

Chief Justice's

Annual Report

On the Judiciary

2007-2008

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Foreword

It is with pleasure that I present the Annual Report on the Judiciary of Belize for the period 2006 – 2007.

The Report for this period recounts some of the difficulties and challenges the Judiciary encountered. Above all however, the Report is a snap-shot of the administration of justice in Belize, in particular, the numbers and types of cases the various courts dealt with over the period.

A number of persons made the Report possible, especially the Editorial Committee, to whom I express special appreciation.

Dr. Abdulai Conteh
Chief Justice

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Editorial Committee

**Dr. Abdulai Conteh
Chief Justice of Belize**

**Mr. Aldo Salazar
Registrar General**

**Ms. Margaret Gabb Mckenzie
Chief Magistrate**

**Ms. Margaret Nicholas
Director, Family Court**

**Ms. Lovinia Daniels
Assistant Registrar, Vital Statistics Unit**

**Mrs. Erollyn Grinage
Librarian, Supreme Court Library**

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**ADDRESS DELIVERED
AT THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE
COURT COMMENCING THE 2007
LEGAL YEAR
OF THE SUPREME COURT**

ON

MONDAY 14TH JANUARY, 2008

BY THE HON. CHIEF JUSTICE ABDULAI CONTEH

Introduction



Your Excellency, the Governor-General, Sir Colville Young, My Lords Gonzalez J., Lucas J., Lord J., Madam Justices Arana and Hafiz-Bertram, Mr. Attorney General, Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Retired Chief Justice Sir George Brown, Your Worship the Mayor of Belize City, Members of the Clergy, Mr. Solicitor General,

the Ombudsman, President of the Bar Association of Belize, Your Worships, learned Senior Counsel and Attorneys, Commissioners of the Supreme Court, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have just witnessed an important aspect of the administration of justice, namely, the administering of the oath of allegiance and office to two of our newly appointed judges of the Supreme Court. The act itself is not, and ought not to be, one



of mere formality or symbolism. It is constitutionally prescribed and for good reason: section 99 of the Constitution of Belize provides that a justice of the Supreme Court shall not enter upon the duties of his or her office without first taking and subscribing to the oath of allegiance and office. By subscribing to the oath of office of a judge, a judge solemnly pledges allegiance to uphold the Constitution and the law and to conscientiously, impartially and to the best of his or her ability discharge her duties as a judge and to do right to all manner of people without fear or favour, affection or ill-will.

Explicit in the judge's oath of office is the requirement of impartiality. On the bench therefore, a judge ought to lay aside all prejudices and partial affection and decide cases only on their merits.

It is therefore, in this spirit that I formally welcome on behalf of my colleagues and on my own personal account, Mr. Justice Herbert Lord and Madam Justice Minnet Hafiz-Bertram to the bench of the Supreme Court of Belize. I heartily congratulate them on their elevation to the rank of justices of the Supreme Court. I have every confidence they will live up to the expectations of the office of a judge and the public generally.

Mr. Justice Herbert Douglas Robert Lord is no stranger to the law. He was for many years, the virtual personification of the Magistracy in Belize in his capacity as Chief Magistrate, an office he held for almost a decade. His professional career as a magistrate spans all the Districts of Belize, starting in 1977, when he first served as a magistrate in the Toledo District, then in 1978, as a magistrate in Stann Creek District. Over the years, he went on to serve in all the other Districts. From 1993 to 1997 Mr. Justice Lord served as the Senior Magistrate of Belize, and was elevated to Chief Magistrate in 1997, a position he held until his present translation to the office of Justice of the Supreme Court of Belize.

Mr. Justice Lord is a proud product of the Wesleyan educational system, having attended Wesley Primary School, Wesley College and Wesley College Sixth Form.

He holds the LLB Degree from the University of the West Indies Law Faculty, and the professional Certificate of Legal Education (CLE) from the Norman Manley Law School in Jamaica.

Mr. Justice Lord's professional career has been in public administration in which he rose up to the rank of Acting Permanent Secretary. He was awarded the Merit Award of the Public Service of Belize in 1999, and three years later in 2002 he was awarded the accolade of an Officer of the British Empire (OBE), Civil Division. A crowning glory in his cap, no doubt, was the award to him just a couple of weeks ago, in Her Majesty's New Year's Honours List, of the insignia of Commander of the British Empire (CBE) Civil Division.

May I take this opportunity again, on behalf of my colleagues and on my own behalf to proffer congratulations to Mr. Justice Lord on this signal honour! Madam Justice Minnet Hafiz-Bertram has had a close association with the law. She is a Belizean of Guyanese descent and a product of the Zeeburg High School of Guyana, and holds the LLB Degree of the University of Guyana and the professional Certificate of Legal Education (CLE), of the Hugh Wooding Law School in Trinidad. She joined the Attorney General's Ministry as a Crown Counsel in 1998 and is the editor of volumes 2 and 4 of the **Belize Law Reports** for the years 2000 and 2002 respectively. She is also the editor of volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the **Belize Law Review**. She served in the Attorney General's Ministry until March 2005 when she moved to the office of Registrar General of Belize which position she held until her recent translation to the office of a Justice of the Supreme Court.

The office of Registrar General is a vital cog in the wheel of the administration of justice; it also provides the holder a valuable perch from which to observe and influence, in the round, the minutiae of the administration of justice.

Madam Justice Hafiz-Bertram assumed the Registrar's office at a critical time, just on the eve of the promulgation of the new **Supreme Court (Civil Procedure)**

Rules. From her vantage position as Registrar, she was able to render commendable yeoman services in the transition from the old rules to the new rules. Her patient and pain-staking approach, especially at case management conferences, was vital in assuaging the trepidation, frustration and even asperity of some attorneys who, no doubt, must have been inaudibly uttering imprecations at the new rules. It may still be early days yet, but it is now virtually unarguable that the new rules have proved a vast improvement in the conduct and progress of civil litigation in the Supreme Court.

I therefore again, congratulate Mr. Justice Lord and Madam Justice Hafiz-Bertram on their elevation to the Bench, confident in the knowledge that in due course, they will prove themselves worthy appointees.

May I take this opportunity to thank you Mr. Attorney General and through you the Executive, especially the Prime Minister for making these appointments possible. I would also like to thank the Senate for the swift confirmation of the nominations; the Hon. Leader of the Opposition for his concurrence during the consultation phase, and the Judicial and Legal Services Commission for putting forward the nominations. Finally, I would like also, if I may, to express grateful thanks to His Excellency, the Governor General, Sir Colville Young, for approving the commissions of office of the new judges.

The appointment of the two new judges should, it is hoped, put an end to the seemingly perennial shortage of judges that has bedeviled the administration of justice in Belize for quite some time. This has, in the past, been a constant refrain of mine, as it put an intolerable burden on the available judicial manpower to deal with the ever-increasing lists of both criminal and civil cases.

Refurbishing of the General Registry and Relocation of the Magistrates' and Family Courts

I am happy to announce that in the course of last year, both the Magistrates' Courts for Belize City and the Family Courts were relocated in refurbished accommodation in this building in quarters that were formerly home to the Treasury and Accountant General's Department. These Courts were then housed in rented premises. They completed their move to their present location in September of last year and the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister graciously declared the building formally open for business for the Magistrates and Family Courts.

I want therefore to take this opportunity to express the appreciation and thanks of the Judiciary, including the Magistrates' Courts and the Family Court, through you Mr. Attorney, to the Government for the financial support without which the exercise would not have been possible.

Thanks and appreciation are also, I believe, in order for the material and financial support that made possible the refurbishing of the Registry and some of the judges' chambers and courts in the building across the street. This is an overdue exercise, but better late than never. The refurbishing, no doubt, will provide a more congenial and salubrious environment for both the Registry staff and the judges who work in that building.

However, much as the refurbishing of the Registry and new accommodation for the Magistrates' and Family Courts are appreciated, it is now evident that the space is just not enough and this will give rise to a new set of problems. Any wish list for the administration of justice in Belize must now include a custom-built edifice devoted to the law Courts.

In the past, I have always on occasion such as the present, bemoaned the meager resources allocated to the Judiciary. I will advisedly refrain from doing so on this occasion. But not because the Judiciary has been given the horn of

cornucopia. Far from it. But rather because, in the course of last year, even with the belt-tightening enjoined on all of us in the public sector, tangible steps were taken to address the constraint of resources confronting the Judiciary.

I can only therefore, express the collective appreciation of the Judiciary, and urge at the same time that the need for sufficient financial resources for the Judiciary should always be paramount.

This is so, because it is unarguable that a well-resourced, satisfied, competent and able Judiciary is vital to the political stability and economic progress and development of Belize, as it is for any country.

New Registrar General

With the elevation of Madam Justice Hafiz-Bertram to the Bench, I am happy to formally announce that the Judicial and Legal Services Commission approved towards the close of last year the appointment of Mr. Aldo Josué Salazar as the new Registrar General. Up until his appointment Mr. Salazar was a practicing attorney in Youngs Law Firm, and before that was an associate attorney in the law firm of Glenn D. Godfrey and Co. and earlier, between September 2001 to June 2003, he was an attorney in the law firm of Shoman & Chebat.

Mr. Salazar therefore brings to the office of Registrar General practical litigation experience which should redound to the benefit of that office. I therefore take this opportunity to welcome on board Mr. Salazar as the new Registrar General. I am confident that he will prove to be an able and worthy Registrar.

Last year also saw the appointment of Ms. Elizabeth Dorothy Humes as the new Assistant Registrar following the retirement of Mr. Raymond Usher as Assistant Registrar. Ms. Humes is no stranger to the Registry having worked there in various capacities over the last fifteen years. Mr. Usher finally retired after 30 years service

in the Registry. Mr. Usher during his time in the Registry was ubiquitous and always helpful. We therefore wish him well in retirement.

During the course of last year Ms. Marie Coye was appointed Legal Assistant, a position previously held by Miss Humes.

After twenty years of service as the Supreme Court Librarian, Mrs. Sylvia Hulse finally retired last year and she was succeeded on 28th September 2006 by Mrs. Erolyn Grinage as the new Supreme Court Librarian. I want to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Hulse for her many years of service and to wish her well in her retirement.

New Chief Magistrate

Following the elevation of Mr. Lord to the Supreme Court, the Judicial and Legal Services Commission has approved the appointment of Mrs. Margaret Gabb-McKenzie as the new Chief Magistrate. Mrs. Gabb-McKenzie is a professional lawyer and holds the LLB Degree from the U.W.I. and the CLE from the Norman Manley Law School in Jamaica. She was first appointed magistrate in 1994 and has served as a magistrate since then. I am therefore confident that with her vast experience on the bench she will competently discharge the duties of her high office.

Conferences and visits

In April last year, under the sponsorship of UNICEF, Ms. Margaret Nicholas, the Director of the Family Court and I paid two days working visit to the Family Court of Trinidad and Tobago in Port of Spain. I want to take this opportunity to formally thank UNICEF, its country director, Ms. Flowers and Mr. Roy Bowen, its

country coordinator as we found the visit informative and inspiring. The Family Court in Trinidad & Tobago we found acts as a one-stop shop for all legal matters relating to the family and problems and issues associated with it. The Family Court format in Trinidad & Tobago is a seamless one that has both a Magistrate Court and a High Court Division that provides easy access, quick and responsive resolution to family problems and issues. This is a model that could with profit be replicated here in Belize.

On 20th January 2006, the 7th Annual Bench and Bar Summit was held at the Radisson Hotel here in Belize City. The theme for the Summit was Sustainable Development: Challenges for the Environment and the Law. It was by all accounts, a successful meeting and it attracted high level participation both from within Belize and from abroad.

From 8th – 16th September, 2006 Mr. Justice Samuel Awich and I attended the Triennial Conference of the Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association (CMJA) in Toronto, Canada.

Also, from 6th – 8th October 2006, as a part of the confidence building exercise between Belize and our neighbour, Guatemala, a sizeable contingent representing the administration of justice was invited to the LX Project Judiciary Workshop in Flores, Peten in Guatemala. The object of the exercise was to exchange information and views on the legal systems and institutions of the two countries. Belize was represented by Gonzalez J., Awich J., Lucas, J. and Arana J.; Mrs. Dorothy Flowers, the Senior Magistrate, Magistrates Sharon Fraser, Margaret Gabb-McKenzie; Alberta Perez, Edd Usher and Ms. Margaret Nicholas, the Director of the family Court and Ms. Merlene Moody of the Director of Public Prosecutions' Office.

At my request, Awich J. represented me from 7th to the 12th December 2006, at the 7th International Conference of Chief Justices of the World organized by the Montessori International School in Lucknow, India.

Donations to the Supreme Court Library

During the course of last year the Library of the University of Belize (UB) made a handsome donation of several volumes of legal textbooks to the Supreme Court Library.

Also, His Excellency Robert J. Dieter, the American Ambassador to Belize, donated law books on Criminal Law and procedure and International Law to the Supreme Court Library.

In September 2006 while attending the Triennial Conference of the CMJA in Toronto, Canada, I received the sum of Canadian \$300.00 towards the purchase of a scanner for use in judicial education in Belize from Judge Sandra Oxner of the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute (CJEI). The money was used to purchase a printer with scanning capability and this is already in use.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all these benefactors for their contributions towards judicial education in Belize and the administration of justice.

In the course of last year, in my capacity as the representative of the Heads of Judiciaries of the CARICOM member states, I attended several meetings in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, of the Trust Fund of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). The Trust Fund, as you may know, is the independent body set up by CARICOM to ensure the availability of resources for the CCJ, concomitant with its independence and integrity as a court.

Some Judicial Statistics

Again, like last year on this same occasion, I shall spare you the tedium of recounting the facts and figures that reflect the annual work of the courts. These will now be found in the **Annual Report on the Judiciary** which is now published every year. But I can safely say that two trends are readily discernible from the numbers. One of them is decidedly disturbing and it speaks to the increasing spate of criminal offences; and some of these are serious crimes of violence, including murder, harm and wounding and sexual offences: 34 cases of murder were dealt with by the courts, 60 cases of rape and carnal knowledge and 21 cases of attempted murder. The year 2006 was on the whole, a very busy year for criminals! This must be disturbing for us as a society.

The other trend is the increasingly litigious nature of Belizean society. This, of course, keeps the courts busy, but it betokens as well the fact that Belizeans are every day becoming more aware of and assertive of their rights and are having increasing recourse to the courts of law. Not counting the spill over from previous years, for last year alone a total of 722 claims were filed in the Supreme Court. I am however, happy to report that with the new Supreme Court Rules now fully operational, more and more cases are being disposed of quicker than was hitherto possible.

The New DPP and Deputy DPP

I have mentioned that the criminals were very busy last year. Indeed, the rate of homicide increased and sexual offences against minors were also on the increase as was the intolerable incidence of domestic violence. Last year on this occasion, I spoke about the **Consultation Paper on Criminal Justice Reform** that was circulated by the Hon. Attorney General. It is now evident and pressing that we must all combine to put the criminals out of business. This can only be achieved

through concerted and sustained efforts among all the stakeholders. These include, of course, the general public, the police, the DPP's Office and the Courts. In this exercise, it is important that no mixed or wrong signals are sent out to the criminal elements. This I venture to urge requires sustained coordination and cooperation between the DPP's office and the rank and file of the Police. It is therefore disheartening to hear of talk of disharmony between these two very important stakeholders in law enforcement.

I can only express the hope that these two vital institutions will work harmoniously to put the criminals on the run: they owe this to the rest of Belizean society.

May I, therefore, take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Lutchman Sooknandan the new DPP and Ms. Cheryl-Lyn Branker-Taitt his new Deputy DPP. Both Mr. Sooknandan and Ms. Branker-Taitt are no strangers to the office of the DPP. It was their old haunt. In the case of Mr. Sooknandan, he once held the office of acting DPP; and Ms. Branker-Taitt cut her legal teeth in that office. On behalf of the Judiciary, I wish both of them all the very best which I hope will be to the discomfiture and despair of the criminals!

I regret to say however that the sessions I called for last year on the Attorney General's **Consultation Paper** have yet to materialize. It is hoped that these will take place soon in order to achieve a more realistic and workable consensus on the paper.

Victim Impact Statement

Important as it is to put the criminals out of business, it must be realized that whenever a crime is committed, an individual or persons are almost always the victim. But in the criminal justice system, this fact is often lost sight of as the victim of the crime is often reduced to the spectator role of only a witness. The impact or effect of the crime on her is hardly ever taken into account either by the

prosecution or the court in sentencing. Even where the offender has been convicted, his victim goes home with some listlessness aching for closure, with the additional burden of having to live with the effects of the crime on her.

After consultation with the Attorney General, the DPP and the Bar Association, the judges and magistrates, it is proposed that during the course of this year, I will issue a **Practice Direction** that will allow for a more formal and structured approach to obtaining a **Victim Impact Statement**, stating the effects of the crime on the person or persons who were victimized as a result of it.

This, it is hoped, will provide some form of restorative justice that will enable the victim or victims of the crime to tell the court how they have been affected by the offence. Through this, it is hoped to bring some measure of closure to the trauma caused by the crime to the victim by appropriate orders and sentencing by the Court.

A Draft of the **Practice Direction** has been circulated last year. It is hoped to be finalized soon for promulgation.

Judicial Education

The law is an ever-evolving field both as a discipline of study and as a practical profession. It is therefore necessary that both practitioners, that is, attorneys and judges, including magistrates who preside in courts be brought up to date with this ever-expanding field. Through judicial education, judges and magistrates are kept abreast with new developments and afforded an opportunity to acquire new and necessary skills to enable them to discharge their duties more efficiently. There is at the moment no formal judicial education institute in Belize. It is hoped however that with assistance from the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute in Canada to set up one here in Belize for **in situ** training for new judges and

magistrates, including serving judges. The value of continuing judicial education, I dare say, can no longer today be questioned.

I hope resources will allow us to send two of our judges, including one who has recently been appointed to profit from a course of training offered by the CJEI later this year in Ottawa, Canada.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Ms. Margaret Nicholas, the Director of the Family Court for her initiative and leadership in keeping herself and her colleagues of that court and their supporting staff in professional trim through retreats, workshops and seminars. The latest one was held last December in Burrel Boom Village at which Gonzalez J. and I participated as facilitators.

Conclusion and Appreciation

We live in challenging times both as individuals and as a country. These challenges confront, without doubt, the Judiciary as well. I would however like to assure you that as an institution the Judiciary, including the Magistracy, is on the whole composed of men and women of integrity and fully committed to the overriding task of dispensing justice independently and fearlessly and without favour in consonance with the judicial oath I mentioned at the start of this address. This is the pledge and commitment of the Judiciary of Belize: In short, our mission statement.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity, if I may, to advise that even with the latitude of the right to freedom of expression, on commenting on the administration of justice, we do so in reasonable, responsible and measured language, always mindful of the serious damage that can be caused to the administration of justice itself by hasty, misleading and uninformed statements. I urge therefore that at all costs, nothing should be done by anyone, however mighty or lowly-placed, to impair, by words or conduct, confidence in the administration of justice: we are all under the law. Therefore undermining the due and proper

administration of justice in any way only imperils the welfare, safety and stability of Belize.

I cannot conclude this address without some words of appreciation to all those persons who, in sundry ways, contributed in facilitating the due and proper administration of justice over the last twelve months: to all of you, I express on behalf of the Judiciary, our collective thanks for your diverse contributions.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to say a special “thank you” to members of the clergy who, as in the previous years, organized and facilitated an inter-denominational service of worship to start off the new Legal Year. We are grateful for your prayers and the invocation of Divine guidance as we start the New Year.

I would also like to thank all my colleagues on the Bench, including the justices of the Court of Appeal.

I similarly express thanks and appreciation to all the magistrates, the Director of the Family Court and their supporting staff.

Also, to the Commissioners of the Supreme Court and Justices of the Peace, who render valuable services in the administration of justice, I say thank you.

To the Commissioner of Police and his officers, particularly those detailed for service in the courts and for those who formed the splendid parade I had the honour to inspect earlier, I say a big thank you!

To you Mr. President of the Belize Bar Association and your Executive and colleague attorneys, I say on behalf of the Bench, thank you for courtesies and cooperation you extended to us during the course of the last year.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Glennis Moody Tillett and the janitorial staff who over the years try to keep the courts, our chambers and offices clean. Our thanks and appreciation go as well to the staff of Anchor Security Company for their watchful eye on the Courts.

The staff of the Registry continues to toil tirelessly in the cause of the administration of justice, even in the midst of the dislocation caused by the refurbishing exercise: to each and every one of you I say "thank you".

Again, at the risk of sounding self-serving, I proffer my warm thanks to Ms. Julie Staine, my secretary. She is a pillar of support with an indomitable spirit.

Finally, Mr. Attorney, may I thank you, and through you the Administration, for the indispensable support that was rendered to the Judiciary over the course of last year.

If I may be permitted to end on a personal note, I would like to say that last year was a particularly trying one for me when I suffered a serious upset in my health. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone, who, in one form or the other, expressed concern and support. Your prayers and well wishes helped to nurse me back to health. I am truly grateful.

Mr. Attorney, you may now move the motion for the adjournment.

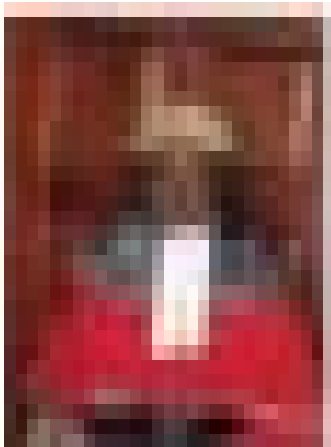
Chief Justice's Annual Report On the Judiciary
JUDGES OF THE SUPREME COURT



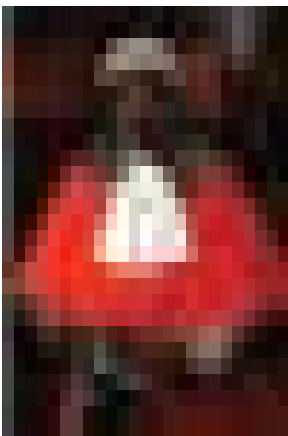
Hon. Justice Troadio Gonzales



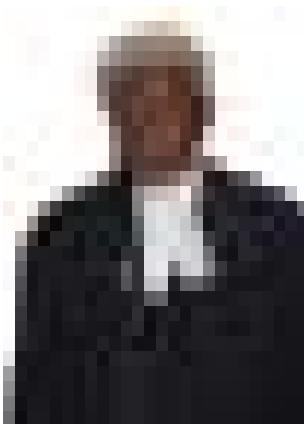
Hon. Madam Justice Minnet Hafiz



Hon. Madam Justice Michelle Arana



Hon. Justice Samuel Awich



**Hon. Chief Justice Dr.
Abdulai O. Conteh**



Hon. Justice Herbert Lord



Hon. Sir John Muria



Hon. Justice Adolph Lucas

COMMISSIONERS OF THE SUPREME COURT

Section 15 of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Chapter 91 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Ed. 2000, provides for the appointment of "fit and proper Persons" as commissioners of the Supreme Court, by instruments under seal of the Court.

Commissioners are authorized to take affidavits and declarations or, by special order of the Court or a Judge, to take the examination of witnesses or receive production of documents.

Commissioners

Name	Date of Appointment	Residence
BULLER, Kelsie Henry - J.P.	10.8.1964	Stann creek
GEGG, Edgar Gilbert Napier - J.P.	2.4.1969	Belize
LIZAMA, J. Alfonso - J.P.	7.1.197	Corozal
RAMIREZ, Ramon Edmundo	7.1.1971	Corozal
ESPADAS, Adolfo	23.1.1971	Orange Walk
WRIGHT, Leopold Gregory	20.7.1971	Cayo
USHER, Victor Edward	6.3.1974	Belize
STANSMORE, Alfred L.	30.8.1974	Corozal
BRADDICK, Luis R.	6.1.1978	Punta Gorda
AYUSO, Angel L.	16.1.1978	Corozal
ESPAT, Luis A.	18.5.1979	Belmopan
USHER, Gerald Charles	7.6.1979	Belmopan
AKE, Gabriel Modesto	21.12.1979	Belize
PRICE, Ester Maria	2 1.12.1979	Belize
MUSA, Edward Nabil	22.12.1979	Belize
BOWMAN, Alice (Mrs.)	28.12.1979.	Dangriga
MENZIES, Karl Hugh Joseph	28.12.1979	Belize
PRINCE, Maria Callola Pinto	28.12.1979	Belize
QUAN, Norman	28.12.1979	Belize
MOODY, Hallett Jr.	21.1.1986	Belize
MEIGHAN, Dorine	21.1.1986	Belize
CHAVANNES, Charles Gustave	21.1.1986	Belize
RIVEROLL, Othon	21.1.1986	Corozal
BURGOS, Narciso	21.1.1986	Orange Walk
SMITH, Lloyd	21.1.1986	Orange Walk

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HORNBY, Henry	21.1.1986	Orange Walk
ARAGON, Ella Wilcox (Mrs.)	2 1.1.1986	Cayo
JENKINS, Denzil	21.1.1986	Stann Creek
OGALDEZ, Alonzo Bernard	21.1.1986	Dangriga
MAHUNG, Paul	21.1.1986	Punta Gorda
ZUNIGA, Edmund	21.1.1986	Punta Gorda
NUNEZ, Wilfredo	21.1.1986	San Pedro
PACHECO, Herculano	2 1.1.1986	Benque Viejo
BOITON, George Paul	21.1.1986	Cayo
MUNNINGS, Kenneth	13.11.1989	Belize
CLARKE, Orton	13.11.1989	Belize
QUINTO, William	13.11.1989	Belize
EWING, Kenneth	13.11.1989	Belize
HERNANDEZ, Clinton	13.11.1989	Dangriga
SEGURA, Carolina	13.11.1989	Benque Viejo
LESLIE, Martha Marina	10.1.1991	San Pedro
GUERRERO, Abelardo E.	10.1.1991	San Pedro
ZABANEH, Mary Elizabeth	18.4.199 1	Independence
WADE, Aubrey A.	18.4.1991	Placencia
HOTCHANDANI, Bhogwan	25.11.1991	Belize
PITTS, Edward	25.11.1991	Belize
CAYETANO, Phyllis	25.11.1991	Dangriga
TILLET, Herman	25.11.1991	San Ignacio
HARRISON, Alicia	25.11.1991	San Ignacio
CASTILLO, Justo	25.11.1991	Belmopan
GARBUTT, Raymond	25.11.1991	Roaring Creek
TORRES, Uvaldemir	25.11.1991	Orange Walk
AGUILAR, Wilfredo Sr.	25.11.1991	Corozal
GRANIEL, Baldemar	25.11.1991	San Pedro
BADILLO, Gerald Sr.	16.3.1994	Caye Caulker
CAMPBELL, Sydney	16.3.1994	Hattieville
COLEMAN, Rita	16.3.1994	Hattieville
GREENWOOD, Thomas	16.3.1994	Belize
HULSE, Robert	16.3.1994	Belize
McKENZIE, Arthur	16.3.1994	Belize
MEYERS, Raymond Anthony	16.3.1994	Burrel Boom
SOSA, John	16.3.1994	Belize
SMITH, Beatrice Kingston	16.3.1994	Crooked Tree
THOMPSON, Hector Douglas	16.3.1994	Belize
VERNON, Telford	16.3.1994	Burrel Boom
YOUNG, Shirley A.	16.3.1994	Caye Caulker
GARBUTT, Chorley Ann	28.11.1994	Belize
ADOLPHUS, Bernard Alexander	16.3.1995	Hattieville

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YOUNG, Fred	1 6.3.1995	Hattieville
ANDERSON, Rudolph	6.2.1996	Belize
TILLET, William	6.2.1996	Belize
GALVEZ, Florence	6.2.1996	Punta Gorda
NUNEZ, John	6.2. 1996	Punta Gorda
CANSINO, Elia	6.2.1996	Orange Walk
ELLIS, Rudolph	6.2.1996	Orange Walk
AYUSO, Mateo	6.2.1996	Corozal
ZETINA, Jaime	6.2. 1996	San Ignacio
FLOWERS, Harold	6.2.1996	Belize
SHI, Wen-Chen (Rick Shi)	4.6. 1996	Belize
HOARE, Fulgencio Apolonio	3.1.1997	San Pedro
ALAMILLA, Wilfredo Luis Sr.	3.1.1997	San Pedro
COURTNAY, Delhart Luthrel Sr.	3.1.1997	Belize
CHRISTLE, Mark Anthony	3.1.1997	Belize
LENAREZ, Sonia Louise	3.1.1997	Belize
BERNARD, Patrick Alexander	17.9.1997	Belmopan
STAINÉ, Julie Therese	19.12.1997	Belize
GILL, Beatrice Clarabell	19.12.1997	Belize
GRINAGE, Audrey	19.12.1997	Belize
KNIGHT, Hector Benjamin	19. 12.1997	Belize
NUNEZ, Margaret Rose	19.12.1997	Belize
LASHLEY, Raymond Granville	22.12.1997	Belize
USHER, Minnie Seay	29.12.1997	Gales Point Manatee
BOL, Benigno	3 0.12.1997	Belize
GIRON, John	3 1.12. 1997	Maskall Village
BRICEÑO, Elijio Eloy "Joe"	23. 12.1999	Orange Walk
ERALES, Jose Eduardo - J.P. (S)	23.12.1999	Belize
SIKAFFY, Beulah Agnes (Mrs.)	23. 12.1999	Belize
XIAO, Yibin "Bennicio"	23.12.1999	Belize
KUAN, Shaoyun "Wendy" (Mrs.)	23.12.1999	Belize
CASTILLO, Kevin Andrew	23. 12.1999	Belize
DIAZ, Santos -O.B.E., J.P.	23.12.1999	Belize
HAYLOCK, Kent Albert -M.B.E.	23.12.1999	Belize
JOSEPH Fitzgerald Alexander	23. 12. 1999	Belize
ARNOLD, Janet Pitts (Mrs.)	23.12.1999	Belize
BHOJWANI, Vinod	23.12. 1999	Belize
BROWN, Walter Linford J.P.	23.12.1999	Belize
USHER, Francis Henry - J.P.	23.12.1999	Belize
HYDE, Charles Bartlett - C.B.E., J.P.	23.12.1999	Belize
GODFREY, Joy Vernon (Mrs.)	23. 12.1999	Belize
HOTCHANDANI, Arun Sunder - J.P.	23. 12.1999	Belize
ESCOBAR, Ramon Eustaquio	23.12.1999	Corozal

Chief Justice's Annual Report On the Judiciary

CHAVEZ, Rafael Primitivo - J.P.	23.12.1999	Corozal
MARIN. Olga Daisy (Mrs.) - J.P.	23.12.1999	Corozal
EK, Eugenio - J.P.	23.12.1999	Corozal
ALPUCHE. Israel Jacinto - J.P.	23.12.1999	Corozal
LOPEZ, Joseito - J.P.	23.12. 1999	Corozal
ZUNIGA, Sherman Eufrescio	23.12.1999	Belmopan
KEN, Jesus - J.P. (S)	23.12.1999	Belmopan
DEL VALLE. Frances Emolyn (Mrs.)	23.12.1999	Belmopan
PUNJABI, Jagdish kumar	23.12.1999	Corozal
SHARP. Leslie Woodman - J.P.	23.12.1999	Orange Walk
ESPEJO, Agripina Ann (Mrs.) -M.B.E., J.P.	23.12.1999	Orange Walk
PUNJABI, Vinod Kumar - J.P.	23.12.1999	Orange Walk
JOHNSON, John Arthur	23.12.1999	Punta Gorda
FLORES, Augustine - J.P.	23.12.1999	Dangriga
FRANCISCO, Fredrick	23.12.1999	Dangriga
RAMOS. Gadsby Sr.	15.2.2001	Belmopan
RAMCLAM, Howard - J.P.	15.2.2001	Belize
WOODS, Charles Maurice - J.P.	15.2.2001	Belize
GRIFFITH, Anthony Albert	15.2.2001	Belize
SHOMAN, Yasin J. - J.P.	15.2.2001	Belize
GRIFFITH, Roy A.	15.2.2001	Corozal
HUMES, Elizabeth Dorothy (Ms.)	15.2.2001	Belize
PALACIO, Irene Agnes (Ms.)	15.2.2001	Belize
PANDY. Myrna Elizabeth (Ms.)	15.2.2001	Belize
SMILING, Winston A.K. - J.P.	15.2.2001	Belize
HULSE. Sylvia (Mrs.) - J.P.	15.2.2001	Belize
MAGANA, Othon - J.P. (S)	16.1.2003	Orange Walk
LENNAN. Attolene Crawford (Mrs.)	16.1.2003	Belize
LEE, Archie – J.P.) (5)	16.1.2003	Belize
JENKINS, David Anthony	16.1.2003	Belmopan
GILLET, Gweneth (Mrs.)	16.1.2003	Belize
GABB. Kent	16.1.2003	Belize
DIAZ, Ricardo	16.1.2003	Belize
CASTILLO, Ricardo - J.P.	16.1.2003	Corozal
CARDONA, Jose Amir	16.1.2003	Belmopan
BUXANI, Ramesh Dialdas	16.1.2003	Belize
ACOSTA, Allan Anthony	16.1.2003	Belize
BUDHRANI, Tara Rewa	16.1.2003	Belize
VERDE, Jorge - J.P.	16.1.2003	Orange Walk
REYES, Ramon Sr.	16.1.2003	Caye Caulker
RATH, Therese (Mrs.)	16.1.2003	Dangriga
QUIROS, Dorene (Mrs.)	16.1.2003	Belize
PEYREFITTE, Lisa (Ms.)	16.1.2003	Belize

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PEÑA, Arnold Antonio	16.1.2003	Belize
MEENAVALLI, Manga Raju	16.1.2003	Cayo
MATHEWS, Baxter Fitzgerald	16.1 .2003	Belize
JOHNSON, Netty (Ms.)	16.1 .2003	Belize
VASQUEZ, Sandra (Mrs.)	16.1 .2003	Belize
NICHOLAS, Lawrence J.	2.5.2003	Belmopan
SKEEN, Marlon Andrew	12.1.2006	Belize City
MADRID, Adrian 'Danny'	12.1.2006	Belize City
ESPAT, Luke	12.1.2006	Belize City
IRELAND, Sandra Marie	12.1.2006	Belmopan
Gabb, Antonio R	12.1.2006	Belize City
Jose Alezemiro Paz, Jr.	6.4.2006	San Pedro
Mr. Bruce Austin Gibson	6.4.2006	Belize City
Mr. Fred C. Smith	6.4.2006	Belize City
Mr. Natividad Jesús Obando	6.4.2006	Stann Creek
Mr. Robert Llewellyn Palacio, J.P. (S)	4.08.2006	Belize City
Mr. Jose Carmen Zetina, J.P. (S)	4.08.2006	Belize City
Mr. Raymond Alexander Usher	4.08.2006	Belize City
Mrs. Ann Priscilla Wiltshire, J.P.	4.08.2006	Belize City
Mr. Anil Sunder Hotchandani, J.P.	8.09.2006	Belize City
Mr. Jian Lin, He, J.P.	02.01.07	Belize City

THE COURT OF APPEAL

The Court of Appeal was established under Section 94 of the Constitution of Belize, Chapter 4 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition, 2000 and exercises an appellate jurisdiction with power to hear and determine appeals in both civil and criminal matters.

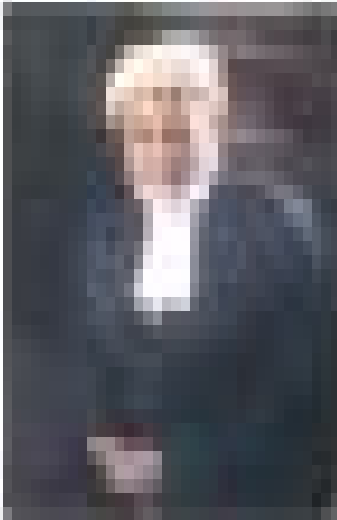
The Court held its first sitting in Belize on March 25th 1969 and now sits three times a year in March, June and October. The duration of each session depends on the number of matters scheduled for hearing in a particular session. Presently, each session lasts 3 weeks with the dedication of the first 2 weeks of the session primarily to the hearing of criminal appeals. A panel of three judges presides at any one time upon the hearing of any civil or criminal matter.

There are currently 4 judges of the Court of Appeal. They are: The President Mr. Justice Elliot Mottley; the Justices of Appeal, Mr. Justice Manuel Sosa, Mr. Justice Boyd Carey and Mr. Justice Dennis Morrison.

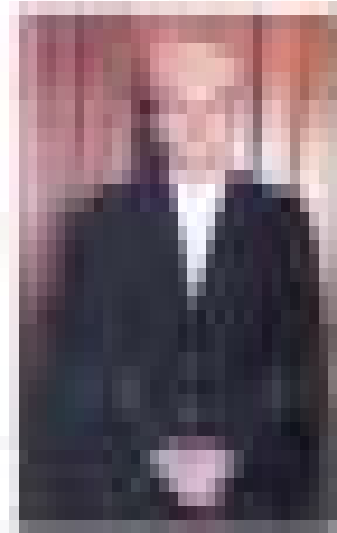
The judges of the Court of Appeal are appointed by the Governor General acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, given after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition, for such period as may be specified in the instrument of appointment. A Judge of the Court of Appeal must have at least 15 years standing as an attorney-at-law or must have held office as a judge of a Court of unlimited jurisdiction in Civil and Criminal matters or of a Court having appellate jurisdiction from such a Court.

Judges of Appeal hold office, subject to removal for inability or misbehavior, until the expiration of their period of appointment or until resignation.

MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL



Hon. Mr. Justice Leveson
President



Hon. Mr. Justice Macpherson



Hon. Mr. Justice MacLennan



Hon. Mr. Justice O'Leary

THE SUPREME COURT

Sections 94 and 95 of the Belizean Constitution establish the Supreme Court as a superior court of record with unlimited original jurisdiction to hear and determine any civil or criminal proceedings under any law. The Supreme Court also hears and determines any appeals arising from any decision of an inferior court. There are currently 8 Judges of the Supreme Court including the Chief Justice. The Supreme Court sits in its civil division in Belize City. There are three district sittings of the Court in its criminal jurisdiction as follows: 1) the Northern District (for offences committed in the Northern Districts of Corozal and Orange Walk); 2) The Central District for offences committed in the Belize and Cayo Districts, and; 3) the Southern District for offences committed in the Southern Districts of Stann Creek and Toledo). The sittings of the Court in each of these districts constitute the sessions of the Court which are held throughout the legal year, which normally commences on the second Monday of January. The Chief Justice is appointed by the Governor General in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister given after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. The other justices of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Governor General acting in accordance with the advice of the Judicial and Legal Services section of the Public Service Commission and with the concurrence of the Prime Minister after consultation with the leader of the Opposition.

MAGISTRATE COURT REPORT 2007

1.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COURTS

Chapter 94 of the Laws of Belize, Part II Section 3 (1) of the Inferior Courts Act sets out the constitution of the Magistrates Courts into the following Judicial Districts:

- (a) The Belize Judicial District
- (b) The Toledo Judicial District
- (c) The Stann Creek Judicial District
- (d) The Cayo Judicial District
- (e) The Orange Walk Judicial District
- (f) The Corozal Judicial District

The Belize Municipal Court is also under the authority of the Inferior Courts Act authorizing it to do or perform any act or function.

1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Magistrate's Court is to provide the community with equal and impartial access to judicial services by ensuring the preservation of judicial independence, protection of individual rights and increasing the public's trust and confidence by maintaining high ethical standards.

1.3 FUNCTIONS

The Magistrate's Court is a creature of statute and as such plays a very important role in society in the dispensation of justice. The principles of Integrity, Independence, Impartiality and upholding the rule of law are paramount for the court's existence. Its role is to be efficient in the delivery of justice to ensure the welfare and safety of citizens and to engender confidence in the whole system of justice. Despite the challenges the Magistrates Court face it continues to meet the growing number of cases that have been lodged and it strives to dispose of these in a timely manner.

STAFFING

In the year 2007, the Magistrates Court's saw the appointment of Ms. Margaret Gabb McKenzie as the new Chief Magistrate in succession of Mr. Herbert Lord who was elevated to the position of a Justice of the Supreme Court. Justice Lord was an asset to the Department and gave his expertise and valuable experience as not only an administrator but also as a dedicated judicial officer. We wish Justice Lord success in his new position.

Mr. Richard Swift returned from study leave June 4, 2007 after attaining the Certificate in Legal Education from Norman Manley Law School. Shortly after he was posted to the Belmopan Magistrate's Court as the Resident Magistrate.

Unfortunately Magistrate Swift met his untimely death in a boating accident on October 21, 2007. Magistrate Swift was an exemplary Public Officer and was a great asset to the Department.

TRANSFERS OF MAGISTRATES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2008

Earl Jones	-	Transferred from San Pedro to Belmopan Magistrate's Court.
Harrison Hulett	-	Transferred from Belize City Magistrate Court to Municipal Court # 2.
Emmerson Banner Pedro	-	Transferred from Orange Walk to San Magistrate's Court.
Hettie Mae Stewart	-	Transferred from Municipal Court #2 to Orange Walk Magistrate's Court.

RETIREMENTS

Mrs. Sheila Genitty, First Class Clerk, who worked in the Accounts Section of the Department retired November 7, 2007. We wish Mrs. Genitty all the best in her future endeavors.

IMPROVEMENTS

The department has replaced a Suzuki Truck which it had for the past ten years with an SUV motor vehicle. This has alleviated some of the problems that the Bailiffs had in the serving of summonses and warrants.

The department has also established a monthly newsletter in which information is shared with each court in the country. The installation of internet access in each Magistrate's Office has improved the information technology asset which, it is hoped, will facilitate the updating of these Courts with legal development.

THE YEAR AHEAD

As a part of the department's goal in giving better service to the public, the Magistrate's Court will be conducting a one day training for all Clerks of Court, Assistant Clerks of Court and other support staff. This will help with the development and improvement of the relationship between staff and the public. A retreat for Magistrates is also being planned as part of continuing judicial education.

CHALLENGES

The department is faced with the problem of inadequate spacing in the Courts For Magistrates which are presently too small and cause inconvenience to both staff and public. The Magistrates Courts in Orange Walk and Corozal at long last had some improvement carried out by the Attorney General's Ministry.

Appreciation is recorded to the Administrative Officer and others in the Attorney General's Ministry for making this possible. This shortage of Bailiff continues to be a concern in the Belize City Courts. Additional Bailiffs would assist in the vital areas of serving processes and executing orders and judgement.

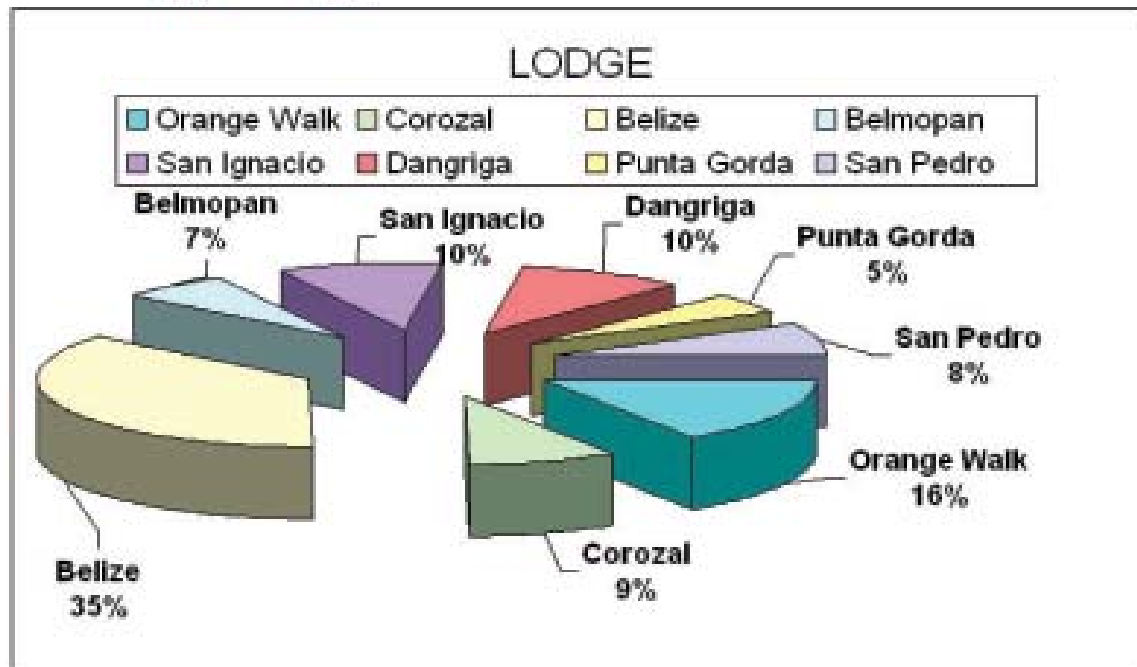
At the moment there are no Bailiffs in the districts and reliance is placed on Police Officers to serve summonses. This creates its own problem as the Police readily do not attend to the needs of the District Courts.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that the year ahead will be even more productive and that Magistrates be given the opportunity to pursue judicial education as well as having increased access to books, periodicals and law reports.

STATISTICAL REPORT FOR 2007

DISTRICTS	LODGE
Orange Walk	2547
Corozal	1438
Belize	5822
Belmopan	1090
San Ignacio	1545
Dangriga	1632
Punta Gorda	806
San Pedro	1248
TOTAL	16127

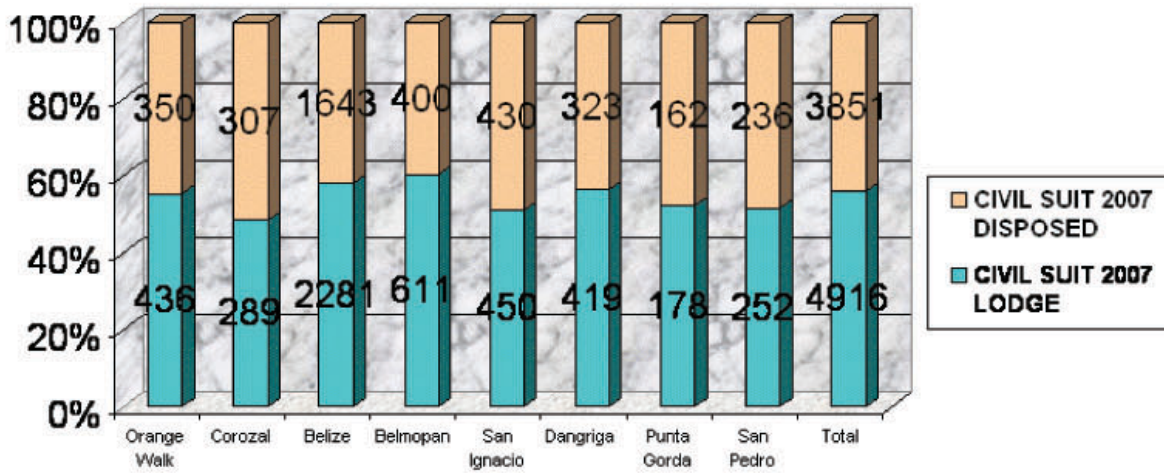


This Report reflect the amount of Crimes Lodged Country Wide for 2007

CIVIL SUIT 2007

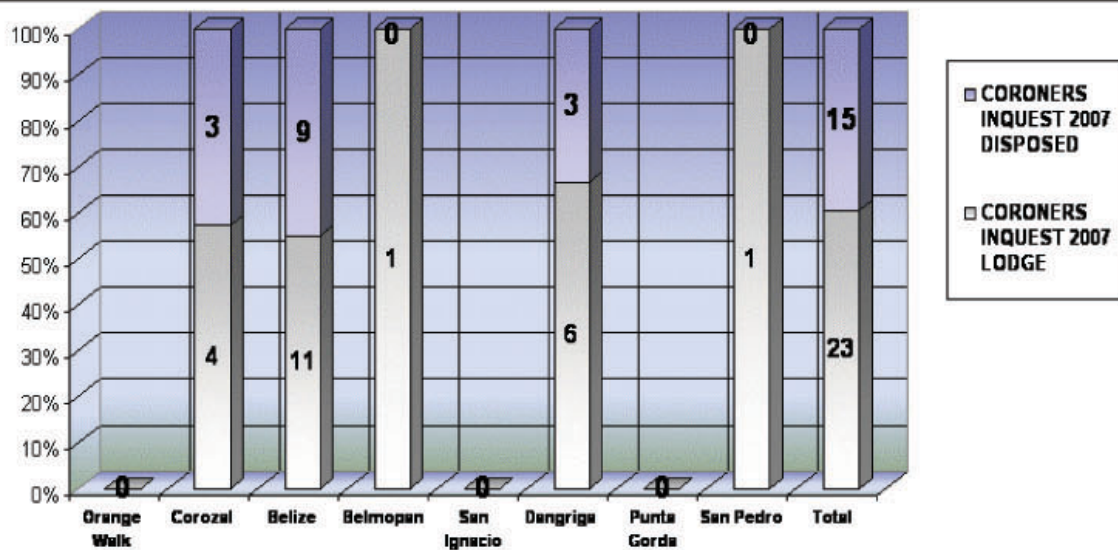
DISTRICTS	LODGE	DISPOSED
Orange Walk	436	350
Corozal	288	307
Belize	2281	1643
Belmopan	611	400
San Ignacio	450	430
Dangriga	419	323
Punta Gorda	178	162
San Pedro	252	236
Total	4916	3851

Chief Justice's Annual Report On the Judiciary

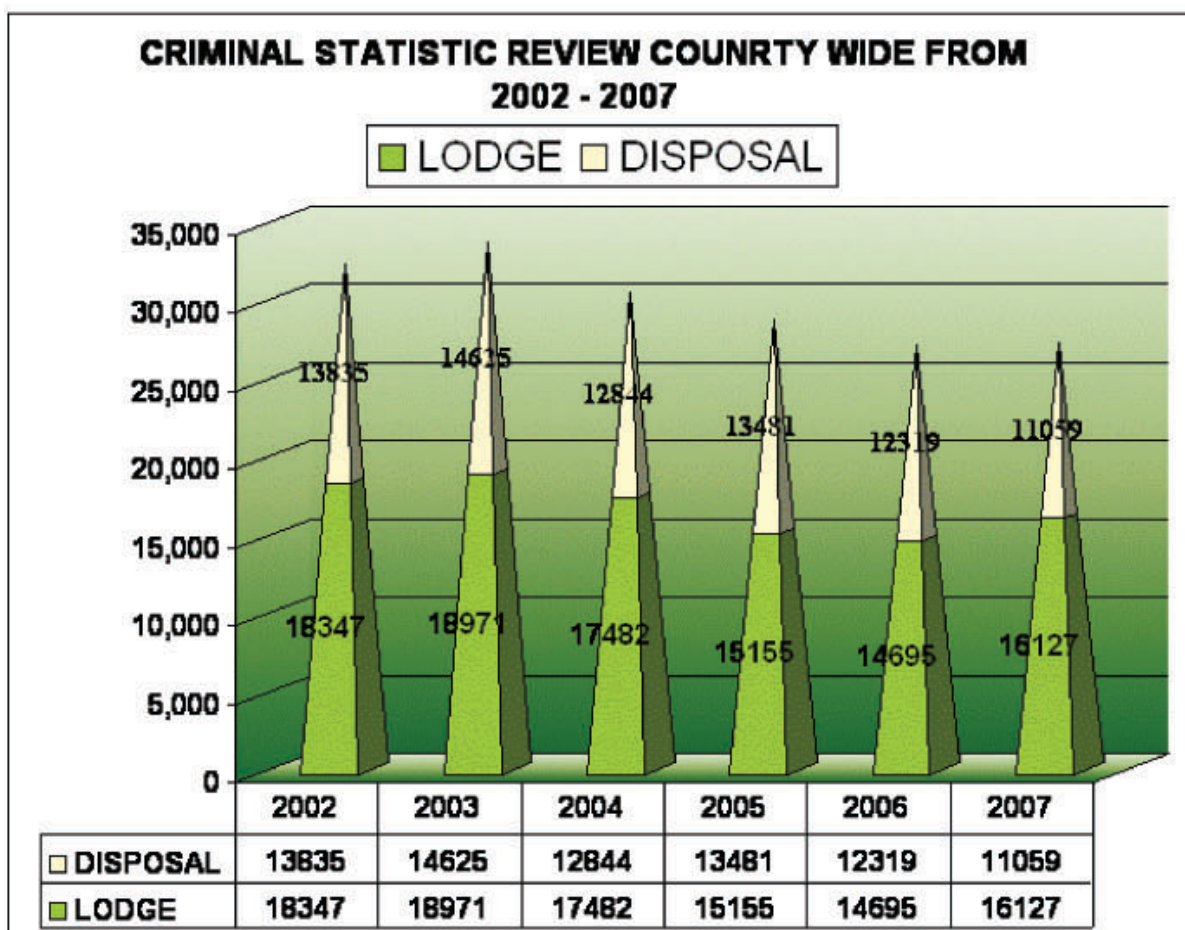


CORONERS INQUEST 2007

DISTRICT	LODGE	DISPOSED
Orange Walk	0	0
Corozal	4	3
Belize	11	9
Belmopan	1	0
San Ignacio	0	0
Dangriga	6	3
Punta Gorda	0	0
San Pedro	1	0
Total	23	15

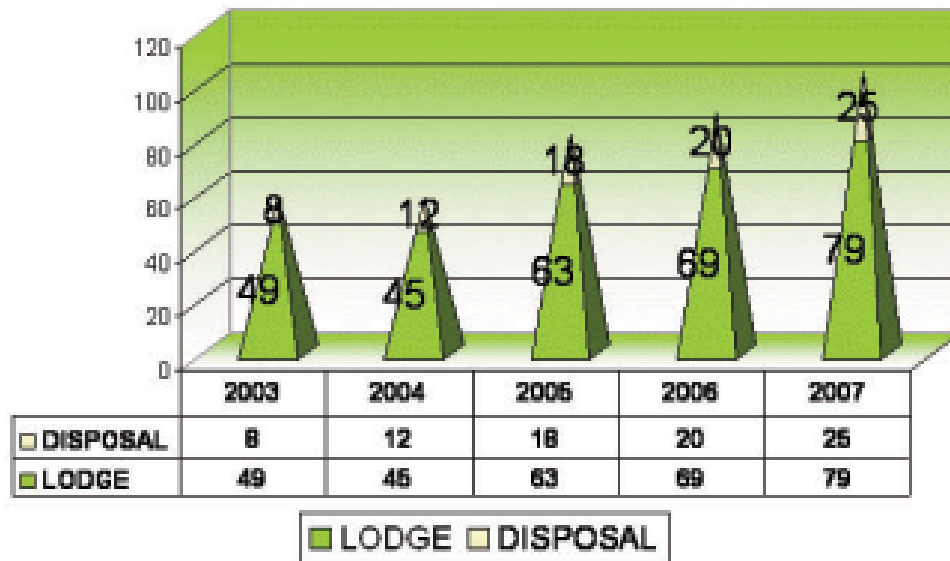


YEAR	LODGE	DISPOSAL
2002	18347	13835
2003	18971	14625
2004	17482	12844
2005	15155	13481
2006	14695	12319
2007	16127	11059



MURDER		
YEAR	LODGE	DISPOSAL
2003	49	8
2004	45	12
2005	63	18
2006	69	20
2007	79	25

REVIEW OF MURDER CHARGES FOR THE COUNTRY OF BELIZE PERIOD 2003- 2007





MAGISTRATES
OF THE
MAGISTRATE COURT



Mrs. Dorothy Flowers
(Senior Magistrate)



MAGISTRATE COURT
staff



THE BELIZE FAMILY COURT ANNUAL REPORT 2007

1.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Belize Family Court has the authority to operate by virtue of the Family Court Act Chapter 93 of the Laws of Belize Revised Edition 2000. The Belize Family Court was established on April 1, 1989 and has been in operation for the past eighteen years.

1.1 JURISDICTION

The Belize Family Court is a specialized Court and determines civil and juvenile criminal matters. The following legislation constitutes the remit of the court

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| · Families and Children Act | Chapter 173 of the Laws of Belize |
| · Domestic Violence Act | Chapter 178 of the Laws of Belize |
| · Married Person Protection A | Chapter 175 of the Laws of Belize |
| · Juvenile Offenders Act | Chapter 119 of the Laws of Belize |
| · Certified Children Reformation Act | Chapter 121 of the Laws of Belize |
| · Probation of Offenders Act | Chapter 120 of the Laws of Belize |
| · International Abduction Act | Chapter 197 of the Laws of Belize |
| · Penal System Reform (Alternative Sentences Act) | Act No. 41 of 2001 |

1.2 OBJECTIVE

The Belize Family Court provides an environment where family and juvenile matters are handled in a holistic manner in order to provide alternative methods for reconciliation, protection, rehabilitation, growth and development in conjunction with other relevant organizations.

1.3 MISSION STATEMENT

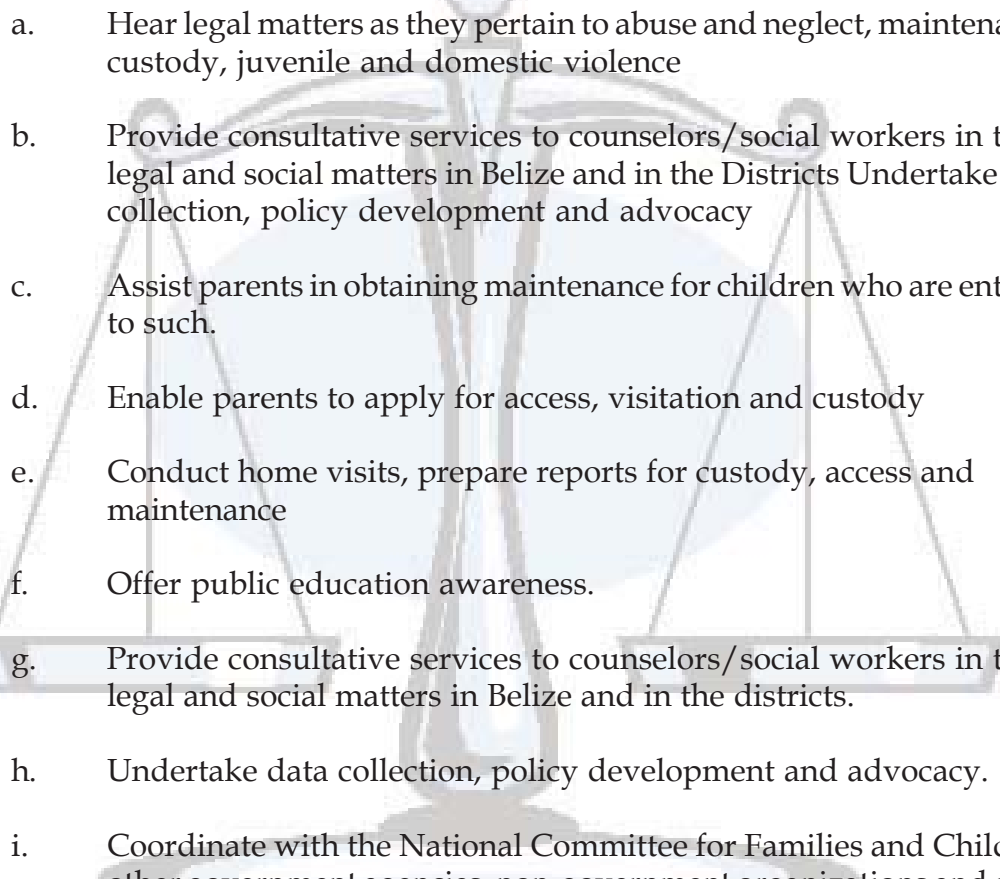
To serve the public by offering a complete, professional, family centered service in a caring, committed and confidential manner based upon the principles of dignity and respect for all.

1.4 ROLE AND FUNCTION

The Court plays a vital role in keeping society together. When the Family Court functions well, society as a whole benefits, especially those who rely on the Court for assistance. It is therefore in the best interest of all concerned that the Belize Family Court functions as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The Belize Family Court continues to over see the administration of justice for family and juvenile justice matters. It also continues to see the rise in domestic violence and maintenance cases. The Family Court has a very demanding task. Throughout the years the court has seen a significant increase in the number of cases it administers on an annual basis. For the year in review, the Court has dealt with in excess of two thousand cases (an increase over last year), the majority falling within the areas of maintenance and Domestic Violence.

1.5 THE FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY COURT ARE TO:

- 
- a. Hear legal matters as they pertain to abuse and neglect, maintenance, custody, juvenile and domestic violence
 - b. Provide consultative services to counselors/social workers in the legal and social matters in Belize and in the Districts Undertake data collection, policy development and advocacy
 - c. Assist parents in obtaining maintenance for children who are entitled to such.
 - d. Enable parents to apply for access, visitation and custody
 - e. Conduct home visits, prepare reports for custody, access and maintenance
 - f. Offer public education awareness.
 - g. Provide consultative services to counselors/social workers in the legal and social matters in Belize and in the districts.
 - h. Undertake data collection, policy development and advocacy.
 - i. Coordinate with the National Committee for Families and Children, other government agencies, non-government organizations and other related organizations for the improved services to families.

2.0 PROGRAMME REVIEW

Family matters are dynamic in nature and the Belize Family Court endeavors to address these matters with a holistic approach. Matters which are addressed by the Court includes the obtaining of maintenance for children and spouse, legal separation, custody and access/visitation for children, child care orders, protection and occupation orders. The Court also deals with criminal juvenile matters and adopted a policy to place conditions for bail to ensure that the juvenile is kept busy in an effort to prevent them from engaging in criminal enterprise.

The Court also recognizes that parents play a key role in ensuring that their children reach their full potential to become productive citizens in our society; and where the need is evident when dealing with uncontrollable behavior, the Court would order counseling for behavioral problems, substance abuse and order the parent to participate in parenting skills counseling to acquire the necessary skills to understand and deal with their children.

3.0 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Protection Orders

A total of 477 domestic violence matters were lodged. Of this number 426 were heard before the courts to decide, 14 of these were settled out of court and 37 remain pending. There were a total of 7 applications for revocation of protection orders, 3 of the applicants were female and the remaining 4 were males.

It is anticipated that the provisions in the proposed Domestic Violence Bill 2007 will to a large extent, provide greater protection and assistance for victims of domestic violence. The Bill provides for an extensive definition of domestic violence, applicants who can apply for various types of orders due, compensation for costs incurred, for severe penalties for breaches of any orders and for admissibility of evidence from refractory victims.

4.0 OCCUPATION ORDER

Statistics have revealed that application for occupation orders are far less in number compared to protection orders. Out of the 113 cases lodged in the Court 108 were heard. Male and female have continued to apply for

occupation orders. The male applicant amounts to 19 while the female applicant amounts to 104. The applicants' ages range from 20 to 80 years. There were 3 applications made for revocation of occupation orders, 2 were made by female and the remaining 1 was made by a male applicant.

5.0 CUSTODY

During the year under review a total of 100 applications came before the court. Of the 160 applications 93 were made by fathers and 67 by mothers, while 21 were settled out of court and 42 matters remain pending. There was also a total of 6 application for variation of custody made and all were made by female applicants.

6.0 CHILD CARE PROTECTION

Where it is evident that the child had suffered some type of abuse at the hands of the parents, care givers or other responsible adult, the Human Services Department will make an application to the court for supervision or care orders to monitor or to remove the child from immediate danger of being harmed. There were a total of 80 applications brought before the Court by the Human Service Department during the year under review.

7.0 ACCESS/VISITATION

Statistics at the Belize Family Court have indicated that males are the more dominant of the two sexes making applications for access and visitation. There were 93 applications for access/visitation made by fathers who visited the Family Court to seek the assistance of the Court to gain access to their children, and a total of 20 mothers who also did the same. A total of 71 matters went before the Court and 25 were settled by the intake officers.

8.0 LEGAL SEPERATION

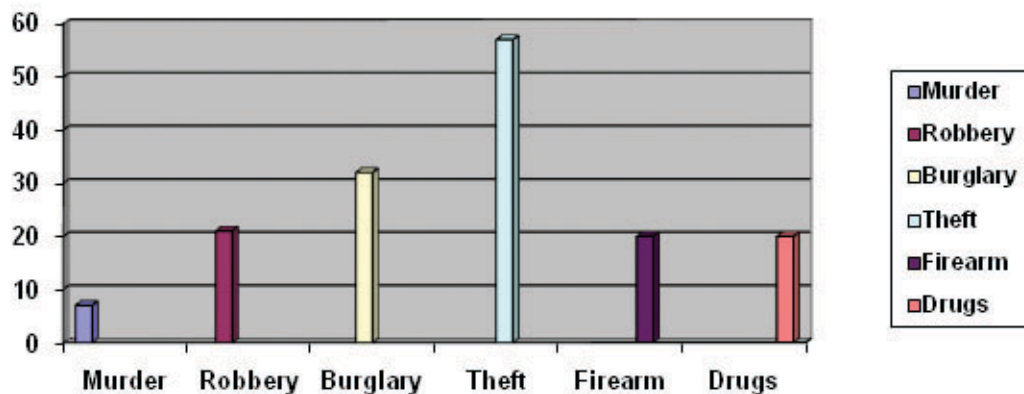
During the year under review there were a total of 137 application for legal separation. Of the 137 applications 100 were made by females and 37 by males and grounds included adultery, persistent cruelty, neglect to provide reasonable maintenance and desertion.

9.0 MAINTENANCE

The Belize Family Court statistics for the year 2007 reveals that a total of 618 applicants came to the Court for maintenance. Because few fathers have custody of their child or children, this figure also includes application by fathers, which amounted to 41 and the remaining 577 applications were made by mothers.

10.0 JUVENILE

The Belize Family Court also has the jurisdiction to hear criminal matters committed by juveniles. During the year under review there was a total of 436 criminal cases lodged in the Belize Family Court from January to December 2007. These included 7 Murders, 46 Grievous harm and use of deadly means of harm, 32 aggravated assaults, 7 Rapes, 21 Robberies, 57 Thefts, 32 Burglaries, 21 Kept Unlicensed Firearm and Ammunition, 20 Possession of Controlled Drugs, 12 Damage to Property, 17 Traffic Offences, 32 Harm and Assault and 16 cases of Wounding. This figure also included Breaches for Protection Orders which amounted to 49.



11.0 STATISTICS ON CIVIL MATTERS

Statistics reveal the diversity of matters for which the public seek the assistance of the Court to resolve their issues. A total of 2,582 civil matters came before the Family Court in 2007; from this amount the intake officers were able to settle a total of 237 while 1,967 cases were determined by the Court. Female applicants amounted to 1,976 and male 606.

Cases	Pending	In Court	Out of Court	Total
Legal Separation	32	93	12	137
Legal Custody	42	97	21	160
Maintenance	85	442	91	618
Variation of Maintenance	26	111	2	139
Family Issue	17	0	67	84
Protection Order	37	426	14	477
Occupation Order	10	108	5	123
Attachment	13	62	0	75
Access/Visitation	17	71	25	113
Recovery of Arrears	69	238	0	307
Continuance of Payment	2	13	0	15
Revocation of Maintenance	11	76	0	87
Contempt of Court	2	9	0	11
Uncontrollable	6	44	0	50
Misapplying of Maintenance	0	0	0	0
Remittance of Arrears	1	12	0	13
Care order	0	80	0	80
Guardianship	1	2	0	3
Variation of Protection	0	3	0	3
Variation of Access	1	25	0	26
Declaration of Paternity	5	13	0	18
Production of child	0	2	0	2
Relinquishment	1	9	0	10
Revocation of Protection	0	7	0	7
Revocation of Occupation	0	3	0	3
Revival of maintenance	0	4	0	4
Supervisory Order	0	9	0	9
Variation of Custody	0	6	0	6
Parental Responsibility	0	0	0	0
Variation of Arrears	0	1	0	1
Discharge of Access Order	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	378	1967	237	2582

12.0 APPLICANTS BY GENDER

Cases	Male	Female	Total
Legal Separation	37	100	137
Legal Custody	93	67	160
Maintenance	41	577	618
Variation of Maintenance	76	63	139
Family Issue	40	44	84
Protection Order	76	401	477
Occupation Order	19	104	123
Attachment	0	75	75
Access/Visitation	93	20	113
Recovery of Arrears	2	305	307
Continuance of Payment	0	15	15
Revocation of Maintenance	56	31	87
Contempt of Court	9	2	11
Uncontrollable	5	45	50
Misapplying of Maintenance	0	0	0
Remittance of Arrears	12	1	13
Care order	1	79	80
Guardianship	0	3	3
Variation of Protection	1	2	3
Variation of Access	16	10	26
Declaration of Paternity	17	1	18
Production of child	0	2	2
Relinquishment	5	5	10
Revocation of Protection	4	3	7
Revocation of Occupation	1	2	3
Revival of maintenance	0	4	4
Supervisory Order	0	9	9
Variation of Custody	0	6	6
Parental Responsibility	0	0	0
Variation of Arrears	1	0	1
Discharge of Access Order	1	0	1
TOTAL	606	1976	2582

13.0 MEDIATION

The final training for Certification of Mediators was held on 14th & 15th of May at the Radisson Fort George Hotel. The training and practicum exercise was conducted by Ms Donna Parchment, attorney at law and Chief Executive Officer of the Dispute Resolution of Jamaica with the assistance of Mr Paul Hinds expert in conflict resolution, negotiations, mediation. A total of 19 participants were certified which includes the Director, Magistrates, and Intake Welfare Officers of the Belize Family Court.

This marks an important milestone for the country of Belize, as family problems seem to be more complex and need more of a non-adversarial approach. The certification of these officers will positively increase their coping ability to better respond to complex situations when managing disputes to assist families.

This was a collaborated effort between UNICEF, Government and the Belize Family Court. We are indeed grateful to UNICEF and the Government of Belize for funding this project. We would especially like to thank Mr Roy Bowen, Programme Officer, Ms Angie August, Dr Abdulai Conteh, Chief Justice of Belize, and Professor Albert Fiadjoe, LL.B., LL.M, Ph.D, Barrister at Law, for their continued technical support and guidance

14.0 OTHER ACTIVITIES

Visit to St. Lucia

Ms. Margaret Nicholas the Director of the Belize Family Court participated in a three days Juvenile Justice workshop held in St. Lucia in July of 2007. This workshop was designed to provide a forum for building a knowledge base on justice for children and to develop consensus on a sub-regional action plan for a sustainable process for reform in the sector that is endorsed and promoted by the Heads of participating Member States.

This workshop was organized by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, the United Nations Children's Fund Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Countries, in collaboration with the Austrian Cooperation, British High Commission, Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), International Association for Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates and International Institute for the Rights of the Child. There were several presentations made by legal experts discussing the state of legal institutional reform in the OECS. Many of these presentations, while informative, did not allow for meaningful exchanges of ideas and experiences.

A review progress made in the Caribbean with respect to the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) after the signing of the Belize Consensus, Kingston Accord and Port-of Spain Declaration show that in many countries reform has been slow. Belize was cited as the best practiced country in the area of legal reform.

During the session 'Innovative Practices in the Caribbean and Beyond' Margaret Nicholas Director Family Court made a dynamic presentation of the Belize experience that was well received. It demonstrated that while we have made notable progress, there are key areas (such as institutional reform and financing) which need to accompany the process for greater results.

The small working groups were the most effective component of the meeting, because it gave participants the opportunity to interact in small groups based on their interest. The group identified strengths, good practices, weaknesses, needs and strategies for moving forward. The final products were draft plans of action for: Restorative Justice Programmes, Legal Reform, Juvenile Justice Programmes, and Family Support Services.

The Family Court and the Attorney General's Ministry are extremely grateful to UNICEF for this opportunity and will ensure that every effort will be made to apply the lessons learnt.

15.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT/ TRAINING

The Director was successful in obtaining an additional computer to assist the Belize Family Court in enhancing the input of invoices into the smart stream system. This will allow for the improvement of clients receiving payments in a timely manner.

Staff training is a key element in order to enhance the services provided by any institution, and based on this concept, The Belize Family Court held its 3rd annual staff retreat at the San Ignacio Hotel on the 8th and 9th December 2007. The facilitators for the various sessions were the Chief Justice of Belize Dr. Abdulai Conteh, Mr. Roy Bowen, Programme Officer UNICEF and Mrs. Myrtle Palacio, Director of the Office of Governance.

The Honorable Chief Justice facilitated a discussion on the Families and Children Act as well the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, with respect to the suspension of appeals. The support staff of the Family Court participated in a good governance workshop which was facilitated by Mrs. Myrtle Palacio, Director Office of Governance which dealt with key elements such as accountability, transparency and inclusiveness. This was followed by team building exercise which was facilitated by Mr. Roy Bowen and assisted by Ms. Angie August, both of UNICEF.

16.0 CHALLENGES

A. The Court Environment

In August 2007 the Belize Family Court was relocated to #2 Bishop Street. This location now affords the Intake Officers more space, and confidentiality in dealing with clients, and affords them room for mediation sessions. Notwithstanding the above mentioned improvements The Family Court is still faced with some constraints:

- ❖ Privacy in the Court rooms due to the fact that the court rooms are not sound proof.
- ❖ Lack of a children's corner.
- ❖ Adequate waiting area.

17.0 PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2008

- ❖ Advocate for the passage of the Mediation Act
- ❖ Formation of Mediators Association
- ❖ Belize Family Court Staff Retreat
- ❖ Continued upgrading of Computer Systems
- ❖ Upgrade the data system for juvenile offenders- which will include, status of parents and offenders and repeated offenders.
- ❖ Advocate for the amendments to the Firearm Act where it discriminates against juveniles
- ❖ Advocate for amendments to the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Chapter 91 of the Laws of Belize Subsection (2) of s112 to include matters in the Families and Children Act Cap.173, the Domestic Violence Act Cap 178.and the Married Persons Protection Act Cap. 175 to prevent the automatic suspension of the decision under appeal
- ❖ Specialized training for Intake/Welfare Officers.

18.0 STAFF LIST

DIRECTOR
MAGISTRATE MS. MARGARET NICHOLAS

MAGISTRATES
MS. ALBERTA PEREZ MRS. SANDRA ARNOLD MRS. NATALIA CARTER

COURT COORDINATOR
MRS. MYRNA WILLOUGHBY

INTAKE OFFICERS
LISA GRIFFITH FAYE USHER
PAUL FERGUSON MIGUEL ICO

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION
CLERK OF COURT - Alberta Lino
FIRST CLASS CLERK - Sharon Bayliss
SECOND CLASS CLERK- Carmontella Brown
SECOND CLASS CLERK – Desiree Kelly
Clerk/Typist- Karen Moguel
SECRETARY 111- Geraldine Garbutt
TEMPORARY SECRETARY- Jaime Staine
TEMPORARY SECRETARY- Kayla Tingaling
BAILIFF/RECORDS KEEPER- Everaldo Day
BAILIFF/RECORDS KEEPER- Alfaro Bol
DRIVER/ MECHANIC- Raymond Belgrave
OFFICE ASSISTANT- Cornel Gibson

MAGISTRATES AT THE FAMILY COURT



PRIVY COUNCIL APPEALS 2006 – 2007

NO. OF APPEALS LODGED IN 2006

Criminal Appeals 0 lodged
Criminal Appeals 2 disposed
of

Civil Appeals1 lodged
Civil Appeals 1disposed of

OUTSTANDING CRIMINAL CASE

R vs Wilfred Larriano Simeon Sampson, SC for Appellant

Criminal Appeal No: 7 of 2003 Earlin White, Simeon Sampson , SC for Appellant

Criminal Appeal Nos: 7 & 8 of 2004 Leslie Pepersburgh & Patrick Robateau, Simeon
Sampson, SC for both Appellants

OUTSTANDING CIVIL CASES

Civil Appeal No: 7 of 2007 William Quinto & Jimmy Quinto v Santiago Castillo
Ltd

Fred Lumor SC for Appellants and Wilfred P. Elrington SC for Respondent.

Civil Appeal No: 18 of 2007 Belize Bank Ltd v Association for Concerned Belizean
etal. Andrew Marshalleck Esq for Appellant and Ms. Lois Young Barrow, SC for
Respondents.

APPEALS LODGED IN 2007

Criminal Appeals2 lodged
Criminal Appeals0 disposed of

Civil Appeals2 lodged
Civil Appeals 0 disposed of

COURT OF APPEAL 2007

DATE OF SITTING	CRIMINAL APPEALS	CIVIL APPEALS	TOTAL
7 th February	15	3	18
26 th June	18	8	26
10 th October	20	15	35
Single Judge	2	2	4
TOTAL	55	28	83
No. of appeals lodged in 2006 - Criminal Appeals .....31 lodged			
Criminal Appeals .....35 disposed of			
Civil Appeals .....10 lodged			
Civil Appeals .....18 disposed of			
No. of Appeals lodged in 2007 - Criminal Appeals .....25 lodged			
Criminal Appeals .....28 disposed of			
Civil Appeals .....33 lodged			
Civil Appeals .....20 disposed of			

CIVIL

NUMBER OF CIVIL CASES FILED DURING PERIOD 2006-2007

Superior Actions/Claims 2006	722
Number of Superior Actions concluded up to	
Superior Actions 2007	71
Claims 2007 .....	.635
Number of Claims actually completed during 2006	529
Number of Claims actually completed during 2007	544
Summary Action 2006	None
Summary Actions actually concluded up to	
Summary Action 2007	None
Applications for Case Management filed in 2007	102
Case Management disposed in 2007	102

DIVORCE

NUMBER OF DIVORCE PETITIONS FILED DURING THE PERIOD 2006-2007

Number of Divorce Petitions filed in 2006	219
Number of Divorce Petitions filed in 2007	232
Number of Divorce Petitions disposed in 2006	216
Number of Divorce Petitions disposed in 2007	213

ADOPTIONS

NUMBER OF ADOPTIONS FILED DURING THE PERIOD 2006 -2007

Number of Adoptions filed in 2006	82
Number of Adoptions filed in 2007	56
Number of Adoptions approved in 2006	66
Number of Adoptions approved in 2007	52

INFERIOR COURT OF APPEALS

Number of Inferior Court Appeals lodged in 2006	9
Number of Inferior Court Appeals disposed of in 2006	6
Number of Inferior Court Appeal Notices lodged in 2006	129
Number of Inferior Court Appeals lodged in 2007	96
Number of Inferior Court Appeals disposed of in 2007	10
Number of Inferior Court Appeal Notices lodged in 2007	

CORONERS INQUEST LODGED

Number of Coroners Inquests lodged in 2006	5
Number of Coroners Inquest lodged in 2007	8

MURDER CASES

There were 90 Murder cases dealt with by the Court in 2007 as follows:

		FEMALE	MALE
48 arose in the Belize District	)	1	65
18 arose in the Cayo District	) Central District	66	
10 arose in the Corozal District)		
2 arose in the Orange Walk District)	) Northern District	0	12
6 arose in the Stann Creek District))		
6 arose in the Toledo District	) Southern District	0	6
	)	6	
TOTAL		90	

ROBBERY CASES

There were 3 Robbery cases dealt with by the Court in 2007 as follows:

		FEMALE	MALE
2 arose in the Belize District	)	0	2
0 arose in the Cayo District)	) Central District	2	
1 arose in the Corozal District)		
0 arose in the Orange Walk District)	) Northern District	0	1
0 arose in the Stann Creek District))		
0 arose in the Toledo District	) Southern District	0	0
	)	0	
TOTAL		3	

0 arose in the Cayo District)	)		4
0 arose in the Corozal District)		
	) Northern District	0	0
0 arose in the Orange Walk District)	)		0
2 arose in the Stann Creek District))		
	) Southern District	0	2
2 arose in the Toledo District)		
	)		2

TOTAL			6

MANSLAUGHTER BY NEGLIGENCE CASES

There were 17 Manslaughter by Negligence cases dealt with in 2007 as follows:

		FEMALE	MALE
6 arose in the Belize District)		
	) Central District	1	8
3 arose in the Cayo District)	)		9
4 arose in the Corozal District)		
	) Northern District	0	7
3 Arose in the Orange Walk District)	)		7

1 arose in the Stann Creek District)			
	) Southern District	1	0
0 arose in the Toledo District)		
	)		1
TOTAL			17

OTHER CASES

There were 83 other cases dealt with by the Court in 2007 as follows:

		FEMALE	MALE
31 arose in the Belize District)		
	) Central District	6	42
17 arose in the Cayo District)		
		48	
19 arose in the Corozal District)		
	) Northern District	2	25
8 arose in the Orange Walk District)		
		27	
6 arose in the Stann Creek District)			
	) Southern District	1	7
2 arose in the Toledo District)		
		8	
TOTAL			83

THE VITAL STATISTICS UNIT

CRIME 2007

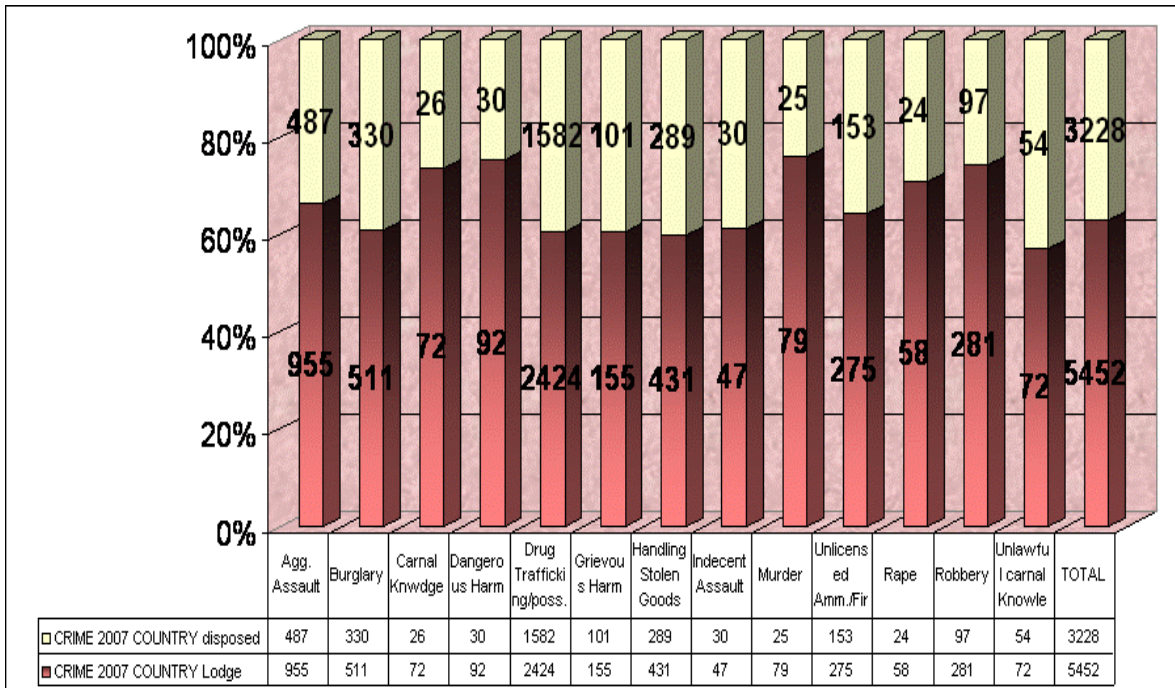
	Orange Walk		Corozal		Belize City		Belmopan	
	Lodge	disposed	Lodge	disposed	Lodge	disposed	Lodge	disposed
Aggravated Burglary	1	2	12	5	19	3	2	0
Aggravated Assault	175	104	70	49	306	73	62	35
Arson	0	1	11	8	4	1	0	0
Attempt Rape	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Attempt Murder	1	8	14	9	62	1	12	2
Attempt Robbery	1	2	1	1	7	1	0	0
Burglary	61	47	62	39	129	35	33	14
Carnal Knowledge	16	18	0	0	12	3	9	1
Claiming Upon a Forged Doc.	3	0	3	3	45	0	4	0
Dangerous Harm	5	5	9	7	35	1	9	3
Drug Trafficking	41	39	25	18	125	30	21	13
Escape	10	11	4	1	15	4	10	4
Forgery	0	3	2	2	45	0	6	3
Grievous Harm	28	20	14	7	44	7	6	1
Handling Stolen Goods	41	30	52	41	111	24	22	13
Incest	0	0	2	1	5	0	3	0
Indecent Assault	14	9	11	10	5	2	0	0
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Maim	2	1	3	1	1	0	2	0
Manslaughter	10	6	1	1	0	0	8	3
Murder	3	4	13	7	39	2	4	0
Poss. Controlled Drugs	286	258	90	81	792	336	92	70
Poss. Unlicensed Ammunition	13	8	7	5	76	9	10	4
Poss. Unlicensed firearm	11	10	12	10	46	6	11	6
Rape	1	2	19	8	10	0	4	0
Robbery	36	21	29	21	121	13	12	2
Theft	119	86	93	85	233	69	56	28
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	0	0	27	15	3	0	0	0
Unnnatural Crime	2	0	3	2	1	1	0	0
OTHER	1667	1271	847	988	3531	853	690	478
TOTAL	2547	1966	1436	1425	5822	1474	1090	681
CIVIL SUITS	436	350	289	307	2281	1643	611	400
CORONERS INQUEST	0	0	4	3	11	9	1	0

CRIME 2007

	COUNTRY	
	Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	955	487
Burglary	511	330
Carnal Knwdge	72	26
Dangerous Harm	92	30
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	2424	1582
Grievous Harm	155	101
Handling Stolen Goods	431	289
Indecent Assault	47	30
Murder	79	25
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	275	153
Rape	58	24

Chief Justice's Annual Report On the Judiciary

Robbery 281 97
 Unlawful carnal Knowledge 72 54
TOTAL 5452 3228



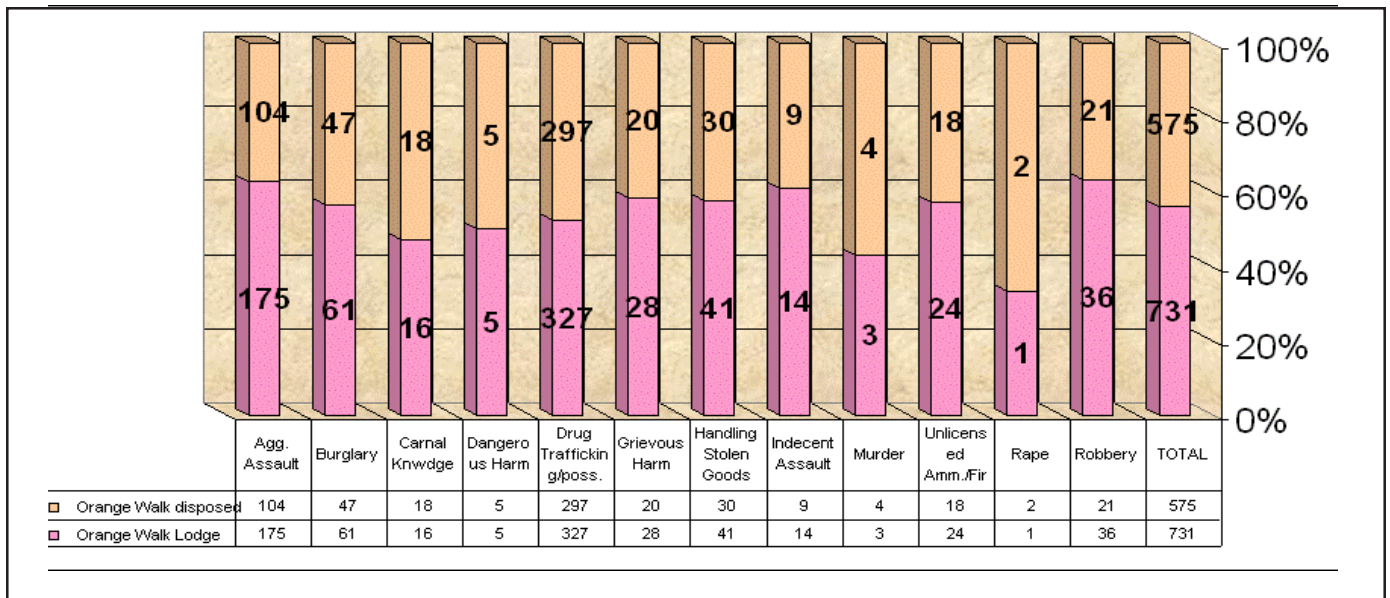
CRIME 2007

Orange Walk
 Lodge disposed

Agg. Assault 175 104
 Burglary 61 47
 Carnal Knwledge 16 18
 Dangerous Harm 5 5
 Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs 327 297
 Grievous Harm 28 20
 Handling Stolen Goods 41 30
 Indecent Assault 14 9
 Murder 3 4
 Unlicensed Amm./Firearm 24 18
 Rape 1 2
 Robbery 36 21
TOTAL 731 575

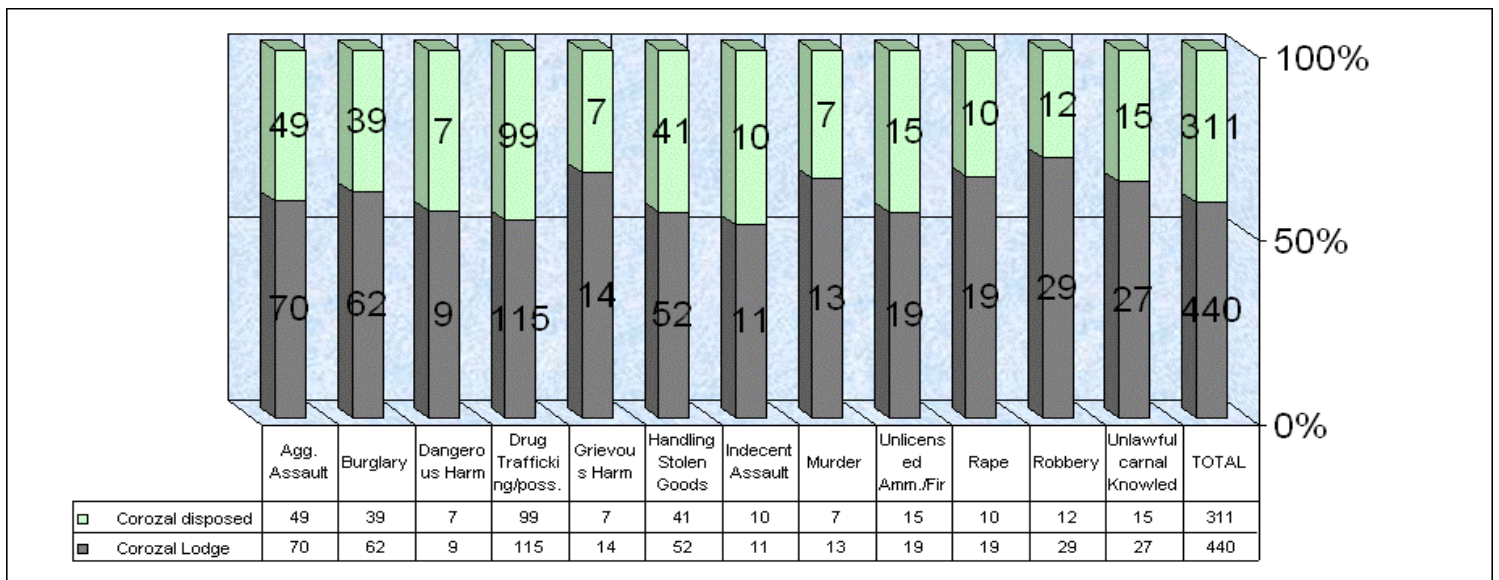
CRIME 2007

	Orange Walk	
	Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	175	104
Burglary	61	47
Carnal Knwdge	16	18
Dangerous Harm	5	5
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	327	297
Grievous Harm	28	20
Handling Stolen Goods	41	30
Indecent Assault	14	9
Murder	3	4
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	24	18
Rape	1	2
Robbery	36	21
TOTAL	731	575



CRIME 2007

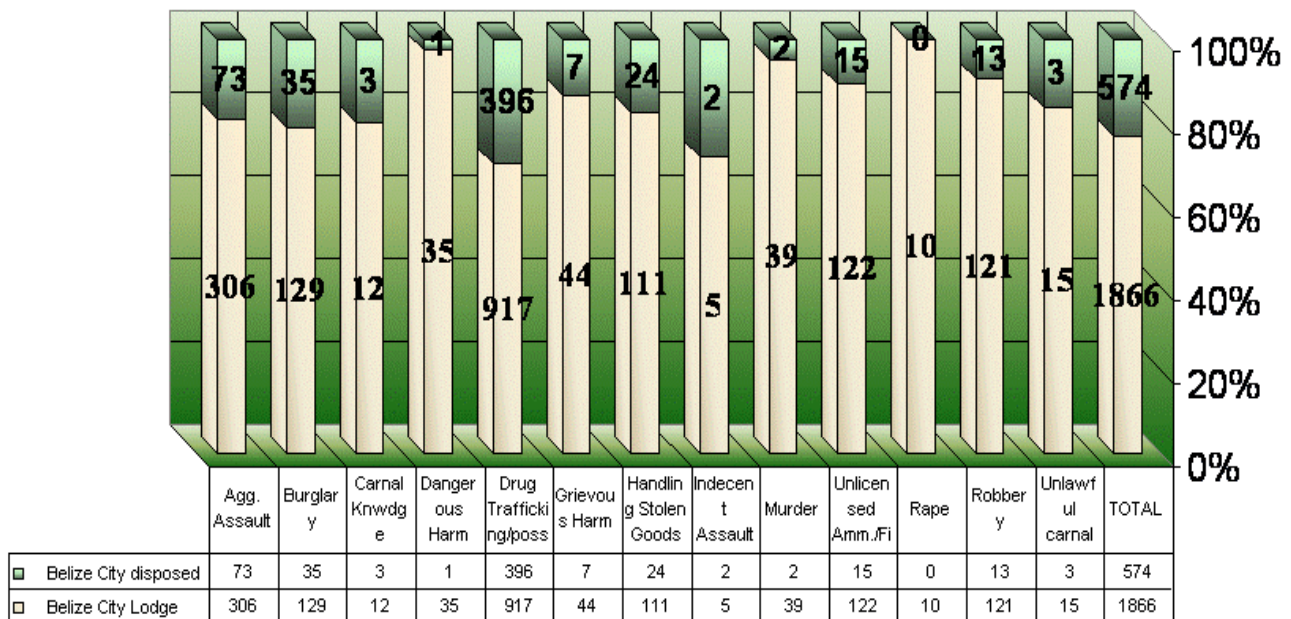
	Corozal Lodge	Corozal disposed
Agg. Assault	70	49
Burglary	62	39
Dangerous Harm	9	7
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	115	99
Grievous Harm	14	7
Handling Stolen Goods	52	41
Indecent Assault	11	10
Murder	13	7
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	19	15
Rape	19	10
Robbery	29	12
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	27	15
TOTAL	440	311



Chief Justice's Annual Report On the Judiciary

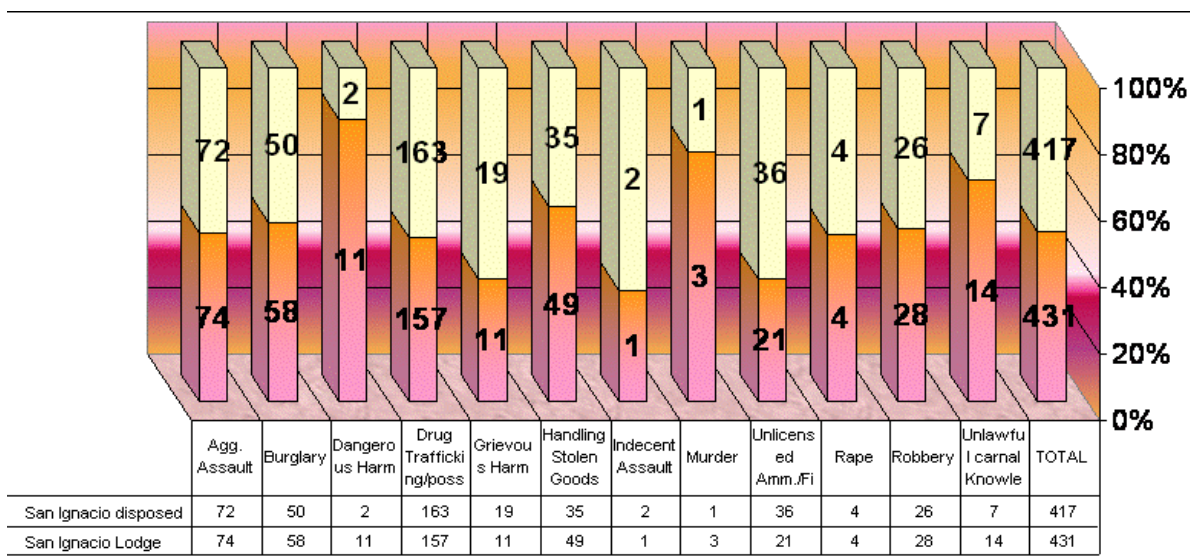
CRIME 2007

	Belize City Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	306	73
Burglary	129	35
Carnal Knwde	12	3
Dangerous Harm	35	1
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	917	396
Grievous Harm	44	7
Handling Stolen Goods	111	24
Indecent Assault	5	2
Murder	39	2
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	122	15
Rape	10	0
Robbery	121	13
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	15	3
TOTAL	1866	574



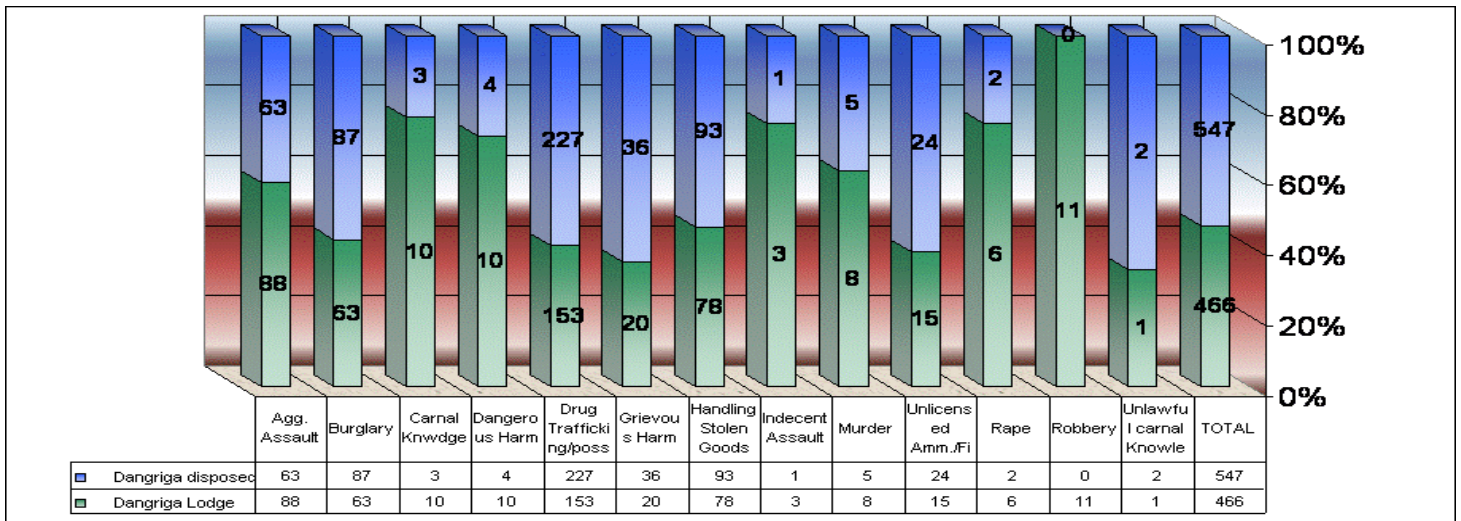
CRIME 2007

	San Ignacio Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	74	72
Burglary	58	50
Dangerous Harm	11	2
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	157	163
Grievous Harm	11	19
Handling Stolen Goods	49	35
Indecent Assault	1	2
Murder	3	1
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	21	36
Rape	4	4
Robbery	28	26
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	14	7
TOTAL	431	417



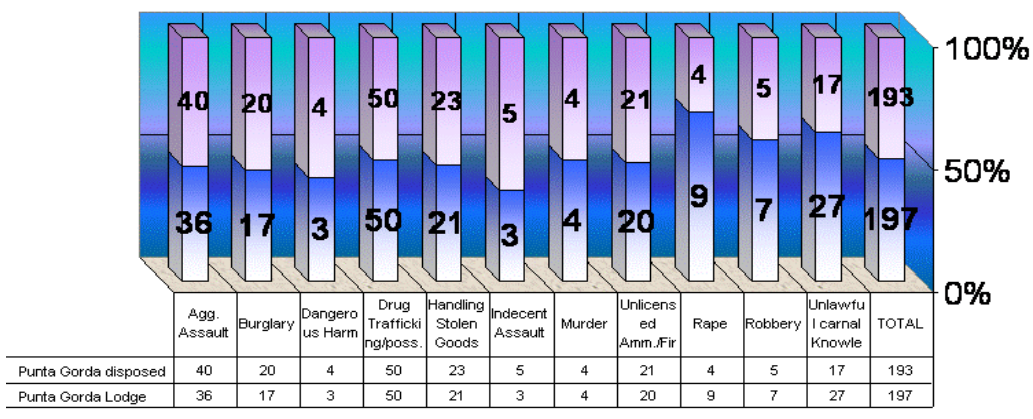
CRIME 2007

	Dangriga Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	88	63
Burglary	63	87
Carnal Knwdge	10	3
Dangerous Harm	10	4
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	153	227
Grievous Harm	20	36
Handling Stolen Goods	78	93
Indecent Assault	3	1
Murder	8	5
Unlicensed Am./Firearm	15	24
Rape	6	2
Robbery	11	0
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	1	2
TOTAL	466	547



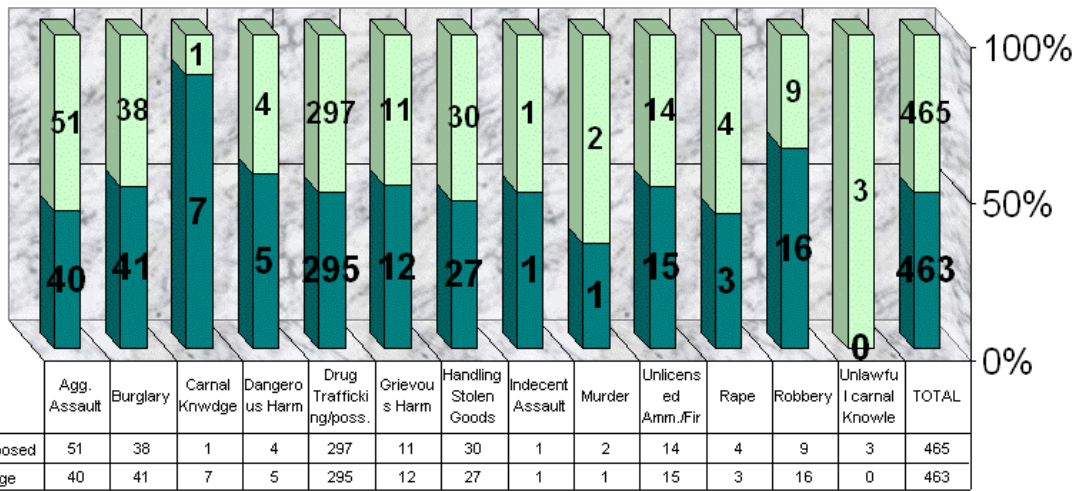
CRIME 2007

	Punta Gorda	
	Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	36	40
Burglary	17	20
Dangerous Harm	3	4
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	50	50
Handling Stolen Goods	21	23
Indecent Assault	3	5
Murder	4	4
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	20	21
Rape	9	4
Robbery	7	5
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	27	17
TOTAL	197	193



CRIME 2007

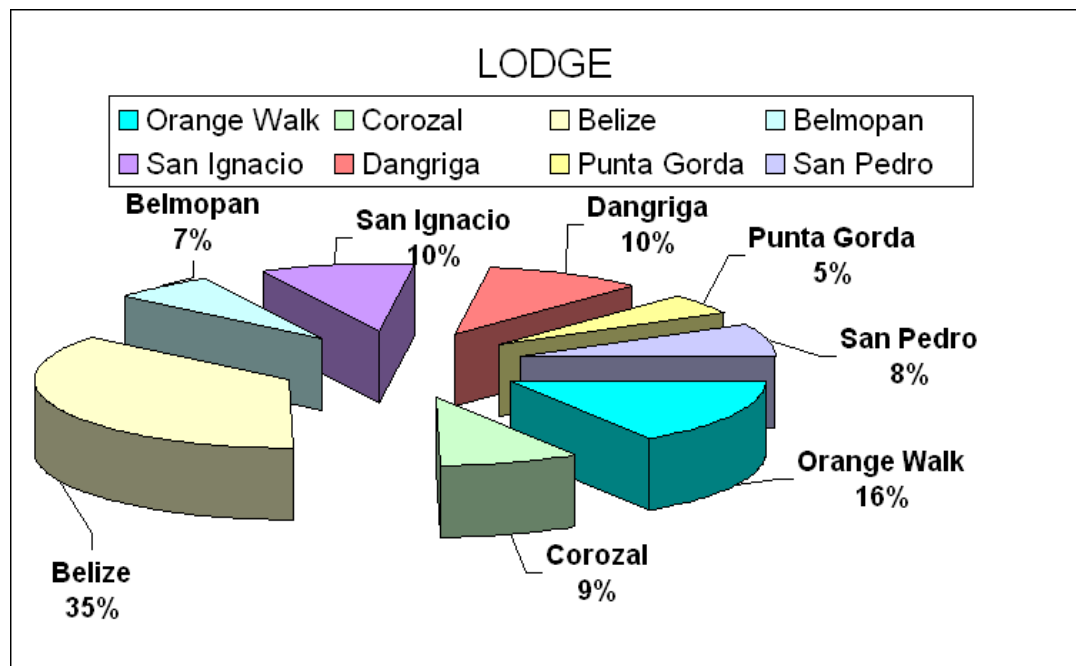
SAN PEDRO		
	Lodge	disposed
Agg. Assault	40	51
Burglary	41	38
Carnal Knwde	7	1
Dangerous Harm	5	4
Drug Trafficking/poss. c/drugs	295	297
Grievous Harm	12	11
Handling Stolen Goods	27	30
Indecent Assault	1	1
Murder	1	2
Unlicensed Amm./Firearm	15	14
Rape	3	4
Robbery	16	9
Unlawful carnal Knowledge	0	3
TOTAL	463	465



STATISTICAL REPORT FOR 2007

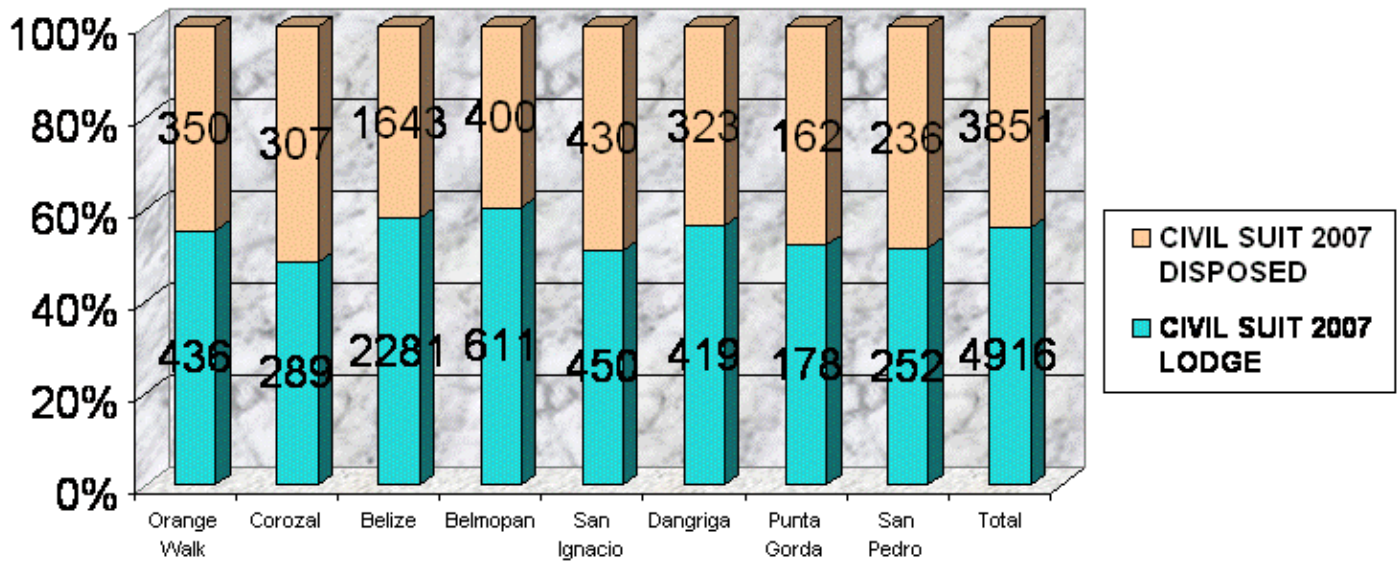
DISTRICTS	LODGE
Orange Walk	2547
Corozal	1436
Belize	5822
Belmopan	1090
San Ignacio	1545
Dangriga	1632
Punta Gorda	806
San Pedro	1249
TOTAL	16127

34



**This Report reflect the amount of Crimes Lodged Country Wide for 2007
CIVIL SUIT 2007**

DISTRICTS	LODGE	DISPOSED
Orange Walk	436	350
Corozal	289	307
Belize	2281	1643
Belmopan	611	400
San Ignacio	450	430
Dangriga	419	323
Punta Gorda	178	162
San Pedro	252	236
Total	4916	3851



A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Ministry of Health and the Attorney General's Ministry, Vital Statistic Unit in June 2007. According to the terms of the memorandum the Ministry of Health would provide space within each District Hospital to allow for the registration of births and deaths at the said hospitals. The Vital Statistics Unit, on the other hand, would provide staff and office supplies. This project was to be implemented in January, 2008.

The benefit to be derived from project was to allow for the branch of the Unit to be located in each district in order to improve access by the public. Presently, only registration is offered at the district level. Monies were approved in pursuance of the project in late October, 2007 and office supplies and furniture, printing materials have been purchased. Staff members were also identified and a workshop was held at the Radisson Fort George Hotel in December 2007. Unfortunately, the project was halted by the Ministry of Finance at the last step of the implementation when the Ministry refused to approved the employment of the necessary staff.

Changes in Staff

In 2007, the Registry benefited from the appointments of additional staff members. In August, Mr. Freddy Cantillano was appointed as the interpreter for the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal. In September, the staff was complemented by Ms. Avril Bennett who came on board as the Systems Administrator. On June 11th, 2007 the department lost a long time asset in the person of Ms. Ermita Flowers when she resigned from the Public Service after many years of dedicated service. The staff of the Registry takes this opportunity to thank Ms. Flowers and to wish her well in her retirement.

The Supreme Court Law Library

The Law Library continues to facilitate the judicial system of Belize with basic information on resources geared to support the delivering of justice in a timely manner. The library mission is to make its resources available and useful to the judiciary and legal community of Belize. Also to sustain and preserve our legal heritage for future generations.

The Library aims at providing legal reference service for the judicial system of Belize, and legal researchers. In addition the library provides support to the paralegal programme of the University of Belize, University of West Indies School of Continuing Studies, and the Saint Luke's College, School of Professional Studies.

Gifts to the Supreme Court Library

A desktop photocopy machine was donated by an anonymous donor for use in the library. The British High Commissioner handed over several law books which his mission has secured for the library.

The US Ambassador to Belize donated some law books for the library. The librarian records her appreciation for these gifts.

Budget

The government of Belize allocated \$10,000 for the purchasing of new books for the library.

Depository

Legal researchers, scholars and students in the legal community are encouraged to deposit a copy of their Thesis, and Dissertations, and results of their researches free of charge at the Law Library. These deposits will enable collection development and allow the preservation and conservation of our legal heritage in Belize.

The Courts and legal Community depends heavily on the Law Library Collection. The library is in need of continuous funding to replace old, failing equipment and fragile books. The replacement of equipment is critical to continue access by researchers and staff.

Conclusion

The Library's first priority is to make knowledge available and useful to the judiciary in the administration of justice. This primary purpose can be realized only if the library continues to acquire, organize, preserve, secure and sustain its unique collection for present and future.



Left to Right: Mrs. Erolyn Grinage, Ms. Angela Flowers