



Anniversary Message

Mr. Godfrey Statia - Commissioner-General

On January 27, 2000, twenty-one (21) years ago, and in keeping with the Revenue Act of 1996, the departments of Inland Revenue and Customs merged to form what came to be known as the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA). The rationality behind the said merger

being improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of tax administration by downsizing support functions, better information flow, increased collections, better service to taxpayers, build more management capacity while at the same time reducing corruption. The difficult task of integration of these two agencies was left to the first Commissioner General, Mr. Edgar Heyligar and upon his retirement to my predecessor, the late Mr. Khurshid Sattaur, both stalwarts in their own right, each of whom left their mark on this great organisation.

Increased Revenue Collection is not the only criteria by which the GRA should be judged. Rather, it is my firm opinion that our service to the taxpaying public and the efficiency in tax administration are just as important. The GRA must practice what it preaches – A good tax system should be fair, simple, adequate, transparent and easy to administer. Consistency and Equality of treatment for all taxpayers should be what governs our relationship with the taxpaying public.

Over the years, the Authority has not only been successful in progressively increasing tax collections but has improved its infrastructure and technical capacity, and has expanded its services to taxpayers by establishing and improving the operation of its Branches. Despite the constraints previously faced with our IT system (TRIPS), a major revamp of the Authority has seen the introduction of Trade Facilitation systems and the soon to be launched Revenue Management System.

As a nation that has risen to the status of major oil producing country, new challenges arose, challenges that require solutions in keeping with not only technological changes, but all international best practices. Building on the systems and policies implemented by my predecessors, I was able to lead our management team in successfully implementing the ASYCUDA World system which has been able to enhance the Customs procedures. With Guyana now being a major oil producer, the GRA has partnered with Data Torque, to design a Revenue Management System to achieve revenue optimization and enable the GRA to become an efficient and effective tax administration akin to that of the developed nations. Our Oil and Gas Unit, has proven its worth and with ongoing training of its staff, the GRA will ensure that the nation benefits from its oil revenues, whether in upstream, mid-stream or down-stream activities.

The year 2020 tested our strength and resolve. The emergence of COVID 19 resulted in an immediate need to revise the manner in which business transactions were conducted, the implementation of strict safety guidelines, and a reduction in the staff complement as a direct result of the use of a rotation system. Despite all the challenges and uncertainty, we were able to attain and surpass our revenue target for the year. Staff have shown that they were up for the challenge and the Guyana Revenue Authority has once again performed remarkably well. This achievement would not have been possible had it not been for the hard work, selflessness and dedication of the management and staff of the agency.

I know 2021 will bring additional challenges, both internal and external. However, let me encourage the entire management and staff to continue to be committed to our task which will no doubt also lead to greater economic development for our beloved Guyana.

As we celebrate the achievements thus far, appreciation is extended to the Management and Staff for their hard work and dedication, to the Governing Board for their guidance and to all Taxpayers for their patience and resilience. We pause to remember those long serving members of staff who made major contributions to the Authority, and not forget those who have been called to higher service. Our prayers are with their family, relatives and friends.