



MINISTRY OF
HUMAN RESOURCES
& IMMIGRATION
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

James Austin-Smith
Chairman, Cayman Islands Human Rights Commission
2nd Floor Artemis House
67 Fort Street, George Town
Grand Cayman KY1-1106

19 December, 2018

Dear Mr. Austin-Smith,

I would like to take this opportunity to extend Season Greetings to you and the Commission and thank you for your letter dated 6 December 2018 inquiring on the current status of the establishment of the Refugee Protection Appeals Tribunal (RPAT).

The Ministry is pleased to advise the Commission that recommendations for appointments have recently been received, as such will seek Cabinet's approval for the appointments in January 2019. This will facilitate the Ministry organizing initial training for RPAT members locally with the aim of more in-depth training with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) within the first quarter of 2019.

Additionally, to ensure that there is a seamless transition, the Ministry continues to liaise with Cabinet Office in finalizing their policy and procedure manual. Once completed, the manual will provide guidance on the process for filing immigration appeals including asylum matters. It is anticipated that the document will be concluded by February 2019, at which time relevant information will be made available to the public. Furthermore, powers and appeal processes for the RPAT are outlined in legislation, hence once section 14 of the Immigration (Amendment) Law, 2018 is brought into force this will enhance the functions of the Tribunal.

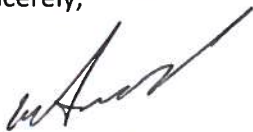
As the Commission can appreciate, the transformational changes which are currently ongoing with Workforce Opportunities and Residency Cayman (WORC) and Customs and Border Control (CBC) is a radical shift in organisational culture for the Civil Service and as such will require comprehensive onboarding, training and development strategies. The Ministry has commenced developing a program of training initiatives to further improve the capacity within WORC and will also conduct a similar exercise for CBC, the programs will be delivered throughout 2019-2020.

Given the above proposed timelines, the Ministry envisions that the RPAT will be prepared to receive and consider asylum matters by the end of March 2019. However, in the interim the IAT Secretariat will continue to ensure that asylum matters are given priority and dealt with thoroughly and expeditiously.

Finally, we are awaiting judgements on the pending judicial review matters and will be in discussions with Judicial to ascertain their capacity to advance such cases in the future, which will further enhance our asylum processes.

We trust that this information provides greater clarity to your concerns surrounding asylum matters and we look forward to your continued support as we endeavor to improve the country's migration management and border control capacity.

Sincerely,



Wesley Howell, JP
Chief Officer

Cc'd: Bruce Smith, Acting Chief Immigration Officer
Charles Clifford, Collector of Customs Department