	134	55	1,256	**19.38**
St. Kitts and Nevis		2	132		41	100	174	449	**6.93**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	3	1	274	558	23	32	280	1,171	**18.07**
TOTAL	**13**	**54**	**2,556**	**610**	**668**	**927**	**1,654**	**6,482**	**100.00**
Case Type as a % of Total	**0.20**	**0.83**	**39.43**	**9.41**	**10.31**	**14.30**	**25.52**	**100.00**	

*Approximate figure provided for SLU Criminal disposed.

Table 2 (e) informs on the events/hearings which occurred in the High Courts during 2024 as obtained from the JEMS and/or ELP software for each jurisdiction. The 3 most common events in the High Courts were Case Management Conferences, Chamber Hearings and Open Court Hearings, which together accounted for almost half (49.26%) of total events.

Table 2 (e) Numbers of Events/Hearings in the High Courts as obtained from JEMS and the ELP: 2024

TYPES OF EVENTS	2024										
	ANG.	A&B	COMM. OF DOM.	GREN.	MONT.	SKN	SLU	SVG	TVI	TOTAL	%OF TOTAL
Case Management Conference/Masters Hearing	47	1,194	93	1,005	65	159	2,342	744	149	5,798	20.90
Chamber Hearing	90	816	637	620	2	612	949	891	351	4,968	17.91
Open Court Hearing	18	271	170	811	136	191	701	370	232	2,900	10.45
Criminal Trial	2	25	6	72	3	81	1,860	31	13	2,093	7.55
Sufficiency Hearing							1,709			1,709	6.16
Application Without Hearing		19		1		75	1,189			1,284	4.63
Sentencing/Sentencing Hearing	15	43	Data not available	38	2	43	855	30		1,026	3.70
Fixed Date Claim Form Hearing/First Hearing	7	98		104	43	22	100	27	554	955	3.44
Uncontested Divorce	100	201	42	192	11	78	321			945	3.41
Arraignment	10	17	26	18	3		800	23	7	904	3.26
Status Hearing	2	4		70	28	6	721	43	1	875	3.15
Omnibus Conference/ Hearing							741			741	2.67
Mention						726				726	2.62
Civil Trial (Includes Commercial, Matrimonial)	3	119	11	90	10	61	115	58	13	480	1.73
Judgment summons		400			3			8	64	475	1.71
Pre -Trial Review/ conference	1	101		32	7	13	185	28	31	398	1.43

TYPES OF EVENTS	2024										
	ANG.	A&B	COMM. OF DOM.	GREN.	MONT.	SKN	SLU	SVG	TVI	TOTAL	%OF TOTAL
Bail Hearing (this is captured under Criminal Trial for other jurisdictions)				46			184		7	237	0.85
Judgment Delivery/ Decision Hearing	3	8		14	12	15	131	12		195	0.70
Sentence Indication							187			187	0.67
Exparte Hearings	16	15			6	9	4	2	125	177	0.64
Application for Committal Orders/ Committal Proceedings		106				1	8			115	0.41
Request for directions/ Directions Hearing					54			2	53	109	0.39
Divorce/Contested Divorce/Decree Nisi	3	17	14		5	5	16		46	106	0.38
Motion Hearing							1		85	86	0.31
Fitness Plea/Fitness Hearing	1						49			50	0.18
Confiscation Order							50			50	0.18
Application with Hearing	1			1	24	1	14			41	0.15
Oral Exam	8	4		11	1	1	10			35	0.13
Judicial Sale		1		1			15			17	0.06
Judicial Review/Review	5				10					15	0.05
Hearing of Petition		1			13					14	0.05
Matrimonial/ Ancillary Relief									11	11	0.04
Hearing for Report	8									8	0.03
Decree Absolute	3									3	0.01
Special Procedure				3						3	0.01
Jail Delivery							2			2	0.01
Total	**343**	**3,460**	**999**	**3,129**	**438**	**2,099**	**13,259**	**2,269**	**1,742**	**27,738**	**100.00**

Time to Disposition Reports for High Courts in 2024, as obtained from JEMS and the ELP

The tables in this section highlight data on "time to disposition" of cases obtained from both JEMS and the ELP software, for the High Courts in the year 2024. This is a measure of how long cases take from the time of filing to disposition. Some of the data is not consistent with previous tables on disposed cases since the Court Offices manually added data in the process of verifying JEMS and ELP information contained in these previous tables.

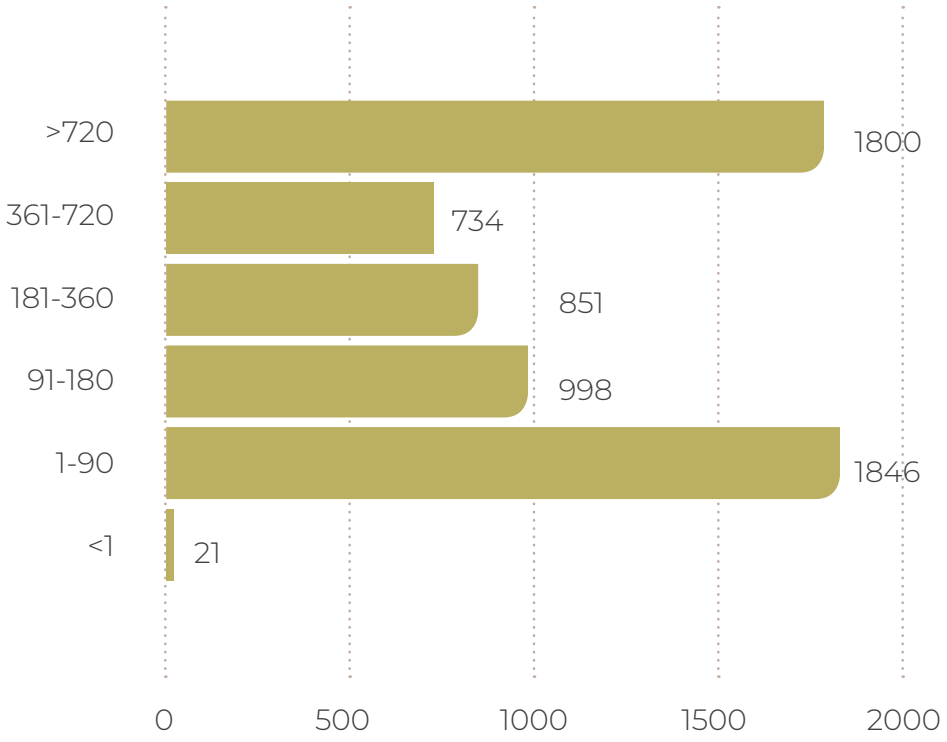
Examination of the data in Table 2 (f) reveals that the overall timeframe when most cases were disposed, was "1 to 90 days" followed closely by ">720 days" during which 29.54% and 28.80% of cases were disposed respectively.

Table 2(f) Time to Disposition in days as obtained from JEMS and the ELP, High Courts, 2024

TIME TO DISPOSITION OF CASES BY JURISDICTION	<1	1-90	91-180	181-360	361-720	>720	TOTAL CASES
Anguilla	0	50	31	37	21	13	**152**
Antigua and Barbuda	4	322	117	85	49	90	**667**
Commonwealth of Dominica	1	24	15	3	6	18	**67**
Grenada	2	100	174	165	159	73	**673**
Montserrat	3	30	8	3	4	4	**52**
Saint Lucia	4	375	275	318	272	555	**1799**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3	45	32	58	127	976	**1,241**
St. Kitts & Nevis	2	149	128	82	46	42	**449**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	2	751	218	100	50	29	**1,150**
Total	**21**	**1,846**	**998**	**851**	**734**	**1,800**	**6,250**
% of Total	**0.34**	**29.54**	**15.97**	**13.62**	**11.74**	**28.80**	**100.00**

Montserrat and Nevis data is only from the ELP; no JEMS access

Figure 6: Number of cases disposed per time range as obtained from JEMS and the ELP; High Courts, 2024



The cumulative percentages are given in Table 2(g) [calculated from data in Table 2(f)]. These are the percentage of cases disposed of within or by a certain time limit. Overall, 71.20% of cases were disposed of within 24 months or 2 years in the High Courts. Anguilla, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis as well as the Territory of the Virgin Islands had over 90% of their cases disposed of within the 2 years. St. Vincent and the Grenadines had a low 21.35% of cases disposed within 720 days; Table 2(f) showed that most cases (976 or 78.65%) took more than 720 days to be disposed of in this jurisdiction.

Table 2(g) Cumulative Percentages (% of cases disposed within given timeframes), as obtained from JEMS and the ELP, High Courts, 2024

CUMULATIVE % OF CASES DISPOSED BY JURISDICTION	90 DAYS/ 3 MONTHS	180 DAYS/ 6 MONTHS	360 DAYS/ 12 MONTHS	720 DAYS/ 24 MONTHS
Anguilla	32.89	53.29	77.63	91.45
Antigua and Barbuda	48.88	66.42	79.16	86.51
Commonwealth of Dominica	37.31	59.70	64.18	73.13
Grenada	15.16	41.01	65.53	89.15
Montserrat	63.46	78.85	84.62	92.31
Saint Lucia	21.07	36.35	54.03	69.15
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3.87	6.45	11.12	21.35
St. Kitts and Nevis	33.63	62.14	80.40	90.65
TVI	65.48	84.43	93.13	97.48
Overall	**29.87**	**45.84**	**59.46**	**71.20**

Pending Cases Reports

The tables below give information on Pending Cases as of December 31, 2024, obtained from the ELP and/or JEMS. The Court Offices are encouraged to continue reviewing the Pending Cases reports in both software applications to ensure that they are accurate, by verifying that the required fields to properly dispose of cases are completed in the software.

2(h) Anguilla High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	37	0	37	3.10	3.10
91-180	23	0	23	1.93	5.03
181-270	24	2	26	2.18	7.21
271-365	19	0	19	1.59	8.80
366-450	12	2	14	1.17	9.97
451-540	9	2	11	0.92	10.90
>540	86	977	1,063	89.10	**100.00**
Total Cases	**210**	**983**	**1,193**	**100.00**	

2(i) Antigua High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	170	0	170	2.15	2.15
91-180	111	0	111	1.40	3.55
181-270	133	0	133	1.68	5.23
271-365	134	0	134	1.69	6.92
366-450	125	0	125	1.58	8.50
451-540	92	0	92	1.16	9.66
>540	1249	5902	7151	90.34	**100.00**
Total Cases	**2014**	**5902**	**7916**	**100.00**	

2(j) Commonwealth of Dominica High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	120	0	120	0.96	0.96
91-180	118	0	118	0.94	1.90
181-270	135	1	136	1.09	2.98
271-365	86	5	91	0.73	3.71
366-450	81	3	84	0.67	4.38
451-540	108	1	109	0.87	5.25
>540	601	11,275	11,876	94.75	**100.00**
Total Cases	**1,249**	**11,285**	**12,534**	**100.00**	

2(k) Grenada High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	207	0	207	1.20	1.20
91-180	192	0	192	1.11	2.31
181-270	206	0	206	1.19	3.50
271-365	163	0	163	0.94	4.45
366-450	158	0	158	0.91	5.36
451-540	129	0	129	0.75	6.11
>540	993	15,228	16,221	93.89	**100.00**
Total Cases	**2,048**	**15,228**	**17,276**	**100.00**	

2(l) Montserrat High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024
(data only available from the ELP)

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	12		12	7.55	7.55
91-180	9		9	5.66	13.21
181-270	9		9	5.66	18.87
271-365	6		6	3.77	22.64
366-450	6		6	3.77	26.42
451-540	4		4	2.52	28.93
>540	113		113	71.07	**100.00**
Total Cases	**159**	Not on JEMS	**159**	**100.00**	

2(m) Saint Lucia High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	175	0	175	1.78	1.78
91-180	145	3	148	1.50	3.28
181-270	157	22	179	1.82	5.09
271-365	136	27	163	1.65	6.75
366-450	105	72	177	1.80	8.54
451-540	74	26	100	1.01	9.56
>540	889	8,023	8,912	90.44	**100.00**
Total Cases	**1,681**	**8,173**	**9,854**	**100.00**	

There were also 346 criminal pending cases in the ELP from the SLU Criminal Division. However, the Mag Court and High Court data could not be differentiated.

2(n) St. Kitts High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	101	0	101	1.25	1.25
91-180	70	0	70	0.87	2.12
181-270	77	19	96	1.19	3.32
271-365	61	8	69	0.86	4.17
366-450	61	6	67	0.83	5.00
451-540	74	3	77	0.96	5.96
>540	512	7,060	7,572	94.04	**100.00**
Total Cases	**956**	**7,096**	**8,052**	**100.00**	

2(o) Nevis High Court Pending cases: December 31, 2024
(data only available from the ELP)

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	37		37	7.49	7.49
91-180	27		27	5.47	12.96
181-270	29		29	5.87	18.83
271-365	19		19	3.85	22.67
366-450	30		30	6.07	28.74
451-540	24		24	4.86	33.60
>540	328		328	66.40	**100.00**
Total Cases	**494**	**Database not accessible**	**494**	**100.00**	

2(p) St. Vincent and the Grenadines High Court Pending cases:
December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	123	0	123	1.50	1.50
91-180	98	0	98	1.20	2.70
181-270	114	3	117	1.43	4.12
271-365	91	4	95	1.16	5.28
366-450	85	0	85	1.04	6.32
451-540	80	0	80	0.98	7.30
>540	287	7,312	7,599	92.70	**100.00**
Total Cases	**878**	**7,319**	**8,197**	**100.00**	

2(q) Territory of the Virgin Islands High Court Pending cases:
December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90	108		108	1.76	1.76
91-180	110		110	1.79	3.55
181-270	89		89	1.45	5.01
271-365	55		55	0.90	5.90
366-450	55		55	0.90	6.80
451-540	47		47	0.77	7.57
>540	431	5,238	5,669	92.43	**100.00**
Total Cases	**895**	**5,238**	**6,133**	**100.00**	

The Sexual Offences Model Court (SOMC) in Antigua and Barbuda

Table 2(r) gives information on the caseload of the SOMC including Pending cases and highlights the clearance rates. The rate of clearance of cases initially increased and peaked in 2022 at 123.08%. Thereafter the rate of clearance of cases declined.

Table 2(r): Numbers of Filed and Completed SOMC cases with clearance rates: 2020 to 2024

YEAR	NUMBER OF PENDING CASES AT THE START OF THE YEAR	NUMBER OF FILED CASES	NUMBER OF DISPOSED CASES (CAN INCLUDE PENDING CASES WHICH HAVE BEEN DISPOSED)	NUMBER OF PENDING CASES AT THE END OF THE YEAR	CLEARANCE RATE (%)
2020	0	49	6	43	12.24
2021	43	16	11	48	68.75
2022	48	26	32	42	123.08
2023	42	30	15	57	50.00
2024	57	14	3	68	21.43

Of mention is that; one case can have several offences, and the case is deemed complete or disposed of when all offences related to the case are disposed of. The SOMC recorded a high number of pending offences and minimal disposed offences in 2024.

Table 2(s): Numbers of SOMC offences 2024

OFFENCE	NUMBER OF OFFENCES PENDING AT THE START OF 2024	NUMBER OF OFFENCES FILED IN 2024	NUMBER OF OFFENCES DISPOSED OF IN 2024 (CAN INCLUDE PENDING OFFENCES WHICH HAVE BEEN DISPOSED IN 2024)	NUMBER OF OFFENCES PENDING AT THE END OF 2024
Incest	2	0	0	2
Indecent Assault	12	7	3	16
Rape	12	6	2	16
Serious Indecency	18	4	2	20
Unlawful Sexual Intercourse	20	4	2	22
Buggery	2	0	0	2
Total	**66**	**21**	**9**	**78**

The various outcomes of the SOMC disposed cases are given in Table 2(t). It is noted that one case can be disposed of in more than one manner and hence can have more than one outcome.

Table 2(t): Outcomes of the disposed cases in the SOMC, 2020 to 2024

OUTCOME	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL
Acquittals	-	3	6	1	4	14
Convictions after Trial	-	0	4	2	0	6
Discontinued	3	-	-	9	0	12
Guilty Pleas	3	6	8	3	0	20
Matters Discontinued by DPP	-	2	14	0	2	18
Total cases	6	11	32	15	6	70

Table 2(u) highlights data on the time to disposition of the 3 cases which were disposed of in 2024 [from Table 2(r)]. Generally, all 3 cases took less than 12 months to be disposed of; 1 of these cases was disposed within 6 months.

Table 2(u): Time to Disposition of SOMC cases (2024)

TIME PERIOD	NUMBER OF CASES DISPOSED
6 months or less	1
Between 6 to 12 months	2
Between 12 to 18 months	0
More than 18 months	0
Total cases	**3**

While Sexual Offence cases are a critical priority, the allocation of the limited judicial and prosecutorial resources must also be utilized for other serious matters such as murders, woundings, and other violent offences. The "Sexual Offences Court," is not a separate court dedicated solely to sexual offence matters with its own dedicated resources within the criminal justice system. Rather, it represents a specialized framework of procedures, rules, and guidelines that govern how such cases are managed and heard within the broader structure of the Criminal Court. To improve disposal rates of Sexual Offences, the Court has periods where there is an intensified focus on these matters, which leads to higher disposal rates in that category. Such measures will have to be implemented more regularly to achieve more timely disposition of these cases.



SECTION 3: MAGISTRATES COURTS

This Section highlights the work of the Magistrates Courts in 2024. Information on Family related matters for jurisdictions with official Family Courts or Divisions (Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines as well as Antigua and Barbuda) is given in Section 4.

The overall clearance rate for the Magistrates Courts steadily increased from 2022 to 2024 and was just above the 100% benchmark at 106.47% in 2024. Most jurisdictions attained clearance rates above 100% in 2024 (except for Anguilla at 92.69%, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at 81.20% as well as Antigua and Barbuda at 55.85%).

Table 3 (a) Cases Filed and Disposed by Member State in the Magistrates Courts with accompanying Clearance Rates: 2022 to 2024

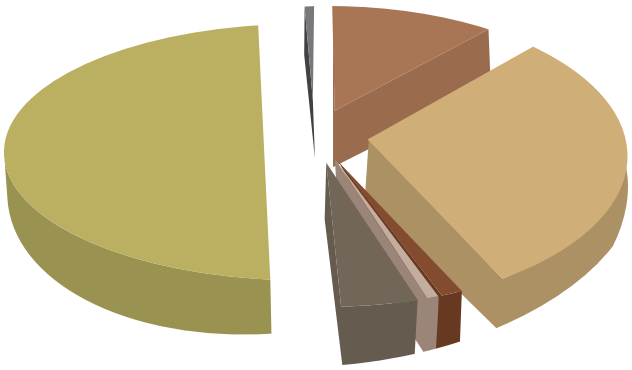
COUNTRY	2022			2023			2024		
	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)	TOTAL CASESFILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)
Anguilla	540	557	**103.15**	497	454	**91.35**	520	482	**92.69**
Antigua and Barbuda	4,436	2,951	**66.52**	4,704	3,862	**82.10**	4,181	2,335	**55.85**
Comm. of Dominica	3,005	2,361	**78.57**	2,371	2,524	**106.45**	2,061	2,458	**119.26**
Grenada	9,142	1,674	**18.31**	8,978	11,734	**130.70**	8,136	11,615	**142.76**
Montserrat	246	252	**102.44**	215	217	**100.93**	197	213	**108.12**
Saint Lucia	5,860	5,161	**88.07**	8,353	7,836	**93.81**	7,107	7,512	**105.70**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3,904	3,608	**92.42**	4,689	4,061	**86.61**	4,755	3,861	**81.20**
St. Kitts and Nevis	6,079	3,920	**64.48**	5,518	3,634	**65.86**	4,062	4,454	**109.65**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	746	754	**101.07**	650	646	**99.38**	447	571	**127.74**
TOTAL	**33,958**	**21,238**	**62.54**	**35,975**	**34,968**	**97.20**	**31,466**	**33,501**	**106.47**

Table 3(b) shows that the dominant case types in the Magistrates Courts were Traffic and Criminal matters which when combined represented 81.43% and 83.46% of total filed and disposed cases respectively. Clearance rates were above 100% for all case types except for Civil and Domestic Violence cases. Domestic Relationship is a relatively new case type which is similar to Maintenance and Affiliation and includes: access to child, custody, legal guardianship and legal separation, paternity and access, reasonable access.

Table 3 (b) Cases Filed and Disposed by Major Case Type in the Magistrates Courts: 2024

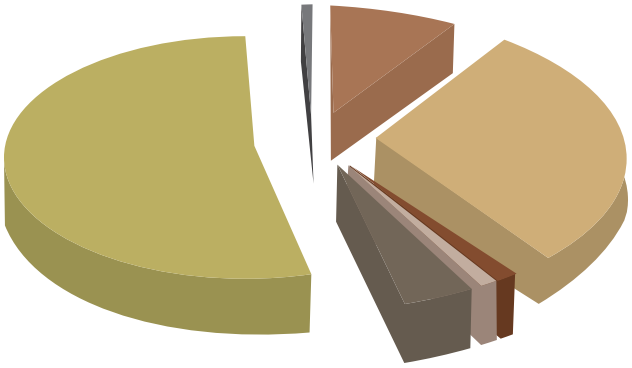
CASE TYPE	2024				
	FILED CASES	% OF TOTAL FILED CASES	DISPOSED CASES	% OF TOTAL DISPOSED CASES	CLEARANCE RATES (%)
Civil	3,718	**11.82**	3,141	**9.38**	84.48
Criminal	9,837	**31.26**	10,274	**30.67**	104.44
Domestic Violence	399	**1.27**	318	**0.95**	79.70
Juvenile	199	**0.63**	355	**1.06**	178.39
Maintenance./ Affiliation, Domestic Relationship, Child Care and Protection, Custody	1,327	**4.22**	1,423	**4.25**	107.23
Traffic	15,788	**50.17**	17,686	**52.79**	112.02
Other	198	**0.63**	304	**0.91**	153.54
TOTAL	**31,466**	**100.00**	**33,501**	**100.00**	**106.47**

Figure 7a: Percentage of Cases Filed
by Major Case Type in the Magistrates Courts: 2024



Civil	12%
Criminal	31%
Domestic Violence	1%
Juvenile	1%
Maintenance./ Affiliation, Domestic Relationship, Child Care and Protection, Custody	4%
Traffic	50%
Other	1%

Figure 7b: Percentage of Cases Disposed
by Major Case Type in the Magistrates Courts: 2024



Civil	9%
Criminal	31%
Domestic Violence	1%
Juvenile	1%
Maintenance./ Affiliation, Domestic Relationship, Child Care and Protection, Custody	4%
Traffic	53%
Other	1%

The numbers of filed and disposed cases by jurisdiction and case type are given in Tables 3(c) and 3 (d) which follow. It is emphasized that Family matters (Domestic Violence, Juvenile and Maintenance) for Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia as well as St. Vincent and the Grenadines are represented in Section 4 (Family Court).

Some of the highlights from Tables 3(c) and 3 (d) include:

- About half of the total filed cases as well as disposed cases were Traffic cases
- Criminal cases were in the vicinity of 30% of both totals (filed and disposed cases)
- Criminal and Traffic cases together were roughly 80% of the total filed and disposed caseloads
- The highest total numbers of filed and disposed cases were recorded in Grenada followed by Saint Lucia. Grenada had over 10,000 disposed cases (11,615) which was significant.
- A substantial 36.57% and 42.89% of total filed and disposed Criminal cases respectively were from Grenada
- There were over 5,000 Traffic cases filed in Saint Lucia while both Saint Lucia and Grenada disposed of over 5,000 Traffic cases
- The cases categorized as “Other” were Coroner’s Inquests for both filed cases and disposed cases; apart from the 216 disposed in Saint Lucia which were not specified

Table 3(c) Cases Filed by Member State and Case Type in the Magistrates Courts: 2024

MEMBER STATES	2024								COUNTRY TOTAL AS A % OF TOTAL
	CRIMINAL	CIVIL	TRAFFIC	DOM VIO	JUV.	MAINT/ AFF/DOM REL/CHILD CARE,ETC.	OTHER	TOTAL	
Anguilla	216	64	116		10	76	38	520	**1.65**
Antigua and Barbuda	1,655	1,001	1,525					4,181	**13.29**
Commonwealth of Dominica	810	372	483	91	25	120	160	2,061	**6.55**
Grenada	3,597	259	3,429	282	116	453		8,136	**25.86**
Montserrat	84	30	64	7	2	10		197	**0.63**
Saint Lucia	1,266	531	5,310					7,107	**22.59**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1,566	383	2,806					4,755	**15.11**
St. Kitts and Nevis	446	995	1,978	19	26	598		4,062	**12.91**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	197	83	77		20	70		447	**1.42**
TOTAL	**9,837**	**3,718**	**15,788**	**399**	**199**	**1,327**	**198**	**31,466**	
Case Type as a % of Total	**31.26**	**11.82**	**50.17**	**1.27**	**0.63**	**4.22**	**0.63**		

Dom Vio - Domestic Violence,
Maint/Aff/DomRel/ChildCare - Maintenance/Affiliation/Domestic Relationship/ Child Care/Protection/Custody
Juv. - Juvenile

Table 3(d) Cases Disposed by Member State and Case Type in the Magistrates Courts: 2024

MEMBER STATES	2024								COUNTRY TOTAL AS A % OF TOTAL
	CRIMINAL	CIVIL	TRAFFIC	DOM VIO	JUV.	MAINT/ AFF/DOM REL/CHILD CARE,ETC.	OTHER	TOTAL	
Anguilla	231	64	115		4	55	13	482	**1.44**
Antigua and Barbuda	929	326	1080					2,335	**6.97**
Commonwealth of Dominica	991	563	545	65	30	193	71	2,458	**7.34**
Grenada	4,407	335	5,735	247	301	590		11,615	**34.67**
Montserrat	92	36	72	1	2	10		213	**0.64**
Saint Lucia	1,443	583	5,270				216	7,512	**22.42**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1,462	486	1,909				4	3,861	**11.53**
St. Kitts and Nevis	489	666	2,779	2	7	511		4,454	**13.30**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	230	82	181	3	11	64		571	**1.70**
TOTAL	**10,274**	**3,141**	**17,686**	**318**	**355**	**1,423**	**304**	**33,501**	
Case Type as a % of Total	**30.67**	**9.38**	**52.79**	**0.95**	**1.06**	**4.25**	**0.91**		

Dom Vio - Domestic Violence,
Maint/Aff/DomRel/ChildCare - Maintenance/Affiliation/Domestic Relationship/ Child Care/Protection/Custody
Juv. - Juvenile

Time to Disposition Reports for Magistrates Courts in 2024, as obtained from JEMS and/or the ELP.

Tables 3(e) and 3(f) show the "time to disposition" of cases obtained from the JEMS and ELP systems. There will be inconsistencies with data in these tables when compared to the previous tables showing disposed data because the previous tables have manual data provided, in instances where some Courts or branches of the Courts were not on the JEMS software. These differences are greater for some jurisdictions than others (Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia have bigger differences). The Magistracies have since commenced the transition to the ELP during 2024.

Table 3 (e) shows that overall, the timeframe with the highest number of disposed cases was "1 – 90 days" where 27.13% of cases were disposed. It is also noted that 21.23% of cases took more than 720 days for disposition. Individually, this differed among a few jurisdictions. The data from Table 3 (e) is exhibited in Figure 8.

Table 3(e) Time to Disposition in days as obtained from JEMS and/or the ELP, Magistrates Courts 2024

TIME TO DISPOSITION OF CASES BY JURISDICTION	<1	1-90	91-180	181-360	361-720	>720	TOTAL CASES
Anguilla	21	241	71	66	57	15	**471**
Antigua and Barbuda	518	498	335	374	389	220	**2,334**
Commonwealth of Dominica	143	561	238	290	359	729	**2,320**
Grenada	6	26	11	1	0	1	**45**
Montserrat	0	20	6	1	0	0	**27**
Saint Lucia	40	1,032	251	291	306	315	**2,235**
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	73	477	94	0	0	0	**644**
St. Kitts & Nevis	16	413	521	696	819	1,201	**3,666**
Territory of the Virgin Islands	4	73	80	108	173	133	**571**
Total	**821**	**3,341**	**1,607**	**1,827**	**2,103**	**2,614**	**12,313**
% of Total	**6.67**	**27.13**	**13.05**	**14.84**	**17.08**	**21.23**	**100**

Montserrat and Nevis data is only from the ELP; no JEMS access

Figure 8: Percentage of cases disposed per time frame as obtained from JEMS and/or the ELP for Magistrates Courts, 2024

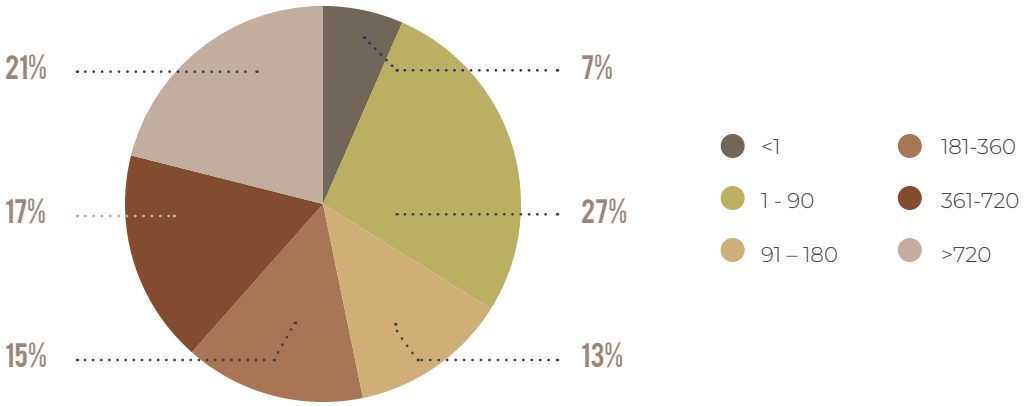


Table 3(f) shows the cumulative percentages which are the percentage of cases disposed of within a certain timeframe. Overall, 78.77% of cases were disposed of within 24 months or 2 years in the Magistrates Courts. Although data for Montserrat and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines show that 100% of their cases were resolved within shorter timeframes, this is not conclusive because they had minimal case entries in the ELP.

Table 3(f) Cumulative Percentages (% of cases disposed within given timeframes), as obtained from JEMS and/or the ELP for Magistrates Courts, 2024

CUMULATIVE % OF CASES DISPOSED BY JURISDICTION	90 DAYS/ 3 MONTHS	180 DAYS/ 6 MONTHS	360 DAYS/ 12 MONTHS	720 DAYS/ 24 MONTHS
Anguilla	55.63	70.70	84.71	96.82
Antigua and Barbuda	43.53	57.88	73.91	90.57
Commonwealth of Dominica	30.34	40.60	53.10	68.58
Grenada	71.11	95.56	97.78	97.78
Montserrat	74.07	96.30	100.00	100.00
Saint Lucia	47.96	59.19	72.21	85.91
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	85.40	100.00	100.00	100.00
St. Kitts and Nevis	11.70	25.91	44.90	67.24
TVI	13.49	27.50	46.41	76.71
Overall	**33.80**	**46.85**	**61.69**	**78.77**

Pending Cases in the Magistrates Court

The following tables give information on Pending Cases (cases not disposed of) as at the end of 2024. Data was retrieved from both JEMS and the ELP. For jurisdictions where the data might not be accurate, the ECSC continues to advise the Courts to conduct an exercise to dispose of cases in the software which are in fact completed but showing up as pending. There were some Magistracies which commenced entry of some case types into the ELP prior to 2024 hence these have pending cases for longer periods.

3(g) Anguilla Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	27	0	27	3.75	3.75
91-180	4	0	4	0.56	4.31
181-270	4	7	11	1.53	5.83
271-365	3	10	13	1.81	7.64
366-450	2	11	13	1.81	9.44
451-540	1	7	8	1.11	10.56
>540	1	643	644	89.44	**100.00**
Total Cases	**42**	**678**	**720**	**100.00**	

3(h) Antigua and Barbuda Magistrates Court Pending Cases:
December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 - 90		0	0	0.00	0.00
91-180		141	141	0.63	0.63
181-270		689	689	3.08	3.71
271-365		868	868	3.88	7.60
366-450		531	531	2.38	9.97
451-540		458	458	2.05	12.02
>540		19,667	19,667	87.98	**100.00**
Total Cases	**No data in the ELP report**	**22,354**	**22,354**	**100.00**	

*Although Antigua and Barbuda received training in the ELP in the latter half of 2024, legislation called the "Notice of commencement of Proceedings on the Electronic Litigation Portal", only permitted them to commence filings in 2025

3(i) Commonwealth of Dominica Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	144	0	144	3.89	3.89
91-180	84	0	84	2.27	6.16
181-270	42	29	71	1.92	8.08
271-365	59	151	210	5.67	13.75
366-450	41	90	131	3.54	17.29
451-540	52	98	150	4.05	21.35
>540	0	2,911	2,911	78.65	**100.00**
Total Cases	**422**	**3,279**	**3,701**	**100.00**	

3(j) Grenada Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	1,442	0	1,442	2.05	2.05
91-180	1,483	1	1,484	2.11	4.17
181-270	1,323	0	1,323	1.88	6.05
271-365	110	0	110	0.16	6.21
366-450	128	337	465	0.66	6.87
451-540	95	667	762	1.09	7.95
>540	134	64,508	64,642	92.05	**100.00**
Total Cases	**4,715**	**65,513**	**70,228**	**100.00**	

3(k) Montserrat Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	13		13	24.07	24.07
91-180	5		5	9.26	33.33
181-270	10		10	18.52	51.85
271-365	14		14	25.93	77.78
366-450	2		2	3.70	81.48
451-540	7		7	12.96	94.44
>540	3		3	5.56	**100.00**
Total Cases	**54**	Not on JEMS	**54**	**100.00**	

3(l) Nevis Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	34		34	25.19	25.19
91-180	23		23	17.04	42.22
181-270	12		12	8.89	51.11
271-365	12		12	8.89	60.00
366-450	16		16	11.85	71.85
451-540	20		20	14.81	86.67
>540	18		18	13.33	**100.00**
Total Cases	**135**	Not on JEMS	**135**	**100.00**	

3(m) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	503		503	42.38	42.38
91-180	592		592	49.87	92.25
181-270	92		92	7.75	100.00
271-365	0		0	0.00	100.00
366-450	0		0	0.00	100.00
451-540	0		0	0.00	100.00
>540	0		0	0.00	**100.00**
Total Cases	**1,187**	Not on JEMS	**1,187**	**100.00**	

3(n) Saint Lucia Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	782	0	782	2.01	2.01
91-180	102	0	102	0.26	2.27
181-270	0	0	0	0.00	2.27
271-365	0	122	122	0.31	2.58
366-450	0	150	150	0.38	2.97
451-540	0	174	174	0.45	3.41
>540	0	37,655	37,655	96.59	**100.00**
Total Cases	**884**	**38,101**	**38,985**	**100.00**	

There were also 346 criminal pending cases in the ELP from the SLU Criminal Division. However, the Mag Court and High Court data could not be differentiated.

3(o) St. Kitts Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	244	0	244	1.05	1.05
91-180	150	3	153	0.66	1.70
181-270	186	171	357	1.53	3.23
271-365	173	243	416	1.78	5.02
366-450	148	150	298	1.28	6.29
451-540	191	507	698	2.99	9.29
>540	189	20,966	21,155	90.71	**100.00**
Total Cases	**1,281**	**22,040**	**23,321**	**100.00**	

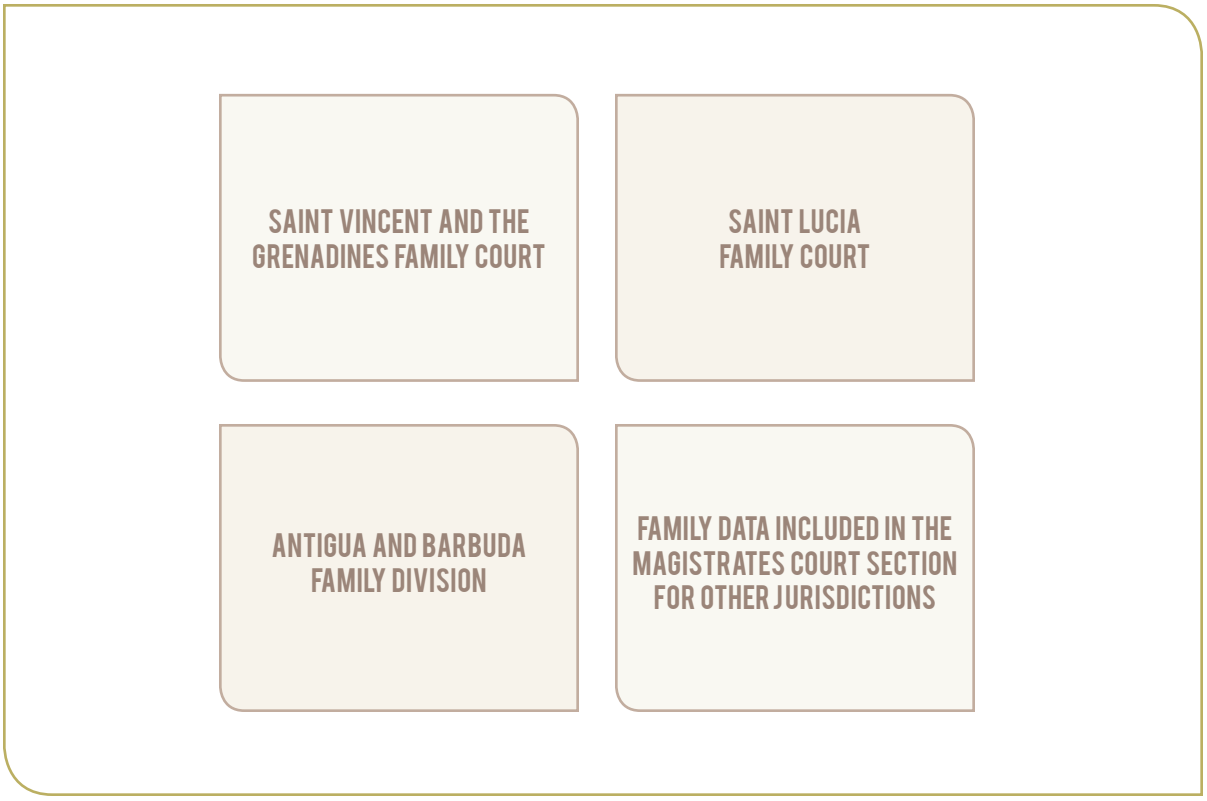
3(p) Territory of the Virgin Islands Magistrates Court Pending Cases: December 31, 2024

AGE IN DAYS	NUMBER OF CASES ELP	NUMBER OF CASES JEMS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE (%)
0 – 90	71	0	71	1.21	1.21
91-180	58	0	58	0.98	2.19
181-270	61	0	61	1.04	3.23
271-365	15	0	15	0.25	3.48
366-450	8	2	10	0.17	3.65
451-540	17	32	49	0.83	4.48
>540	59	5,568	5,627	95.52	**100.00**
Total Cases	**289**	**5,602**	**5,891**	**100.00**	



SECTION 4: FAMILY COURTS

Information on the Official Family Courts in the OECS is provided in this Section. The official Family Courts/Divisions include Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court, Saint Lucia Family Court as well as the Family Division in Antigua and Barbuda.



Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court

Over the period 2022 to 2024, the total number of filed cases gradually declined by a small extent (1.83% decrease). Arrears cases steadily increased, and Adoption cases registered a minuscule increase over the said timeframe. The numbers of Maintenance cases and Protection Orders decreased over the three years while the remaining case types fluctuated in numbers. Arrears and Maintenance cases were a major 67.08% of total filed cases over the three years.

Table 4(a) Numbers of Cases Filed in the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court: 2022 to 2024

CASE TYPE	2022		2023		2024	
	NO. OF CASES	% OF TOTAL	NO. OF CASES	% OF TOTAL	NO. OF CASES	% OF TOTAL
Adoption	7	0.36	7	0.36	8	0.41
Arrears	743	37.81	783	40.07	799	41.42
Criminal Offences	123	6.26	195	9.98	163	8.45
Custody/ Access	287	14.61	203	10.39	218	11.30
Legal Guardianship	55	2.80	47	2.41	48	2.49
Maintenance	556	28.30	533	27.28	509	26.39
Protection Order	194	9.87	186	9.52	184	9.54
Total	**1,965**	**100.00**	**1,954**	**100.00**	**1,929**	**100.00**

Total disposed cases declined continuously over the three years and registered a substantial 29.15% drop from 2023 to 2024. Generally, there were continuous decreases in the dispositions of the various case types except for Adoption and Maintenance cases. There was a spike in the number of disposed Maintenance cases from 2022 to 2023 followed by a sharp decrease in 2024 which was reflected in the reduced disposed total. Arrears and Maintenance cases together represented 70.65% of total disposed cases over the three years.

Table 4(b) Numbers of Cases Disposed in the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court: 2022 to 2024

CASE TYPE	2022		2023		2024	
	NO. OF CASES	% OF TOTAL	NO. OF CASES	% OF TOTAL	NO. OF CASES	% OF TOTAL
Adoption	5	0.19	14	0.54	9	0.49
Arrears	1,159	42.99	875	33.78	799	43.54
Criminal Offences	163	6.05	93	3.59	87	4.74
Custody/ Access	340	12.61	303	11.70	206	11.23
Legal Guardianship	47	1.74	47	1.81	46	2.51
Maintenance	642	23.81	1,043	40.27	513	27.96
Protection Order	340	12.61	215	8.30	175	9.54
Total	**2,696**	**100.00**	**2,590**	**100.00**	**1,835**	**100.00**

Figure 9 below illustrates the total filed and disposed cases from 2022 to 2024. The graph shows that there were more disposed cases than filed cases in both 2022 and 2023. Subsequently in 2024, disposed cases dropped substantially and were fewer than total filed cases, thus indicating some buildup of backlog.

Figure 9: Cases Filed and Disposed in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court, 2022 to 2024

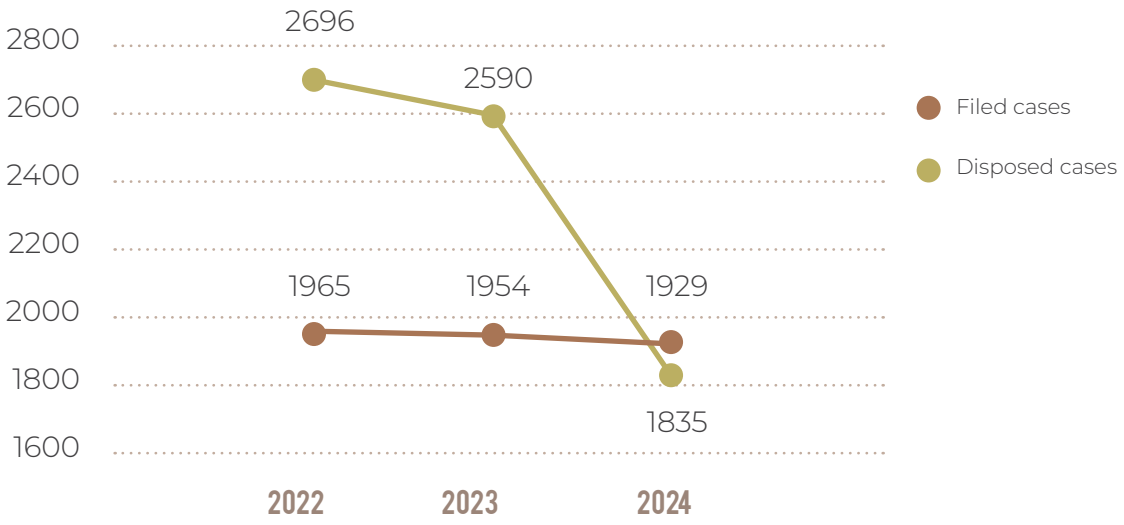


Table 4(c) establishes that the overall clearance rate had a downward trend from 2022 to 2024. The marked decline in the total disposed caseload resulted in an overall clearance rate below 100% in 2024.

Table 4 (c) Clearance Rates in the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court: 2022 to 2024

CASE TYPE	2022			2023			2024		
	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)	TOTAL CASES FILED	TOTAL CASES DISPOSED	CLEARANCE RATES (%)
Adoption	7	5	**71.43**	7	14	**200.00**	8	9	**112.50**
Arrears	743	1,159	**155.99**	783	875	**111.75**	799	799	**100.00**
Criminal Offences	123	163	**132.52**	195	93	**47.69**	163	87	**53.37**
Custody/ Access	287	340	**118.47**	203	303	**149.26**	218	206	**94.50**
Legal Guardianship	55	47	**85.45**	47	47	**100.00**	48	46	**95.83**
Maintenance	556	642	**115.47**	533	1,043	**195.68**	509	513	**100.79**
Protection Order	194	340	**175.26**	186	215	**115.59**	184	175	**95.11**
Total	**1,965**	**2,696**	**137.20**	**1,954**	**2,590**	**132.55**	**1,929**	**1,835**	**95.13**

Table 4(d) shows the categories of the Criminal offences managed in the SVG Family Court in 2024. Most cases were Indecent Assault cases together with other offences related to Assault followed by Unlawful Sexual offences including Rape.

Table 4 (d) Criminal Offences filed and disposed in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court, 2024

CASE TYPE	2024			
	CASES FILED	% OF TOTAL FILED	CASES DISPOSED	% OF TOTAL DISPOSED
Abduction	9	5.52	6	6.90
Assault causing actual bodily harm	3	1.84	0	0.00
Assault with intent to commit buggery	1	0.61	0	0.00
Assault/intent to commit assault	10	6.13	6	6.90
Buggery	0	0.00	3	3.45
Child pornography	1	0.61	0	0.00
Damage to property	1	0.61	1	1.15
Incest/intent to commit incest	4	2.45	0	0.00
Indecent assault	65	39.88	39	44.83
Rape/ intent to commit rape	15	9.20	12	13.79
Theft/ intent to commit theft	9	5.52	2	2.30
Threatening language	2	1.23	1	1.15
Trespassing offences (trespass and assault, trespasser with intent to commit assault)	3	1.84	1	1.15
Unlawful and malicious wounding, actual bodily harm, unlawful grievous bodily harm/intent to commit bodily harm	6	3.68	4	4.60
Unlawful exposure/gross Indecency	5	3.07	2	2.30
Unlawful sexual intercourse/intent to commit/attempt; Intercourse with a girl 13 to 15/ under 13	29	17.79	10	11.49
Total	**163**	**100.00**	**87**	**100.00**

Information on the number of Pending cases at the end of 2024 was provided by the SVG Family Court and is shown in Table 4 (e). There were 73 Pending cases at the end of 2024; over 50% of these were Criminal cases.

Table 4 (e) Number of Pending Cases by Case Type in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Family Court at the end of 2024

CASE TYPE	NUMBER OF PENDING CASES: DEC 31, 2024	PERCENTAGE (%) OF TOTAL PENDING CASELOAD
Access	3	4.11
Arrears	12	16.44
Criminal Matters	40	54.79
Legal Guardianship	2	2.74
Maintenance	5	6.85
Protection Order	10	13.70
Variation of Maintenance	1	1.37
Total	**73**	**100.00**

Saint Lucia Family Court

The Saint Lucia Family Court attended to 538 new lodgings and disposed of 549 cases during the year 2024. Total disposed cases are derived by adding the categories; cases heard and final orders given, cases discharged, cases withdrawn and cases transferred to another court. The Magistrates also delivered 220 interim orders for Domestic Violence cases.

Affiliation, Separation and Maintenance together with Domestic Violence cases were a substantial 86.43% of total filed and 84.88% of total disposed cases.

Table 4 (f) Cases Filed and Disposed in the Saint Lucia Family Court, 2024

	JUVENILE		AFFILIATION, SEPARATION & MAINTENANCE	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	TOTAL
	CRIMINAL	CARE & PROTECTION			
New Cases Lodged	22	51	245	220	538
Cases Heard and Interim Orders Given	.	.	.	220	220
Cases Heard and Final Orders Given	37	19	171	83	310
Cases Discharged	21	.	84	85	190
Cases withdrawn by applicant	1	2	29	14	46
Cases Transferred to another Court	3	.	.	.	3
Total Cases Disposed	**62**	**21**	**284**	**182**	**549**

Figure 10: Cases Lodged and Disposed in the Saint Lucia Family Court, 2024

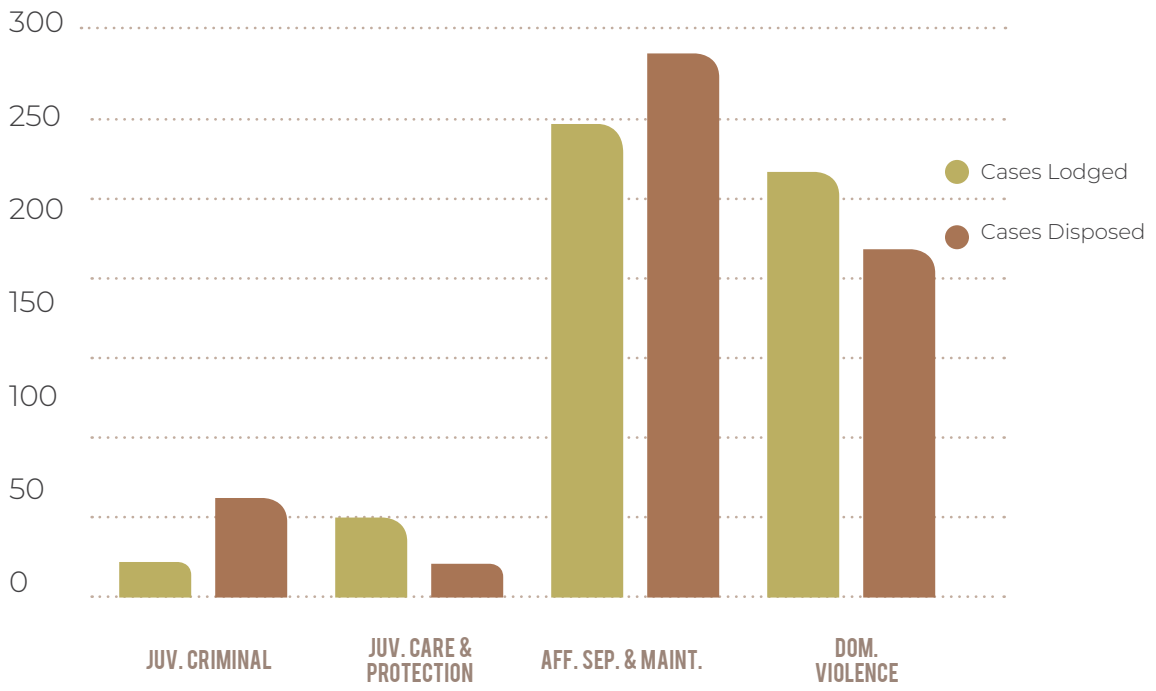


Table 4(g) informs on the clearance rates by case type in the Saint Lucia Family Court in the year 2024. The Saint Lucia Family Court recorded an overall clearance rate of 102.04% which indicates that some cases filed prior to 2024 were disposed of. There was greater backlog cleared for Juvenile Criminal cases and some backlog reduction for Affiliation, Separation and Maintenance cases.

Table 4 (g) Clearance Rates of Cases by Case Type
in the Saint Lucia Family Court, 2024

CATEGORIES/ CASE TYPES	JUVENILE		AFFILIATION, SEPARATION & MAINTENANCE	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	TOTAL
	CRIMINAL	CARE & PROTECTION			
New Cases Lodged	22	51	245	220	**538**
Total Cases Disposed	62	21	284	182	**549**
Clearance Rates (%)	**281.82**	**41.18**	**115.92**	**82.73**	**102.04**

St. Lucia Family Court
Social Support Unit 2024

The mission of the Family Court is to promote justice and social change through a reliable, legal, and therapeutic environment for families, couples, individuals, and children within the Court System. This mission reflects the Court's commitment to ensuring that its services not only uphold the law but also foster a supportive space for those navigating challenging and sensitive family matters. To fulfill this mission, the Family Court operates a Social Support Unit staffed by three Social Workers and one Intake Counsellor.

Between the months of March and October, the Social Support Unit experienced a critical human resource challenge following the transfer of one Social Worker to another Ministry. Notwithstanding this limitation, the Unit successfully provided essential interventions to 246 victims of domestic violence, 212 of whom pursued Interim Protection Orders.

To ensure continued service delivery, two Social Workers alternated on Mondays to provide support services to clients in the southern part of the island. However, victims of domestic violence were still required to travel to the Castries Office to complete applications and have their matters heard before a Magistrate. In addition, four Social Work Interns were afforded coaching, supervision, and practical opportunities to apply their academic knowledge and skills.

As part of its ongoing public education efforts on the Domestic Violence Act, the Director facilitated two training sessions with new recruits of the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force. She also conducted an awareness session with residents of the Dennery community and District Six Counsellors. Furthermore, in collaboration with the St. Lucia Crisis Centre, the Unit referred a small group of domestic violence perpetrators to a program entitled "Empowering Male Perpetrators Through Healthy Relationships and Skills Development." The program sought to educate and raise awareness among male perpetrators on the consequences of abusive behaviour while promoting positive relationship skills.

The Unit also facilitated parenting sessions for parents referred by the Magistrate, further extending its reach in providing holistic support services.
Through these initiatives, the Family Court continues to reinforce its role as a cornerstone of support for vulnerable individuals, ensuring that all persons, regardless of their location or circumstances, are afforded access to justice.

Antigua and Barbuda Family Division

The Family Court, a division of the High Court of Antigua and Barbuda, operates under the administrative control of the Registrar of the High Court and the Deputy Registrar of the Family Court. It is located on the ground floor of the High Court Building on Parliament Drive, St. John's, Antigua.

The Judicial and Administrative Structure of the Antigua and Barbuda Family Division is as follows:

- Judicial Officers:
- One (1) Presiding Judge
- Two (2) Magistrates
  - One assigned to family matters
  - One assigned to the Child Justice Board
- 27 Support Staff including clerical and administrative staff and police officers

Jurisdiction and Proceedings

The Family Court handles a wide range of family and child-related matters, including:

- Divorce under the Divorce Act 1997
- Applications relating to Children including custody and adoption under the Family Proceeding Rules 2022
- Maintenance and access applications under the Maintenance of and Access to Children Act, 2008
- Protection orders under the Domestic Violence Act, 2015
- Spousal maintenance under the Magistrate's Code of Procedure Act 2024
- Care orders under the Child (Care and Adoption) Act, 2015
- Child Justice Board sittings under the Child Justice Act 2015

- Juvenile criminal proceedings for children in conflict with the law under the Child Justice Act 2015

The Status of Children Act, 2015 also relates to proceeding within the Family Court.

Caseload statistics on the Antigua and Barbuda Family Division are given in Table 4(h) which follows. The bulk of cases were Maintenance matters which were 82.10% of total filed cases and 85.48% of total disposed cases. These cases formed 70% of total Pending cases at both the start and the end of 2024. The Antigua Family Division recorded a clearance rate of 77.94% based on the data in Table 4(h).

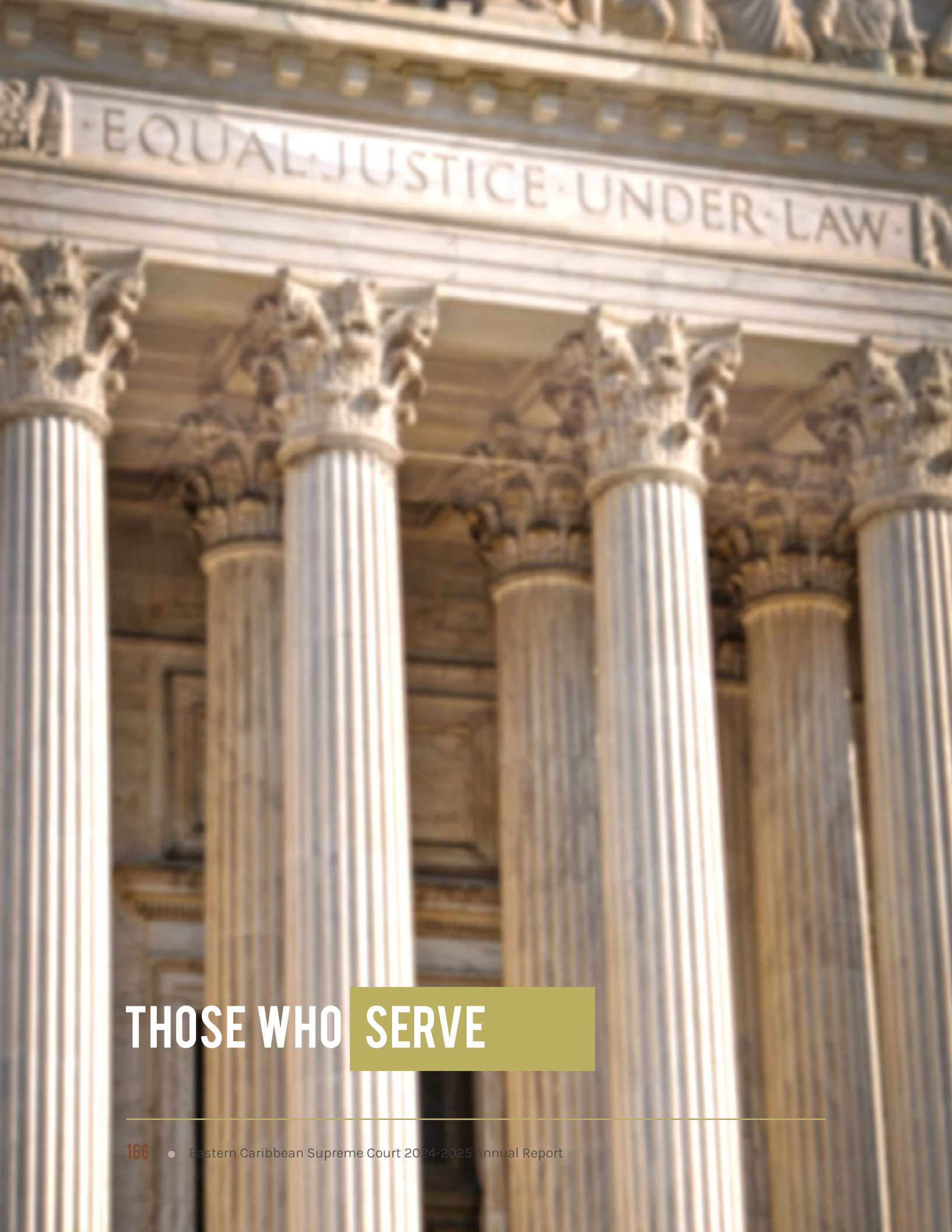
Table 4(h) Antigua and Barbuda Family Division Statistics for the year 2024

CASE TYPE	PENDING CASES AT THE START OF 2024	CASES FILED IN 2024	CASES DISPOSED OF IN 2024	PENDING CASES AT THE END OF 2024
Care and Protection	1	8	7	2
Domestic Relationship	12	39	23	28
Domestic Violence	17	41	33	25
Maintenance	138	718	583	273
Juvenile Court	17	13	21	9
Child Justice Board	12	56	15	53
Total	**197**	**875**	**682**	**390**

During the year 2024, The Antigua and Barbuda High Court Judge presided over some Adoption and Matrimonial matters which also fall under the Family Division. This was also highlighted in the High Court section of this report. There were 8 Adoption cases filed and 8 disposed as well as 157 Matrimonial cases filed and 165 disposed which resulted in clearance rates of 100% for Adoption cases and 105.10% for Matrimonial cases.

Conclusion

The performance of the OECS Courts varied where some made strides and reduced case backlog while others accumulated backlog. The Courts are encouraged to put measures in place, whether it is through the utilization of business process reengineering which would lead to the revision of procedures and thereby result in more efficient case management, to achieve timelier completion of cases. The ECSC has conducted case management training in the jurisdictions through ECSC's JEI (Judicial Education Institute). The High Courts in particular, which recorded an overall decline in the clearance rate should address this situation to avoid further increasing case backlog. A first step to address this is to have an accurate count of Pending Cases by ensuring all completed cases are finalized in the software. The Court is currently undergoing various reforms to address the backlog in the High Courts with an initial focus on Criminal cases.



THOSE WHO SERVE



JUDICIAL OFFICERS

This section introduces the Chief Justice, Justices of Appeal and High Court judges serving across the ECSC Member States and Territories.

Acting Chief Justice



Her Ladyship, The Hon. Mde Margaret Price Findlay



The Hon. Justice Vicki-Ann Ellis



The Hon. Justice Trevor McDonald Ward



The Hon. Justice Eddy Ventose



The Hon. Justice Esco Henry



The Hon. Justice Gerard Farara, QC, KC [Ag.]

High Court Judges
Anguilla



The Hon. Justice
Ermin Moise

Antigua & Barbuda



The Hon. Justice
Nicola Petra Byer



The Hon. Justice
Ann-Marie Smith



The Hon. Justice
Jan Drysdale



The Hon. Justice
Rene Williams

Dominica



The Hon. Justice
Zainab Alami



The Hon. Justice
Davidson Kelvin Baptiste

Grenada



The Hon. Justice
Paula Gilford



The Hon. Justice
Raulston Glasgow



The Hon. Justice
Agnes Actie



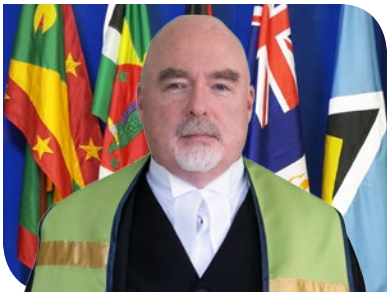
The Hon. Justice
Shawn Innocent

Montserrat



The Hon. Justice
Brian Cottle

St. Kitts and Nevis



The Hon. Justice
Iain Charles Morley



The Hon. Justice
Patrick Thompson Jr



The Hon. Justice
Tamara Gill

Saint Lucia



The Hon. Justice
Cadie St Rose-Albertini



The Hon. Justice
Vivian Georgis
Taylor-Alexander



The Hon. Justice
Kimberly Cenac-
Phulgence



The Hon. Justice
Rohan Phillip



The Hon. Justice
Alvin Pariagsingh



The Hon. Justice
Rechanne Browne

St. Vincent and the Grenadines



The Hon. Justice
Birnie Stephenson



The Hon. Justice
Rickie Burnett



The Hon. Justice
Gertel Thom

Territory of the Virgin Islands



The Hon. Justice
Angelica Teelucksingh



The Hon. Justice
Gerhard Wallbank [Ag.]



The Hon. Justice
Abbas Mithani

Territory of the Virgin Islands



The Hon. Justice
Akilah Anderson



The Hon. Justice
Theresa Hadad

Masters



Master
Carlos Michel



Master
Cybelle Cenac-Dantes



Master
Yuri Saunders



Master
Tamara Foster



ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT STAFF

This section outlines the personnel and departments responsible for the operational, logistical, and administrative functions that support the effective management of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court.

Court Administration



Mr. Gregory Girard
Court Administrator



Mr. Francis Letang
Deputy Court
Administrator

Office of the Chief Justice



Ms. Jodi-Ann
Masters Singh
Executive Legal Assistant
to the Chief Justice



Ms. Natacha James
Administrative Assistant
to the Chief Justice



Ms. Alana Simmons
Programme Manager
Judicial Education
Institute



Ms. Debra J. Maloney
Regional Mediation
Coordinator

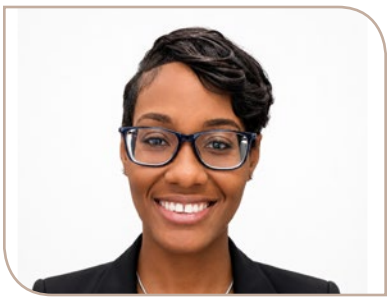
Accounts Department



Ms. Marcellina
St. Edward-Preville
Financial Controller



Mrs. Rita Bastien
Assistant Accountant



Ms. Cedricka James
Accounts Assistant



Ms. Priscilla Ambrose
Junior Accounts Clerk

Court of Appeal Registry



Mrs. Michelle
John-Theobalds
Chief Registrar



Mrs. Danielia Slyvestre
Deputy Chief Registrar



Mr. K-Wani Roberts
Judicial Research
Assistant

Court of Appeal Registry



Ms. Amanda De Freitas
Judicial Research
Assistant



Mrs.Stephine Narcisse-
Lionel
Judicial Research
Assistant



Mr. Al Joseph
Judicial Research
Assistant



Ms. Shania Maharaj
Judicial Research
Assistant



Ms Diane Ettiene
Judicial Research
Assistant



Ms. Sheron Baptiste
Senior Case Manager



Mr. Craig Gabriel
Case Manager



Mr. John Dwite Joseph
Case Manager



Mr. Baldwin Paul
Case Manager



Ms. Abigail Lansiquot
Case Manager



Ms. Chante Philippe
Case Manager



Ms. B'Knelli St. Cyr
Case Manager

Human Resource Department



Mr. Dylan Billy
Human Resource
Manager



Mrs. Natasha
Fitz - Christophe
Human Resource Officer



Ms. Lindel Joseph
Administrative
Assistant (HR)

Information Management



Mr. Dwaymian Brissette
Information Services
and Communications
Manager



Ms. Anselma Fadlin
Library & Information
Services Officer



Ms. Myrtene Cenac
Statistician



Mrs. Francisca Polius
Records &
Archives Officer

Office Management



Ms. Lenore St. Croix
Office Manager



Ms. Florentina Nelson
Administrative
Secretary



Mrs. Genevieve
Francis-Lewis
Secretary



Mrs. Zannia
Plummer-Gabriel
Secretary



Ms. Anna Joseph
Secretary



Mrs Aarah Frederick
Secretary



Mr. Guy Stava
Office Assistant



Ms. Stephanie Desir
Secretary



Benedicta
St. John-Dussiel
Receptionist

IT Department



Mr. Mark Ernest
Information Technology Manager



Mr. Anderson Henry
Systems Administrator



Mr. Augustus Marcellin
Network Administrator



Mrs. Cynthia Ramjeawan
Project Coordinator/ Application Support Officer



Mr. Demetrius Charles
Website Administrator



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