



## **Welcome Address**

To be delivered by

**Mr Roger Salloum**

**CHAIRMAN**

**Facilities Management and  
Maintenance Committee**

**4<sup>th</sup> CARIBBEAN FACILITIES MANAGEMENT  
CONFERENCE & EXPO  
“ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY DELIVERING RESULTS”  
WEDNESDAY 15 / THURSDAY 16 MAY 2013  
HILTON TRINIDAD  
OPENING CEREMONY  
8:00am – 9:15am**

Good Morning

It is my honour and privilege to welcome all of you to the Caribbean Facilities Management Conference and Expo here in Trinidad, which continues to be the number one FM Conference in the Caribbean, the brainchild of the Facilities Management and Maintenance Committee of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce. Through our partnership, we have continuously been able to deliver a first class event raising the bar at each Conference and this year proves to be no different. Your participation and contributions are invaluable. It is only through such gatherings will we be able to share ideas, explore business opportunities, build awareness, elevate industry standards of practice, raise the profile of the facilities management industry, and educate organizational stakeholders about the value of what we do.

With this year's theme of “Enhancing Productivity...Delivering Results,” we will address over the next two days, some of our industry's most topical issues in the local and regional markets. More particularly, organizations the world over, including those in the Caribbean, are facing an interesting challenge — *how do they increase employee productivity and simultaneously lower operating costs?*

Some people say it's a complex issue, but the FM Committee and myself believe that the answer lies in the way buildings and workspaces are designed against the intended use, and of course how effective the management and maintenance of your organizations' facilities are. This, ladies and gentlemen will, in the final analysis, impact the overall productivity of an organization's greatest asset – its PEOPLE.

As we've all hopefully learnt by now, facilities management is not a "bucket and mop" business nor does it strictly deal with the operations and maintenance of a building and its environs. It deals with the integration of multi-disciplinary activities within the built environment and the management of their impact upon the people and the workplace. To the people who own, operate or are otherwise responsible for operations within an organization, FM — when done responsibly — unequivocally means dollars and cents added to their bottom line.

Some of us spend 30, 40, 50 plus hours a week at our offices, and others telecommute but correspond with colleagues daily. Is the environment in which we work safe, comfortable, healthy, non-disruptive, and well-equipped to achieve continuity in our operations, and will it allow us to perform efficiently and effectively? Facilities management is a **people-driven, people-serving** and altogether **PEOPLE-CENTRED** business. It provides the necessary environment for continuous improvement. That is why if we're going to talk about "*Enhancing Productivity.....Delivering Results*," for our organizations, the conversation has to start with FM. An investment in FM is an investment in the people - OUR people— and moving us forward as a region and as a society.

Now that I've made a case — a compelling one, if I may say so myself (LAUGH) — for why we need to look at our industry as people-centric and a solution to organizational productivity, measurable performance and cost efficiency, it's time to talk about how accepting that viewpoint and consequently engaging in responsible FM, can deliver results across the board. So, what better place to start than with the data—cold, hard facts?

*“The Workplace and its Impact on Productivity,”* a report developed and published by the Advanced Workplace Associates (or AWA, a firm in the U.S. that helps organizations adjust their FM practices and policies to increase overall organizational productivity), some eleven years ago states that “From research of the investigations conducted over the past 70 years, there can be little doubt that the physical environment does impact upon the productivity of people in the workplace. “ If I were a betting man, I’d say many of us here today had no idea that people were even attempting to make the connection between productivity and workspace 70 years ago. I certainly did not and I have spent my entire career in this industry both here in the Caribbean and abroad. So that was quite a shocker.

However, since the AWA report was published at the beginning of the new millennium, new reports are being published almost daily espousing progressive analytical data that demonstrate the direct and indirect links between workplace environment and employee health and productivity.

Just the other day, a Michigan State University in the U.S. published a study that focused on air quality versus employee productivity showing that employees who worked at organizations whose buildings had high air quality reported fewer allergy and asthma symptoms which resulted in less absenteeism. Workers were therefore able to complete more work than those working in an environment with poor air quality. Less absenteeism and more productivity enables improved organizational performance and employee morale. That example shows measurable improvement through air quality, but, as you know, air quality is just one of the many measurable building management and maintenance factors. Temperature management, workspace design, water quality, lighting, ergonomics, floor, wall and ceiling chemical composites and many other features within a building can have significant impact to help or hinder your health, safety, comfort, continuity and productivity.

Can you imagine how those kinds of improvements on a larger scale would transform *our* workforce and overall attitudes about work? I’m excited just

thinking about how improved standards of maintenance to our built environment here could influence and improve people's morale, enthusiasm and work ethic. I can predict that there will be an overall cultural shift in attitudes about work and the workplace throughout.

That brings me to the kind of increase in productivity and corresponding revenue we have the power to help generate if we commit to moving our regional standards one step closer to that of our international counterparts and taking a people-centered approach to our jobs as facilities managers.

More productivity and reduced long-term maintenance costs in the workplace leads to higher yields across the board for Caribbean companies. Higher yields for regional companies would lead to better performance of our companies in world markets and ultimately, increase our national gross domestic products (GDP) and gross domestic incomes (GDI) over time. The people-centered approach that our international counterparts have taken to achieving these outcomes is more responsible and sustainable, or "greener" facilities management and maintenance practices.

According to the World Green Building Council's "A Business Case for Green Buildings,"

- 8 case studies linking individual temperature control for each worker measured productivity gains up to a 3% increase in overall productivity.
- 15 case studies linked improved ventilation with up to 11% gains in productivity because of better air quality.
- 12 studies linking improved lighting design with up to 23% gains in productivity.

I think we're seeing a clear pattern here; accommodate people's workplace needs and increase overall organizational performance. **BUT**, if you need some more specific instances of these practices and the results, some of the world's leading companies are really paving the way where this is concerned.

Proctor & Gamble, for example, has energy-efficiency program reduced water consumption by 52%, energy usage by 48%, CO2 emissions 52%, and waste disposal by 53% in their production facilities.

In 2004, Timberland began energy-efficiency improvements that resulted in savings of over 40% in energy and emissions at the company's largest facilities. In 2006, they began using solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays at their California Distribution Centre. And that facility is now 60 percent powered by their PV system.

Walmart has committed to eliminating landfill waste at their stores and Sam's Club facilities by 2025. Between 2008 and 2009, they reduced landfill waste from their stores by more than 57%. The company has established 3 clear ambitious "Green" goals:

1. Being supplied 100% by renewable energy
2. Creating zero waste
3. Selling products that sustain people and resources

All of these leading companies have employed methods resulting in more comfortable workspaces for employees through sustainable practices with implied productivity gains as indicated by the case study research. Therefore, investing in any of the facility components mentioned earlier (i.e. temperature control, air-quality, better lighting etc) studies have shown that this will influence workplace productivity and of course improve operational efficiency of your facility. This makes better business sense to me – and more money in the bank for you!

This is exactly why my colleagues and I on the Chamber's Facilities Management and Maintenance Committee have worked feverishly since our last conference to put together a comprehensive group of sessions and seminars for this year's conference focused on "*Enhancing Productivity...Delivering Results*" which ultimately seeks to make the link between buildings, workplace environments and

organizational performance. Over the next two days, we hope to empower and equip you with the pertinent knowledge needed; to make the case that effective, efficient and timely sustainable facilities planning and management positively impacts employee productivity and achieves operational costs savings on assets. Therefore, integrating strategic facilities planning, management and maintenance into your corporate strategic plan is a win/win for all of the PEOPLE in the organization; from employees to CEOs and of course, the facilities management and maintenance professionals.

Through workshops highlighting everything from "Sustainability and Innovations in FM technology" to "Facilities Resilience and the value of the Facilities Manager," the knowledge you need to better serve your clients and/or organizations and ensure that they recognize how your work enhances productivity and deliver results, is here for the taking. So, I welcome you—NO, I URGE you—to soak it all in so that you can go back to your respective organizations or your clients— ready and willing to meet the PEOPLE'S needs.

Again - Welcome to the Caribbean Facilities Management Conference and Expo, the number one conference of its kind in our region. A big thank you to our Platinum Sponsors: Acuitas and Servus; Diamond Sponsor: Europa; and our Gem Sponsors – 3M, Hope Electrical and Telecommunications Services, and TRACMAC, and to all of you for joining us, including our friends and neighbors throughout the Caribbean to help propel our region's FM industry one step closer to meeting international standards of practice and towards making us more competitive and marketable on an international level.

Enjoy the Conference and Thank you.