



FOCUS

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Electronic Signatures & the Private Client

Sharmon Y. Ingraham



Wet ink signatures are the standard mode of execution for various documents employed in trusts, wills and estates practice. The practice utilizes various documents including written instruments, letters of direction, contracts, powers of attorney, deeds and wills. These documents are often executed in the presence of witnesses; in some instances, the documents are mandated to be executed with witnesses in attendance to comply with statutory requirements. In the midst of a pandemic, travel and movement restrictions, and physical distancing mandates, the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2006 of The Bahamas (the “ECT Act”)

may provide a useful option for the execution of documents for use in The Bahamas. While the ECT Act makes it possible to execute electronically some documents thereby, addressing certain challenges presented by the pandemic, the execution of other documents has been excluded from the scope of the ECT Act as indicated hereafter. Nonetheless, the option to execute by using electronic or digital signatures does exist and may be a useful tool in the practice area.

In the trusts, wills and estates practice area there are two tiers of documents: the core or foundational documents which establish the relationship; and

operational, or supplemental documents by which the relationship is managed. The core documents include trust deeds, wills and testamentary instruments and enduring powers of attorney. The supplemental documents include letters of directions, written instruments, resolutions and contracts. The first tier documents, which are also subject to additional execution requirements, have been excluded from the application of the ECT Act. Specifically, the electronic execution of wills or testamentary instruments, trusts, enduring powers of attorney and other deeds are not permitted. Consequently, it is with the second tier documents where the ECT Act has utility.

The signature is a critical element in the execution of documents. Although wet ink signatures are predominantly used, English common law has accepted various alternative representations as valid signatures. Acceptable representations of a signature include a rubber stamp of a signature, the making of a distinguishing mark and making a cross. In accepting alternatives to a wet ink signature, the courts have established that whatever represents a party's signature must be intended as a signature and to authenticate the document so signed. The House of Lords in the case of *Caton v Caton* (1867) LR 2 HL 127, stated variously:

- “The cases on this point ... establish that the mere circumstances of the name of a party being written by himself in the body of a memorandum of agreement will not of itself constitute a signature. It must be inserted in the writing in such a manner as to have the effect of ‘authenticating the instrument’

or ‘so as to govern the whole instrument’ ... The name of the party, and its application to the whole of the instrument, can alone satisfy the requisites of a signature.” Per Lord Chelmsford; and

- “... be so placed as to show that it was intended to relate and refer to, and that in fact it does relate and refer to, every part of the instrument ... It must govern every part of the instrument. It must shew that every part of the instrument emanates from the individual so signing, and that the signature was intended to have that effect. It follows that if a signature be found in an instrument incidentally only, or having relation and reference only to a portion of the instrument, the signature cannot have legal effect and force which it must have in order to comply with the statute, and to give authenticity to the whole of the memorandum.” Per Lord Westbury.

The above statements of what constitutes a signature have resulted in the considered view that a party's full name, last name, initials, or combination of letters and numbers inserted into a document as an intended signature and authentication would be accepted (see *Mehta v J Pereira Fernandes S.A.* [2006] EWHC 813 (Ch)). More recently, in *Golden Ocean Group Limited v Salgaocar Mining Industries PVT Ltd* and another [2011] EWHC 56 (Comm) it was accepted that an electronically printed signature, voluntarily inserted into email communications was sufficient to establish a valid agreement. These developments in the common law

establish an environment where electronic, or digital, signatures may be more readily used and accepted and make it possible for platforms and services to facilitate the electronic execution of documents to be used.

Consistent with the principles established in common law, the ECT Act provides that:

- “‘signed’ or ‘signature’ includes any symbol executed or adopted, or any methodology or procedure employed or adopted, by a person with the intention of authenticating a record, including electronic methods”; and
- “‘electronic signature’ means any letters, characters, numbers, sound, process or symbols in electronic form attached to, or logically associated with information that is used by a signatory to indicate his intention to be bound by the content of that information”.

Further, section 9 of the ECT Act provides:

“Where the law requires the signature of a person, that requirement is met in relation to an electronic communication if a method is used to identify that person and to indicate that the person intended to sign or otherwise adopt the information in the electronic communication.”

Section 9 also states that the electronic signature may be proven by showing that a process existed requiring a party to execute a symbol or security procedure to verify the party.

The provisions of the ECT Act create as well an environment where the use of electronic or digital signatures


may be a viable option. This is bolstered by language which incorporates platforms and services that tailor its offerings to electronic or digital execution. The incorporation of terms like ‘characters’, ‘numbers’, ‘process or symbols’ suggests such platforms and services could be used by persons in taking advantage of the option.

In light of the above, where a person, or party, has adopted or established an electronic signature, or been assigned a distinct identifying code, symbol or mark, the use of such signature, code, symbol or mark should satisfy both the common law and statutory requirements for acceptance as a valid signature. An intentional use of the form of signature adopted by the person in a document to demonstrate the

approval of the content or purpose of such document also satisfies the above legal requirements.

In practice, it would be possible to effect the valid execution of a written instrument; for example appointing an office holder, using electronic or digital signatures under Bahamian law. The form of the signature may be “any letters, characters, numbers, sounds, process or symbols” which have either been adopted as that person’s signature or assigned to the person by the service or platform chosen. The form of signature must however be clearly associated with the party to demonstrate, when used, the intention of that party to be bound by the document electronically or digitally executed. Other examples where the use of electronic or digital,

signatures may be useful include the execution of letters directing the undertaking of a particular action and instruction.

Even though the ECT Act cannot be applied to every document essential to trusts, wills and estates practice, it can assist in the execution of other necessary documents to progress the work of the practice area. At a time when restrictions and difficulties in execution of documents prevail primarily due to the limited mobility or assemblage of individuals, the option to electronically execute may alleviate some concerns and problems and offer a useful tool in the right circumstances. 

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Extension of Global Platform Via Collaboration with Andersen Global

Higgs & Johnson has extended its global platform through a Collaboration Agreement with Andersen Global, an international association of legally separate, independent member firms comprised of tax and legal professionals around the world.

With offices in New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco, Higgs & Johnson works across all industries with capabilities in commercial, financial, intellectual property, litigation, private client services, insolvency and corporate restructuring, real estate, securities and investment funds, shipping, aviation, tax and government and regulatory affairs.

“Not only is Higgs & Johnson one of the largest firms in the Bahamas, but they have been recognized as leaders and experts for many years,” Andersen Global Chairman and Andersen CEO Mark Vorsatz said. “Their client-focused approach and commitment to excellence align with our

organization’s values and culture. I’m certain that our synergy will bring seamless solutions to our clients in the Bahamas and across the globe.”

“We truly believe that our clients deserve the highest level of service,” noted Senior Partner, Philip C. Dunkley QC. “To exceed their expectations, we promote stewardship and maintain transparency when handling client matters. For over 70 years, we’ve had a reputation for delivering high-quality and reliable services to our clients. This collaboration strengthens our commitment to our clients’ needs and further equips us to provide best-in-class solutions globally.”

Andersen Global was established in 2013 by U.S. member firm Andersen Tax LLC, Andersen Global and through its various expansion initiatives now has more than 7,000 professionals worldwide with a presence in over 251 locations through its member firms and collaborating firms.

All Cleared!

Keith O. Major, Jr.

Over the last five (5) years in particular, the domestic Bahamian aviation landscape has seen numerous and much welcomed modernizations. The introduction of new aviation related legislation, either entirely repealed or replaced in part, predecessor legislation and has driven the majority of the recent modernizations in the aviation sector. The most recent spate of modernizations began in 2016, with the passage of the Civil Aviation Act, 2016 (“CAA2016”).

2016

The CAA2016 for the first time in The Bahamas, brought about the creation of a civil aviation authority, debuting its functionally separated internal component entities. The new civil aviation authority also replaced the former all-in-one civil aviation department. At its outset, the new authority established by the CAA2016 collectively oversaw the functions of air navigation services, flight standards, aircraft investigation and general regulation and safety oversight of civil aviation in The Bahamas. The specific functions of air navigations services and aircraft investigations were performed by the authority’s two (2) functionally separate sections of the civil aviation authority namely: The Bahamas Air Navigation Services Division (“BANSD”) and The Air Accident Investigation Department (“AAID”), respectively.

2017

Subsequent to the CAA2016, in 2017 the Bahamian aviation landscape was once again modernized with the introduction of the Schedule 27 rules which governed drone operations in

The Bahamas. As a result of drones becoming increasingly popular and common place in today’s aviation space, many state aviation regulators around the world have had to make such adjustments. The need to provide adjustments with respect to drone regulations is predicted to continue as the sector continues to evolve, and become even more mainstream.

2019-2020

2019 witnessed the further expansion of the Bahamian aviation landscape by the passage of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority Act, 2019 (“AAIAA2019”). Chiefly, the introduction of this legislation served to separate the function of investigation of aircraft related incidents out of the civil aviation authority into a new independent authority known as the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority (“AAIA”). The AAIA, which now operates under the Ministry of Transport and Local Government, was first established as a separate entity within The Bahamas’ civil aviation authority known as the AAID in 2016.

By way of the AAIAA2019, the AAID was transformed into a separate and autonomous authority in December 2019, now known as the AAIA. The AAIA continues to investigate aviation accidents and incidents to determine what transpired and to make recommendations geared towards improving safety. The AAIA is governed by a four (4) member board (commissioned in July 2020), and is provided with direct state funding to address its mandate. In furtherance of its mandate, the AAIA has entered into various Memoranda

of Understanding with key assets and stakeholders in aircraft accident investigations, which all clearly outline the framework of assistance obligations.

2021

AAIA

In February 2021, in exercise of the powers provided under the AAIAA2019, The Minister responsible for the AAIA promulgated the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority Regulations, 2021 (“AAIAR2021”) which detail the rules governing every aspect of aircraft investigations including but not limited to: (i) accident reporting; (ii) the form and conduct of investigations; (iii) powers of accident investigators (iv) preservation of wreckage and records; and (v) preliminary and final accident reports.

The Bahamas’ recent passage of a three-part compendium of aviation legislation, namely: the Civil Aviation Act, 2021 (“CAA2021”); the Civil Aviation Authority Bahamas Act, 2021 (“CAABA”); and the Bahamas Air Navigation Services Authority Act, 2021 (“BANSAA”), represents the most recent installment in the country’s saga of primary aviation legislation advancements.

CAA2021

CAA2021 repeals and replaces the CAA2016 in its entirety. It also provides for: (i) extra-territorial effect of the CAA2021; (ii) the creation of a registry setting out each locally registered aircraft; and (iii) detailing of the classes of aviation persons and / or operations which require licensure, permission or certification under the new CAA2021. With respect to matters of private law, the

CAA2021 makes provision for the statutory assigning or non-assigning of liability (through immunity) with respect to trespass, nuisance and damages claims against aircraft owners vis a viz aircraft operators. Of considerable note is the fact that the CAA2021 introduces a new statutory discretion in favour of the Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority to authorize the registration of an aircraft privately owned by a person (other than a Permanent Resident of The Bahamas) or corporation of another State. However and perhaps most innovatively, the CAA2021 includes for the first time in Bahamian aviation legislation, statutory footing for the Minister responsible for civil aviation to promulgate subsidiary legislation regulating spaceflight or sub-orbital flight.

CAABA

CAABA is a new introduction to the Bahamian aviation landscape which provides for the continuation of the civil aviation authority which was initially established under the CAA2016 and now known as the Civil Aviation Authority Bahamas ("CAAB"). Under the CAABA, the CAAB is mandated to expand its public registries from only a listing of all aerodromes in The Bahamas to also setting out: (i) every application for and grant of an aviation license, permit or certificate (inclusive of an Air Operator Certificate); (ii) all civil aircraft registered in The Bahamas; and (iii) every exemption granted under the CAA2021.

Additionally, as provided for under the CAA2016, the CAABA (with enhanced provisions) mandates the CAAB to maintain a record of interest in civil aircraft registered in The Bahamas. The CAAB is set to be

governed by a three (3) to six (6) member board, and authorized to receive funding from parliamentary allocations, the imposition of fees and charges or borrowing. Of particular note is the statutory immunity provided to officers and employees of the CAAB and the statutory establishment of Ministerial responsibility with respect to search and rescue operations in the event of an aircraft accident or aircraft in distress.

BANSAA

BANSAA facilitates the full separation (versus functional separation) between the now autonomous air navigation service provider: Bahamas Air Navigation Services Authority ("BANSAA") and the CAAB, the aviation regulator which is responsible for safety oversight. This is a move which this writer has always supported.* The BANSAA is set to be governed by a three (3) to five (5) member board, and authorized to receive funding from parliamentary allocations, the imposition of fees and charges or borrowing. While the detention of aircraft was previously provided for in the now repealed CAA2016, the introduction of statutory liens is another new comer with respect to Bahamian aviation legislative provisions. Under BANSAA, the Director of BANSAA is empowered to enter a statutory lien in respect of any aircraft regarding any portion of a service charge or late payment penalty imposed under BANSAA, which remains unpaid by its due date.

Particularly, worthy of mention in relation to the BANSAA is the mechanism set out therein for the establishment and collection of overflight fees with respect to The Bahamas' airspace. The collection of

overflight fees has become increasingly popular in recent years; while there has been tangible progress, it remains an area under active discussion between The Bahamas and the United States of America and their respective governments.

AAAB2021


On 25th March 2021, the Senate of The Bahamas passed the Airport Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2021 ("AAAB") one day after it was passed by the Bahamian House of Assembly on the 24th March 2021. Once assented to by the Governor-General and coming into force, the AAAB will facilitate the government's acquisition of the Grand Bahama International Airport (GBIA), which until acquired by the government is owned by Hutchison Ports and the Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA). An additional effect of the AAAB, once it comes into effect, is also that the local Airport Authority's mandate and number of airports, for which it is charged with responsibility, will increase to thirty (30).

CARs and Guidance Materials

New regulations and guidance materials, which replace the now outdated civil aviation regulations and schedules (repealed by the CAA2021) were promulgated on 25th March 2021 by the Director General of the CAAB. These new regulations and guidance materials cover civil aviation matters including but not limited to definition and measurements, environmental impact, airworthiness, search and rescue, aerodromes, licensing and registration of aircraft, and remotely piloted aircraft operations.

In closing, the 2021 compendium of

aviation legislation along with the other new 2021 legislative amendments and regulations take off from all of the previous progressive advancements made in the local

aviation sector stemming from the CAA2016; and lands The Bahamas even further as relates to the state of global aviation legislation in the 21st century. 

*Major, Jr., K.O. 2018 'A Case Study of Global Best Practices in the Reorganization of Air Traffic Control Services' *Issues in Aviation Law and Policy* Vol. 18, Issue No. 1, Autumn 2018, pp. 162-164



Keith O. Major, Jr. is Co-Deputy Chair of the firm's Maritime & Aviation practice group and an associate in the firm's Litigation practice group. His practice includes matters relating to Aviation, Asset Recovery and General Civil Litigation. Keith is currently the Deputy Chairman of the newly formed Aircraft Accident Investigations Authority Board (AAIA).
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Bahamas Purpose Trusts & Cayman STAR Trusts: Kindred Spirits with Differences

Nia G. Rolle

The evolution of purpose trusts is a prime example of the versatility of trusts as an estate planning vehicle. Traditionally, a valid trust had to be established for named beneficiaries or charitable purposes, and consequently, non-charitable purpose trusts were not recognised by common law. As a progressive response, some offshore jurisdictions have enacted legislation which provided for the creation of non-charitable purpose trusts.

The Bahamas' Purpose Trust Act, 2004 ("PT Act") and the Cayman Islands' Special Trusts (Alternative Regime) Law 1997 ("STAR Law"), being incorporated in Cayman's Trusts Law (2020 Revision) ("Trusts Law"), introduced forms of non-charitable purpose trusts which may be established for purposes (charitable or non-charitable) or for persons or a combination of them. The Bahamas' authorised purpose trust ("PT") and the Cayman STAR trust ("STAR Trust") are capable of being perpetual in nature. While this is distinguishable from other Cayman trusts, except for charitable trusts, The Bahamas has abolished the rule against perpetuities for all trusts made after December 2011, unless the parties prefer some limited

period for the existence of a trust.

Purpose trusts have become more popular because of their various estate planning and commercial uses, such as holding high-risk assets, creating dynasty-style trusts for the purpose of holding family assets, or where the information rights of beneficiaries need to be restricted. Although STAR Trusts and PTs are similar creatures, some distinctions follow.

Authorised Applicant/Enforcer

Since purpose trusts generally may not have beneficiaries, a person must be appointed to hold the trustees thereof accountable for administering such trusts in accordance with their stated purposes. Such person is known as the "authorised applicant" under the PT Act and the "enforcer" under the STAR Law.

Should there be no authorised applicant/enforcer acting, the trustee must put one in place pursuant to the trust instrument or apply for a court appointment of one. In the Cayman Islands, a trustee has a statutory duty to apply to their courts within thirty days of the absence of an enforcer or be liable to

a fine, but a trustee of a PT is not subject to such strict statutory obligations. Perhaps, the duty of the trustee under the STAR Law is more onerous because unlike in The Bahamas, without an enforcer, a STAR Trust established in perpetuity or for a period of more than 150 years is likely to fail under the Trusts Law. Contrarily, even if a PT established in perpetuity falls outside of the realm of the PT Act, then such PT might still qualify as an ordinary trust as a result of the Rule Against Perpetuities (Abolition) Act.

Trustee's duty to prevent unlawful acceptance

Further, the trustee of a STAR Trust commits an offence when it accepts property thereunder without ascertaining that the settlor or a person acting on his behalf understands who will have standing to enforce that STAR Trust. No such offence exists under the PT Act; conceivably, because in The Bahamas the settlor is automatically an authorised applicant, unless the trust instrument expresses otherwise.

Non-charitable purposes

It is doubtful whether a STAR Trust can state that its purpose is to hold


the shares of its underlying company*. More complex wording is suggested to accomplish the settlor's intention under STAR Law. The PT Act, on the other hand, creates certainty by providing that a PT "may be declared for a non-charitable purpose, including, exclusively or otherwise, the purpose of holding, or investing in shares in a company".

Duty to oversee investments

In instances where the PT Act is silent, the law relating to PTs is the same as the law relating to ordinary trusts. That law includes the Trustee

Act, 1998, which grants protection to a trustee of a trust where the trust instrument thereunder provides that the trustee's power of investment is exercisable only upon direction of a third-party power holder. Therefore, the trustee is not liable if such trustee acts in accordance with that investment direction, fails to do anything other than act in accordance with that direction or fails to act if no such direction is given. Effectively, without the invocation of the statutory protection in the trust instrument,

the trustee might have residual liability for investments. No such statutory exoneration is found in the Trusts Law.

In conclusion, PTs and STAR Trusts are kindred entities. Possibly, because the PT was introduced after the STAR Trust, such PT offers a bit more clarity and flexibility as evidenced by the differences outlined. 

**Kessler, J., and T. Pursall. Drafting Cayman Islands Trusts, paragraph 17.5; Kluwer Law International, 2006.*



Nia G. Rolle is a member of the firm's Private Client & Wealth Management practice group. She has experience advising on trust administration and creation, wills, estate planning and company law.
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New Practice Groups Launched - Tax and Government & Regulatory Affairs

Higgs & Johnson is pleased to announce that it has expanded its areas of practice with the launch of two new practice groups – one dedicated to the area of Tax and the other to Government & Regulatory Affairs. Commercial partner, Portia J.

Nicholson leads the Tax practice group and the Government & Regulatory Affairs practice group is chaired by commercial partner, Alexandra T. Hall, who is also deputy chair of the Tax practice group. Associate, Andre Hill is deputy chair of the Government & Regulatory Affairs practice group.

The Higgs & Johnson Tax Practice Group aims to provide its clientele with expert legal advice and representation at every stage, from structuring to dispute resolution. Attorneys within this practice area are involved in a wide range of tax related activity to ensure that clients receive sound, knowledgeable legal advice and representation for all of their tax needs.

Portia J. Nicholson noted that, "We at Higgs & Johnson are committed to ensuring the quality of service to both the domestic and international markets and wish to ensure that we are well placed to respond to the growing needs of the industry. We can help our clients to confidently navigate the ever changing and increasingly complex tax environment."

In addition to the increasing importance of tax matters, Higgs & Johnson recognises that successful businesses need a partner to manage government relations that could directly impact the start-up, daily operations and long-range outlook of their operations. The Higgs & Johnson Government and Regulatory

Affairs practice group is that partner. Attorneys within this practice area have the knowledge, experience and relationships to guide clients through the local legislative and regulatory regime successfully and efficiently.

"We understand the often-confusing layers of local legislation and regulation and it is our aim to guide our clients in all forms of corporate, legislative and regulatory matters," said Alexandra T. Hall. "The firm's aim is to provide seamless service, onshore and offshore, and to be in the position to assist all of our clients with all of their business needs."

The new practice groups also benefit from the experience of seasoned partners, Vivienne M. Gouthro, Zarina M. Fitzgerald, Stephen J. Melvin, Tara A. Archer-Glasgow, Christel Sands-Feaste and Audley D. Hanna, Jr.; senior associates, Sandra J. Lightbourn, Lori Nelson and Ja'Ann M. Major; and associates, Kamala Richardson, Nia G. Rolle, Keith O. Major, Jr., David J. Hanna, Rhyann Elliott, Trevor J. Lightbourn, Susie T. Bethel, Ian S. Winder and Dennise Newton.

Higgs & Johnson offers a variety of legal services through its other well-established practice groups including Litigation; Financial Services, Insurance Law & Regulation; Real Estate & Development; Securities & Investment Funds; Private Client & Wealth Management; Commercial Transactions; Maritime & Aviation; Insolvency & Corporate Restructuring; and Intellectual Property.

New Co-Managing Partner Appointed



Oscar N. Johnson, Jr.
Co-Managing Partner



Sterling H. Cooke
Co-Managing Partner

Higgs & Johnson appointed Mr. Sterling Harvey Cooke as the new Co-Managing Partner of the Firm on 1 January 2021. He currently serves alongside current Co-Managing Partner, Oscar N. Johnson, Jr., who has provided leadership to the Firm since 2012. Surinder Deal, who proudly served as the Firm's first female Co-Managing Partner, stepped down to become a Consultant with the Firm.

This appointment reflects Higgs & Johnson's response to its continued growth and preparation for its further expansion. Mr. Cooke, who has spent his entire professional career with the Firm, has over 30 years of legal practice under his belt and is the former Chairman of the Firm's Real Estate & Development Practice Group. He has advised local and international real estate investors and lenders on a wide range of real estate matters, including mortgage loans and construction financing, loan acquisitions, and complex transactions involving the purchase, sale, refinancing, leasing and subleasing of a variety of real estate types. In addition, he is an experienced practitioner in the areas of Commercial Law, Probate and Estate Administration, Maritime Law and International Financing transactions involving Bahamian registered ships and companies.

As Co-Managing Partner, Mr. Cooke, together with Mr. Johnson, oversees the day-to-day management of Higgs & Johnson, including all aspects of the Firm's operations. Mr. Johnson commented, "It is with great pleasure that I welcome Sterling to the leadership ranks of Higgs & Johnson. His insight and wealth of experience have been and will continue to be of tremendous value to the Firm. His dedication and commitment to the core values of our Firm and our clients will prove to be invaluable, as together, we work to expand on the Firm's long history of success, and guide this incredible Firm into the future."

"I am extremely honored, grateful and privileged to have the opportunity to lead, alongside Oscar, an incredible group of dedicated and talented Partners, Associates and Staff" said Mr. Cooke. "As we look to the future, I am excited to build upon and strengthen the Firm's strong commitment to capitalize on the creativity, energy and passion that working together creates, to conduct our practice in accordance with the highest standards of honesty and integrity, to maximize the value of our services to our clients, to be meticulous in our attention to detail, and to relentlessly pursue delivery of outstanding results in everything we do."

Higgs & Johnson provides clients with innovative, quality and proactive services, and continues to be recognized globally for excellence and integrity. The Firm remains committed to being a world-class, local and offshore provider of legal and professional services.

2021 Attorney Rankings



Philip C. Dunkley QC
Chambers Global



Oscar N. Johnson, Jr.
Chambers Global & Legal
500 Caribbean



Sterling H. Cooke
Legal 500 Caribbean



Dr. Earl A. Cash
Chambers Global



Vivienne M. Gouthro
IFLR1000 & Legal 500
Caribbean



Zarina M. Fitzgerald
Legal 500 Caribbean



Stephen J. Melvin
Chambers Global & Legal
500 Caribbean



Tara Archer-Glasgow
Chambers Global & Legal
500 Caribbean



Christel Sands-Feaste
IFLR1000, Chambers Global
& Legal 500 Caribbean



Tara Cooper Burnside
Chambers Global



Audley D. Hanna, Jr.
Legal 500 Caribbean



Alexandra T. Hall
IFLR1000



Surinder Deal
IFLR1000, Chambers
Global & Legal 500
Caribbean

Higgs & Johnson has received the top tier ranking by leading legal directories IFLR1000, Chambers Global and Legal 500 Caribbean in the respective 2021 editions.

In **IFLR1000**, clients praised the firm for its *'sound advice on best practices.'* The Guide focuses on ranking law firms and lawyers on the basis of financial and corporate transactional work in over 120 jurisdictions. Lauded as, *'diligent and responsive'*, the firm is also highlighted by commentators for *'providing thorough and thoughtful results.'*

According to **Legal 500 Caribbean**, the firm's commercial practice is known for *'handling the full gamut of commercial, corporate, and banking and finance mandates'* with clients praising attorneys for *'providing timely, careful and reliable advice on international transactions.'* The *'outstanding'* litigation team was lauded for *'providing significant and timely counsel in disputes'* and the real estate department recognized for its *'experience in assisting domestic and international real estate investors on residential properties and high-end developments.'*

In **Chambers Global**, the Firm is said to *'possesses considerable experience of commercial transactions, financing, refinancing and real estate development.'* The Guide noted that the Firm is *'commonly instructed by international clients for its local law advice'* and is *'further respected for its maritime practice'*. Sources highlighted the group for its *'quality of advice and speed of response,'* as well as valuing its *'understanding of clients' needs.'*

Firm Welcomes New Associates

***Trevor J. Lightbourn******Ian S. Winder, Jr.******Dennise Newton******Fola Swain***

Higgs & Johnson has expanded its Commercial and Litigation practice groups with the addition of associates, Trevor J. Lightbourn, Ian S. Winder, Dennise Newton and Fola Swain.

Trevor joins the litigation practice group with over 10 years' experience, specializing in civil and commercial litigation. Ian, Dennise and Fola successfully completed pupillage with the firm and were elevated to the position of Associate. Ian and Dennise are the newest members of the Commercial Transactions practice group and Fola joins the Litigation practice group.

The recruitment of new talent is just one of the ways in which Higgs & Johnson shows its commitment to being a world-class, local and offshore provider of legal and professional service.