



St Lucia Civil Service Association

**DO YOUR BEST EXPECT THE BEST**

# PRESS RELEASE

The St. Lucia Civil Service Association (CSA) is increasingly concerned about the conditions of work in many Government Departments and Offices of Statutory Corporations. In recent times, there have been complaints from our members in various areas about air quality issues resulting from poor ventilation, inadequate maintenance of air condition systems and poor janitorial or cleaning services. The CSA is in possession of reports of studies conducted by the Caribbean Health Agency (CAFRA) and the Labour Department, which have substantiated the presence of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) or other contaminants which are potential health hazards in work places such as Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue, Land Registry, Ministry of Education and the new Finance Administrative Building.

The response from Government has been piecemeal and often in response to interventions by the CSA and at best can be considered as short term and reactionary. In some instances, the CSA has faced resistance from Senior Public Officials, who themselves are affected by the poor conditions, yet they choose instead to threaten workers who are seeking redress. Workers have manifested symptoms such as nose bleeds, respiratory ailments, skin rashes and other similar conditions with some having to be hospitalized or sent on sick leave by their doctors.

In addition, we have noted that the unsafe working conditions have extended beyond the mainstream Government Offices to other government facilities including Districts Courts, Senior Citizens Homes and rented office buildings. Broken furniture, missing windows, poor lighting and dysfunctional toilet facilities, are but a few of the hazardous conditions in which workers are forced to operate. Members of the public and clients also have to endure these unacceptable conditions or face inconveniences when services are interrupted.

The CSA wishes to remind Government and other employers, of the importance of occupational safety and health (OSH) and its obvious link to productivity in the workplace. Productivity is a function of good management practice, including providing conditions which are conducive to achieving the aims and objectives of any organization.

The CSA is also concerned about the recent trend of Government Ministers blaming public officers for the lack of progress on major public sector projects. Public officers are an easy and convenient target and it is grossly unfair and unfortunate when they are blamed for decisions which are taken at levels above their pay grades. Most public officers are hard working and honest and therefore should not be held responsible for the misdeeds and the actions of those with hidden agendas.

The CSA calls on Government to address these concerns and help to motivate and revitalize the public service for the benefit of our country.

**Claude A. Paul**  
**General Secretary**  
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