



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

# **PMISCC 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**March 22, 2018**

**The Normandie Hotel  
10 Nook Avenue,  
St. Ann's, Port-of-Spain**

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Members of the board of the Project Management Institute Southern Caribbean Chapter, members of the 'PMI SCC, Guest Presenter, Dr Rasheed Adam, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, a pleasant good evening to all.

On behalf of the PMI SCC I welcome your presence here this evening for the 15<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting of the 'PMI SCC and it gives me great pleasure to address you tonight in spite of the fact that I do so as your outgoing president, an office I held for the past 4 years.

When back in 1999 a few of us got together to establish the Southern Caribbean Chapter of the PMI, it never came to me that I would one day be elected to lead this August body of practicing project management professionals. Nonetheless, I did and was fortunate to do so for 4 years. During this time I had the benefit of presiding over 2 International Conferences as well as a Region 14 meeting, in the case of the latter, it was the 1<sup>st</sup> time such an event was held outside continental United States. An achievement we of the PMI SCC can all be extremely proud of.

Whilst it was no doubt a great learning opportunity for me, I cannot help but leave with the feeling, that maybe I did not do enough to improve the understanding of the profession, the value that the profession can contribute to every facet of our business, social and personal lives, the encouragement of new members to join the PMI SCC, the increase in the value proposition from which our members can benefit. And I can continue but, suffice to say that our organization is still young and as we continue to grow and our maturity increases. I am assured that the PMI SCC will continue to expand its reach, its contribution and its interaction and integration with varied private and public sector individuals and organizations with the unequivocal objective of increasing the project management contribution to their respective success stories, yet to be told.

**Let me now take this opportunity to highlight some of the activities that your board has been involved in over the past year.**

Let me start with a look at a significant contributor to our survival and success that being the management of the chapter's finance. But before I do so, I must thank your V.P. Finance, Glynis Alexander-Tam, for the fantastic job she has done for the past year, as indeed she has been doing for many years before.

The period 2017 through to 2018 was extremely challenging for the PMISCC with respect to our financial health. 2017 was the year of our 9<sup>th</sup> biennial international conference and it was also the period when the economic challenges of the country really began to kick into full gear.

The option of not having a conference was simply not an option for the board. We were determined, against all odds as some opined, to make it achievable. This required us, as your leaders, to engage in some out of the box thinking coupled with a 180 degree movement from the comfort zone of "this is what we always do" to what is best for the chapter and more importantly its viability whilst at the same time ensuring that the chapter's membership receive full value both in the context of technical content and financial outlay.

Some of the austerity measures introduced were:

Reduction in secretariat hours from five days a week to two days a week which resulted in reduced administrative expenses. This was predicated by the increased level of interaction with our membership using email, our website and social media. Reduction in the level of print media for marketing events and use of mainly social media.

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Moving the conference to San Fernando and using service providers and suppliers based in San Fernando which resulted in a cut in our conference expenditure by almost 50 %. Increasing the local content for our conference from 40% to 80%; thus reducing the cost of presenters and speakers. Seeking sponsorship for overseas travel to attend 'PMI leadership institution and Region 14 meetings

The decision was also made to reduce conference attendance fees, and despite this when coupled with a reduction in the number of participants, we were still able to realize a profit greater than we anticipated. To this, therefore, I must convey my fullest appreciation to our conference organizers led by Glynis Alexander-Tam and Steve Sankar and all our hard working and extremely dedicated team of volunteers most of whom have laboured with us over the years for this event

I must also note that as a direct benefit of the involvement of our volunteers; this is the first year that, with the exception of one participant whose payment is still being processed, all payments were received within four months post conference.

In terms of sponsorship, this year we were able to attract sponsorship from new companies such as Plant Solutions Limited, Massy Energy, Massy Communications, Venture Credit Union and the San Fernando City Corporation, as well as the re-engagement of support from long term sponsors such as Damus, Atlantic LNG, Massy, NGC, Radiant PM, IIL, SBCS, CEP limited and Total Office.

As at the present time, the financial position of the chapter is healthy and with continued prudent financial management the PMISCC will without a doubt be able to accomplish many of its objectives in the coming years

**Let me turn now to the visibility of the 'PMI SCC. The responsibility for this resides in the office of your V.P. Publications, Alicia Garcia-Pedro**

The year 2017 saw some significant wins for the visibility of the PMISCC in the eyes of our members and the public at large.

In an effort to increase our visibility and relevance to our members, we launched our new website and began a series of active and indeed interactive engagement with members via multiple social media forum as well as via whatsapp messaging. This engagement was also instrumental in driving the online marketing and success of our conference. Over the past year we made a conscious decision to focus on leveraging our new and exciting website so as to further support and develop the publishing of content as a strategy to drive membership:

Our new website was developed and is being supported by a new provider. The new website was piloted in October and launched in early November 2017.

We now have an updated and "fresh" new look, more functionality and most importantly we are able to benefit from the membership management component of the website. Some of the membership management features include:

1. Current PMISCC member information is downloaded directly from 'PMI global to synchronize PMISCC member database with 'PMI member database nightly. The system recognizes who are

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your current members and expired members. Automated welcome emails can be set up for new or expiring members as well as congratulatory messages for new certifications.

2. Increased membership engagement via social media via the website on Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook. Continuous ongoing engagement with members and followers who have joined these fora to remain up to date with chapter events.
3. Our conference committee was able to leverage the social media forum to support the marketing drive for our 9th biennial conference. A clear online communication plan was established and content strategy to build membership and public registration was created and executed, with advertising campaigns.

On the conference days we were able to provide live updates and feeds on presenters and workshops on Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook.

Other benefits include:

- Distribution of all electronic communications to members
- Timely dissemination of information both to chapter membership and other external interested parties.
- The provision of input to and reviewing of all external chapter marketing communiqués or messages, for consistency and compliance with chapter's communications standards. E.g. tech session notices and special events.
- The maintenance of the chapter website, including the provision of changes to the website.

**Another** important component of membership engagement is our technical sessions as these provide a regular opportunity for members to benefit from, not only a practicing project management professional, but as we had this evening, also professionals who can present his work experience looking thru the lens of a project manager. Your **VP Technical Sessions, Kamla Rampersad de Silva** heads this portfolio.

Over the years our speakers have included businessmen, actors, authors, lecturers, broadcasters, PM consultants, a psychiatrist, a sport leader and a former permanent secretary. I say that to say this, we have over the past years increased the skill set of presenters so as to diversify the knowledge base and experiential value to which you are exposed with a view to expand your appreciation of the value of project management in all aspects of society and industry.

We continue to serve our membership based on our sister isle of Tobago as we hosted a technical session again, in November last year having started this initiative in 2015. For this I must thank the support and encouragement provided by the Tobago House of Assembly for they have been a welcomed and extremely valued partner for this initiative.

As a chapter that represents the southern Caribbean, we continue to reach out to our members in St. Lucia, Guyana and Barbados. Some of these have not brought in the results we expected but we continue to provide support where we can and as we do so we are hoping to reach out through our technical sessions.

To this end we have introduced the use of **webinars to reach out to both national and non-national members.**

This initiative began in 2017 with a presentation at the Tradewinds Hotel. The trial run was a success with several persons logging in from Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago to give us feedback on the quality and friendliness in using the system. Whilst we must admit we have had some challenges in getting this fully up and running, most of which are related to available bandwidth at the host venue, we continue to direct our concerted efforts to have this fully operational in the shortest possible time.

**I now turn to marketing and sponsorship which is led by your V.P. Mushtaq Sookoor:**

The performance of the V.P. Marketing and Sponsorship, and his team of volunteers, was crucial to the success of our conference in 2017. Their efforts were key to the retention of our past sponsors as well as the securing of new sponsors.

The prevailing economic conditions in 2017 mandated that an unprecedented approach be employed to promote the benefits of membership.

While predominantly maintaining the existing target group consisting of project management professionals and practitioners within the region, we extended the reach to include members in the facilities management industry. This was facilitated by the PMI SCC's partnering with the TTIC for their 6th Caribbean facilities management conference & expo on May 17th 2017, where a booth was set to market the benefits of 'PMI SCC membership as well as our upcoming conference. Analysis of the registered guests at the booth showed a penetration rate, as it related to conference attendance, of 1 in 8, which can be considered a success for our first attempt.

In any membership based organization, adherence by its members to professional codes of conduct and ethics play an integral part in its survival. This therefore needs a "watchdog" as it were for all such organizations and for the 'PMI SCC this office is held by **Owen Fields, V.P. Compliance**

As we approach our 20th year of establishment as a chapter, the 'PMI SCC needed to commence the performance of some introspection and as it were "house-keeping". To this end, it was necessary for us to first identify and then to undertake activities to achieve this objective:

These activities included:

- Review of 'PMI and 'PMI SCC by laws
- Performance of comparative analysis with other 'PMI chapters by laws
- Harmonization between 2 versions of 'PMI SCC by laws in circulation
- Drafting of areas for refinement and recommendations for the board to review over the coming months
- Reaching out to 'PMI SCC branch leaders still on file or still contactable in Guyana, Barbados and St. Lucia.

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- To ensure that all is not lost given the ground works already undertaken, some activities have been identified for the incoming board to give its consideration to:
  - Namely, complete the review of the bye laws followed by presentation to and ratification by the membership.
  - Perform review of compliance with 'PMI SCC charter, 'PMI SCC strategic plan, 'PMI SCC financials, 'PMI SCC policies and procedures.

As we continue to seek growth in our membership one of the key areas identified as being able to add to the success of this objective is that of strategic alliance. Our **Vice President of Strategic Alliance, Princess Adams** is the champion of this endeavor.

Over the past year, the board continued to pursue the PMI SCC's pipeline of Strategic Alliances (S.A) which supports the strategy being adopted for the development of the S.A portfolio of the PMI SCC. Through active corporate outreach over the period, positive feedback has been received for a number of alliances which are being explored to not only allow us to maintain and grow our membership but also achieve our mandate whilst adding value to the membership and the community with focus on the following areas:

- Training and development
- Networking and capacity building
- Health and wellness/ work life balance
- Earn PDUs and maintain credential
- Revenue generation
- Corporate social responsibility

During the period we have been able to successfully secure signed strategic alliances with ISACA (previously known as information systems audit and control association); and Purple Dragon International. Memorandum of understanding has been executed and our strategic partner purple dragon did support the team at our bi annual conference.

The objective of the 'PMI SCC is to continue to pursue strategic alliances with NGO's and other key stakeholders in the upcoming period

**Education and certification of our members** to improve their maturity and competence as project managers is a significant objective of the 'PMI SCC. The education and certification portfolio is led by **Debra Johnson, V.P. Education & certification**

As at 20 March 2018, the 'PMI SCC membership credential data is as follows:

<b>Total members</b>	<b>559</b>
<b>New members added</b>	<b>1</b>
PMP®	430
CAPM®	11
PGMP®	2
PMI-SP®	2
PMI-RMP®	3
PMI-ACP®	0
PFMP®	0
PMI-PBA®	3

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PMI SCC's education & certification portfolio has continued to evolve. Changes at the global governance level within the last two years, particularly, the change of the testing format in Trinidad and Tobago from paper-based to computer-based during the last two years meant a shift in some previous chapter portfolio focus areas and activities.

These changes also present new opportunities for the chapter which will aim to derive benefit for current members, be leveraged to expand the chapter's reach and increase its member-pool, all while propagating project management as one among the fastest growing professions in this era.

Numerous funding and technical resources are available from the 'PMI educational foundation to schools, universities, educators and students. Thus, engaging the support and resources available from the 'PMI-education foundation (PMIEF) in **academic outreach program** to schools and universities will continue in close collaboration with support from our parent organisation.

In this regard, I employ members to visit the 'PMI website and examine the plethora of information, guidelines and opportunities for professional development as they are all free of charge and for your benefit as members.

**Steve Sankar is your V.P. Special Events and Volunteerism** and over the past year, Steve and his team of volunteers have provided tremendous support to the main special event hosted, that is our conference as indeed to all other initiatives that the 'PMI SCC have embarked on

Volunteerism is the life blood of 'PMI SCC as it flows thru every vein of our chapter. In this regard, our chapter currently maintains a volunteer database with close to 45 volunteers available for assignment to various volunteer opportunities. Volunteer registration is facilitated via the website and we continue to seek new volunteers to increase our pool.

Volunteering for activities of the 'PMI SCC not only provides you with the opportunity to obtain PDU's, more importantly it will provide you with an opportunity to work with the members of the board as a learning opportunity to prepare yourself to serve your fellow members at board level. This is something I would most certainly encourage, for members should grasp the benefits to be reaped from such an opportunity.

Over the past years, membership has been somewhat stagnant, with little or no growth. The facts continue to remain the same: people join to take advantage of reduced examination rates and then drop out, members drop out when their employers stop funding their membership and they can ill afford to fund this out of their pockets.

But fear ye not for all is not lost. For at the meeting of leaders of both Region 5 and Region 14 held in Chicago in October, 2017, the 'PMI SCC was recognized and awarded the distinction of being the chapter out of a total of 40 chapters with the highest membership retention rate. This is an achievement, as members of the 'PMI SCC, we should all be extremely proud of.

This achievement notwithstanding, the board was of the view that there is much work still to be done to increase our membership.

To this end a simple "baby steps" approach was identified and 2 of your V.P's accepted the task of partnering to achieve this objective. Thus the year of 2017 was one of a partnership between the V.P.

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publications and the V.P. membership as the publications portfolio (visibility of the 'PMI SCC) was determined to be a key enabler for the membership experience

The establishment of the website and social media *fora* has meant the discontinuation of the onerous task of manually manipulating membership data and manually issuing communications. In this way, the membership committee was allowed to focus more effort on designing and executing key membership strategies.

**The membership committee, led by V.P. Alisha Bertrand-Bostic**, has been working with the V.P. Publications to drive support for some of the key 2017 events, and brainstormed for the further adaptation of our re-awakened web and social media presence for both the short-term and medium-term with a focus on membership engagement and retention.

As a result of these initiatives, it is suggested to the incoming board that there be a focused drive to ramp up membership engagement employing such strategies as:

- Rollout of a suite of automated communications via the website for the near instantaneous engagement of new and renewing members.
- Establishment and training of membership ambassadors who promote and support membership, and become "human" promoters of membership especially at key 'PMI SCC events.
- Upgrade of the website and social media presence to focus on the membership themselves via:
  - Revamped membership page content
  - Member of the month or quarter features
  - Membership discussion forums about
  - Trending topics
  - Recently hosted technical sessions
  - Membership recognition activities
  - Establishment of a monthly membership birthday club
- Where possible, channel professional development content and career opportunities to members based on their expressed areas of interest via:
  - Projectmanagement.com
  - Project management videos
  - Mentorship programs
  - Hosting semi-annual, company-sponsored, membership networking events
- Establishment of at least one community outreach program to be an enabler of desired social change where members live/ work every day.

Members of the 'PMI SCC, whilst I would like to claim success for all that has been achieved in the past year, as indeed during the last 4 years as president, I would be unfaithful to myself as the achievements were the result of the hard work, dedication and unwavering commitment of the Members of the Board and their volunteers.

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Nonetheless, tonight, I am proud to say I have fulfilled a promise to myself to serve you as president for the past 4 years to the best of my ability. I am thankful for having been given such a distinguished privilege. I enjoyed every moment of my term. During my journey, I had laughter, I had fun. I had things that upset me, things that broke me down and those that built me back up. But all these did was to provide fond memories and lessons learnt, for indeed I have learnt a lot.

I have no regrets taking up the position and I am extremely grateful to my team of board members for seeing me through the past 4 years as your president.

my heartiest congratulations to in-coming president, whomsoever that might be, as I relegate myself to post of immediate past president, I know there are opportunities for me to share my knowledge, learning and experience, all to the ultimate benefit of the growth, development and indeed the maturity of the noble profession of project management.

Members of the board, Members of the 'PMI SCC, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen; I extend my heartfelt thanks for your most kind attention and do wish you a pleasant evening and a productive AGM.