

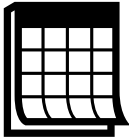
VOLUME 30
FEBRUARY 2025



MEMBERSHIP COUNT: 826

NEWSLETTER

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Georgetown
Chamber of Commerce & Industry



FEBRUARY IN
REVIEW



UPCOMING
EVENTS



NEW
MEMBERS



MEMBER OF
THE MONTH



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- » MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES MAKES PRESENTATION TO GCCCI

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members,

February marked the end of GCCI's fiscal year. As we approach the Annual General Meeting and the end of my term as President of the Chamber, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to all the members who have supported the GCCI's workplan over the last year and those companies and individuals who supported me in my role.

During the month of February, the Chamber continued its advocacy work--meeting with not just business support organisation but facilitating crucial engagements with ministers, government agencies and companies within the energy sector.

As we approach the Annual General Meeting, we prepare for the onboarding of a new Council and workplan. I encourage you all to continue to support the GCCI in its efforts to develop Guyana's business landscape and advance Guyana's economy.

**Warm regards,
Mr. Kester Hutson
President**

WELCOME TO THE GCCI

In February 2025, the Council of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry approved the applications of its newest cohort of members. We would like to take the opportunity to extend our warmest welcome to:

- HSS Customs, Brokerage and Shipping
- Dynotech Construction Chemicals Inc.
- Techniques Energy Guyana Inc.
- Zenith Services Inc.
- Sherwyn's Refridgeration and Air Condition Services
- Leader Engineering

EVENTS

GCCI collaborates with MODEC to host Vendor Forum



In keeping with the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (GCCI) objective of ensuring that local companies benefit from the oil and gas sector through information sharing and capacity building, a MODEC Vendor Forum was hosted on February 5 through a collaborative effort between the Chamber's Petroleum Committee and the company.

MODEC is a Japanese company that specialises in the construction and operation of floating solutions for the offshore energy industry. The company established its local presence a year ago, following the award of a contract for the construction of the 'Errea Wittu' Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) vessel that will produce oil in the Uaru field in the Stabroek Block. The event saw members of the GCCI receiving crucial information on the company's procurement process and opportunities from the MODEC team, including Country Manager, Mr. Rafael Fumis, and Supply Chain Manager, Mr. Pedro Nascimento.

President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson explained that the Chamber viewed the opportunity to engage MODEC as an important one, as there is keen interest in understanding the role of the company and how local businesses can benefit from the company's operations in Guyana. Meanwhile, Senior Vice President and Chairperson of the Chamber's Petroleum Committee, Mrs. Kathy Smith, stressed the importance of not just contract opportunities but also skills transfer for the benefit of Guyanese.

Attendees were provided with an overview of the company's supply chain procedures, including vendor registration, and some upcoming opportunities. They were also able to interact with the company's officials and ask questions.

GCCI hosts press conference on OTC 2025



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest) held a press briefing on February 14 at the GCCI Secretariat, and provided the media with an overview of the plans for its 2025 participation in the Offshore Technology Conference as well as the benefits that participants have received over the last several years.

OTC 2025 is scheduled to be held from May 5 to 8, in Houston, Texas, and President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson stated, “It’s our annual trade mission that Guyana has been going to and leading the way in a significant way.” He pointed out that outbound trade missions are not new to the GCCI and the private sector is the engine of growth for the country, and as such, these events are important. Meanwhile, Senior Vice President, Mrs. Kathy Smith highlighted efforts within the Chamber to foster increased opportunities for its membership. Mrs. Smith, who is the Chairperson of the GCCI’s Petroleum Committee, shared, “We focus on areas that help to support the energy sector but more than that what we have decided to do is see how we can take our members to organisations, to places, to countries where they can get an understanding of the energy sector.”

Executive Member and Councillor, Mr. Richard Rambarran spoke of the importance of this collaboration between government agencies and the GCCI to develop Guyana’s knowledge and capacity for the energy sector. “I believe this cooperation between the private sector, business support organisations, and the Government of Guyana continues to be an excellent representation of public-private partnership. It is a good representation of when collaboration happens, what benefits can accrue and redound to the domestic private sector forward using anchor events,” he said. Mr. Rambarran also announced that this far, 12 organisations have registered to participate, and non-member companies that register to participate in OTC 2025 before May 2025 will receive free membership subscription for one year.

Minister of Natural Resources makes presentation to GCCI



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is continuing its efforts to ensure that members benefit from the energy sector and are up-to-date on all developments in the industry. The Petroleum Committee, which is at the forefront of this effort on February 17 hosted Minister of Natural Resources, Hon. Vickram Bharrat who made a presentation to members on the pace of development in the oil and gas industry and provided insights into regulatory matters surrounding the sector.

This meeting was held in the Chamber's boardroom and Minister Bharrat stated that these engagements are important, particularly since they provide the platform to discuss how Guyanese are supporting the sector, planned developments, and how local enterprises can be part of the development in the oil and gas sector in Guyana. The minister updated members on operations in the various offshore blocks, including the Stabroek, Canje, Kaieteur, and Orinduik Blocks. He reminded attendees that the ONE GUYANA floating production, storage, and offloading (FPSO) vessel will arrive in Guyana by June and be operational in the last quarter of the year. "The average production right now is around 640,000 barrels per day, that is with three FPSOs—Unity, Destiny and Prosperity," he stated, later adding, "By 2028, we will have six FPSOs producing." He noted that there are currently five drill ships exploring the Stabroek Block, also sharing that as exploration moves further south of the Stabroek Block, more gas is being encountered.

Senior Vice President of the GCCI and Chairperson of the Petroleum Committee, Mrs. Kathy Smith in her remarks stated, "Since the discovery of oil, the GCCI has been resolute in its efforts to ensure that Guyanese benefit from this discovery. In fact, our advocacy has led to the establishment of the local content act where we see that Guyanese are being prioritised in terms of hiring, training, and in the form of being suppliers to the industry."

GCCI partners with GRCI to host workshop for members



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is continuing its collaborative efforts to ensure that members understand the regulatory framework and processes involved in conducting business in Guyana.

On February 18, the Chamber's Human Resource Management and Capacity Building Committee in partnership with the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) hosted a workshop that was geared towards ensuring businesses have a clear understanding of crucial processes in documentation and tax services.

The GRA's Communication Officer, Mr. Fabian Clowes; IT Officer, Ms. Elizabeth Bourne; Tax Specialist, Mr. Samdavid Arron; ESERVICES Officer, Mr. Simmeon Kissoon; ESERVICES Officer, Mr. Roland Trotman; Tax Specialist, and Mr. Saisnarine Ramnarine facilitated the session.

The workshop saw participants benefiting from valuable insights and demonstrations in areas including the PAYE submission process, the income tax returns procedures and the advantages of electronic filing, and the use of the recently launched PADNA app which facilitates easy submission and tracking of refunds.

Councillor and Chairperson of the GCCI's Human Resource Management and Capacity Building Committee, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George iterated the importance of this collaboration in developing the knowledge of members as it relates to taxation. "We are always looking for opportunities to bring training sessions to our members...With the new updates with regards to the PADNA App and the income tax rates, we've listened to our members and we took the initiative to reach out to the GRA for guidance and we had a very successful session," she stated.

GCCI attends launch of Mexico-Guyana Chamber of Commerce



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is a strong proponent of collaboration, partnership and investment. As such, the Chamber was thrilled to support the launch of the Mexico-Guyana Chamber of Commerce on February 18. President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson attended the event at the Guyana Marriott Hotel.

Head of the Guyana Office for Investment and Guyana's Chief Investment Officer, Dr. Peter Ramsaroop in his address to the gathering noted that there are now significant opportunities in Guyana for investors, and there have been a number of Mexican delegations that have visited Guyana. "We urge you to find local partnerships and work with the local partners," he told the Mexican businesses present.

Remarks were also delivered by Mexican Ambassador to Guyana, Mr. Mauricio Vizcaíno Crespo and President of the Mexico-Guyana Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Ricardo Magaña.

MEETINGS

GCCI meets with Antiguan Tourism officials



As Guyana continues to focus on diversifying its economic activities, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is amplifying its efforts to support the investment thrust in Guyana by exploring areas for investment.

With the vast potential of the tourism industry and Guyana's many attractions, officials of the GCCI on Friday, February 21 met with a team from the Antigua Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) and the Antigua Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association (ABHTA) and discussed potential collaboration among the three organisations.

Senior Vice President, Mrs. Kathy Smith, and Executive Member, Mr. Richard Rambarran met with the ABTA's Director of Tourism for the Caribbean and Latin America, Mrs. Charmaine Browne-Spencer, and Head of Operations for ABHTA, Ms. Anthea Watkins. The team's visit to Guyana was aimed at promoting the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Market Place that is scheduled for May 2025 in Antigua.

Discussions delved into benefits for Guyanese businesses in hospitality, travel, and trade; key tourism activities and collaboration activities; strengthening the business linkages between the two countries and connecting local tourism businesses to their counterparts in Antigua.

The discourse also saw the challenges to the local industry including the issue of Guyana's tourism sector not being cost competitive being discussed. Given the opportunities in bird-watching and the cricket carnival season, the two parties spoke of the potential to capitalise on the holiday periods. The creation of corporate packages for Chamber members was also considered during the meeting.

GCCI meets with SEBRAE



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) is committed to the development of local businesses, and with more than 70 percent of its membership comprising Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), the Chamber's support for this market has been recognised by many of its international counterparts. On February 27, a delegation from the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (SEBRAE) visited the Chamber during which discussions touched on the promotion of trade between Guyana and Brazil.

SEBRAE is a private non-profit organisation, that aims to promote the competitiveness and sustainable development of Micro and Small Businesses in Brazil through efforts such as raising their participation in internal and external markets, increasing SMEs and entrepreneurs' participation in networks and broadening entrepreneurship and cooperation culture.

Councillor and Chairperson of the Trade and Investment Committee, Mr. Devon Seeram, and Treasurer and Chairperson of the Agriculture Committee, Mr. Brian Edwards met with the Brazilian delegation in the GCCI's boardroom and discussed, among other areas, the importance of developing commercial relations. It was noted that despite the geographic proximity of the neighbouring states, exchanges have been limited. It was also pointed out that logistics is a significant challenge, with transportation complications and varying regulations between states; however, it was noted that efforts are being made to facilitate agreements that improve transportation.

The two parties are committed to addressing issues to improve trade and exploring continuous dialogue for the success of commercial interactions.

GCCI collaborating with UG to provide capacity-building for members and human resource database



The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) and the University of Guyana (UG) are collaborating to provide capacity-building opportunities for members and establish a human resource database of graduates of the university.

President of the GCCI, Mr. Kester Hutson; Councillor and Chairperson of the Human Resource Management and Capacity-Building Committee, Mrs. Melisa McRae-George; Executive Member and Councillor, Mr. Richard Rambarran; Councillor, Mr. Rayad Boyce, and Vice Chairperson of the Human Resource Management and Capacity-Building Committee, Ms. Holly Persaud on February 28 met with Dean of the School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, Dr. Leyland Lucas; Head of the Department of Marketing and Tourism, Ms. Coleen Patterson; Head of the Department of Accounting and Finance, Mr. Alfred Aaron, and Head of Department of Entrepreneurship and Supply Chain Management, Mr. Bruce Lovell to discuss areas for collaboration in this regard.

The Chamber signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University in 2021 to cooperate in the areas of education, training, and research. The MoU was also geared towards providing internships and training opportunities, facilitating research, and professional development for students.

The meeting saw discussions on the certificate training programmes to be made available for members of the Chamber and the framework for the database of graduates for recruitment by the private sector.

GCCI attends First Meeting of the Joint Commission on Renewed and Enhanced Cooperation between Guyana and Belize



Executive Member and Councillor, Mr. Richard Rambarran, who was present at the First Meeting of the Joint Commission on Renewed and Enhanced Cooperation between Guyana and Belize on February 10, voiced an interest in developing a relationship with Business Support Organisations in Belize.

The meeting, which was held at the Ramphal House Conference Room at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation saw the participation of a number of stakeholders, including Guyana's Ambassador to CARICOM and Director of the Multilateral and Global Affairs Department, His Excellency, George Talbot as well as High Commissioner of Belize to Guyana, Her Excellency, Gale Miller-Garnett. Other stakeholders from local and Belizean sectors that are interested in collaborating and initiating trade relations were also present. In July 2022, the Government of Guyana and the Government of Belize signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Renewed and Enhanced Cooperation between the two countries. The meeting facilitated an initial interaction between the two sides to discuss the proposed areas for cooperation.

At the meeting, Mr. Rambarran noted the importance of commencing discussions on areas for cooperation. "Perhaps we can start some structured dialogue around areas of cooperation, potential areas for synergy, that would be imperative for us to move forward," he stated. He also proposed that the possibility of a trade promotion event in Belize be considered, which would allow for local businesses to embark on a trade mission.

FEBRUARY 2025: MEMBER OF THE MONTH LODESTAR INC.



Lodestar Inc., is an Events Production and Marketing firm that serves several companies across various sectors. The company was established in May 2019, and it is a full-service, professional event management company which provides complete planning, consulting, and supervision for a range of corporate and private events. Lodestar also specialises in, and manages, communications and marketing functions for clients, including the drafting of press releases, the managing of media relations, and social media marketing, among other services.

The company was founded by Mrs. Kristia Ramlagan-Prescott, a Communications Professional who specialises in planning and executing corporate events mainly for the oil and gas sector. With over 10 years of experience in the industry, she has a passion for storytelling, and with the use of impactful messaging, Mrs. Ramlagan-Prescott brings brands to life and creates memorable experiences for her clientele.

Mrs. Ramlagan-Prescott has a penchant for detail, flexibility, and commitment to effectively multi-task in a fast-paced, ever-changing environment. She is keen on fostering strong relationships with clients, vendors, and other stakeholders to deliver quality and exceed expectations through her company.

STATEMENT



Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry

"Serving Guyana through Commerce and Industry since 1889"

President: Mr. Kester Hutson

February 10, 2025

STATEMENT *by*

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry *on*

Condemning Infringement of Guyana's Territorial Integrity

-START-

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) strongly condemns recent infringements on Guyana's territorial integrity by way of publicised images that represent the New River Triangle as part of neighbouring Suriname at the International Business Conference in Suriname, which was hosted by the Suriname-Guyana Chamber of Commerce and organised by Action Invest Caribbean Incorporated and Global Event Partners.

The Chamber is deeply concerned by the use of these images as well as the failure to object to the use of these images. Silence in the face of this threat to Guyana's sovereignty is viewed as an endorsement of same, which the Chamber views as inexcusable.

The GCCCI calls on fellow Business Support Organisations and other agencies that acted as supporting actors to the conference to reject these actions and refrain from supporting and justifying any activity that violates Guyana's national boundaries.

-END-

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STATEMENT



Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry

"Serving Guyana through Commerce and Industry since 1889"

President: Mr. Kester Hutson

February 18, 2025

STATEMENT *by*

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry *on*

Legislative efforts to improve business landscape in Guyana

-START-

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) commends the Government of Guyana on the bold and timely legislative initiatives taken to improve the business and economic landscape in Guyana—particularly the introduction of the Financial Institutions Act, the Security Interests in Moveable Property Act and Acquisition of Lands for Public Purposes (Amendment) Act. The GCCCI recognises these legislative initiatives as being crucial to driving development and economic growth.

The passage of the Financial Institutions Amendment Act comes at a critical point as with increasing investment interest in Guyana, there is a need for a well-regulated financial sector, particularly when viewed in conjunction with the increasing demand for access to capital. The Chamber, as a proponent of the development of businesses—particularly Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME), has also long advocated for increased access to finance for small-scale businesses. The Security Interests in Moveable Property Act, which now allows for moveable assets such as equipment, vehicles, inventory, crops, livestock and intellectual property to be used as collateral for accessing credit, was eagerly anticipated and welcomed. This legislation is anticipated to be a catalyst for the development of enterprises in Guyana and a driver of economic growth.

The Chamber has also noted with satisfaction the amendments to the Acquisition of Lands for Public Purposes Bill to allow for timely and adequate payments to landowners whose properties are acquired by the State for the development of public projects. This legislative measure to ensure that landowners are treated in an equitable and just manner in the process of executing projects for national development aligns with international best practices.

The GCCCI fully supports these initiatives that are geared towards the development of the business community and the advancement of Guyana's economy.

END

STATEMENT



Georgetown Chamber of Commerce & Industry

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President: Mr. Kester Hutson

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STATEMENT *by*

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-END-

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GCCI's Calendar of Events 2025



MAR
19

**135TH ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING**

MAY
5-8

**OFFSHORE
TECHNOLOGY
CONFERENCE**

JUN
18

**BUSINESS
BREAKFAST
SEMINAR**

JUL
7

**CARICOM DAY
BARBECUE**

JUL
18-27

**NATIONAL
SMALL
BUSINESS
WEEK**

SEP
24

**ENERGY LUNCHEON
& LAUNCH OF THE
BUSINESS GUYANA
MAGAZINE**

OCT
23

**NADENE GILBERT-
RAMBARRAN
CANCER
AWARENESS &
FUNDRAISING
MIXER**

NOV
18-19

**BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
FORUM**

DEC
11

**136TH ANNUAL
AWARDS
PRESENTATION
& GALA DINNER**

DATES ARE TENTATIVE & SUBJECT TO CHANGE