



# CARIBBEAN METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

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**CARIBBEAN METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL**  
SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION  
PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO  
16-17 NOVEMBER 2023

**Doc. 7**

## **SPECIAL CMO ISSUES**

(Submitted by the Coordinating Director)

### **Introduction**

1. This document is designed to keep the Council informed on significant regional issues related to the CMO. Some of these will require decisions or actions by Council to ensure that CMO Member States understand their roles and adhere to commitments and requirements. Some other items will likely be presented verbally. The agenda item covers primarily the following topics:

- (A) Review of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Institutions
- (B) 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Agreement of Establishment of the CMO in 1973
- (C) CMO Headquarters Staff Terminal Benefit Fund
- (D) Arrangements for Meteorological Forecast and Warning Services among CMO Member States

## A. Review of Caribbean Community Institutions (RCCI)

2. At the first Intersessional Meeting of the 61<sup>st</sup> Council, held virtually on 1 February 2022, Council was informed that the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) would conduct a review of its Community Institutions (CIs) to determine their efficacy and to make them "fit for purpose".

The Review had the following objectives and purpose:

- (1) Overall Objective: To determine the efficacy of Community Institutions and obtain actionable, and timely recommendations which will enable CARICOM to streamline its institutions, making them 'Fit for Purpose', able to deliver equitable and gender-sensitive services to the Member States; to improve the oversight of Community Institutions by the Community through the rationalisation of their functions, resources, structures and governance arrangements, and to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
- (2) Purpose: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the 17 Community Institutions.

3. The consultants were assigned by the Conference of Heads of Governments (CHOG) to review all CIs, with respect to the following three questions:

- Are they fit for purpose?
- Are they effective in delivery?
- Would the Region be harmed were they to be closed?

4. The CMO Headquarters cooperated fully with the process, providing extensive information to the consultants, Baastel, via responses to questionnaires; provisions of many documents and reports; participation in several consultation meetings; and responses to the reports from the Review.

5. Council should note that, per the Agreement for the Establishment of the CMO, the CIMH is an Organ of the CMO, and **operates under the legal and governance structure of the CMO**. However, the *Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas* (RTC, 2001) lists both the CMO and the CIMH as separate institutions, even though CIMH is an Organ of the CMO by law in each CMO Member State. No reason is provided in the RTC and there is no record of an associated decision by the Council, the supreme body of the CMO. The preliminary first report of the RCCI stated that:

*"Among the challenges identified for CMO is the apparent ambiguity regarding the relationship between the CMO and the CIMH, which stems from the inclusion of both the CMO and CIMH as separate Institutions under Article 21 of the RTC, even though the latter is an organ of the former."*

6. This ambiguity does not affect the legal status of the CMO Headquarters. However, the listing in the RTC led to an evaluation process that was designed and conducted in a manner that did not reflect the legal structure of the CMO, as a single institution with the following organs:

- the *Caribbean Meteorological Council* as the Governing, Ministerial-Level Body,
- the *Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology* (CIMH, formerly Caribbean Meteorological Institute or CMI),
- the *CMO Headquarters Unit* (as the Secretariat) and
- the *Caribbean Meteorological Foundation*.

7. It is important to note that, **in 2004, three years after the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas**, CMO was **reviewed as a single institution**, i.e., both CIMH and the Headquarters Unit were reviewed together and no changes were made to the boundary of the CMO at the end of that review. However, for this current Review, after an initial joint meeting with CMO Headquarters Unit and CIMH on 3 March 2022, the consultants interacted with each Organ of the CMO separately. Nonetheless, the CMO Headquarters Unit and CIMH exchanged their responses to the Consultants' first preliminary report

delivered in July 2022, clarifying various erroneous items and elaborating on the information presented in each respective report.

8. During September and October 2022, consultations were held with stakeholders of each CI and included surveys completed by CMO Headquarters' senior officers and technical staff. In November 2022, CMO Headquarters completed a survey as input with respect to the CIs with which we partner.

9. No further report was received from the consultants until the Third Draft report was delivered to the CMO Headquarters on 29 June 2023, following a video conference with the consultants when CMO was informed of their recommendations. A special meeting of the Institutions and the CARICOM Secretariat was convened in response to a media leak of the Third report. The meeting was formally requested by the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), to discuss the media breach, the impact on the region's reputation and donor agency relations as well as the recruitment, retention and morale of staff at institutions that were recommended for closure or mergers. An oral update on the RCCI was provided at the mid-year meeting of the Council (CMC64) on 14 July 2023. CMO Headquarters shared both the RCCI Third Report and its written response with the Council in August.

10. The consultants presented a Final Report Draft 1 of the RCCI to a meeting of the Heads of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Institutions, the RCCI Project Steering Committee, and the CARICOM Secretariat on **30 August 2023**, having submitted the supporting documents to the Institutions on the evening of 29 August 2023. Community Institutions were given until **6 September 2023** to provide input and feedback for the consultants to consider for inclusion in their Final Report.

11. The allotted period for responding was too short to convene a meeting of the Council. Therefore, the Coordinating Director shared the draft Final Report with the Chair of the Council and notified of the intention of the CMO Headquarters to provide a preliminary written response, until the Council could provide its position on the Report's recommendations. The CMO Headquarters' extensive written response was conveyed to the Chair of the Council, CARICOM Secretariat, and the consultants.

12. Council will note that the Final Report of the RCCI was received by CMO Headquarters on 2 October 2023 and shared immediately with the Chair of the Council and later in the month to the other members of Council. At the meeting with the CARICOM Secretariat on 30 August, CIs were told that the recommendations of the RCCI Final report would be considered by the **Caribbean Community Council** in December 2023.

13. Council will recall correspondence from CMO Headquarters supporting the scheduling of a special meeting of the Council to review and discuss the RCCI Final Report and determine its position on the recommendations before the Caribbean Community Council's December meeting. Unfortunately, the CMC meeting that was set for 1 November 2023 was cancelled because of a lack of quorum.

14. The 65<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Meteorological Council is therefore being asked to provide a written position for submission to the CARICOM Secretariat prior to that December meeting and to provide guidance on the way forward for the Organization given very consequential recommendations and the impact on the CMO Headquarters Unit, in particular.

## **B. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Agreement of Establishment of the CMO in 1973**

15. At CMC63, Council was reminded that October 2023 would mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Agreement for the establishment of the CMO and informed that the occasion would be celebrated in conjunction with the Annual Council Session to be hosted by the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Host Country of the CMO Headquarters. CMO Headquarters established a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coordination Committee, comprised of focal points from Member States and CIMH to plan the

commemorative activities (Table I). The committee aided in the choosing of a logo and theme of the year and in connecting with retired members of the CMO community and procuring videos and other remembrances.

Table 1. CMO 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coordination Committee

Denel	Dixon	St. Kitts and Nevis
Cécil	Mitchell	Grenada
Karen	Bazil-Lawerence	Dominica
Kerry	Powery Linwood	Cayman Islands
Arlene	Aaron-Morrison	Trinidad and Tobago
Tia	Browne	Barbados
Eron	McPherson	Guyana
Billy	Jeffers	St Vincent & the Grenadines
Jeffery	Jennings	Anguilla
Tiffany	Hennifield	Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI)
Dr Ashford	Reyes	CIMH
Lynne Marie	Deane	CIMH
Mauricia	Pegus	Ministry of Public Utilities, Trinidad & Tobago

16. Council is asked to express its gratitude to ***Ms Tevonna McDavid*** of Trinidad and Tobago, who designed the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo and lapel pin, as a staff member of the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service.

### C. CMO Headquarters Staff Terminal Benefit

17. Council will recall that, due to the small size of the staff complement, the Headquarters Unit does not have a staff pension fund, but instead operates a Headquarters *Staff Terminal Benefit Fund*. The Fund, which was established in 1995, requires three Trustees as signatories. Since inception, the first two have been the Coordinating Director and the Administrative Officer, while, for convenience and expediency, the third Trustee has been the Director of the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service, with approval from the parent Ministry. However, since the retirement of the former Director of the TTMS in 2018, the third Trustee position has been vacant. During the 61<sup>st</sup> CMC Session (Guyana, Virtual Platform), the delegate from Jamaica offered to serve, pending approval by the parent Ministry. Nevertheless, the position remains open due, a status that delays the required registration of the Fund as a Pension Plan within Trinidad and Tobago.

18. The 63<sup>rd</sup> Council nominated the ***Principal of CIMH*** to serve as the third Trustee. Since then, all trustee forms have been completed and signed and the documents are with the legal firm that will register the plan as required.

### D. Arrangements for Meteorological Forecast and Warning Services among CMO Member States

19. From the inception of the CMO in 1973, the Council agreed on the responsibilities of the NMHS of the States with Forecast and Warning Offices for those States without such offices. The arrangements have been modified in the intervening years but the fundamental premise of major cooperation and collaboration among all nations, on which the CMO was established, remains. The 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Council re-formalized the forecast and warning arrangements and the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Council reiterated Resolution 2 of the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of Council and reconsolidated the interface between its own arrangements and those of the WMO-led Regional Hurricane Operational Plan.

20. In 2021, questions were raised by the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Service to the Council about the formalities of the process and related costs for the services provided. So, the Council agreed to form a committee, which was chaired by Guyana and Belize, to review and discuss cost recovery as a part of regional forecasting arrangements and make a recommendation to the Council. At a meeting in February 2022, the committee considered the question raised by Antigua and Barbuda with respect to cost recovery for services provided to the aviation sector in Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and St Kitts and Nevis. The committee was of the view that the Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Service should be having discussions with the respective Civil Aviation Authority, instead of the various Meteorological Services, since the Civil Aviation Authorities are end users. The Committee offered several draft recommendations to be considered by the Council.

- Encourage CMO Member States to develop a cost recovery mechanism at the national-level as a means of sustaining aviation meteorological services
- Support the Meteorological Services in lobbying the relevant authorities in their national government for cost recovery;
- Reaffirm the spirit of cooperation among Member States, reiterating the resolutions taken at CMC 50/51;
- Commit the Council and the CMO Headquarters to providing support to Member States in their bid for cost recovery, inter-regionally.
- Determine who the actual partners are in the negotiation. The Meteorological Services should not be the negotiator. End users (immediate stakeholders) should be included in the discussion of cost recovery as they would be the most affected.
- Develop a regional formulation for a cost-recovery that would apply across CMO Member States, not only for a specific set of arrangements between States.

21. The 63<sup>rd</sup> Council discussion noted that the recommendations from the Committee were generic and did not address the question of cross-border cost recovery. It was also noted that border agreements for cost recovery would need an intermediary to audit the process so that, for example, if a percentage cost is agreed, the transaction amounts can be ascertained.

22. CMC63 **noted** the recommendations of the Committee with regard to the regional forecast and warning arrangements and cost recovery and **agreed** to defer a decision until an interim meeting of the Council. At the mid-year meeting of the CMC, held on 14 July, Antigua and Barbuda was not present so no further updates were provided.

23. At CMC63, it was noted that ***Air Safety Support International Limited (ASSI)***, under the auspices of the UK Department for Transport, had invited proposals for the provision of services to aviation in Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, and Montserrat, under a formal arrangement. The lack of a formal arrangement is contrary to the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 3, and the matter had then been outstanding for more than two years.

24. Council is reminded that ICAO requires that all meteorological services providers implement a quality management system (QMS) and that, prior to implementing cost recovery for aeronautical meteorological services, a QMS must be implemented.

25. Since CMC63, CMO Headquarters continued to support the delivery of meteorological services in CMO Member States and advancing QMS implementation, including:

- Meeting twice with the Regional Office of ICAO to discuss and receive clarification on matters of meteorological services for aviation, including QMS implementation, designation of meteorological authority, and modifications to ICAO definitions of those terms in 2023, which have implications for cost recovery.

- Collecting data from National Meteorological Services for a baseline assessment of QMS compliance among Member States as a necessary first step in assisting the Directors with establishing QMS following the WMO and ICAO guidelines.
- Meeting with the representative of the UK Met Office who visited the region in June 2023 and providing relevant information about the Organization and the regional forecasting arrangements that support the safety of the British Overseas Territories in the Caribbean. The representative was apprised of the concerns raised by Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services with regard to resources required to provide forecast and warnings to the neighbouring British Overseas Territories.

26. Council will recall the Statement issued by CMC58 (St Kitts and Nevis, 2018) with respect to QMS and the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority's (ECCAA's) mandate with ABMS and other meteorological services in the OECS region, for the oversight of meteorological services to aviation ([CMC58 report, Annex III](#)). The statement requested ECCAA, *"to give priority to providing oversight and expanding regulatory support (even through outsourcing) to Quality Management Systems in the Meteorological Services of the various States in the OECS region"*.

27. Council is informed by the Regional Office of ICAO that ECCCA has received technical support from ICAO to help to close the gaps in their capacity to provide oversight for meteorological services for aviation in OECS States.

28. Council will recall that the Barbados Meteorological Service provides forecast and warnings for Dominica and St Vincent and the Grenadines by agreement with CMO and the WMO Hurricane Committee (CMC51, Resolution 1). CMC63 was informed of difficulties encountered with the issuance and cessation of watches and warnings in Dominica, as their internal official processes for approval of warnings or end of warnings had delayed the issuance of watches and warnings in a timely manner. In one instance it took eight hours (8) for approval to be received, which created great risk to the population. The resulting delays reflected poorly on the Barbados Meteorological Service (BMS). It was noted that the BMS has a good working relationship with the Dominica Meteorological Service and the Meteorological Service of St Vincent and the Grenadines.

29. As a result of the ongoing problems with the issuance and cessation of warnings for Dominica, Council was informed that Barbados intended to request a change in the wording of the watches and warnings for tropical cyclones that are issued by the WMO Regional Specialized Meteorological Center/US National Hurricane Center. Therefore, for example, where the text would normally state that *"The Government of Barbados has issued a Tropical Storm Watch for Dominica"*, the text would be changed to state *"The Government of Dominica has issued a Tropical Storm Watch for Dominica"*.

30. Council is informed that the change of wording was accepted by the 45<sup>th</sup> Hurricane Committee.

31. The 63<sup>rd</sup> Council noted that relevant line Ministers need to be involved in this process in order to resolve this matter and CMO Headquarters was asked to facilitate discussions with senior officials of the governments involved. Council is asked to note that the Coordinating Director brought the matter to the attention of the Permanent Secretary of the parent Ministry of the Dominica Meteorological Service during an official visit to Dominica in March 2023. Advance correspondence on the matter was sent to the Honourable Minister, with a request for a meeting but he was unavailable during the visit.

## **ACTIONS PROPOSED TO COUNCIL**

32. **Council** is asked to:

- (i) **Recall** the final report of the Review of Caribbean Community Institutions and the recommendations of the Review with regard to the CMO

- (ii) **Recall also** the preliminary written response of CMO Headquarters to the Final Report Draft 1, which also applies to the Final Report of the Review
- (iii) **Note** the concerns raised by the CMO Headquarters about the inadequacies of the review process and its strong objections to the recommendations made about the future of the CMO Headquarters
- (iv) **Provide** written positions on the findings and recommendations for submission to the CARICOM Secretariat before the next meeting of the Caribbean Community Council
- (v) **Express** its gratitude to the members of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coordination Committee and the graphics artist who designed the logo for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- (vi) **Note** progress being made in towards the registration of the CMO Headquarters Staff Terminal Benefit Fund as a Pension Plan as required by law in Trinidad and Tobago.
- (vii) **Urge** Members to enact draft legislation for National Meteorological Service that provide a mechanism for the National Meteorological Service to recover cost for services and to engage in partnerships with public sector or private sector.
- (viii) **Discuss**, and **decide** on recommendations with regard to the regional forecast and warning arrangements and cost recovery.

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CMO Headquarters  
November 2023