
CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2024

The Leading Lawyers and Law Firms Globally

Trinidad & Tobago





How lawyers are ranked

Every year we carry out thousands of in-depth interviews with clients in order to assess the reputations and expertise of business lawyers worldwide. The qualities we look for (and which determine rankings) include technical legal ability, professional conduct, client service, commercial awareness/astuteness, diligence, commitment, and other qualities most valued by the client.

Contents:

General Business Law p.2871
Leading Individuals p.2874

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: An Introduction to General Business Law

Contributed by Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan

Background

Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) has emerged from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with a renewed focus on the diversification of its economy, and continues to be an attractive destination for international investment. Efforts are being made to increase investment and business optimisation as a means of strengthening the economy post-pandemic.

With an established common law legal system, commercial disputes are regularly tried in the High Court of T&T. If applicable, appeals can be made to the Court of Appeal and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London, the country's highest court of appeal save for CARICOM Treaty-related disputes (whose jurisdiction lies with the Caribbean Court of Justice). In addition, there are specialist courts such as the Tax Appeal Board, Industrial Court and Equal Opportunities Tribunal. While challenges arise from delays in having matters determined, the introduction of electronic filings and continued use of virtual hearings prove to be efficient for all stakeholders.

Commercial parties regularly engage in various methods of alternate dispute resolution. Arbitration agreements are widely used and are considered irrevocable except with specific leave from the High Court, unless otherwise agreed. Foreign judgments are also enforced by the local courts, either by way of registration under statute or by common law.

Legislation and Tax

T&T continues to adopt legislative measures for greater transparency. A new and proposed tax incentive regime embodied in the Trinidad and Tobago Special Economic Zones Act, No 58 of 2022 (SEZA) is expected to be fully operational soon. The SEZA provides for:

- the designation, development, operation and management of special economic zones, the establishment of the Special Economic Zones Authority;
- the repeal of the current Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Act (TTFZA);
- the regulation of special economic zones; and
- related matters.

The SEZA is partially a response to T&T becoming a member of the OECD's Base Erosion and Profit Shifting project (which focuses on eliminating harmful tax practices) and T&T's continued commitment to meeting its international obligations. At present, the SEZA is only partially proclaimed and neither its substantive provisions nor the provisions repealing the TTFZA are in force. Once the new regime is fully operational, concessions pertaining to various types of taxes will be granted.

The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act (the "Procurement Act") was fully proclaimed in April 2023 after having been partially in force for eight years. The Procurement Act overhauls the previous procurement legislation with a focus on the principles of good governance (accountability, transparency, integrity and value for money). It also establishes the Office of Procurement Regulation as the regulator (the "Office"). Full proclamation of the Procurement Act was highly anticipated and considered a positive step for T&T, as a means of combating public corruption and fraud. Importantly, the Procurement Act provides for:

- a database of information on public tenders;
- detailed due diligence procedures during procurement processes; and
- reporting of contract awards to the Office.

From a fiscal perspective, various measures to encourage investment in T&T are to be introduced, including an exemption from business levy charges (0.6% tax on the gross sales or receipts for each year of income) for manufacturing companies whose gross receipts fall within the 30% tax bracket on export sales only.

Controversially, the government of T&T (GORTT) has signalled its intention to introduce legislation disallowing expenditures incurred in earning tax-exempt income (subject to specific statutory exceptions). While details of these proposals have not been disclosed, if introduced, without appropriate diligence and care, they may have a significant effect on commercial taxpayers.

For the energy sector, the sustainability incentive will be increased from 20% to 25% with respect to the rate of supplemental petroleum tax (SPT) for any mature marine or small marine oil fields, in order to encourage smaller producers and lease operators in those oil fields to promote further production. Additionally,

there will be adjustments to the SPT regime for shallow water areas, introducing a new threshold of USD75 per barrel for SPT for those producers.

Challenges and Future Outlook

While the exploitation of hydrocarbons continues to dominate the economy, T&T has recently experienced challenges due to the historical lapse in exploration activity, volatile energy prices and natural gas shortages affecting the mid and downstream sectors. Concerted efforts are being made by GORTT and upstream operators to alleviate these challenges. GORTT has increased its offering of onshore and offshore acreage in competitive bid rounds, and production sharing contracts for three deep water blocks were recently granted to a BP and Shell consortium.

The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI) also launched the 2023 Shallow Water Competitive Bid Round with the introduction of several key changes geared towards improving investor appeal, including:

- the removal of the pre-bid fee;
- a reduction in the bid fee; and
- the payment of royalty from GORTT's share of profit petroleum.

In an effort to enhance T&T's gas security, NGC (a state-owned gas company) and Shell also announced the signing of an amended gas sales contract for the purchase of gas produced from Shell's Manatee field (one of T&T's largest offshore fields), which forms part of the cross-border Loran-Manatee discovery, straddling the T&T and Venezuela maritime borders. Gas production is expected to improve as other upstream operators intensify their efforts in existing and upcoming projects.

As T&T moves towards the global energy transition, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adoption of low-carbon technologies play an important role, as the exploitation of traditional hydrocarbons remains a significant factor in the energy supply chain. Several initiatives continue to be progressed to ensure energy sustainability and efficiency in the future. These projects include:

- the progression of a proposed twin solar power farm project by a BP and Shell consortium;
- the advancement of the Green Hydrogen Roadmap, including a Wind Resource Assessment Programme led by the IDB in collaboration with the MEEI and National Energy;
- a green hydrogen project initiative by Kenesjay Green Ltd and Hydrogen De France; and
- the restructuring of the four Atlantic LNG trains, in recognition of the significant role LNG plays in the energy transition.

Over the years, T&T has experienced foreign currency shortages in the local foreign currency market, which have had a significant effect particularly on the operations of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The Minister of Finance recently

announced that GORTT intends to aggressively develop strategies to increase the repatriation of foreign exchange earned overseas by local and foreign businesses. As part of this strategy, in early 2024 the GORTT proposes to implement preferential access to foreign exchange by qualified SMEs.

In February 2023, the Companies Registry of the Registrar General's Department launched a new digitised system called the Companies Registry Online System (CROS), which is intended to facilitate the paperless, electronic and remote transaction of business with the Companies Registry. The introduction of CROS directly affects the manner in which filings are to be effected going forward, including:

- the incorporation of a company;
- registration of a branch of a foreign company;
- registration of a non-profit organisation; and
- filing post-incorporation documents.

In order to conduct business via CROS, persons are required to apply for a Companies Registry Account (CRA) to facilitate electronic submissions and electronic signatures. The introduction of CROS dovetails with existing legislation geared towards enhancing the ease of doing business in T&T—such as the Electronic Transactions Act (ETA), Chapter 22:05 and the Data Protection Act (DPA), Chapter 22:04, although these Acts are not yet fully in force. While some initial teething challenges have been experienced, it is expected that as the changeover progresses CROS will operate seamlessly.

In a post-pandemic world, T&T's digitisation efforts have renewed discussions on bringing fully into force legislation governing electronic transactions and data protection. According to ministerial statements, GORTT is actively working towards the full operation of the ETA and DPA in 2024. As it stands, there are legislative provisions in force which generally give legal effect to electronic transactions, documents and signatures, but with certain specified exceptions. For example, conveyances of real or personal property, or the creation of wills, require original signatures and documents and may not be executed electronically. As for the DPA, general privacy principles are established and in force, but the substantive provisions concerning the collection, storage and handling of private information and sanctions are not yet proclaimed.

GORTT's Vision 2030 places emphasis on ESG (environmental, social and governance). Particular focus is being placed on climate change mitigation in the formation of national development objectives. T&T's private sector has already taken steps towards implementing ESG initiatives, including the adoption of sustainable development practices. This suggests a change in the business landscape as local businesses and GORTT actively work towards limiting their carbon footprint. We anticipate that legislative and policy changes will soon be made to enhance T&T's ESG commitments.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: An Introduction to Dispute Resolution: Senior Advocates

Contributed by Bethany Chambers

Trinidad and Tobago, a high-income nation of 1.4 million people, navigates a unique dispute resolution landscape. Its compact size and hydrocarbon-driven economy, heavily reliant on natural gas for petrochemical production and LNG exports, shape the context of conflict resolution. Recognising the potential of natural gas as a bridge to a carbon-neutral future, the government actively develops its own resources while fostering regional partnerships in the energy sector.

Most recently, Trinidad and Tobago signed a 30-year exploration and production licence with its neighbour Venezuela for the Dragon gas field located in Venezuelan territorial waters. In December 2023, the country's sole LNG producer and exporter was restructured, with a shift towards a market-related pricing structure. In mid-2024, government policy aligned the threshold for supplemental petroleum tax (SPT) for small shallow water producers with small onshore producers and adjusted the SPT for both mature and small marine oil fields. This incentive targets smaller oil producers and lease operators so as to increase crude oil and condensate production. The country is best in class in Latin America in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

The country is diversifying its energy economy with renewables such as solar, is looking at wind and green hydrogen as well carbon capture. In other areas, the country has become a leading regional centre in financial services as well as in light manufacturing. However, the tourism sector lags behind these industries.

The High Court, as a superior court of record, has unlimited jurisdiction to resolve civil, corporate, public law and certain statutory disputes. Its low threshold of TTD50,000 (approximately USD7,500) threatens to engulf the civil litigation system. Trinidad and Tobago has a very developed public law jurisprudence based on the 1976 Constitution's fundamental rights and freedoms, the Judicial Review Act and common law and may involve certain key statutes, such as the Freedom of Information Act, the Data Protection Act and the Public Procurement Act.

In both civil and public law matters, if a party is dissatisfied with a decision of the High Court, they have the right to appeal to the Court of Appeal, and then, in most matters, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the country's highest appellate court. The Privy Council's judgments are binding.

In matters that concern the interpretation of the main regional trade treaty – the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas – both individuals and corporations may have recourse to the local regional international court – the Caribbean Court of Justice, which is conveniently located in Port of Spain. The Caribbean Court of Justice is also the final appellate court for several regional neighbours, namely Guyana, Belize, Barbados, and the Commonwealth of Dominica. Its judgments are highly persuasive.

The Companies Acts of 1995 & 1997 (CA), are modelled after the Ontario Corporations Act. These Acts govern the incorporation of local entities in Trinidad and Tobago. Recent digital initiatives permit virtual filings.

In case of corporate failures, the applicable legislation is the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act of 2007 (BIA) which came into force in 2014 with the exception of the part concerned with cross-border insolvencies. The BIA is also modelled after Canadi-

an legislation and provides a regime for both insolvent companies and individuals, including governing the conduct of receivers and receiver managers. In several instances, eg, receivership, both the CA and BIA will apply.

The policy of the BIA is in part to encourage the rehabilitation of insolvent companies and individuals. This is done by permitting the making of proposals to enable the debtor to reorganise their financial affairs and to remain a going concern under the debtor's management and for there to be an automatic stay of court proceedings. Trustees are bound to ensure that bankrupt individuals have access to counselling. In the case of individuals, disputes between creditors and licensed trustees under the BIA may be resolved by mediation in accordance with the Mediation Act 2004 instead of litigation.

This general philosophy of facilitating mediation is also enshrined in the Mediation Act. In any non-criminal matter where the court considers it appropriate, it may refer parties to mediation before a certified mediator. For the purpose of the Mediation Act, the judiciary, the Industrial Court, the Tax Appeal Board, the Environmental Commission (all superior courts of record) and the Tobago House of Assembly are deemed to be mediation agencies – ie, entities that can provide mediation services.

The Industrial Court, the Tax Appeal Board, the Environmental Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission are superior courts of record with limited jurisdiction in their respective spheres of employment and other trade disputes; tax disputes between taxpayers and the state; issues of environmental enforcement (eg, the refusal of an environmental clearance certificate by the Environmental Management Authority); and cases of discriminatory, unfair, and unequal treatment in the public sphere, frequently involving employment-related disputes.

In 2023, Parliament passed an updated Arbitration Act (not yet assented to) that encourages judicial respect for arbitration agreements by introducing provisions that allow a court to stay legal proceedings to uphold an arbitration agreement, recognising their formal validity unless such agreements are found to be null, void, or incapable of being performed. The new Arbitration Act also introduces the doctrine of separability and the principle of competence-competence, which the old Arbitration Act did not include.

Further, the Act allows for court involvement in certain aspects of the arbitration process, similar to the English Arbitration Act 1996, including the appointment and removal of arbitrators, the determination of jurisdiction and the enforcement of interim measures.

The Act provides that the arbitral tribunal should decide on the applicable principles and statutory rules as well as the admissibility, relevance, materiality, and weight of the evidence presented by the parties applicable to both international and domestic legal arbitration.

In Trinidad and Tobago's public construction sector, the most widely used set of standard terms and conditions are the FIDIC Books and these usually provide for mediation or a dispute adjudication board, and/or arbitration. It remains to be seen whether

Trinidad and Tobago will emerge as a regional arbitration powerhouse once the 2023 Arbitration Act comes into legal force.

In the highly regulated financial services sector, market actors' conduct is actively regulated by multiple regulators – the Central Bank under the Central Bank Act, the Financial Institutions Act and the Insurance Act; the Securities and Exchange Commission

under the Securities Industry Act and the Stock Exchange under the Securities Industry Act and the Stock Exchange Rules. In each case, the regulators have direct administrative power over the regulated entities with the power to impose penalties without recourse to court proceedings, and with a right to appeal to the High Court if necessary.

General Business Law

General Business Law
Leading Firms
Band 1
Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan
M. Hamel-Smith & Co.
Band 2
JD Sellier & Co
Johnson, Camacho & Singh
MG Daly & Partners
Pollonais, Blanc, de la Bastide & Jacelon
Band 3
Dentons Delany
Hobsons Attorneys At Law
Lex Caribbean
Mair and Company
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Ferreira-Aaron Nicole M. Hamel-Smith & Co.
Hamel-Smith Timothy M. Hamel-Smith & Co.
Julien Jo-Anne MG Daly & Partners
Miller Kurt Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan
Moultet Jon Paul Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith
Band 2
Hamel-Smith M Glenn M. Hamel-Smith & Co. *
Inglefield Melissa M. Hamel-Smith & Co.
Laquis Mark Pollonais, Blanc, de la Bastide & Jacelon
Morgan Mark Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan
Sinanan Nicholas Johnson, Camacho & Singh *
Band 3
Ali Ashmead Ashmead Ali & Co (ORL) ◇
Beckles Richard M. The Legal Consultancy (ORL) ◇
Campbell Shalini Dentons Delany
Regrello Mandisa Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan

What the team is known for Fitzwilliam Stone is regularly engaged in large-scale transactional work in Trinidad & Tobago. It retains a long-standing reputation as one of the nation's leading law firms owing to its large and highly proficient bench. The firm advises clients on a wide range of matters with a broad scope, with the team holding particular expertise in oil and gas M&A, foreign direct investment and corporate restructuring. It

General Business Law: Dispute Resolution
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Byrne Adrian Byrne & Byrne (ORL) ◇
Kangaloo Colin Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith *
Mootoo Jason Jason Mootoo-Attorney at law (ORL) ◇
Morgan Mark Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan
Walker Jonathan M. Hamel-Smith & Co.
Band 2
Dass Rishi Victoria Chambers (ORL) ◇
Ferdinand Marcelle JD Sellier & Co
Pantin Gregory M. Hamel-Smith & Co. *
Singh Stephen A Johnson, Camacho & Singh *
Band 3
Bissessar Alana Pollonais, Blanc, de la Bastide & Jacelon
Byrne Joan Byrne & Byrne (ORL) ◇
Moultet Jon Paul Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith

also has considerable capability in dispute resolution, with high-profile experience in construction cases as well as matters adjudicated by the Tax Appeal Board.

Strengths

"I am very comforted by Fitzwilliam Stone's ability to navigate issues while providing appropriate clarifications and keeping to timelines."

"Fitzwilliam Stone offers advice that is very sound and well researched. They are very reliable and deliver as promised."

Work highlights Fitzwilliam Stone assisted First Citizens Bank as lead counsel with a refinancing transaction for a property development project quoted at TTD85 million.

Notable practitioners

Colin Kangaloo (see p.2874) has presided over numerous significant commercial litigation matters in the Trinidad & Tobago region. He is particularly adept at navigating high-value construction claims, and additionally handles a broad range of employment, insurance and white-collar criminal cases. In conjunction with his capabilities as an advocate, the market holds the depth of his legal knowledge in high esteem. **Strengths:** "Colin is very strong and an excellent counsel." **Kurt Miller** is at the helm of Fitzwilliam Stone as managing partner and also chairs its transactional department. He retains a distinguished reputation in Trinidad's financial services field, owing to the wealth of experience he has accrued in bond issuances and syndicated loans, as well as a variety of securitisation mandates. **Strengths:** "Kurt Miller is

Dispute Resolution: Senior Advocates
Senior Statespeople
Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Denbow Claude Law Offices of Dr. Claude (ORL) ◇
Martineau Russell Russell Martineau (Attorney (ORL) ◇
Leading Silks
Band 1
Mendes Douglas Chancery Chambers (ORL) ◇
Peake Deborah Deborah Peake S.C (ORL) ◇
Band 2
Armour Reginald Marie De Vere Chambers (ORL) ◇
Benjamin Ian Bethany Chambers (ORL) ◇
Fitzpatrick Alvin K. Alvin K. Fitzpatrick (ORL) ◇
Jairam Seenath Victoria Chambers (ORL) ◇

always exceptional in his service delivery and takes great care of clients." "He is an excellent leader, in addition to being very responsive and knowledgeable." **Jon Paul Moultet** is a leading lawyer in the Trinidadian legal market. He routinely assists clients with a range of commercial contracts and transactional issues. He is further noted for his handling of high-value tax appeals and other contentious tax matters. **Strengths:** "Jon Paul Moultet delivers a very experienced service level and brings a lot to the case." **Mark Morgan** is particularly well reputed for his handling of tax litigation. Additionally, he has an equally strong command of matters in the manufacturing and oil and gas industries. **Strengths:** "He brings a great wealth of experience and knowledge to bear on the matters he deliberates on for us. He's very practical and solution-oriented." **Mandisa Regrello** is a highly reputable lawyer in the banking and finance space. She acts on behalf of a number of leading financial services players in the Trinidad & Tobago market. Her practice encompasses the full spectrum of issues at play in this space, including syndicated financings, debt restructuring and regulatory matters. **Strengths:** "Mandisa Regrello understands the very complicated laws of company registration. She is really pleasant to work with and very smart."

M. Hamel-Smith & Co.

What the team is known for M. Hamel-Smith & Co. is one of the most highly regarded law firms in the Caribbean, with a history in Trinidad tracing back to the early 20th century. It is especially noted for handling highly significant litigation work. In this field, the firm has taken on shareholder disputes, tax appeals and insolvency proceedings, among

**Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)
General Business Law**
**Trinidad & Tobago expertise
based in countries listed below**
Barbados Hamel-Smith Christopher Hamel (ORL) ◇

◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.

other work. Its outstanding litigation capabilities are complemented by its considerable transactional expertise. The firm retains a stellar track record when it comes to landmark M&A, finance and capital markets matters.

Strengths

"M. Hamel-Smith & Co. has the capacity to distil complex matters in a manner that clearly identifies risks, all while creating the appropriate legal framework that ensures the required protection for both sides."

Work highlights M. Hamel-Smith & Co. acted for Endeavour Holdings on a dispute concerning a TTD36 million premature termination of a cinema lease.

Notable practitioners

Nicole Ferreira-Aaron, managing partner of M. Hamel-Smith & Co., is noted for her formidable practice in aviation finance, representing an impressive roster of clients in this sector. Her practice encompasses a breadth of financing agreements in addition to working across a number of M&A transactions and capital markets issuances. **Strengths:** *"Nicole is a leader in her field. She is very client-centric and displays a passion for seeing her clients succeed."* **Timothy Hamel-Smith** is one of Trinidad & Tobago's most esteemed transactional lawyers. He has overseen a broad variety of matters throughout the course of his career, which has spanned five decades.

Strengths: *"Simply put, Timothy Hamel-Smith is a luminary in the legal profession."* **Jonathan Walker** heads the dispute and risk management practice group at Hamel-Smith. An esteemed lawyer, he is regularly called upon to assist clients in some of Trinidad's most high-profile commercial disputes. He has appeared many times in instances of High Court litigation, with experience spanning areas including contractual disputes, insurance claims and constitutional law proceedings. **Strengths:** *"Jonathan Walker is a really sophisticated lawyer and significantly adds value to challenging commercial projects. I value his input and assistance very, very much."* **Glenn Hamel-Smith** (see p.2874) is a highly reputable lawyer who sits at the helm of the banking and finance practice at Hamel-Smith. He routinely offers counsel to an impressive roster of commercial lenders. He is additionally noted for his capital markets practice and has complementary expertise in rights issuances, M&A and company restructuring matters.

Strengths: *"Glenn is able to articulate his views clearly and succinctly. This enables him to gain the trust of all parties in a transaction."* **Melissa Inglefield** is an esteemed lawyer in the Trinidad legal market, with colleagues praising her capabilities to the highest degree. She is active across an array of finance transactions and capital markets issuances, offering counsel to a variety of high-profile clients. **Strengths:** *"Melissa Inglefield enjoys a high degree of client satisfaction."* *"Melissa's ability is outstanding. I hold her in very high*

regard." **Gregory Pantin** (see p.2874) is a well-regarded disputes lawyer in the Trinidadian legal market. He boasts a range of expertise spanning trade and real estate cases. He enjoys a stellar reputation in the market as an astute choice to handle both litigation and arbitration.

Band 2
JD Sellier & Co

What the team is known for JD Sellier & Co retains its substantial market share in Trinidad & Tobago when it comes to intellectual property matters. In this field, the firm's expertise is highly sought after to assist with trade mark filings, and it has additional proficiency in opposition proceedings. The disputes team is equally reputable for its capacity to take on complex and highly contentious proceedings. Experience in real estate is a further asset of the firm; and its lawyers are regularly engaged in matters pertaining to sales, acquisitions, mortgages and leasing.

Notable practitioners

Marcelle Ferdinand is an acclaimed lawyer and managing partner of JD Sellier & Co. In addition, she chairs its litigation team. Her activity encompasses significant construction and employment mandates, with her experience extending to medical negligence claims and maritime disputes.

Johnson, Camacho & Singh

What the team is known for Johnson, Camacho & Singh is a highly respected law firm which is sought after for representation by multinational and domestic clients. The firm handles a range of practice areas, including project financing, M&A and construction mandates. It is further noted for housing one of the leading conveyancing practices in Trinidad & Tobago.

Strengths

"Johnson, Camacho & Singh are very attentive and focused on service delivery."

Notable practitioners

Nicholas Sinanan (see p.2874) is a skilled lawyer who is the managing partner at Johnson, Camacho & Singh. He is a well-respected figure in Trinidad's legal market, offering a wealth of experience pertaining to capital markets issuances and finance transactions. **Strengths:** *"Nicholas Sinanan thinks both as a lawyer and a business person. That allows him to deliver solutions that set him apart."* *"He is very business-savvy and you always feel confident you are in good hands."* **Stephen Singh** (see p.2874) enjoys a strong reputation in the Trinidadian dispute resolution market. He is active across both litigation and arbitration. With expertise in oil and gas and construction matters, Singh offers further proficiency in real estate, tax and insolvency disputes.

MG Daly & Partners

What the team is known for MG Daly & Partners is a well-established Trinidadian law firm whose highly experienced lawyers are well respected throughout the business and legal communities. The team as a whole maintains an excellent reputation among commentators, who applaud its deep-seated expertise in litigation and especially strong

track record in employment as well as constitutional and public law disputes. On the non-contentious side, the team is regularly mandated on conveyancing matters and represents a number of major real estate developers. It also advises on high-profile M&A transactions, with noteworthy experience acting on private equity buyouts.

Notable practitioners

Jo-Anne Julien is active on a variety of M&A, financing and commercial contract matters. In addition, she is highly esteemed for her conveyancing practice. She is a highly reputable figure within the business community of Trinidad & Tobago due to her tenure on several company boards.

Pollonais, Blanc, de la Bastide & Jacelon

What the team is known for Pollonais Blanc is an esteemed law firm which is often sought after owing to its strong capability in conveyancing. With a steady foothold in the Trinidad market, the firm is also adept in handling banking and finance transactions as well as M&A operations. The firm is additionally heralded for its robust dispute resolution offering, which is particularly active on matters related to negligence.

Notable practitioners

Mark Laquis is an eminent lawyer who is managing partner of Pollonais Blanc. He holds a long-established reputation as one of Trinidad's most prolific conveyancing practitioners. In conjunction with his expertise in this area, he has a wide-ranging practice in real estate work, regularly advising clients on mortgages and leaseings in addition to property sales and acquisitions.

Strengths: *"Mark Laquis is an exceptional lawyer. He is very astute."* **Alana Bissessar** heads up the dispute resolution department at Pollonais Blanc. She has a particular focus on medical and professional negligence matters, in addition to personal injury litigation. She is active in representing clients such as health boards and insurance companies, in addition to individual medical, legal and financial services professionals.

Band 3
Dentons Delany

What the team is known for Dentons is well regarded in Trinidad & Tobago, with its team of lawyers on the ground regularly working in collaboration with the firm's wider network. The firm counsels a number of high-profile clients in regulatory matters from a diverse range of sectors, including insurance, retail and technology. In addition, it is poised to assist with cross-border mandates in the fields of M&A, finance and litigation.

Strengths

"Dentons is very commercial, practical and results-oriented. They rapidly grasp complex commercial issues and come up with clever ideas to address or sidestep potential concerns."

Work highlights Dentons advised Gallagher Insurance Brokers on its USD12.5 million acquisition of Global Financial Brokers and Total Benefits Specialists.

Notable practitioners

Shalini Campbell is a respected lawyer who is the managing partner of Dentons' Trinidad & Tobago office, in addition to her role as head of litigation and dispute resolution. Her practice in litigation is particularly active, often pertaining to debt recovery and personal injury, with further capabilities in regulatory matters.

Hobsons Attorneys At Law

What the team is known for Hobsons is widely regarded as the principal law firm in Trinidad & Tobago's second city of San Fernando and holds an impressive share in this market. The firm is well renowned for its considerable exposure in the oil and gas industry, as well as its frequent work in the areas of finance transactions and conveyancing. Furthermore, the firm routinely represents clients in litigation proceedings.

Notable practitioners

Barendra Sinanan is a key contact at the firm.

Lex Caribbean

What the team is known for Lex Caribbean houses a highly capable transactional practice which regularly advises clients on restructuring, M&A, intellectual property and a whole host of other mandates. Its litigation department is notably active, with insolvency and real estate cases among its areas of focus. Financial institutions are an important part of the firm's client base. The team in Trinidad & Tobago maintains close collaboration with the firm's Barbados office, with the two groups regularly working together on cross-border transactions and disputes.

Notable practitioners

Bernard Shepherd SC is a key contact at the firm.

Mair and Company

What the team is known for Mair and Company is a compact law firm which is often cited for the formidable collective experience of its senior lawyers. Its litigation practice is notably strong, with a wealth of expertise in construction and financial services disputes, in addition to proficiency in employment matters. In addition, the team is able to provide guidance to clients on a range of non-contentious issues including trade mark filing, real estate acquisitions and company structuring.

Notable practitioners

Lucille Mair is a key contact at the firm.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Ashmead Ali is a veteran lawyer whose expertise has a strong footing in conveyancing work. His extensive experience makes him a popular choice for counsel on property-related issues.

Richard Beckles is the principal practitioner of Port of Spain boutique firm The Legal Consultancy. His work retains a strong focus on oil and gas matters, including areas such as project finance agreements. In addition, he regularly acts for the Trinidad & Tobago government and its state-owned entities.

Adrian Byrne of Byrne & Byrne is renowned for the high quality of his output. He brings many years of experience to the commercial litigation space and can frequently be seen handling high-stakes cases. He has further proficiency in arbitration.

Strengths:

"Adrian Byrne is one of the most knowledgeable lawyers in Trinidad."

Joan Byrne of Byrne & Byrne is a well-regarded figure in the Trinidadian legal market. She attracts strong recognition for her expertise in family law, along with a variety of other contentious mandates.

Rishi Dass of Victoria Chambers is an esteemed lawyer in the Trinidad & Tobago advocacy space, receiving praise from all corners of the market. He has an active and particularly wide-ranging practice which sees him undertake constitutional cases and public interest litigation, in addition to commercial matters.

Jason Mootoo is an accomplished practitioner who is held in incredibly high esteem by commentators and is regularly instructed on high-profile cases in the jurisdiction. His experience encompasses disputes ranging from employment and white-collar crime to notable construction matters.

Strengths:

"Jason Mootoo is a well-known, active and highly regarded lawyer. He seriously knows his stuff."

Reginald Armour SC of Marie De Vere Chambers is frequently active on a range of high-level disputes in Trinidad and throughout the English-speaking Caribbean. He is particularly well equipped to come to the aid of government entities and officials.

Ian Benjamin SC of Bethany Chambers maintains an active and broad practice which sees him representing clients in insolvency, tax, insurance and

construction disputes. In addition to his practice in Trinidad & Tobago, he is notably active across the Commonwealth Caribbean region.

Claude Denbow SC is a revered advocate with a longstanding reputation as one of Trinidad's most astute and strategic legal minds. He is regarded as a particular authority on contentious tax issues, and boasts complementary expertise in financial services and insolvency matters.

Alvin Fitzpatrick SC is an esteemed Trinidadian silk who maintains a considerable reputation for his effective handling of construction disputes. In addition, he is regularly sought after to work on an array of high-stakes matters in other fields. He is well known in the jurisdiction for his capabilities in court advocacy.

Seenath Jairam SC of Victoria Chambers retains an impressive regional practice with a particular focus on trusts and estates disputes. In addition, he has taken on significant cases against government entities and oil multinationals.

Russell Martineau SC is a highly respected advocate in Trinidad & Tobago and consistently receives the highest accolades from his peers. His long-established practice sees him routinely represent clients in high-stakes cross-border matters.

Douglas Mendes SC of Chancery Chambers enjoys an impressive profile in the jurisdiction of Trinidad & Tobago. He maintains a very robust reputation and is held in high regard by instructing solicitors.

Strengths:

"Douglas Mendes is one of the premium silks in the nation. He is a very good practitioner."

"Douglas is a legend who is fantastic. He is extremely good."

Deborah Peake SC is widely respected by instructing solicitors as one of Trinidad's leading advocates. She retains an active and varied practice which encompasses work across major insolvency, environmental and constitutional law claims.

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Christopher Hamel-Smith SC of Hamel-Smith Caribbean is a respected fixture in the Trinidad & Tobago legal market. He is equipped with notable expertise in the fields of intellectual property, financial services, telecoms and insurance. Based in Barbados, he has a long history of experience in Trinidad.

Leaders' Profiles in Trinidad & Tobago

HAMEL-SMITH, M Glenn

M. Hamel-Smith & Co., Port of Spain
+1 (868) 285-5310; +1 (868) 299-0981
glenn@trinidadlaw.com

Featured in General Business Law (Trinidad & Tobago)

Practice Areas: Banking and Financial Services; Corporate and Securities; Mergers & Acquisitions; Capital Markets; Secured Lending; Foreign Investment Project Finance.

Professional Memberships:

ExeQtrust Limited – Chairman, 2021 – Present; Island Finance Trinidad & Tobago Limited – Director, 2018 – Present
Readymix (West Indies) Limited – Chairman, June 2018 – Present; Director, 2015 – Present
Trinidad Cement Limited – Director, 2014 – 2015
American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad & Tobago – Director, 2015 – Present; Secretary 2015–2023
Vice-President & Director 2014 – 2015; Legislative Committee Chair, 2010 – 2014
Association of Caribbean Corporate Counsel – Regional Board Advisory Member, 2013 – 2015
Law Association of Trinidad & Tobago – Member
The Florida Bar – Member

Publications: 2021: Contributor, Lex Mundi Global Foreign Investment Restrictions Guide, Trinidad and Tobago Chapter, Lex Mundi, July; 2021: Co-Contributor, Merger Thresholds & Foreign Investment Guide, Granville Knowledge Management, January; 2021: Co-Author, Merger Control – Getting the Guidance for Merger Transactions, T&T Guardian newspaper, January 31, 2021; 2020: Co-Author, Bankers Beware – The Duty to Protect Customers From Fraud, T&T Guardian, February 16, 2020; 2019:

Co-Author, Fair Competition is Coming – Will it Ever Reach? T&T Guardian, August 4, 2019; 2019: Author, Know Your Capital, T&T Guardian, February 28, 2019;

KANGALOO, Colin

Fitzwilliam, Stone, Furness-Smith & Morgan, Port of Spain
868 623-1618
ckangaloo@fitzwilliamstone.com

Featured in General Business Law (Trinidad & Tobago)

Practice Areas: Colin practices as an Advocate Attorney and handles diverse areas of civil law practice including corporate/commercial; securities regulation; insurance; land matters; administrative law; proceeds of crime/money laundering matters construction law and employment. He regularly represents clients in the High Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal; and has appeared before the Privy Council. He also appears as Counsel in arbitrations and before Commissions of Enquiry such as the Commission of Enquiry into the Construction Sector of Trinidad and Tobago and the Commission of Enquiry into the Collapse of CL Financial Ltd. et al representing clients which have included inter alia the Attorney General and a multi-national accounting firm.

Career: Colin sat as a Temporary Judge of the High Court of Justice of Trinidad and Tobago from September 2007 to April 2008. He also served as a member of the Disciplinary Committee of the Law Association from 2003 to 2007. Colin was appointed Senior Counsel in May 2023.

Personal: He tutored at the Hugh Wooding Law School for 20 years in the area of Trial Advocacy, and is passionate about the traditions and responsibilities of the Legal Profession and committed to ensuring that these continue and are passed on to the younger members of the Profession.

PANTIN, Gregory

M. Hamel-Smith & Co., Port of Spain
001 868 389 6812
gregory@trinidadlaw.com

Featured in General Business Law (Trinidad & Tobago)

Practice Areas: Construction; General Commercial Litigation; Commercial Arbitration; Alternative Dispute Resolution; Product Liability; Admiralty; Employment and Labour Law; Energy; Environmental Law.

Professional Memberships: The Law Association of Trinidad & Tobago; Trinidad and Tobago Sailing Association; The Shipping Association of Trinidad and Tobago; Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago; ShipArrested; Fellow-Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb) .

Publications: Co-Author: "Salvage Claims Arising out of Towage Contracts", featured in the July 2022 ShipArrested's quarterly publication;

SINANAN, Nicholas

Johnson, Camacho & Singh, St Clair
nsinanan@jcscribeanlaw.com

Featured in General Business Law (Trinidad & Tobago)

Practice Areas: Banking & Finance, Project Finance, Capital Markets, Securities, Corporate & Commercial.

Career: Prior to his admission to practice as an attorney-at-law, Nicholas began his professional career as a financial analyst at a local financial institution.

Professional Memberships: The Law Association of Trinidad and Tobago. The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn.

SINGH, Stephen A

Johnson, Camacho & Singh, St Clair
+1 868-622-8959
ssingh@jcscribeanlaw.com

Featured in General Business Law (Trinidad & Tobago)

Practice Areas: Commercial Litigation; Arbitration, Banking and Finance, Construction, Insolvency, Environmental, Insurance, Labour, Oil and Gas, Maritime and Tax.

Professional Memberships: Law Association of Trinidad and Tobago. Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitration.

Publications: Notable publications include "THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR E&D IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO" International Oil and Gas Finance Review 2002 and together with a former United States of America Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago he co-authored "ARBITRATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE CARIBBEAN" – The Commonwealth Lawyer, April 2002, Vol. II No.1. He is the co-contributor to "THE AMERICAS RESTRUCTURING AND INSOLVENCY GUIDE 2008/2009" section on Trinidad & Tobago (publishers: Morgan Stanley, PricewaterhouseCoopers, American Bankruptcy Institute, Globe White Page).