

**Civil Service Association**

**National Executive**

**&**

**Staff Retreat**

**26<sup>th</sup> April 2006 & 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

**Report of Proceedings**

**Prepared by**  
**Victor Poyotte**  
**September 2006**

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## **1. Introduction**

The retreat was conducted in two (2) phases. Phase 1 was conducted on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2006 while Phase 2 was conducted on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006. During Phase 1, participants focused on measures to strengthen the institutional capacity of the union with particular reference to the annual work programming and budgeting activities. However, in the second session participants placed more emphasis on team building.

### *1.1 Retreat Objectives*

The objectives of the retreat were to introduce CSA staff to:

- The fundamental concepts of group activity and teamwork;
- Address group dynamics and teamwork issues;
- Provide opportunity for introspection and discuss issues involved in implementing teamwork;
- Provide opportunity to apply various methods and techniques of effective teamwork;
- Examine strategies and actions required to ensure more effective teamwork.
- Decide on the way forward for the union
- Establish a common goal for the union
- Establish focus and improve cohesiveness
- Clarify lines of communication
- Re-affirm commitment to the objectives and principles of the CSA
- Review the institutional framework of the union
- Examine and clarify the duties and responsibilities of the Executive and Secretariat
- Improve understanding of the core and support services offered
- Agree on a work programme priorities and a budget for the union

### *1.2 Target Group*

A total of seventeen (17) executive officers and members of staff of the Civil Service Association (CSA) participated in the two phases of the retreat. A list of participants is shown as Appendix 1 of the report.

### *1.3 Retreat Venue*

The venue for Phase 1 was the Mount of Prayer in Coubaril overlooking the city of Castries while Phase 2 was held at the Coco Creole Hotel. Both venues proved to be excellent choices for the activity.

### *1.4 Methodology*

The facilitator made presentations on most of the areas covered in the retreat with the exception of a few activities. Each presentation was followed by group activities and general discussions held in plenary.

## 2.0 Union Mandate

Discussion on the mandate of the union focused on the vision, mission and goals. The agreed statements of vision and mission are outlined overleaf.

### 2.1 Vision Statement

"A financially independent trade union operating within the confines of national trade union legislation, regulations and policies to protect the rights and interest of all members while contributing to their professional development and personal advancement."

### 2.2 Mission Statement

"To provide quality representation and deliver prompt and reliable industrial relations services to members in a manner that will facilitate full participation in union activities, the forging of strategic alliances with social partners, the building of trust and confidence in the union's programmes and activities.."

## 3. Presentations & Activities

The facilitator made a number of power point presentations and engaged participants in small group discussions. A detailed discussion on the presentations made and the small group activities undertaken follow.

### 3.1 Participant Expectations

The Facilitator invited each participant to state his/her individual expectations of the retreat. A list of the expectations identified by participants is shown as Table 1 below.

**Table 1 - A List of Expectations Identified by Participants**

No	Participants Expectations
1	A clear idea of what to be done and to set clear goals and objectives
2	More harmonious relationship between secretariat and the NEC
3	Better understanding of Union's objectives and the service needs of members
4	Decisions will be made to improve the terms and conditions for staff
5	The sessions will help officers and staff become better focus as a union
6	Identify problems affecting the union agenda
7	Have a unified goal, work as a cohesive team
8	Take steps to encourage self-development and progress
9	All concerned must show a determination to make a difference
10	Maintain continuity and togetherness
11	Resolution of internal conflicts that impact negatively on the work of the union
12	Encourage a more positive change in attitude by all parties
13	No realistic expectations unless drastic change in attitude
14	Better communication, establish clear boundaries and authority lines
15	Adopt strategies that will make the union more efficient as a unit

Afterwards the Facilitator made a presentation on the stated objectives of the retreat. He then led a discussion among participants about the similarities and differences in the statements.

### 3.2 Organizational Review

Using power point, The Facilitator made a presentation on the institutional arrangements of the union. In the discussion that ensued, the participants examined the Governance responsibilities of the NEC, the responsibilities of the various Standing Committees, the responsibilities of the Secretariat and the responsibilities of individual members of staff. It was agreed that the union should develop an 'Operations Manual' that documents guidelines for all organs of the union.

### 3.3 2006 Work Programme

Working in their groups, participants identified the needs of the union and established priorities for the remainder of the year. Participants also identified activities under core member services and administrative support services. A list of activities and schedule of implementation finalized during the second phase of the retreat is shown as Table 2 overleaf.

**Table 2 – Proposed 2006 Work Programme**

#### 2 (a) Member Service Activities

No	Specific Activities
<b>1</b>	<b><i>Industrial Relations</i></b>
	Prepare collective bargaining proposals
	Negotiate collective agreements –RSL & WASCO
	Sign collective agreements – GOSL, SLASPA, SLNA & BLBS
	Monitor the administration of collective agreements
	Intervene & resolve grievances as they arise
	Hold monthly meetings with the public service
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Member Representation</i></b>
	Support Activities of National Committees
	Support Activities of Affiliated Organizations
	Attend CPSA, PSI Meetings & Conferences
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Benefits Administration</i></b>
	Administer the Joint CLICO/CSA Insurance
	Administer the Annual Scholarship Awards
	Administer the Discount scheme
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Member Education &amp; Training</i></b>
	Develop a member orientation programme
	Prepare & implement a trade union education plan
	Conduct professional development training for members
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Information Dissemination</i></b>
	Conduct ongoing desk research & surveys
	Develop & maintain databases on membership etc
	Disseminate information through Newsletters & reports
<b>6</b>	<b><i>Career Guidance &amp; Counseling</i></b>
	Provide ongoing support to members
	Provide ongoing counseling to members

## 2 (b) Administrative Support Services

No.	Proposed Support Service Activities
<b>1</b>	<b><i>Governance</i></b>
	Review the CSA Constitution
	Develop an 'Administrative Policies Manual' for the union
	Review provisions of the Draft Labour Code
	Convene a special session of the National Executive Committee
	Convene monthly meetings on of the National Executive Committee
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Executive Management</i></b>
	Pursue the appointment of a Research Officer
	Present industrial relation strategies
	Provide administrative support to the National Executive Committee
	Provide administrative support to Standing & National Committees
	Establish strategic alliances & manage stakeholder relations
	Coordinate the building space rental activities
	Complete negotiations with staff of the Secretariat
	Publish & Implement the annual work plan
	Publish & submit annual progress reports
<b>3</b>	<b><i>General Administration</i></b>
	Coordinate clerical, secretarial & janitorial support activities
	Manage day to day office activities
	Hold monthly meetings with staff of the Administrative Secretariat
	Coordinate the material & supplies requisition list
	Maintain an updated Staff Vacation Leave Roster
	Finalize the database for the issuance of membership ID Cards
	Prepare a 'Membership Benefits Package' & administer the benefits
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Finance &amp; Accounting</i></b>
	Prepare & manage the approved annual budget
	Prepare investment or loan proposals
	Collect and deposit members dues & service fees
	Conduct of physical inventory & maintain the assets register
	Manage the cash flow, settle invoices & control finances
	Formalize a 'Bank Deposit Escort' programme
	Administer the monthly payroll
	Deduct & pay national insurance contributions
	Coordinate annual auditing
	Coordinate financial reporting
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Human Resource Management</i></b>
	Coordinate staff recruitment, selection & placement
	Maintain employee information & personal files
	Coordinate staff development & training
	Supervise staff & coordinate annual performance appraisals
<b>6</b>	<b><i>Public Relations</i></b>
	Compile member information, statistics & administrative reports
	Coordinate interviews, press conferences & publications

### 3.4 2006 Annual Budget

Participants discussed principles of Activity-Based Budgeting and examined a trend analysis of budgetary figures from 2001 to 2004. Details of the trend analysis are shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 –Summary of Trend Budget Analysis for 2001 to 2004**

<b>Description</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>EC\$</b>	<b>EC\$</b>	<b>EC\$</b>	<b>EC\$</b>
CLICO Administrative Fees	6,000	6,000	3,500	7,200
Insurance Commission	4,359	4,182	19,732	9,213
Members Subscriptions	530,929	566,680	578,411	581,904
Application Fees	1,480	1,095	1,610	1,565
Rental Income	108,023	20,509	3,625	15,770
Interest Income	49,227	97,674	131,829	103,782
Dividends Income	2,988	4,796	2,302	3,846
Other Income & Fund Raising	14,784	36,079	26,257	29,521
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>721,946</b>	<b>748,742</b>	<b>767,431</b>	<b>704,801</b>
<b>RECURRENT EXPENDITURE</b>				
Identification Cards	2,990	3,230	2,530	660
Salaries	260,641	252,713	343,997	316,960
Scholarship Expenses	15,661	16,703	21,744	23,168
Travelling Allowances	9,006	10,569	7,495	10,808
Depreciation	59,529	59,404	77,244	59,523
Affiliation Fees	6,545	2,097	15,080	5,720
Insurance	13,582	7,288	10,193	6,145
Education & Training Expenses	1,834	6,102	13,552	7,790
Office & Building Supplies	17,105	18,484	32,121	32,482
Advertising & Promotion	5,308	5,984	10,437	14,870
Bank Charges	1,660	1,159	2,492	1,940
Meetings & Activities	20,569	14,451	35,471	25,369
Miscellaneous	1,833	1,042	30	2,386
Property Taxes	700	700	1,400	700
Repairs & Maintenance	10,965	6,628	9,926	42,003
Regional & International Meetings	40,783	19,954	37,031	24,602
Utilities	20,741	23,124	37,344	32,535
Audit & Accounting Fees	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Special Assistance	6,936	2,525	2,727	1,918
Legal & Professional Fees	350	5,200	4,120	17,701
CSA Week Expenses	10,961	42,991	351	19,298
Caretaker Fees	7,660	3,000	1,310	2,445
Staff Uniforms	3,769	2,093	2,600	5,142
Sports Committee Expenses	1,378	1,891	2,429	1,785
Donations	100	859	12,277	3,885
May Day Expenses	11,274	627	-	2,550
Security	881	1,612	2,583	2,717
50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	43,303	-	-	-
Loan Interest	-	4,575	26,930	2,736
Office Rental Expenses	-	-	25,200	26,438
Bad Debt Expenses	-	-	30,817	-
<b>Total Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>586,084</b>	<b>525,836</b>	<b>779,431</b>	<b>704,276</b>
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>				
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>135,862</b>	<b>222,906</b>	<b>(12,165)</b>	<b>48,525</b>

Participants also reviewed the schedule of activities in the trend analysis and proposed a new work programme for 2007. Details of the activities considered are shown as Table 4 below.

**Table 4 – Proposed Programme Activities for 2007**

<b>No</b>	<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Personnel Emoluments</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>Advertising &amp; Promotion</b>
1.1	-Salaries	12.1	-Public Relations
1.2	-Allowances	12.2	-Publications
1.3	-Performance Bonus	12.3	-Advertising
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Travel &amp; Subsistence</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>Affiliation &amp; Subscriptions</b>
2.1	-Casual Mileage	13.1	-Memberships in Organizations
2.2	-Meal Allowance	13.2	-Subscriptions to Publications
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Office &amp; General</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>Committee Operations</b>
3.1	-Staff Uniforms	14.1	-National Executive Committee
3.2	-Caretaker Services	14.2	-General Council
3.3	-Security Services	14.3	-Branch Executive Committees
<b>3.4</b>	-Identification Cards	14.4	-Grievance Committee
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	14.5	-Finance Committee
4.1	-Scholarships	14.6	-Management Committee
4.2	-Bursaries (Special Assistance)	14.7	-Publicity Committee
4.3	-Seminars & Workshops	14.8	-Shop Stewards Committee
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Operating &amp; Maintenance</b>	14.9	-Sports Committee
5.1	-Property Taxes	<b>15.0</b>	<b>Overseas Meetings &amp; Conferences</b>
5.2	-Furniture & Equipment Repairs	15.1	-Taxi-fare
5.3	-Building Repairs	15.2	-Airfare
5.4	-Grounds Maintenance	15.3	-Accommodation
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Utilities</b>	15.4	-Registration Fees
	-Electricity	15.5	-Subsistence Allowances
	-Water	<b>16.0</b>	<b>Meetings of Members</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Communication</b>	16.1	-Biennial Convention
7.1	-Telephone	16.2	-Annual General Meeting
7.2	-Internet	16.3	-Extra-Ordinary General Meeting
7.3	-Postal	<b>17.0</b>	<b>National Representation</b>
7.4	-Courier	17.1	-Training Committee
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>	17.2	-Travelling & Subsistence Committee
8.1	-Office Supplies & Materials	17.3	-Staffing & Structure Committee
8.2	-Building Supplies & Materials	17.4	-Housing Committee
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Professional &amp; Consultancy</b>	17.5	-Honorarium Committee
9.1	-Legal Services	<b>18.0</b>	<b>Industrial Relations</b>
9.2	-Accounting Services	18.1	-Collective Bargaining/Negotiations
9.3	-Auditing Services	18.2	-Grievance Handling
9.4	-Consultancy Services	<b>19.0</b>	<b>Insurance</b>
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Facilities Rental</b>	19.1	-Building
10.1	-Conference Room	19.2	-Furniture & Equipment
10.2	-Equipment	19.3	-National Insurance Contributions
10.3	-Conference Furniture	<b>20.0</b>	<b>Bank Loans &amp; Charges</b>
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Special Events</b>	20.1	-Loan Interest
11.1	-May Day Celebrations	20.2	-Bank Charges
11.2	-CSA Week Celebrations	<b>21.0</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Expenses</b>
11.3	-International Women's Day	21.1	-Depreciation
11.4	-Other Celebrations	21.2	-Bad Debt Expenses

Using figures from the trend analysis, participants estimated the cost of activities proposed for the 2007 work programme. Details of the budget proposed for 2007 are shown as Table 5 below.

**Table 5 - Proposed Budget Outline: January to December 2007**

Description	2006
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>EC\$</b>
CLICO Administrative Fees	39,600
Insurance Commission	
Members Subscriptions	588,000
Application Fees	2,000
Rental Income	59,000
Interest Income	110,000
Dividends Income	3,000
Other Income & Fund Raising	30,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>831,600</b>
<b>RECURRENT EXPENDITURE</b>	
Personnel Emoluments	334100
Travel & Subsistence	22600
Office & General	13700
Education & Training	35500
Operating & Maintenance	21200
Utilities	33600
Communication	34163
Supplies & Materials	40000
Professional & Consultancy	18000
Facilities Rental	2500
Special Events	19700
Advertising & Promotion	18000
Affiliation & Subscriptions	10000
Committee Operations	18000
Meetings & Conferences	30000
Meeting of Members	21000
National Representation	10000
Industrial Relations	63225
Insurance	22800
Bank Loans & Charges	62500
Miscellaneous Expenses	9000
<b>Total Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>839,588</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	
Building Repairs & Renovations	20,000
Office Furniture	10,000
Computers & Accessories	8,000
Other Office Equipment	3,500
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>41,500</b>
<b>Net Budget Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>(49,488)</b>

### *3.5 Organizational Capacity*

Discussions centered on the capacity of the union to deliver services to members. Participants examined the skills available at the level of officers and staff. It was felt that the union lacks the capacity to engage in meaningful strategic and operational planning and that the NEC adopts a crisis approach to the management of the affairs of the union. There is also too much red tape involved in making and implementing decisions of the organization.

Participants also highlighted the need to address a number of outstanding issues affecting the staff. Among these include the need for the union to introduce a Staff Training Policy, conduct annual Staff Training Needs Assessment and implement it. Also, staff should be provided with incentives to undertake self-development activities in areas that would be beneficial to the union.

### *3.6 Managing Organizational Diversity*

Participants also examined the impact of organizational diversity on the operations of the union. Among the many issues discussed were the need for officers and staff to develop a much better understanding of individual differences and variations in each other's roles and responsibilities.

Participants felt that generally, members, officers and staff lack an awareness of each other's role and functions in the union. They therefore agreed that steps should be taken to organize and conduct an annual orientation programme to raise the consciousness of members, officers and staff. Such a programme would also be aimed at preparing the next generation of leaders of the union.

### *3.7 Managing Organizational Conflict*

It is clear that the union must resolve the important issue of the role of volunteer officers on the NEC or Standing Committees as against that of the permanent appointees in the Secretariat. Officers and staff must make a greater effort to demonstrate a positive attitude towards each other. Improved communication between is vital if the various organs of the Secretariat is to function more efficiently and effectively. Very little can be achieved if officers and staff do not show more trust and confidence in each other. The NEC must also demonstrative a higher level of leadership in order to tackle the day-to-day conflicts more effectively.

## **4. Action Planning**

Working in their groups participants developed action plans containing specific follow-up actions to be carried out by the National Executive Committee and individual officers such as the President, Secretary and Treasurer. The plans outlined what they should start doing, what they should do more of, what they should do less of and what they should stop doing. A summary of the action plans is given under the respective headings in the sections that follow.

### *4.1 Start Doing*

Participants identified a number of the actions that the National Executive Committee and more specifically the President, Secretary and Treasurer should start doing. Details of these actions are given in Table 6 overleaf.

**Table 6 – What CSA Officials Should Start Doing:**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Follow-up Action Plan</b>
1	Treasurer	-Operate with a budget -Become an independent thinker
2	Executive	-Execute plans and programmes with less interference -Organize more social activities with staff -Understand and learn about the organization -Visit departments regularly and interact with members -Follow established channels of communication -Be proactive -Improve understanding of the role of the Secretariat and staff -Provide the staff with training needed to be more efficient
3	Secretariat	-Present accurate summaries of events -Record information properly and obtain advise -Focus on staff development
	President	-Initiate developmental ideas and strategies -Make more statements to the press on matters of concern -Hold general meetings on major issues affecting members

*4.2 Doing More of:*

Participants identified a number of the actions that the National Executive Committee and more specifically the President, Secretary and Treasurer should do more of. Details of these actions are given in Table 7 below.

**Table 7 - What CSA Officials Should Do More Of:**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Follow-up Action Plan</b>
1	President	-Get to know organization better -Deal with issues more timely and forcefully -Lead the NEC, give guidance and control discussions -Public and media activities -Control the Secretariat, communicate and participate -Listen and be in contact with members -Obtain information about their needs -Learn about the organization
2	Secretary	-Take charge of work and follow-up -Call meetings when necessary -Recognize when there is an issue and how to solve it -Organize activities and discuss work programmes -Have faith in the association and administrative staff -Be courteous to the staff -Read events correctly to facilitate sound decision making -Be fair and impartial -Communicate effectively and follow-up on decisions
3	Executive	-Govern the affairs of the CSA -Complete tasks on time -Contact with members -Meet with departments -Stick-to-itive-ness and action -Develop new ideas, staff appreciation and staff concerns

### 4.3 Doing Less of

Participants identified a number of the actions that the National Executive Committee and more specifically the President, Secretary and Treasurer should do less of. Details of these actions are given in Table 8 overleaf.

**Table 8 - What CSA Officials Should Do Less Of:**

No.	Designation	Follow-up Action Plan
1	Executive	-An authoritative approach in dealing with staff -Now for now, procrastinating and talk -Long discussion over trivial things
2	Secretariat	-Complaining of petty issues that can be easily resolved -Cliques and holding grudges, feeling insecure & tension -Thinking about offending NEC members -Accommodating petty discussions and destructive habits -Taking sides and engaging staff in NEC decisions.
3	Executive	-Focus on tours and overseas trips -Concentrate on what CSA can do but what can be done

### 4.4 Stop Doing

Participants identified a number of the actions that the National Executive Committee and more specifically the President, Secretary and Treasurer should stop doing. Details of these actions are given in Table 9 overleaf.

**Table 9 - What CSA Officials Should Stop Doing:**

No.	Designation	Follow-up Action Plan
1	Secretariat	-Separating self from staff and employees -Bad talking and gossip -Blaming others and last minute work
2	Executive	-Abusing each other at meetings and blaming staff -Encouraging manipulation and undermining of each other -Showing favouritism, too aggressive, too negative -Leaving NEC meeting before time -Convening too many meetings to finalize plans
3	President	-Depending on other officers to do what you should do -Being aggressive

## 5. Retreat Evaluation

The evaluation covered the content of the retreat, administrative support provided, the lessons learnt and the overall impressions of participants.

### 5.1 Retreat Content

Generally, the participants felt that that all the topics discussed were extremely important. However, due to the late start of the retreat some areas were not dealt with. It was agreed that the Secretariat would make arrangements for a follow-up session within the earliest possible time.

## 5.2 Administrative Support

The CSA national executive and staff provided much needed assistance to ensure the successful implementation of the retreat. The CSA assistance took the form of making logistical arrangements such as coordinating its members and staff participation and arranging for the necessary equipment and supplies.

## 5.3 Lessons Learnt

Generally, participants agreed that they learnt many lessons from the retreat. Among these include:

- It is important for the CSA to nurture the person side of the organization.
- There is need to manage and accept diversity and to recognize what makes each person different.
- The basic premise is that with the employment of a new staff member a new team is being created.
- That change is necessary, however, it has to be comprehensive and incremental.
- CSA needs to deal with conflicts in role of the NEC as an employer and simultaneously as a trade union.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned discussions, a number of conclusions were drawn and recommendations made to address the issues identified. These are identified in Table 8 below.

**Table 8 - Summary Conclusions and Recommendations**

No	Conclusions	Recommendations
1	The CSA Secretariat does not have a long history of engaging in strategic and operational planning	The CSA should prepare a five-year strategic plan, convene annual retreats to review its performance and to develop operational plans
2	In past years, the NEC did not mandate the Treasurer and the Secretariat to prepare an annual budget	The NEC should require the Treasurer and the Secretariat to prepare an annual budget using the format developed at the retreat
3	There are a number of matters relating to the terms and conditions of employment of the staff that are still outstanding	The NEC should address all matters relating to the terms and conditions of employment of the staff as soon as possible
4	The institutional capacity of the Secretariat to deliver industrial relations services to members is inadequate	The NEC must strengthen the institutional capacity of the Secretariat to deliver industrial relations services to members
5	Lack of clarity between the role of staff and officers of the union often result in role conflict	Prepare an Operations Manual that documents the administrative policies and procedures of the union
6	The union does not have an orientation programme for officers serving on the executive and on committees and for the staff	The union should develop and implement an orientation programme for officers serving on the executive and on committees and for the staff

**Appendix 1**  
**List of Participants**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
	<b>Executive Officer</b>	
1	Joseph Dosserie	President
2	Francis Raphael	Immediate Past President
3	Amy Charles	3rd Vice President
4	Cyprian Montrope	Treasurer
5	Damian Monroe	Public Relations Officer
6	Carlisle Marshall	Trustee
7	Cynthia Labadie	Trustee
8	Josephine Farrell	Trustee
	<b>CSA Staff</b>	
9	David Demacque	General secretary
10	Lilia Auguste	Assistant General secretary
11	Hayden Forde	Industrial relations Officer
12	Karen Davis	Office Secretary
13	Brenda Dayes	Accounts Clerk
14	Philomen Darius-Constantin	Insurance Coordinator
15	Velitta Isidore	CSA Staff
16	Sophia Daniel	CSA Staff
17	Christine Constantine	Office Assistant