

MINISTRY OF  
NATIONAL DEFENCE  
AND BORDER SECURITY  
2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

As Minister of National Defence and Border Security, I am proud to present the ministry's achievements in the financial year 2023 guided by our commitment to our mission, mandate and #planBelize.

Throughout the specified period, the BDF has demonstrated remarkable progress across various fronts. Key priorities, including improving soldier living conditions, fortifying operational bases, and conducting live firing exercises, underscore our commitment to enhancing operational capabilities and readiness. Our soldiers' morale, welfare, and discipline remain paramount, as evidenced by initiatives such as family sports days, mental health support, and promotion/recruitment drives.



**Hon Florencio Marin**

The Belize Coast Guard's considerable progress in operations, training, collaboration, and technological advancement is commendable. Their dedication to safeguarding maritime spaces, reducing violence associated with coastal piracy, and deterring drug trafficking underscores their invaluable contribution to our nation's security. I commend the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) for its instrumental role in advancing Belize's defence and security objectives. Collaborative efforts with international partners, strategic planning, and training initiatives have been pivotal in enhancing our preparedness and effectiveness. Likewise, the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) has played a crucial role in combating transnational criminal activities and maintaining Belize's security with a proactive and collaborative approach.

As we reflect on 2023 and the achievements, lessons learned, and plans outlined in this report, I am confident in the resilience and capabilities of our armed forces. Together, we will continue to prioritize investment in training, welfare initiatives, and infrastructure projects to ensure Belize's security and prosperity. I extend my gratitude to all members of the Belize Defence Force, the Belize Coast Guard, the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff, and the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center for their unwavering dedication and service to our nation. Your sacrifices and commitment are deeply appreciated, and I pledge my full support as we work together to safeguard Belize's future.

Thank you.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Aide-de-Camp
AIR	Apparent Intake Rate
AORs	Areas of Responsibility
ATOI	Air Traffic of Interest
BATSUB	British Army Support Unit Belize
BCG	Belize Coast Guard
BDF	Belize Defence Force
BNR	Belize National Reserve
BPD	Belize Police Department
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic integration
CBDF	Commander, Belize Defence Force
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
DTO	Drug Trafficking Organization
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FOB	Forward Operating Base
FOE	Forecast of Events
FY	Financial (Fiscal) Year
G4	Logistics and Finance Directorate
GPS	Global Positioning System
HADR	Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Response
ICJ	International Court of Justice
JCET	Joint Combined Arms Training
JETs	Joint Effective Targeting Systems
JIATF-S	Joint Interagency Task Force South
JIOC	Joint Intelligence and Operations Center
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Center
JSVPR	Joint Sexual Violence Prevention and Response
MNDBS	Ministry of National Defence and Border Security
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organization
NSDS	National Security and Defence Strategy
OW	Orange Walk
PACT	Protected Areas Conservation Trust
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations
PRO	Public Relations Officer
SAR	Search and Rescue
SMEE	Small Medium Enterprise Education
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
SUT	Small Unit Tactics
TCV	Troop-Carrying Vehicle
UAS	Unmanned Air Systems
UN	United Nations

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary provides an overview of the achievements, challenges, and plans of the key entities within the Belizean armed forces, including the Belize Defence Force (BDF), the Belize Coast Guard, the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), and the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center.

The BDF outlines its mission to safeguard Belize's sovereignty and territorial integrity, emphasizing strategic objectives such as conducting operations, and enhancing training and welfare initiatives. Notable achievements include successful operations, training events, and infrastructure projects aimed at bolstering operational capabilities. Lessons learned highlight the importance of addressing technological and procurement challenges while plans focus on infrastructure developments and operational enhancements.

The CDS highlights its role in providing strategic direction, developing joint employment doctrine, and facilitating collaboration with international partners. Accomplishments include mental health training initiatives, educational opportunities for armed forces members, and participation in multinational security conferences. Plans involve reviewing national defence strategies and conducting assessments of organizational effectiveness.

In the Belize Coast Guard, there has been significant progress in operations, training, collaboration, and technological advancement. Noteworthy achievements include higher education pursuits by officers, collaborations with institutions like the University of Belize, and reductions in violence associated with coastal piracy and drug trafficking. Lessons learned underscore the importance of strategic vision, partnerships, and continuous improvement, while plans focus on procurement, deployment, and ongoing commitment to regional security.

Lastly, the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) highlights its role in combating transnational criminal activities in Belize and the region. Key achievements include reductions in illegal aircraft activities and successful joint enforcement operations. Plans involve ongoing training initiatives and collaborations to maintain Belize's security.

Overall, each member of Belize's defence enterprise provides a comprehensive insight into the accomplishments and future trajectory of Belize's armed forces, showcasing their commitment to safeguarding the nation's security and well-being.

## **MISSION STATEMENT AND PRIORITIES OF THE MINISTRY**

### **Vision Statement**

Poise a robust and equipped Defence Forces of Belize to respond to all threats, thus making valuable contribution to national and regional security.

### **Mission Statement**

To provide effective support to the Defence Forces of Belize, to enhance their ability to defend our sovereignty, territorial integrity, and uphold the Constitution.

### **Roles**

Implement defence policy on:

- Morale
- Welfare
- Accountability,

To enhance the defence forces' operational capabilities, and

To promote defence diplomacy.

# BELIZE DEFENCE FORCE





## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Purpose. The focus of this submission is to summarize the Belize Defence Force yearly achievements from 01 Jan 2023 to 31 Dec 2023. It will highlight the Mission, Vision of the BDF, Force Priorities (Strategic Objectives), various Battalion and unit accomplishments related to operations, training, welfare, the current situations, lessons learnt, future priorities, projects, and workable recommendations.

1.2. Breakdown. These accomplishments will be sectored into an Operational Synopsis showing Belize's problematic zones. It will also highlight the BDF Routine Patrols conducted to deter and mitigate these illegalities. Furthermore, these Operations will highlight the Surgical Operations conducted to target specific incursions from the North, West, and Southern Tactical Areas of Responsibility. It also includes the collaborative Joint Operations conducted with local agencies and foreign military personnel. The Training, Welfare, infrastructure, projects, and logistical issues will also be highlighted.

## **2. MISSION AND VISION**

2.1 Mission. The BDF is a potent pillar under the National Security Umbrella capable of conducting military as well as non-military operations to detect, deter, and defeat threats to Belize, both internal and external, with support from local, regional, and international partners to ensure the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Belize.

2.2 Vision. An enhanced combat-ready, dedicated, and professional force capable of providing credible deterrence to threats, both internal and external. The BDF shall maintain and enhance healthy partnerships with local Law Enforcement Agencies and other partners to ensure the Rule of Law while engaging with neighbours and International Partners to contribute to regional and Hemispheric Security. The BDF shall be robust and agile to incorporate new technology, embrace change, and develop its Human Resources and core competencies to contribute to the security, stability, and prosperity of Belize.

## **3. FORCE PRIORITITES (OR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES)**

These are to:

3.1 Improve the living conditions of the soldiers in Fairweather Camp and Camp Belizario.

3.2 Fortify the Operational Bases in the West and South.

3.3 Conduct Battalions Live Firing Exercise

3.4 Have a force well kitted and equipped.

3.5 Increase the recruitment to twice a year.

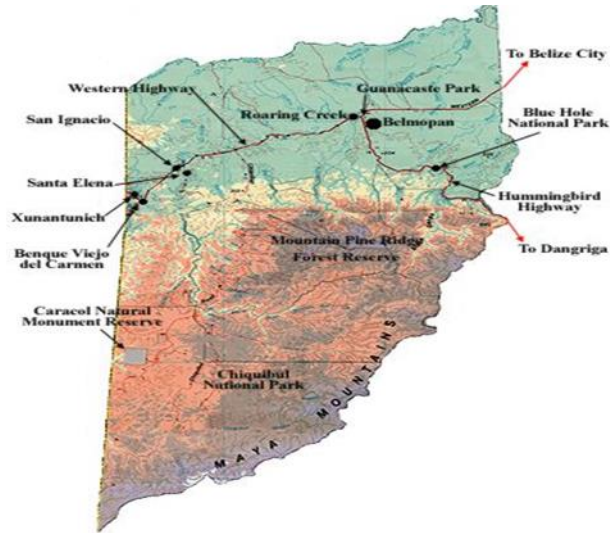
#### 4. OPERATIONS

4.1 Routine Deployments. Daily, the Belize Defence Force maintained a deployment of an average of two hundred and fifty soldiers on routine operations to include the following:

a. Northern Area of Responsibility (AOR) – Standby Composite, Inland Patrols, Northern Border Patrols, Blue Creek Standing Patrol, and Village Patrols.



b. Western (AOR) – Rio Blanco, Ceibo Chico, Cebada, Caballo, Valentin, Caracol, D’ Silva, Arenal, Barrio El Juda, Xunantunich, San Vicente, St. Margaret Patrols.



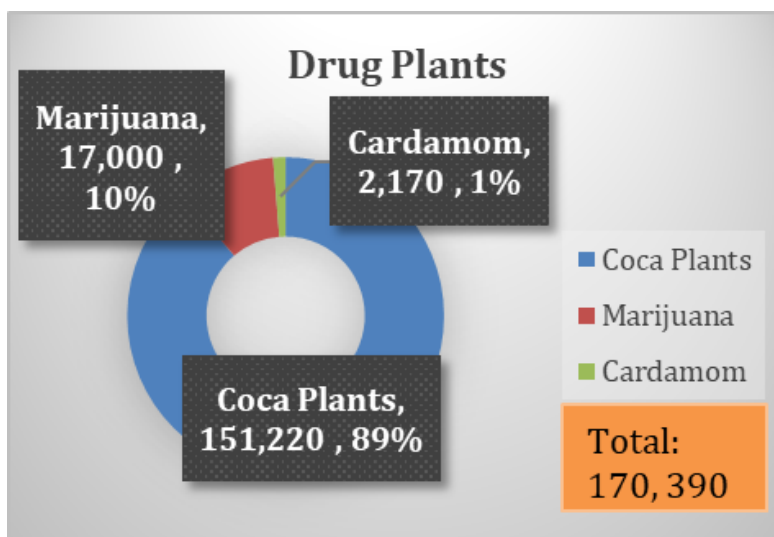
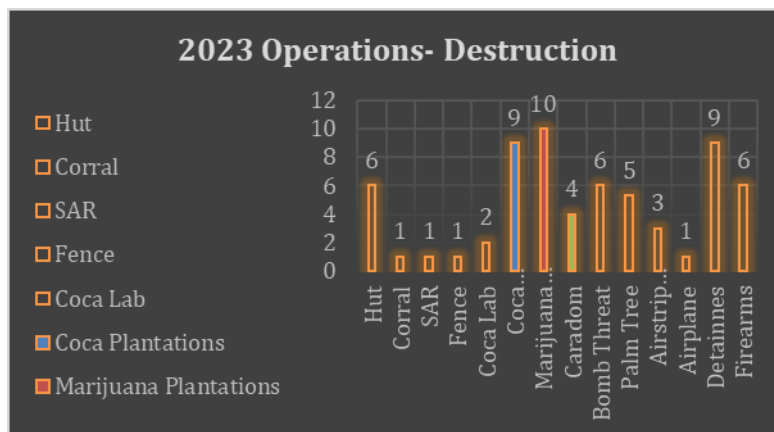
c. Southern (AOR) – Machakilha, Santa Rosa, San Vicente, Tree Tops, Dolores, Cadenas, Sarstoon Forward Operating Base (FOB).



4.2 Synopsis. These accumulated Routine Operations were deployed weekly or bi-monthly, depending on the proximity and involvement of the Joint Agencies, but the majority was with the BDF soldiers. The Northern and Western AOR's most problematic zones are along the entire Belize/Guatemala Western Border. These were primarily due to incremental incursions, Cattle Ranching, illegal building constructions, illegal fence/corals, illegal cultivation, pouching, illegal settlements, illegal gold panning, illegal logging, and deforestation.

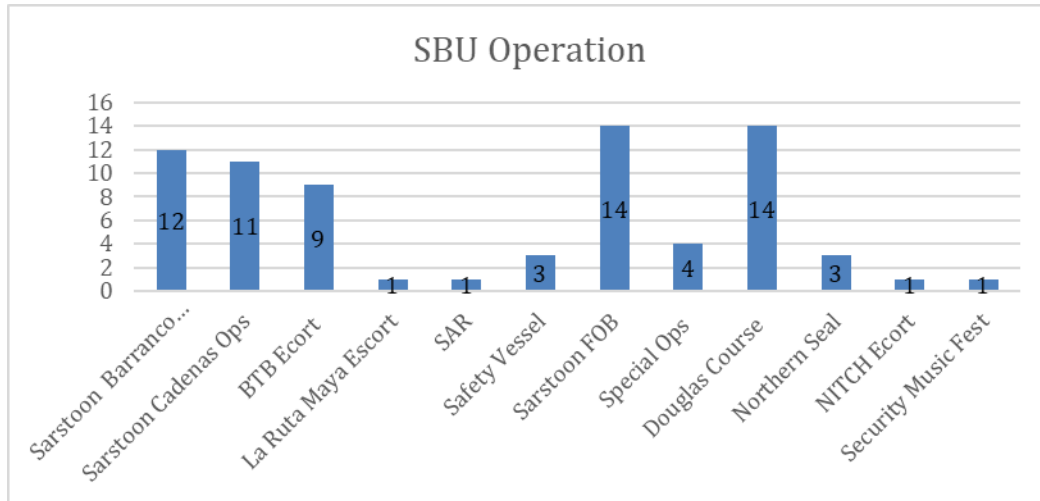
In the Southern AOR, the most problematic zone was in the periphery of the South and East of Dolores area, where illegal aircraft incursions occurred, numerous illegal migrant incursions and illegal plantations were reported. Concerning Special Operations, the Special Operations Task Unit and members of the various infantry units conducted a series of Surgical Operations across the AORs. These successful operations managed to destroy Coca Plantations, Marijuana destruction, and deter illicit aircraft landings and incursions. This table depicts the operations conducted through deterrence, detention, and destruction in 2023.

#### 4.3 1<sup>st</sup> BN & 2<sup>nd</sup> INFANTRY BN Summary of Operations 2023

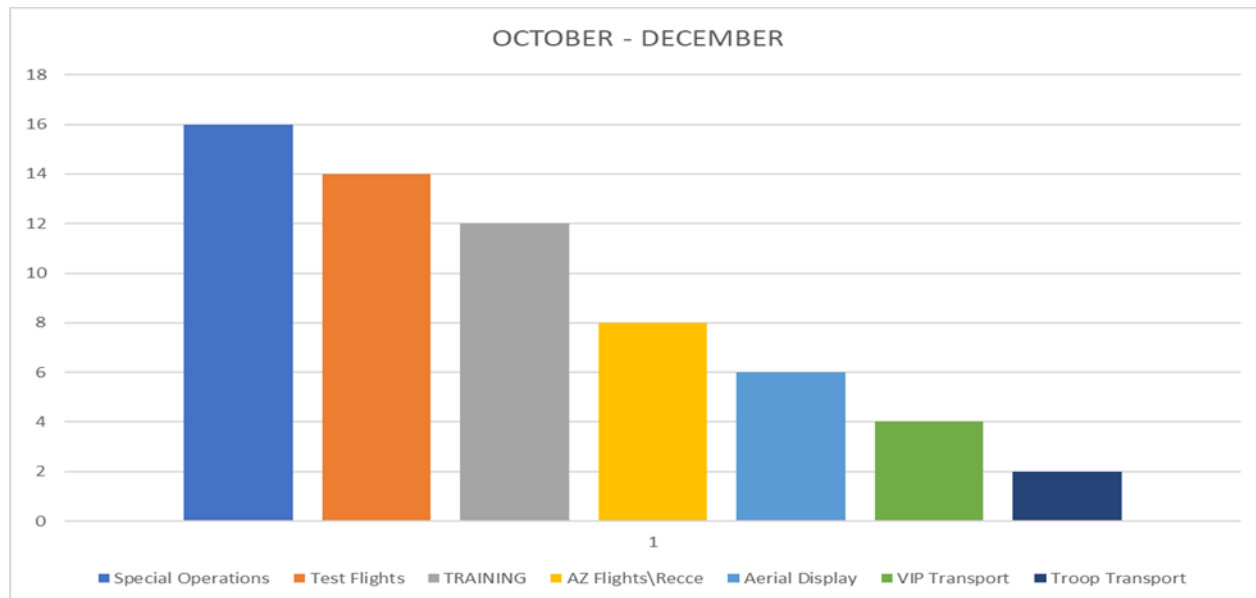


**SMALL BOAT UNIT/AIRWING.** The charts below illustrate an accumulative number of activities conducted by both Units during the reported period.

**SBU Operation for the year 2023**



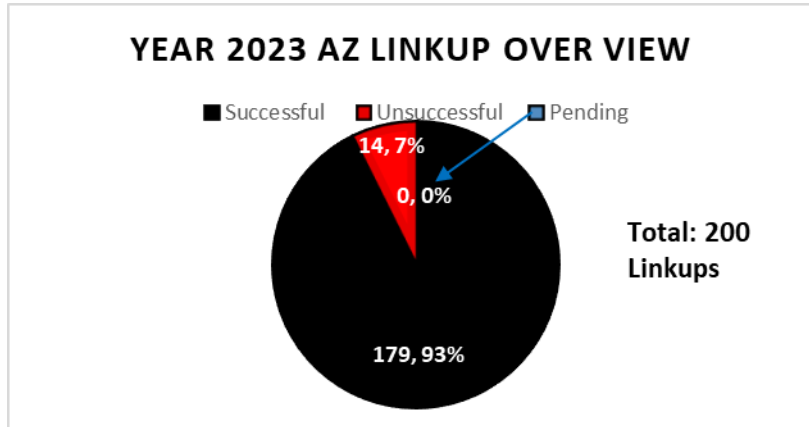
**Air Wing Operations for the year 2023**



4.4 Adjacency Zone Link-Up Patrols. The bar charts below illustrate an accumulative number of sanctioned link-up patrols with BDF and the Guatemala Army during the reported period. The Unsuccessful were due to weather restrictions, administrative issues on both sides and Guatemala’s 2023 elections.

YEAR 2023	WESTERN & NORTHERN AOSUCCESSFUL/UNSUCCESSFUL	YEAR 2023	SOUTHERN AO SUCCESSFUL/UNSUCCESSFUL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99 Successful</b>  11 unsuccessful  0 pending	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87 Successful</b>  03 Unsuccessful  01 Pending





4.5 Other Operations Conducted. The following were other miscellaneous targeted operations that involved the Internal and External Agencies during the reported period 2023.

Ser	OPORD	LOCATION
01	Operation Graham Creek 01/23	The southwest direction of the Graham Creek area
02	Operation Rio Bravo.	Rio Bravo, Northern AO
03	Barranco OPO	Temash/Sarstoon FOB
04	Operation Edward Central AO 02/23	Edward Central AO
05	Operation Quick Strike 01/23	The westerly direction of Wamil and Cedar
06	Operation SICA 01/23	San Pedro Island
07	Operation VIPs Escort 01/23	Price Barracks to Caye Caulker
08	Operation Northern Seal 01/23	Belize/Mexico Border Area
09	Operation Barranco FOB 01/23	Sarstoon & Temash River
10	Operation Edward Central 03/23	Edward Central AO
11	Operation Exotic Chukka 23	Area of Haulover Bridge to Burrell Boom
12	Operation Recon Star 23	Cebada and Ceibo Chico AOR
13	Operation Taiwan President Escort 23	Belize and Belmopan City
14	Operation Machakil Ha 01/23	Machakil Ha AOR
15	Operation Santa Theresa 23	Santa Theresa
16	Operation Corazon Covert Recon 23	Corazon

<b>Ser</b>	<b>OPORD</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
17	Operation Decisive Action (Incisive Gallops) 23	Barranco
18	Operation Northern Seal 02/23	Belize/Mexico Border Area
19	Operation Cordyline Australis 23	Cadenas
20	Operation Caballo 01/23	Caballo
21	Operation Douglas Cause 23	Belize/Mexico Border
22	Operation Ghost Recon 23	Crique Sarco
23	Operation Corazon Airstrip 23	Corazon
24	Operation Corozal VCP 23	Corozal
25	Operation Cordyline Australis 01/23	Cadenas
26	Operation SICA Member Visit 02 23	Riversdale Aerodrome air Strip to Umaya Resort
27	Operation Customs 23	Benque Viejo Border
28	Operation Belize Tourism Board: BTB 23	Marion Jones Sporting Complex
29	Operation Rio Blanco 01 23	Rio Blanco
30	Operation Northern Seal 03/23	Belize/Mexico Border Area
31	Operation John Hunter III 23	Graham Creek
32	Operation Demond Caballo 23	Caballo Area
33	Operation Jungle Central 23	Edward Central
34	Operation Santan 23	Belize City
35	Operation Security Cup 23	Belmopan City
36	Operation Bas and Panthera Security 23	Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary
37	Operation SOC Security 23	NAIA Hotel & Resort
38	Operation Machakil Ha 01/23	Graham Creek, Machakil Ha, and Crique Sarco AOR
39	Operation Programmed for Belize Recce 23	Aguas Turbias AO
40	Operation Coca 01/23	Graham Creek, Machakil Ha, and Crique Sarco AOR
41	Operation Mary Jane 23	Caballo AO
42	Operation Belize Forest Department (BFD) Recce 23	Sibun Forest Reserve AO
43	Operation Coca 02/23	Caballo AO
44	Operation Northern Seal 04 23	Belize/Mexico Border Area



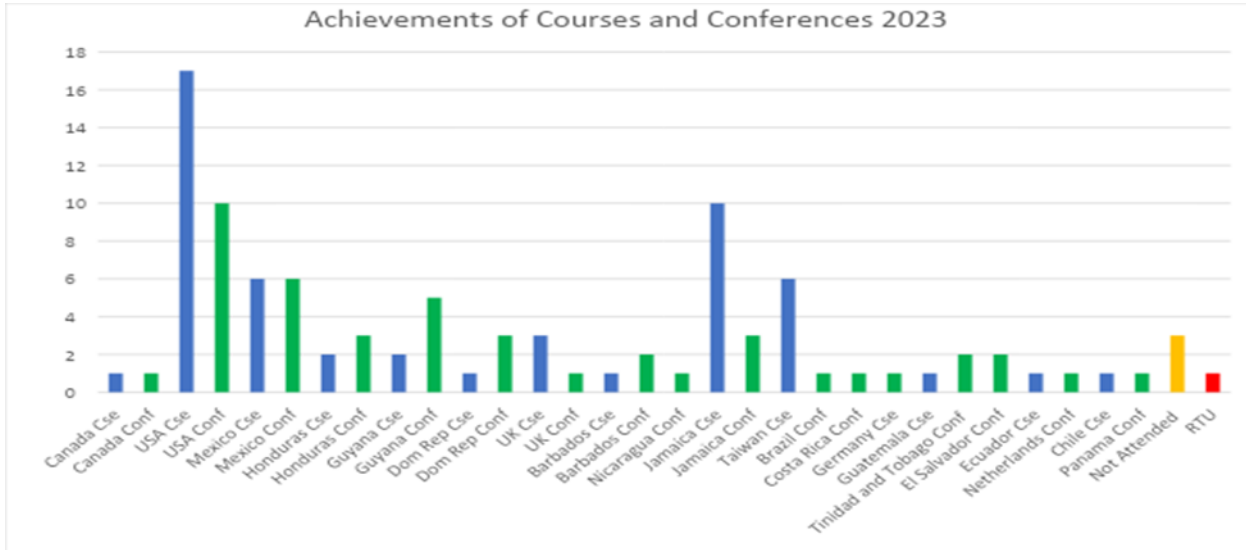
Ser	OPORD	LOCATION
45	Operation Arenal Mary Jane 01 23	Arenal AO
46	Operation Arenal Mary Jane 02 23	Arenal AO
47	Operation Machakil Ha Recce 02/23	Machakil Ha
48	Operation SAR 01 23	Cayo
49	Operation MAF/BDF Conference	Belize
50	Operation Machakil Ha 03/23	Machakil Ha
51	Operation Multi-National Cooperation Security	Cahal Pech, Cayo.
52	Operation Yax Che Conservation Trust Joint Ops	BNR, Stann Creek.
53	Calla Creek Tilapia Farm	Cayo
54	Inland Ops	Dolores, Toledo.
55	OPO Grinch	North, Central, West, and South.
56	OPO Vol Church Parade	Orange Walk
57	Northern Seal 05 2023	Orange Walk
58	OPO IA Security	Caracol
59	OPO Protégé 23	Tower Hill Area, OW

**59 Operations were successfully conducted from January to December 2023.**

## 5. TRAINING

5.1 Local Training Forecast of Events. The Force conducted its regular annual Forecast Of Events Training (FOE). A total of 25 BDF local, promotional, and/or skills courses were conducted during this reporting period.

5.2 Foreign Training Forecast of Events. As the BDF progresses in the development of its personnel, several foreign courses are offered as part of the overall success in the objectives and goals for 2023. The Joint Readiness Training Centre (JRTC) was successfully hosted by the Louisiana Army National Guard (LANG) in Louisiana, with a total of 150 members of BDF/BNG participants. The Bar Graph illustrates several overseas courses, seminars, and conferences that the BDF attended: Courses 50, Conferences 46, Return to Unit 01

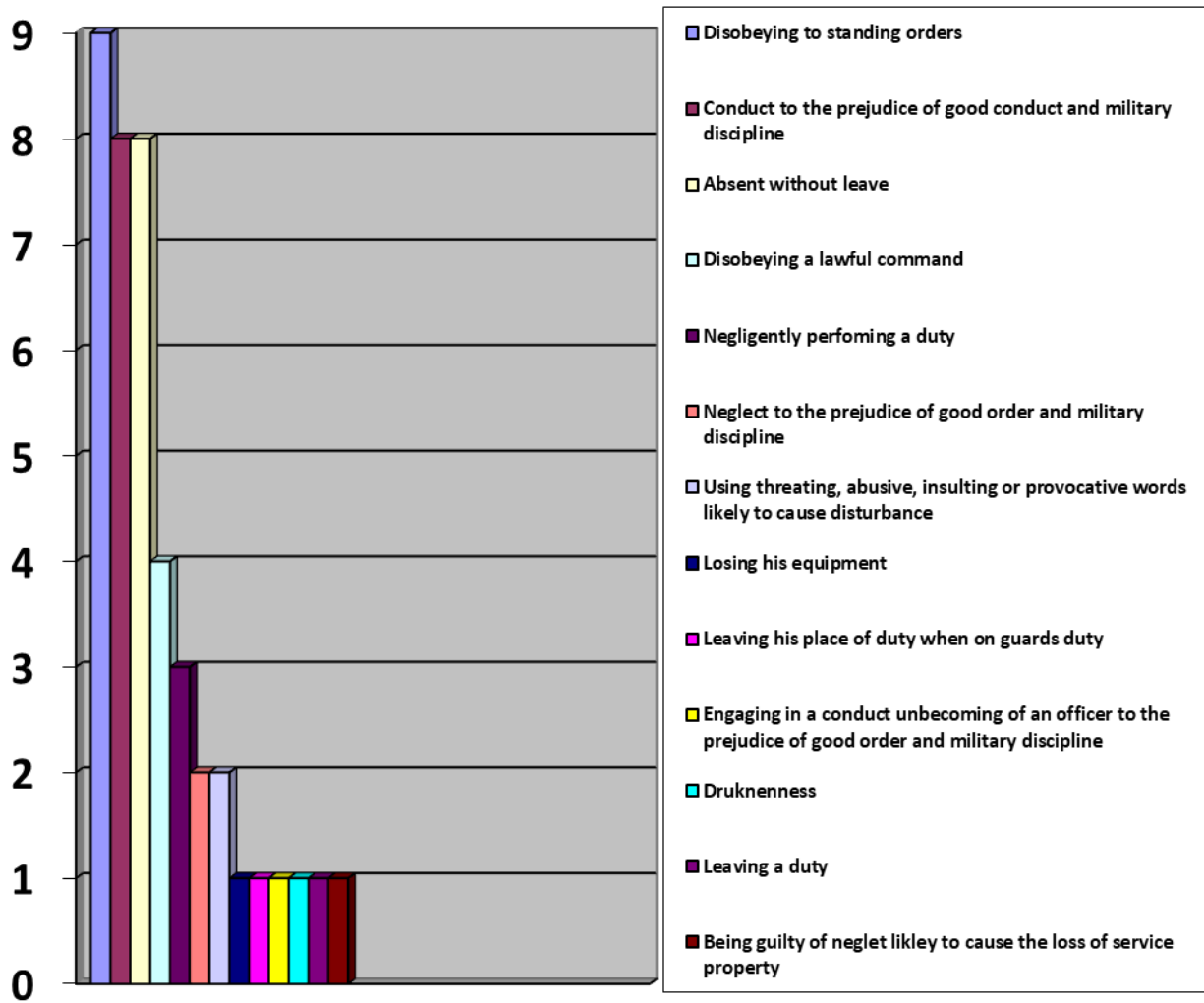


- Course (Crse) - █
- Conferences (Conf) - █
- Not Attended (NA) - █
- Return to Unit (RTU) - █

## 6. WELFARE, MORALE & DISCIPLINE

6.1 Welfare and Morale. The BDF conducted its Annual Family Sports Days event in August 2023. Sub-units also conducted various sports meets along with some adventure training and retreats. The BDF Wellness Department has seen massive improvement by assisting various BDF members and civilians in counselling, mental health, and resilience training. Additionally, the BDF is committed to eliminating the disease of Suicide by implementing its Prevention Policy through education and counselling. Additional courses are being conducted at all levels to guide the Unit Commanders toward recognizing soldiers/officers who require the service. These courses and training are shared approaches from government and non-government agencies both nationally and in Foreign Partner Nations. Furthermore, the BDF now has an operating Media Center that is in full effect, keeping the BDF and the world well-informed in its undertakings. A morale booster for the BDF saw an increase in the promotion of 90 personnel ranging from the rank of Private soldiers to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Furthermore, the BDF saw the inception of 119 recruits as regular soldiers into the ranks of the BDF.

6.2 Discipline. A total of 44 summary trial cases were tried by CBDF during this reporting period. They are as follows: The majority was disobedient to the standing order, contrary to good conduct, and absenteeism.



## 7. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS & EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

7.1. Infrastructure. Over this reporting period, the Force has seen the delivery of a brand-new facility at the BDF Drill Hall in Corozal District. The reconstruction and retrofitting of office spaces and bathrooms in Price Barracks. The Perimeter Fence in Price Barrack is presently undergoing reconstruction. There are ongoing plumbing, electrical, and retrofitting upgrades at the outstations, the Marriage Quarters in Price Barracks, Ladyville, and Camp Belizario. A brand-new building was constructed at Militia Hall. The Water Purification System in Eyles Camp was fixed. Some of the Observation Post received refrigerators and

some reconstruction. The SARSTOON FOB is now functional. The BDF was able to paint and conducted various low-level project construction at various school in Belize and Toledo District.

7.2 Equipment Acquisition. In 2023, the BDF received communication equipment and solar equipment. The United States of America donated a Fuel Tank, and Transport Carrying Vehicles (TCV) through renewed great partnerships. The BDF also has in its inventory handheld radios and antennae, 80 brand-new computers, commercial printers, and other ancillaries. Lastly, yet vital to note, is the acquisition of a brand new updated Cessa Caravan Fixed Wing Aircraft (C-208) gifted by the United States of America.

## **8. LESSONS LEARNT**

8.1 Technological upgrades without adequate software are setbacks.

8.2 The slow procurement stalls much acquisition i.e. kits and equipment, weapons & ammunition.

8.3 Investments in sporting facilities and adventure training will keep the BDF motivated.

## **9. FUTURE PLANS**

9.1 Projects. There are several future projects planned for 2023/2024. The acquisition of industrial power generators and power washers to be used by the BDF, The proposed construction of the Dolores Observation Post, an approved accommodation infrastructure for the Senior Non-Commissioned Officers, and an equipped medical centre in Fairweather Camp, Toledo District. The Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Louisiana, USA, will host approximately a platoon of BDF soldiers for a one-month training in June 2024. The British Army Training Support Unit will inject more training courses in various strengths and capacities. Furthermore, a feasibility study is being conducted for the subsequent establishment of an Officers Cadet Military Academy in Belize. As the BDF continues to grow with an approved Infantry Battalion, the soldiers will be fully equipped, trained, and given the necessary weaponry, ammunition, and tools to enhance the BDF's capabilities. The Forecast of Events 2024, along with its shared partners and stakeholders, will strive in its endeavours to ensure that the BDF meets the challenges of tomorrow.

9.2 Re-strategizing. Commander BDF has directed an amendment to the Constitutional Reform that caters for the inclusion of a medical assistance package to the BDF members in times of great need. Furthermore,

a strategy to revamp the manner the BDF trains which will include standardization of doctrine, policies, and Standing Operational Procedures. This re-strategizing outlook is part of the holistic approach that coincides with the establishment of the proposed Officers Cadet Military Academy in Belize.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

10.1. The Belize Defence Force continues to project itself with a more positive approach to achieving its goals and objectives incrementally through various means despite the significant logistical and financial challenges. The holistic approach to commitment must include our sincere stakeholders and partners to make the BDF a more formidable, resilient, and robust Force. We must not negate the fact that we urgently need the weapons, ammunition, kits, and equipment to make the BDF more combat-effective and ready for any undertakings. “Shoulder to Shoulder,” the BDF stands committed to ensuring the protection of our Territorial Integrity.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 To return the BDF Budget to the G4 Cell.

11.2 A budget for 02 Battalion Exercises in preparation for the 2025 ICJ Ruling.

11.3 Emphasis on a third regular battalion.

11.4 Extend the years of service to age 55.

11.5 Increase the Re-engagement Service for soldiers from three years to four years.

11.6 Increase the Bond Contract for Study Leave, International and Technical Courses.

# BELIZE COAST GUARD



## INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Belize Coast Guard, under the purview of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security, plays a pivotal role in safeguarding Belize Maritime Spaces from various threats, ensuring maritime safety, security, and protection. With a robust mandate and allocated budget, the Coast Guard executes its missions efficiently and effectively to uphold national interests and regional security. In the fiscal year 2023/24, the Belize Coast Guard witnessed a notable 9.65% budget increase, amounting to approximately \$13.8 million, compared to the previous fiscal year, reflecting the government's commitment to maritime governance and security. This significant budget increment has enabled the Coast Guard to enhance its operational capabilities and address pressing challenges within its operational landscape.

1.2 The budget allocation is primarily directed towards various expenditures, with personal emoluments comprising a substantial portion, followed by significant investments in fuel procurement, maintenance of assets, and contractual obligations. However, despite the budget increment, noticeable changes to key line items have impacted the procurement process, presenting both positive and negative effects on operational efficiency. Reductions in specific allocations, such as Material and Supplies and Maintenance Costs, have exerted substantial pressure on vital operational aspects, including the acquisition of uniform supplies and the maintenance of essential assets. Addressing these challenges is imperative to ensure seamless operations and sustained readiness in fulfilling the Coast Guard's mandate.

1.3 Operational readiness and accomplishments underscore the Belize Coast Guard's unwavering commitment to maritime security and governance. Notably, the Coast Guard's proactive stance and operational efficacy have resulted in significant achievements, including the successful containment of coastal piracy and the reduction of violence associated with illicit activities at sea. The deployment of forward-deployed units and the integration of advanced technologies, such as satellite tracking and Unmanned Air Systems (UAS), have bolstered surveillance capabilities and operational effectiveness, further reinforcing Belize's maritime security posture.

1.4 Looking ahead, the Belize Coast Guard is poised to embark on plans aimed at enhancing maritime governance and security. The procurement of two patrol boats represents a landmark investment in Belize's defence capabilities, signalling the government's resolve to protect marine resources, expand operational reach, and uphold naval defence. With a steadfast commitment to achieving the ministry's vision of a robust and equipped defence force, the Belize Coast Guard stands ready to confront emerging challenges and make significant contributions to national and regional security objectives.

## 2. MISSION AND VISION

2.1 Mission. To protect Belize's maritime spaces from threats both foreign and domestic, by providing maritime safety, security and protection of our people, industries and natural resources through military, law enforcement and humanitarian operations.

2.2 Vision. To create an apex institution highly professional motivated trained and resource capable of enforcing maritime laws and projecting sea power to the limits of our sea spaces and supporting maritime operations locally and regionally.

## 3. CORE MISSIONS

These are:

3.1 Maritime Safety, Maritime Security

3.3 Marine Resource Protection

3.3 Territorial Integrity and Sovereignty

3.4 Naval Defence of the state

## 4. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

### 4.1 Budget and Procurement

4.1.1 In the fiscal year 2023/24, the Belize Coast Guard experienced a notable 9.65% budget increase, totalling approximately \$13.8 million compared to the previous fiscal year's allocation of about \$12.6 million. This increase, amounting to an absolute difference of \$1,214,706, signifies the government's commitment to enhancing maritime security and governance. Personal emoluments constitute nearly three-fourths of this budget increment, emphasizing the importance placed on human resources within the organization. Additionally, significant expenditures include the procurement of fuel under Operating Costs, maintenance of assets (boats, vehicles, and facilities) under Maintenance Costs, and food tendering under Contracts & Consultancies.

4.1.2 However, despite the budget increase, notable changes in key line items have impacted the procurement process, presenting both positive and negative effects on operational efficiency. A reduction



in Material and Supplies has intensified pressure on acquiring uniform supplies, affecting the Coast Guard's ability to maintain uniformity and professionalism among its personnel. Moreover, the high cost of fuel, coupled with a decrease in Operating Costs, has compelled the organization to reduce fuel purchases, resulting in fewer patrols and potential limitations in operational reach.

4.1.3 Despite these challenges, the Belize Coast Guard has made significant strides in procurement endeavours, contributing to the improvement of operational capabilities and infrastructure. These accomplishments include the furnishing of Sector South HQ, which involved the procurement of essential items such as beds, kitchen appliances, office supplies, and security equipment. Additionally, investments in infrastructure projects, such as the boat launch ramp and the painting of CGHQ to a battleship grey, demonstrate the organization's commitment to modernization and facility upkeep.

4.1.4 Furthermore, investments in uniform procurement, refurbishing of facilities, and the construction of a parade square reflect the Coast Guard's dedication to maintaining standards of professionalism and operational readiness. Initiatives such as the purchase of ammunition for training purposes highlight the organization's commitment to ensuring personnel readiness and proficiency.

4.1.5 While challenges in procurement persist, including ammunition acquisition issues, the Belize Coast Guard remains proactive in addressing these obstacles and enhancing its operational capabilities. Through strategic investments and prudent resource management, the organization continues to strengthen its position as a key player in safeguarding Belize's maritime domain and contributing to national security objectives.

## **4.2 Welfare**

4.2.1 The Belize Coast Guard is fundamentally shaped by its missions and the dedication of its personnel, driving a continuous pursuit of progress and development among our officers and sailors. Guided by the supportive leadership of the Coast Guard Board, chaired by the Honourable Florencio Marin Jr, Minister of National Defence and Border Security, we have made significant strides in advancing the welfare and education of our members. Over the past year, three of our officers have achieved master's degrees from prestigious institutions such as the University of the West Indies, University of Guyana, while two more are actively pursuing postgraduate studies at the University of International Cooperation and the World Maritime University in Sweden. Furthermore, our scholarship program with the University of Belize is thriving, with two lieutenants currently enrolled and two others on study leave, generously granted by the

Coast Guard Board. Additionally, our partnership with Gallen University has facilitated full-time enrolment for two enlisted personnel, with several others benefiting from part-time study arrangements. These educational endeavours underscore our commitment to the progressive development of our members, ensuring a bright future for the Belize Coast Guard.

4.2.2 In parallel with our focus on professional growth, we recognize the importance of fostering a healthy work-life balance and prioritizing the mental well-being of our personnel. This year, we have actively participated in major sporting events across the country, excelling in disciplines such as canoeing, kayaking, and long-distance running. Our female team proudly represented Belize at the Caribbean and Pan American Games, showcasing our nation's athletic talent on the international stage. While our performance in volleyball and football has been commendable, we acknowledge areas for improvement, such as softball, where we aim to enhance our competitiveness. Notably, our engagement in boxing has yielded remarkable success, with one of our boxers maintaining an undefeated record. These sporting achievements not only foster camaraderie among our members but also promote physical fitness and mental resilience.

4.2.3 Furthermore, we recognize that investing in our people extends beyond individual development to encompass the well-being of their families. To this end, we have taken proactive steps to establish a family's association, aimed at fostering a more integrated approach to organizational advancement. At our recent senior officer's conference, an interim executive was appointed to spearhead the creation of this association, reflecting our commitment to supporting the holistic needs of our personnel and their loved ones. Additionally, we have implemented various morale and welfare initiatives under the guidance of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security, including improvements to living conditions and the provision of internet services at our forward operating bases. Moreover, our decentralized strategy has enabled us to optimize logistics and streamline deployments, allowing for a reduction from three to two weeks in areas where feasible, such as the southern region where our sector headquarters at Big Creek strategically supports operational efficiency. These initiatives underscore our unwavering dedication to the well-being and professional growth of every member of the Belize Coast Guard community.

### **4.3 Training**

4.3.1 Considerable emphasis has been placed on training initiatives throughout the past year within the Belize Coast Guard (BCG). We have prioritized internal training programs, conducting in-house

promotional courses for enlisted members ranging from Petty Officer Third Class to Petty Officer First Class. Additionally, our members have actively participated in tactical and technical courses organized in collaboration with the Belize Defence Force (BDF) and other national institutions. Furthermore, we have forged valuable partnerships with international allies to facilitate training opportunities abroad. In particular, we have received support for training programs in countries such as Mexico, the USA, Taiwan, and the UK.

4.3.2 Moreover, the BCG has training detachments to enhance skill sets in various operational domains. Notably, our fleet members undertook small boat training during a deployment to Guyana, further honing their maritime capabilities. Additionally, our special operations group embarked on a training mission in Colombia, where they had the privilege of training alongside elite special forces units from across the Americas. Furthermore, in a significant milestone, we deployed our largest training detachment overseas in May. A platoon was dispatched to the Joint Readiness Training Centre in the United States, an accomplishment made possible through collaboration with the Louisiana National Guard. This extensive training exposure positions us favourably for potential operational deployments, such as the upcoming mission to Haiti.

#### **4.4 Collaboration and Partnerships**

4.4.1 The success of the Belize Coast Guard extends beyond its internal efforts and is significantly bolstered by external support from our partners and allies in defence and security. We have actively engaged with our counterparts in the Mexican Navy to enhance security cooperation and intelligence sharing, particularly focusing on addressing the escalating threat posed by cartels along our northern border region. Additionally, at the Multinational Security Conference held in November, we received reassurance from the United States Security Cooperation Office in Belize regarding ongoing security assistance. This commitment underscores our joint efforts to combat common threats such as drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, and illegal migration.

4.4.2 Furthermore, the Belize Coast Guard deployed one of our senior officers to join the team at the Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West, Florida. This two-year deployment serves as a testament to the commitment of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security to regional security. The United States has consistently proven to be a steadfast partner for the Belize Coast Guard, with 35 coast guard personnel receiving training in the United States or being sponsored for regional training exercises.

4.4.3 Moreover, the British Army Support Unit Belize (BATSUB) plays a pivotal role in capacity building through training initiatives. Recruit Intake 11 conducted their entire training at the BATSUB facility in Price Barracks, with live firing exercises conducted at the Manatee Live Firing Range. Additionally, BATSUB provided qualification training for Coast Guard members in various areas including range management, sniper courses, tracking, operational planning, and promotional courses. We are deeply appreciative of their support, as these training programs are integral to our organizational success. The Belize Coast Guard serves as a vital military instrument in support of our foreign policies, working closely with our international partners and allies to ensure maritime security and regional stability.

## **4.5 Operations**

4.5.1 Turning to our operations on the home front, our performance over the past year has been exceptional. We have successfully reduced violence associated with coastal piracy to zero, with no reported deaths or incidents of firearm-related violence at sea. Instead, our operations have been focused and effective, resulting in the confiscation of firearms and the prevention of violence within our maritime domain. Our forward-deployed force posture serves as a powerful deterrent against illicit activities, particularly drug trafficking at sea. This strategy has proven effective, considering that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports that 90% of the global drug trade occurs via maritime routes. Our continuous presence at sea significantly contributes to deterring drug trafficking activities in Belizean waters.

4.5.2 Incorporating technology into our operations has been a priority, enabling us to enhance our surveillance and monitoring capabilities. Through satellite tracking, we can effectively monitor vessels entering our jurisdictional waters, supporting our common operating picture. Additionally, live tracking of our assets via direct satellite link has improved command and control of our forward-deployed units, ensuring swift and coordinated responses to emerging situations.

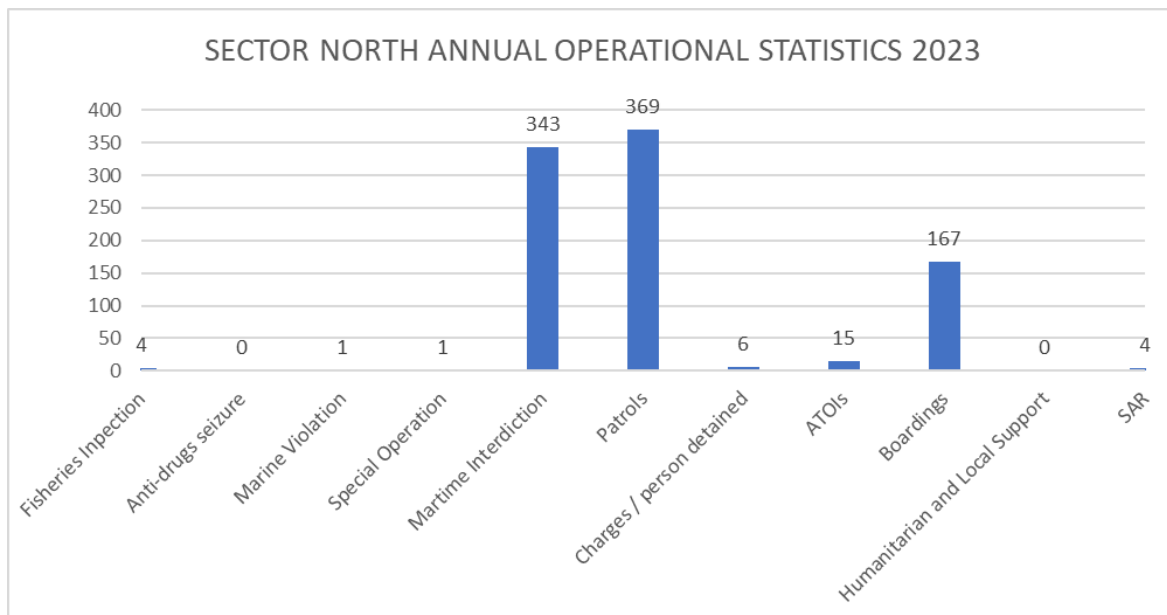
4.5.3 A critical aspect of our mission is the protection of marine resources, which are vital to Belize's economy. Over the past year, our operations have resulted in significant fines imposed and the recovery of thousands of feet of gill nets from our southern waters. The development of our Unmanned Air System further underscores our commitment to marine conservation efforts, enhancing our capability to monitor and protect our marine resources effectively. During the period from January to December 2023, the Belize Coast Guard diligently conducted a wide range of routine and specialized operations aimed at combating illicit activities and ensuring the safety of mariners within our maritime domain. Our commitment to

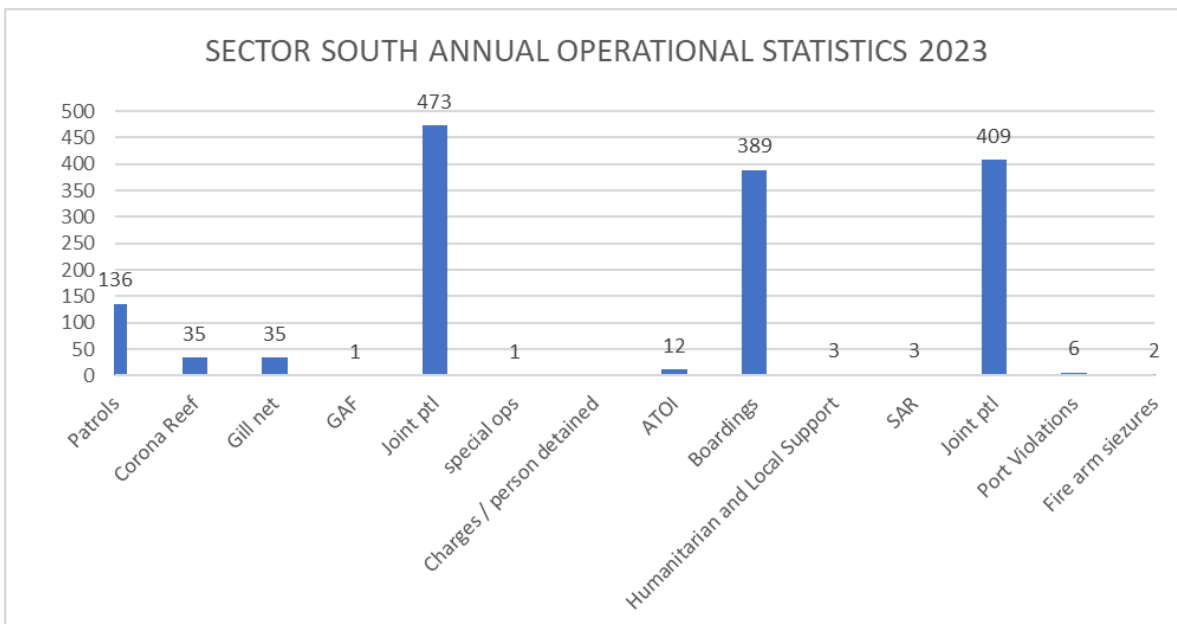
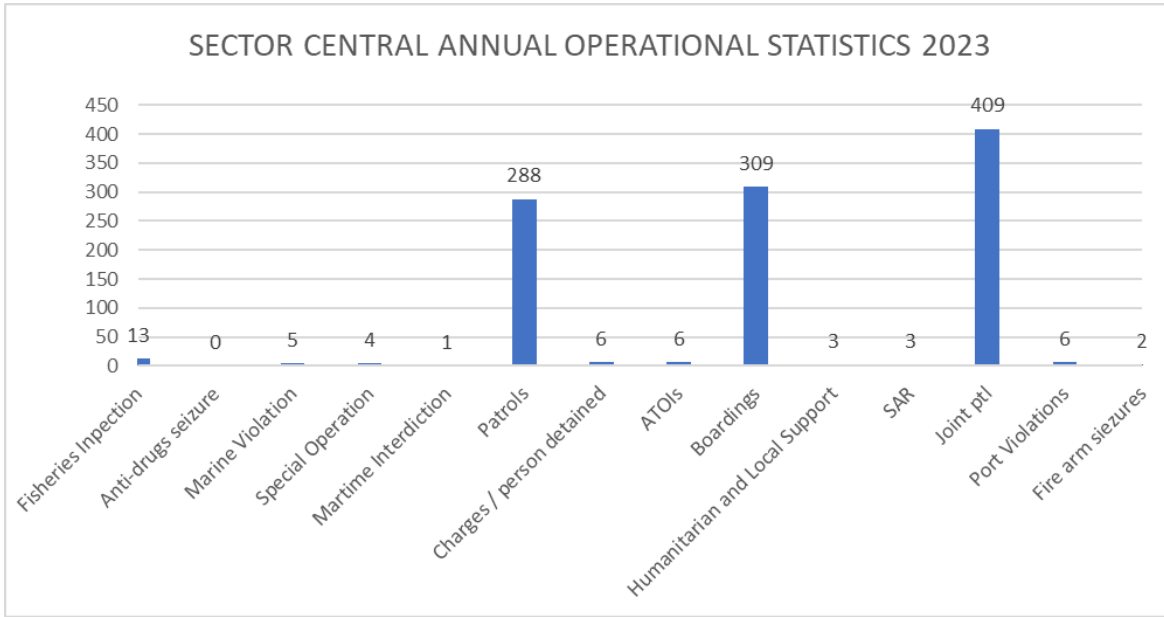
maintaining territorial integrity and supporting partner agencies in safeguarding navigable waters remains unwavering.



*Pictures: Confiscated Conchs and Lobsters*

4.5.4 To optimize operational effectiveness, we strategically divided our territorial sea into three sectors, each overseen by a Sector Commander within the Coast Guard First Fleet. These sectors were carefully planned to facilitate coordinated and strategic operations across our maritime domain.





4.5.5 The strategic divisions and operational efforts highlighted above underscore the Belize Coast Guard's unwavering dedication to maintaining maritime security, safeguarding our territorial waters, and ensuring the safety and prosperity of our nation. In 2023, Sector North achieved significant milestones, conducting four successful search and rescue operations resulting in the safe recovery of 12 individuals. Additionally, the commitment to joint patrols led to the impoundment of five vessels suspected of involvement in criminal activities in San Pedro. Sector North also played a crucial role in aiding the police department by assisting in the detention of six individuals allegedly engaged in criminal endeavours. Throughout the year,

Sector North conducted a total of 369 maritime law enforcement patrols, including 167 boardings. This proactive approach aimed to maintain the integrity of our maritime domain and deter illicit activities. Notably, Sector North swiftly responded to 15 Air Traffic of Interest incidents to counter the threat of illegal plane landings, demonstrating readiness to intercept and deter any potential drug plane activities within our Area of Responsibility (AOR).

4.5.6 Within the Sector Central Maritime Domain, collaborative efforts between the Calabash Caye? FOB, Southern Long Patrol Base, and NGOs like TASA and BAS led to a comprehensive maritime patrol strategy. This collaborative effort resulted in a total of 288 BCG Law Enforcement patrols, 409 joint patrols, and 309 successful boardings. Station Belize, under Sector Central's jurisdiction, played a pivotal role in harbour patrols, ensuring the safety and security of individuals navigating various areas. Despite challenges, Station Belize remained active throughout the year, fulfilling the Coast Guard mandate with a paramount focus on maritime safety and security.

4.5.7 Moreover, Sector Central made significant strides in conservation efforts, confiscating illegal gillnets and marine products. A special operation conducted by the Southern Long Caye Patrol uncovered a cache of firearms and ammunition concealed in a waterproof bag, further emphasizing the Coast Guard's commitment to enforcing regulations and combating illegal activities.



*Pictures: Maritime Interdiction Operations*

4.5.8 Sector South conducted a total of 136 Coast Guard patrols, 473 joint patrols, and 389 boardings, highlighting operational success in maritime security and conservation efforts. Notably, the retrieval of 49 illegal gill nets marked the largest confiscation in BCG history, contributing significantly to revenue generation and maritime governance.

4.5.9 Additionally, Sector South conducted over 6 search and rescue missions, saving numerous lives. The establishment of Sector South's new Command Post adjacent to the Port of Big Creek has further enhanced logistical efficiency and seafarer security. Sector South remains fully committed to executing directives and upholding the Belize Coast Guard's mission.



*Pictures: Search and Rescue Missions*

## 5. LESSONS LEARNT

1. **Strategic Vision and Mission Alignment:** It is essential for organizations like the Belize Coast Guard to have a clear strategic vision and mission that align with national priorities. This alignment ensures that operational efforts are directed towards achieving overarching goals, such as maritime safety, security, and resource protection.
2. **Resource Management and Budgeting:** Effective resource management and budgeting are crucial for maintaining operational readiness and enhancing capabilities. The text highlights the importance of securing adequate funding for equipment, training, and infrastructure to support Coast Guard operations effectively.
3. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Collaborative efforts with national and international partners play a significant role in enhancing maritime security and governance. Partnerships with other government agencies, NGOs, and foreign military entities contribute to information sharing, capacity building, and joint operations.



4. **Training and Professional Development:** Investing in training and professional development is essential for building a skilled and capable workforce. The Belize Coast Guard emphasizes the importance of internal and external training programs, as well as educational opportunities, to enhance personnel skills and readiness.
5. **Innovation and Adaptability:** In a dynamic maritime environment, innovation and adaptability are critical for addressing evolving threats and challenges. The Coast Guard demonstrates a willingness to embrace new technologies, tactics, and strategies to enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency.
6. **Continuous Improvement:** Continuous improvement is essential for organizational growth and resilience. The Coast Guard acknowledges the need to address challenges, learn from experiences, and implement lessons learned to enhance operational capabilities and achieve mission success.

## **6. FUTURE PLANS**

6.1 The process of tendering for the delivery of two patrol boats is currently underway, marking a significant milestone as the largest defence investment in a single capability in independent Belize. With \$16 million allocated to these national assets, the government demonstrates its commitment to maritime governance, ensuring maritime safety for those at sea, expanding operational reach into our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and beyond, and protecting our marine resources. Importantly, these patrol boats serve as the cornerstone of our primary mission: the naval defence of Belize.

6.2 Our upcoming deployment to Haiti presents several uncertainties regarding the definition and scope of the mission, as well as the level of threat in the region. However, one thing remains certain: the need for us to demonstrate our utmost professionalism and capability during this initial deployment. In line with this objective, a warning order has been issued to our special operations group, committing 20 highly skilled individuals to the mission. These men represent the pinnacle of the Coast Guard's expertise, and I have full confidence that they will approach the mission with dedication and execute their duties at the highest professional level.

6.3 As part of our strategic vision for the future, the Belize Coast Guard is planning to establish a specialized Marine Science Technician unit. This unit will be dedicated to conducting scientific research, monitoring, and assessment activities focused on marine ecosystems and environmental conditions within our maritime domain. Through the deployment of advanced technology and scientific expertise, the Marine

Science Technician unit will play a crucial role in environmental monitoring, resource management, pollution response, research, and community engagement. By undertaking these initiatives, we aim to enhance our capacity to protect Belize's marine resources, promote sustainable management practices, respond effectively to environmental threats, advance scientific knowledge, and engage with local communities in environmental conservation efforts.

6.4 We reaffirm our solidarity with our sister forces as we continue to work towards achieving the vision outlined by our ministry. Our goal is to establish a robust and well-equipped defence force of Belize capable of effectively responding to all threats, thereby making a valuable contribution to both national and regional security.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 Communication: It is recommended to equip all Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) with adequate and secure means of communication to address the ongoing challenges in maritime operations. Additionally, considering the acquisition of "man pack" radios for vessels deployed for operations would significantly enhance communication capabilities. Ensuring that every Coast Guard vessel deployed has communication onboard is essential for seamless coordination and response.

7.2 Navigation Equipment: Enhancing navigation equipment is crucial for conducting effective night operations, especially in restricted waters such as reefs, rocks, shoals, and channels, as well as during extreme weather conditions. It is recommended to provide spotlights and handheld GPS devices to coxswains, both senior and junior, to navigate safely during night operations, particularly in confined waters.

7.3 Logistics: Given the accelerated aging of both the vehicle and boat fleet, resulting in reduced lifespan due to extensive usage, it is recommended to expedite efforts to bring vehicles back online. This should include prioritizing the acquisition of parts to address the slow progress in repairs. Similarly, addressing the availability of parts within the country to repair the boat fleet is crucial.

7.4 Moreover, there should be a focus on mitigating damages to boats and addressing constraints on subunits facing personnel shortages. Improvements in logistical support are necessary, particularly concerning living conditions at various FOBs. Therefore, it is recommended that the Service Support Group (SSG) conduct assessments to ensure adequate water catch systems, solar electricity, and proper

berthing facilities for personnel deployed at FOBs. Enhancing living conditions will contribute to the well-being of Coast Guard personnel and ensure operational readiness and effectiveness.

7.5 Vehicle and Vessel Replacement: It is essential to prioritize the acquisition of new vehicles and vessels to replace the aging fleets within the Coast Guard. The accelerated aging of both vehicles and boats has led to a significant reduction in their lifespan, impacting operational effectiveness. Therefore, it is recommended to allocate resources towards procuring new vehicles and vessels to ensure that the Coast Guard maintains a modern and reliable fleet. This investment will not only enhance operational capabilities but also improve safety and efficiency in maritime operations.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

8.1 In conclusion, the Belize Coast Guard stands as a beacon of maritime security, dedicated to safeguarding our nation's waters and ensuring the safety and prosperity of our citizens. Through unwavering commitment, strategic vision, and collaborative efforts, we have achieved significant milestones in protecting Belize's maritime spaces from both foreign and domestic threats. Our core missions of maritime safety, security, marine resource protection, territorial integrity, and naval defence of the state remain at the forefront of our operations, guiding every action we take.

8.2 Looking back at the fiscal year 2023/24, we have witnessed notable achievements and faced challenges that have tested our resilience and determination. Despite budgetary constraints and logistical hurdles, the Belize Coast Guard has demonstrated remarkable adaptability and innovation, leveraging resources efficiently to enhance operational effectiveness and achieve our objectives. Investments in training, technology, and infrastructure have propelled us forward, while strategic partnerships with national and international stakeholders have strengthened our capacity to address emerging threats and uphold maritime governance principles.

8.3 As we chart our course forward, guided by our strategic vision and priorities, we remain committed to continuous improvement and excellence in service. Our future plans, including the establishment of a Marine Science Technician unit and the procurement of new patrol boats, underscore our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and readiness. With the support of our dedicated personnel, leadership, and partners, the Belize Coast Guard is poised to overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and fulfil our mandate to protect and preserve Belize's maritime heritage for generations to come.

# JOINT INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS CENTER

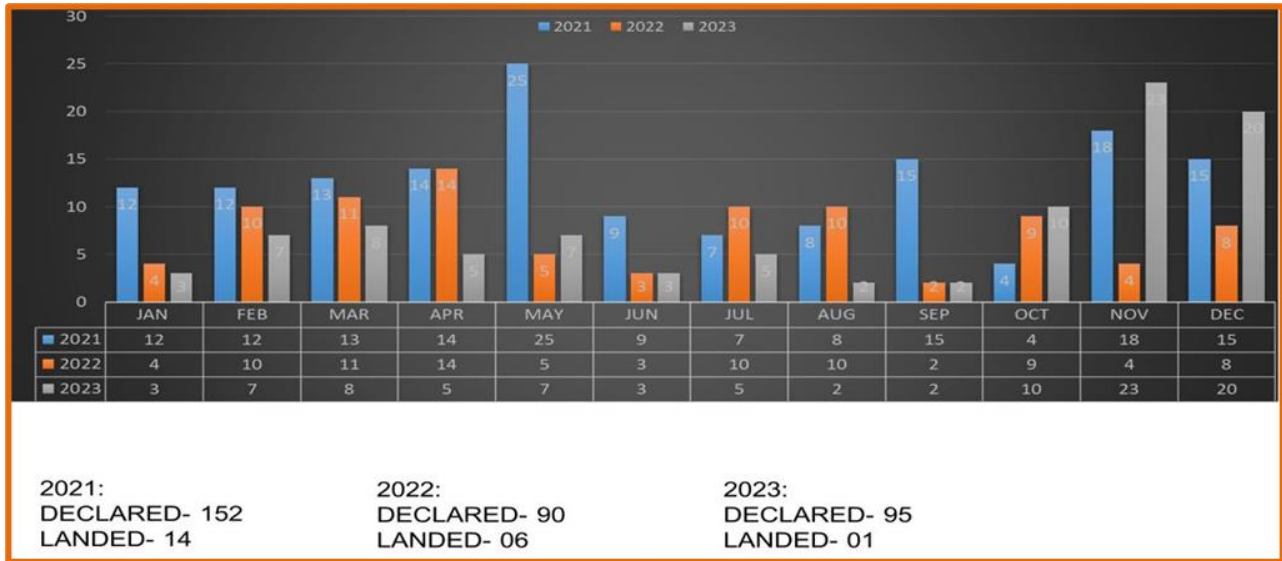


## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2013, the establishment of the Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC) marked a significant milestone in Belize's commitment to combatting transnational criminal activities. Tasked as the National Interagency Coordinating Center for the security forces and law enforcement departments, the JIOC has emerged as a pivotal institution where resources and expertise are consolidated to address the complex challenges posed by transnational criminal elements affecting Belize. Throughout the year, the unwavering support of the country's security forces and law enforcement departments, coupled with the dedication, competence, and character of the JIOC's staff, has propelled the center to notable success, notwithstanding the encountered challenges.
- 1.2 The JIOC's operational posture in the past year has been shaped by the directive of the Ministry of National Defense and Border Security (MNDBS) to mitigate the threat of illegal landings of aircraft within Belize. Regionally, the JIOC actively engages in collaborative efforts with Latin American and Caribbean countries, fostering a united front to deter, detect, and intercept transnational criminal activities, ranging from drug trafficking and weapons smuggling to human smuggling and contraband.
- 1.3 Comprising members from the Belize Defence Force, Belize Coast Guard, and Belize Police Department, the JIOC operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with a current staff of twenty-four. The center serves as the control hub for Joint Enforcement Team operations, facilitates communication among these teams and partner nations, supports intelligence and reconnaissance operations, and enables real-time decision-making in joint operations.
- 1.4 The recent procurement of Belize's state-of-the-art Primary Surveillance Radar represents a significant advancement for the JIOC, enhancing its capacity to detect unidentified illegal aircraft entering Belize's airspace. This technological capability, complemented by air support from regional partners, forms a critical foundation for the JIOC's deterrence strategy, reinforcing the nation's defense against transnational threats. As we delve into the accomplishments, challenges, and future of the JIOC, it is evident that this institution plays a pivotal role in safeguarding Belize's security and integrity within the wider context of regional collaboration.

## 2 COMPARISON OF STATISTICS FOR YEARS 2021, 2022, 2023.

### A. Bar Graph of declared suspect air tracks per month.



2.1 The above bar chart illustrates and compares unidentified aircraft activity for the Year 2021, 2022, and 2023. The figures shown per month further illustrate a combined total of unidentified aircraft enroute from Central America and Mexico to South America and unidentified aircraft enroute from South America to Central America and Mexico.

2.2 For the year 2021 the region saw the highest number of illegal aircraft activity with 152 declared suspected illegal air tracks. Compared 2021 in 2022 the region saw a reduction of 40% of suspected illegal air tracks from 152 to 90. In addition, in 2022, Belize saw a decrease of 57% in illegal aircraft landings from 14 landings in 2021 to 06 landings in 2022. Belize has achieved a groundbreaking milestone in its ongoing efforts to enhance border security, as the nation recorded a record low in illegal aircraft landings in 2023. With only two reported incidents, this represents a remarkable 71% reduction compared to the seven landings documented in 2022 and a staggering 86% decrease from the fourteen landings in 2021. The substantial decline highlights the effectiveness of Belizean authorities' proactive measures to fortify its airspace against illicit activities. Collaborative endeavors between law enforcement agencies, intelligence units, and security forces have played a crucial role in disrupting and



Image 2

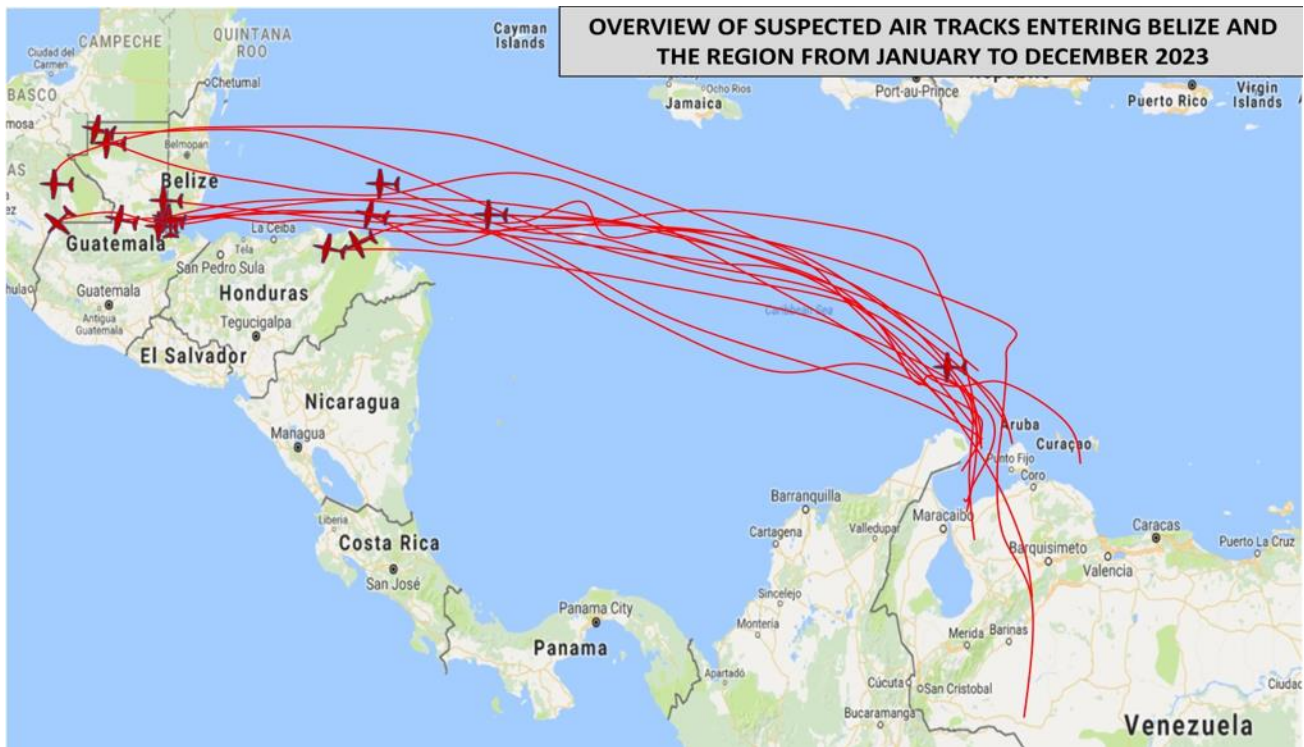


Image 3

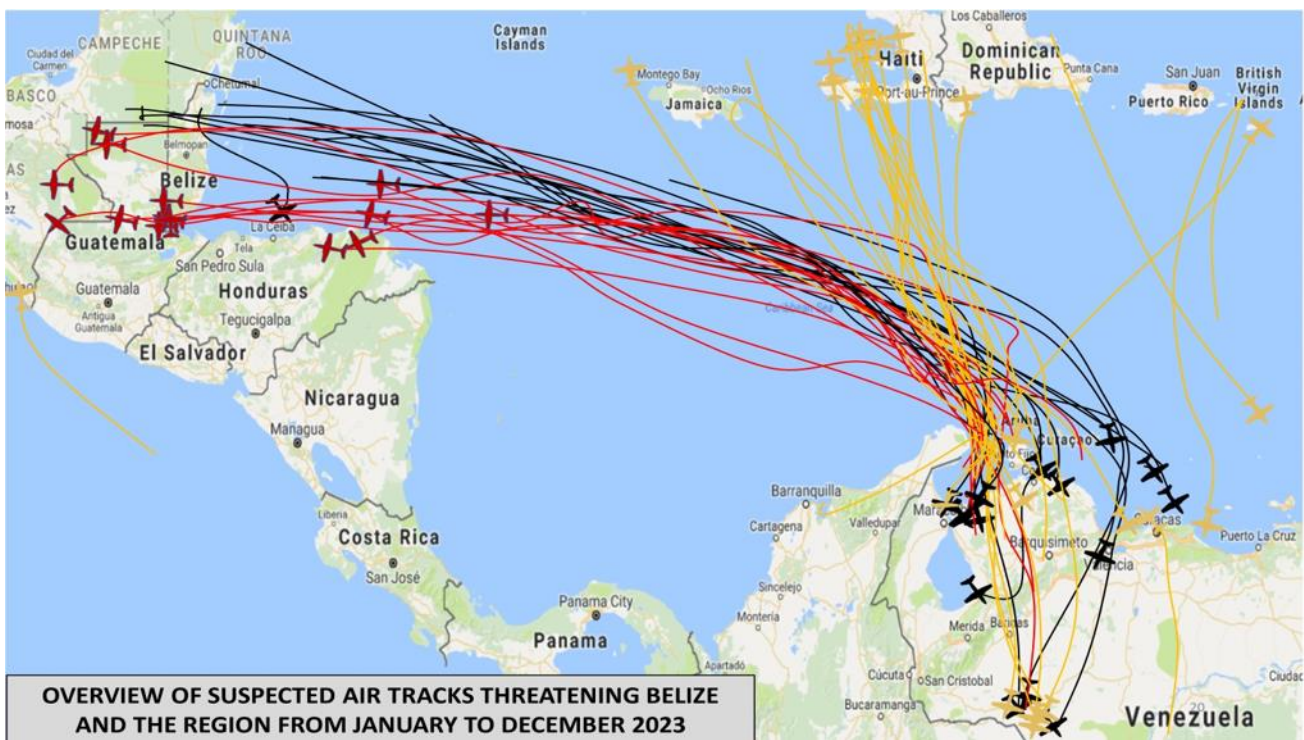
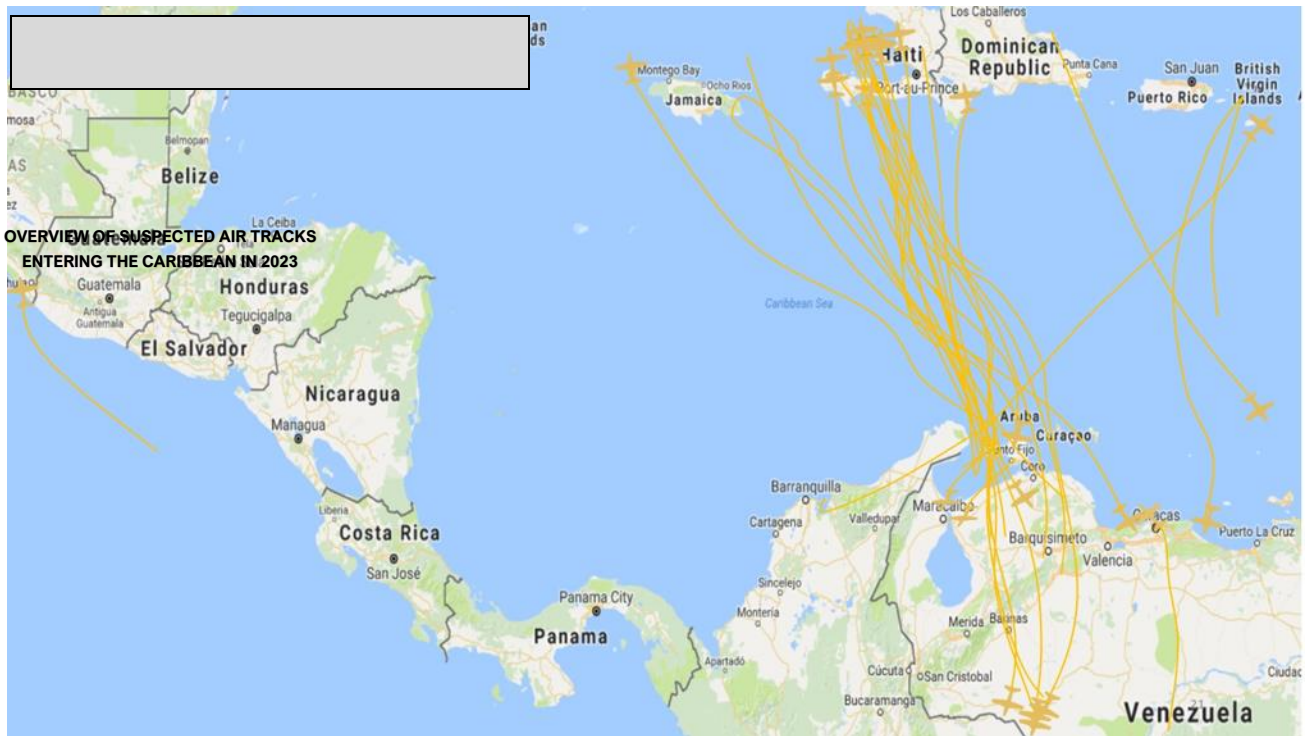




Image 4



2.4 Conversely, Image 2 reveals an equivalent number of suspected illegal air tracks departing South America and enroute to Central America and Mexico. Image 3 combines both sets of air tracks, emphasizing the complexity of these illicit operations between the two regions. It is assessed that the aircraft heading to South America may be involved in the transportation of cash and weapons, potentially related to criminal activities, while those heading towards Central America and Mexico are suspected to be transporting cocaine, highlighting the ongoing challenges in combating drug trafficking. Image 4 highlights the emergence of new routes toward the eastern Caribbean, indicating a dynamic shift in illegal air activities and the need for intensified efforts in monitoring and addressing these evolving challenges.

Image 5



2.5 Lastly, Image 5 provides valuable information on the total illegal landings that occurred in Belize for 2023, adding a crucial dimension to the analysis by pinpointing a specific region within Belize affected by these illicit activities.

## **3 DETERRENCE STRATEGY**

### **A. Deterrence Operations**

3.1 In 2023, the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) coordinated 15 joint operations targeting suspected illegal aircraft in Belize's airspace, a significant reduction from the 50 operations conducted in 2022. Originating mainly from Venezuela and believed to be transporting cocaine to the North American market, these illicit flights posed a grave threat to national security. Through meticulous coordination and early deployments into identified areas of interest, the JIOC effectively deterred Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) from landing aircrafts involved in cocaine transportation through Belize. The impact of this deterrence strategy is evident in the noteworthy statistics: a 71% decrease in illegal landings compared to 2022 and an impressive 86% decrease compared to 2021 nationwide. Additionally, the Northern Districts saw zero illegal landings in 2023, while the Toledo District experienced a remarkable 60% decrease from 5 landings in 2022 to 2 in 2023. However, the evolving tactics of DTOs, such as the utilization of tire spikes to delay Joint Enforcement Teams, underscore the need for continuous adaptation and innovation in the JIOC's deterrence efforts. The timely identification of potential threats, exemplified by the April 2023 ATOI event in the Toledo District, demonstrates the JIOC's agility in responding to emerging challenges, redirecting an aircraft to land in Guatemala, where it was subsequently intercepted. Furthermore, the emergence of the Eastern Caribbean route for illegal aircraft landings highlights the dynamic nature of the threats, requiring ongoing strategic evolution to safeguard Belize's airspace effectively.

### **B. Intelligence/Information Sharing**

3.2.1 The Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) has demonstrated considerable success since the inception of its deterrence strategy, particularly in fostering collaboration among various intelligence arms to develop a comprehensive awareness of the operational environment. The implementation of monthly meetings has been instrumental in ensuring continuous monitoring of targets and preventing the duplication of efforts, establishing a well-coordinated and cohesive approach. The exceptional level of information sharing within the JIOC has played a pivotal role in driving the success of deterrence operations.

3.2.2 The JIOC's commitment to international collaboration is evident in its active involvement

with Latin American and Caribbean countries to exchange crucial information. The alliances and trust built with partner nations proved to be especially valuable during the challenging period when Belize lost its Primary Surveillance radar in March 2023. Partner nations displayed a willingness to share radar information, underscoring the strength of these alliances and their shared commitment to maintaining situational awareness in the region.

3.2.3 The collaboration with the Mexican Airforce, facilitated through CENAVI (Centro Nacional de Vigilancia), further exemplifies the effectiveness of cross-border partnerships. The assistance provided by the Mexican Airforce in air surveillance played a critical role in supporting Belize's Joint Enforcement Operations targeting illegal aircraft, showcasing the benefits of regional cooperation.

3.2.4 Currently, the JIOC is actively engaged as a member of the Caribbean Regional Intelligence Network (CRIC) and the Central American Regional Intelligence Network (CARIC). These memberships reflect proactive initiatives that promote robust information sharing and cooperation among partner nations, contributing to a more effective regional security apparatus. Additionally, the JIOC is a member of the Caribbean Security Intelligence Network (CSIN), coordinated by the Central Intelligence Agency. To be a member of CSIN involved a thorough vetting process, including polygraph and psychological interviews, ensuring the highest standards of trust and reliability in intelligence sharing. Overall, the JIOC's commitment to regional collaboration and membership in these intelligence networks underscores its proactive approach in addressing transnational threats and maintaining the security of Belize and the wider Caribbean and Central American region.

## **C. Search and Rescue**

3.3.1 The Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) maintains a crucial role as the alert center for Search and Rescue (SAR) operations. The SAR platform operated by the JIOC is instrumental in monitoring alerts from various sources, including vessels, aircraft, and individuals equipped with SAR devices. In the year 2023, the JIOC coordinated efforts in response to twenty-five SAR alerts, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to safeguarding lives in distress.

3.3.2 However, the JIOC has identified certain recurring patterns in specific alerts, prompting further investigation. One such case involves an alert originating within the Placencia peninsula

at coordinates 160 23.53’N 0880 21.53’W. Despite deploying Belize Coast Guard Sector Big Creek in response to this alert, reports consistently indicate no vessels within the specified grid, suggesting a potential issue with the alert's accuracy or recurring false alarms.

3.3.3 Similarly, another case involves an alert within the western lagoon of San Pedro Island, originating at coordinates 170 56.0’N 0870 58.0’W. Belize Coast Guard Station San Pedro consistently deploys in response to this alert, yet reports consistently reveal no vessels within the designated grid. The JIOC acknowledges these patterns but maintains a vigilant stance, treating each alert as genuine and coordinating deployments to confirm or deny potential distress situations.

3.3.4 The commitment to consider every alert as legitimate reflects the JIOC's dedication to prioritizing human safety and helping where necessary. While certain alerts may exhibit repetitive patterns, the JIOC remains proactive in verifying the accuracy of distress signals, ensuring a rapid and efficient response to actual emergencies. The ongoing monitoring of the SAR system underscores the JIOC's commitment to maintaining a high level of readiness and responsiveness in its SAR operations, contributing to the overall safety and security of Belizeans.

#### **D. Operations Grinch**

3.4.1 Operation Grinch, executed between November 27th and December 24th, 2023, stands as a comprehensive, multi-agency initiative coordinated by the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) to combat movements of contraband goods, illicit drugs, and illegal migrants through illegal border crossings situated in the northern, western, and southern regions of Belize. The operation's scheme of maneuver seamlessly integrated intelligence operations with routine activities, emphasizing both coordination and independence.

3.4.2 The mission directive issued by the Director of JIOC was explicit: to disrupt transnational criminal activities within Belize's Borders during the specified timeframe, ultimately fostering a safe business environment and ensuring citizen security. Key intentions of Operation Grinch included:

a) **Multi-Agency Approach:** Operation Grinch adopted a collaborative strategy, leveraging the

collective strength of multiple agencies to combat illicit trafficking comprehensively.

b) **Gathering Local Intelligence:** Intelligence operations focused on identifying local groups potentially partnering with international criminal syndicates. This approach sought to dismantle local networks supporting transnational criminal activities.

c) **Intensive Searches and Checkpoints:** Routine operations, executed by Joint Enforcement Teams (JETS), involved intensive searches on vehicles and goods carriers using vehicle checkpoints and roaming mobile and vessel patrols along highways.

d) **Identifying Trends and Concealment Methods:** The operation aimed to stay ahead of criminal tactics, identifying new trends and methods employed by these groups in concealing contraband and conducting their operations.

e) **Identification and Deterrence of Criminal Activities:** Operation Grinch sought to identify and deter any form of criminal activity, enhancing the security landscape along Belize's borders.

f) **Detention and Arrest:** A key component of the operation was the detention and arrest of individuals found in violation of the laws of Belize. This proactive measure served to maintain law and order within the country, sending a clear message that illegal activities would not be tolerated.

3.4.3 In conclusion, Operation Grinch achieved tangible success. A total of \$338,146 worth of confiscated goods, resulting in fines of \$184,676, underscored the impact of disrupting illicit cross border activities. The mission's success also translated into economic benefits for genuine businesses, leading to substantial revenue increases for the Government of Belize through the Customs and Excise Department. The operation's heavy law enforcement presence encouraged domestic spending, fostering economic growth.

#### **4. ADVANCEMENTS AND TRAINING**

In 2023 the JIOC focused on capacity building to enhance Staff and JETs capabilities to allow for better mission planning and interoperability.

- A.** Feb - JIOC hosted a visit from Honduras' Centro Conjunto de Operaciones Interagenciales (CCOI) Director, Navy LO, Military LO, Police LO and an Imagery analyst. During the visit CCOI discussed good practices and shared TTPs pertaining to their strategy to combat DTOs.
  
- B.** March - JIOC participated in a regional exercise called CAMAZOT which is spearheaded by Mexico and involves members from Central and South America and the Caribbean. This exercise is to test the regional strategy effectiveness and to create the environment to de-conflict airspace now that Belize has its own ISR asset.
  
- C.** February 27<sup>th</sup> – One personnel attended the Risk Management-Sensor Operating Training
  
- D.** February 28<sup>th</sup> – One personnel attended the Civil Aviation-Risk Management Training
  
- E.** April 17<sup>th</sup> – Five personnel attended the Aeronet refresher training.
  
- F.** April 17<sup>th</sup> – One senior enlisted personnel attended the Senior Non-Commissioned Drills Course with the BDF.
  
- G.** May 15<sup>th</sup> – One personnel attended the Paralegal course Hosted by the BDF.
  
- H.** May 29<sup>th</sup> – Two personnel attended the Drone Course Hosted by the Forestry Department.
  
- I.** July 9<sup>th</sup> – One personnel attended Sections Commanders Battle Course hosted by the BDF.
  
- J.** September 14<sup>th</sup> – Three personnel attended the US Bices-X Familiarization training.
  
- K.** November 14<sup>th</sup> – Two personnel attended the Basic intelligence Analysis Course hosted by Mexico's CNI.

L. December 4<sup>th</sup> – Eleven personnel attended the CSII operators’ recertification course.

M. December 11<sup>th</sup> – Eleven personnel attended the primary Surveillance Radar training hosted by INDRA Radars.

## 5. CONCLUSION

6.1 In conclusion, the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) has played a pivotal role in addressing the persistent threat of illegal aircraft landings and transnational criminal activities in Belize through the implementation of a robust deterrence strategy. The collaborative efforts of the Belize Defence Force, Belize Coast Guard, and Belize Police Department have been instrumental in the success of this strategy. The Deterrence Strategy, which primarily focuses on Air Tracks of Interest (ATOI), received unwavering support not only from domestic forces but also from key partner nations, including the USA, Mexico, Colombia, Honduras, and Guatemala. The establishment of excellent working relations with these nations has facilitated information sharing, capacity building, and an overall improvement in response capabilities.

6.2 A key aspect of the JIOC's approach involved launching deterrence operations into remote areas of interest, deploying personnel to conduct reconnaissance and gather crucial information to update Joint Enforcement Teams (JETs) and showcase a visible show of force. The intelligence cell within the JIOC played a vital role in fostering relationships among various intelligence units, promoting trust, and facilitating the sharing of information and intelligence. Regular meetings among the leadership of these units ensured coordinated efforts, target development, and the avoidance of duplication of efforts, leading to enhanced collaboration and cooperation.

6.3 Maintaining a constant operational tempo, the JIOC effectively coordinated and controlled interagency operations with various law enforcement and security forces. "Operation Grinch" stands out as a notable example, where the Belize Police Department, Belize Defence Force, Belize Coast Guard, Customs, and Immigration Department collaborated to target not only contraband goods but a wider array of illicit activities impacting the nation.

6.4 Overall, the JIOC's proactive and collaborative approach, both domestically and



internationally, has demonstrated a commitment to deterrence, interdiction, and the protection of Belize from transnational threats. The success of these operations underscores the importance of ongoing coordination, information sharing, and a unified effort to combat the evolving challenges posed by transnational criminal organizations. The JIOC remains steadfast in its commitment to maintaining a safe and secure environment for the citizens of Belize.

# CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF



## **1. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF**

1.1 The functions of the Chief of Defence Staff encompass various strategic responsibilities aimed at ensuring the effective direction and preparedness of the armed forces. These include providing strategic direction, developing joint employment doctrine, and facilitating the preparation and review of defence plans. The Chief of Defence Staff is tasked with assessing the capabilities of the armed forces compared to potential adversaries, preparing contingency plans for government and key personnel protection, and advising on strengths, deficiencies, and their impact on national security objectives and policy conformity. Moreover, the Chief of Defence Staff advises on budget priorities, military procurement plans, joint training policies, and peacekeeping operations. Throughout these duties, consultation with the Commander of the Belize Defence Force and the Commandant of the Belize Coast Guard, as well as consideration of their military advice and opinions, are essential. Additionally, the Chief of Defence Staff is mandated to undertake any other necessary actions for the effective implementation of these functions. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) not only fulfils the outlined functions but also serves as a key advisor to the Minister of Defence, providing insights and recommendations on military matters. Additionally, the CDS plays a pivotal role in developing policies aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the armed forces, which are formulated through consultation with the senior leadership of the Ministry of Defence to ensure alignment with broader strategic objectives and priorities. Notable achievements for the end of this fiscal year include:

## **2. ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **2.1 Mental Health Training**

2.1.1 The Ministry of National Defence and Border Security (MNDBS) recognizes its duty to provide guidance and support to both the Belize Defence Force (BDF) and the Belize Coast Guard (BCG). With alarming reports on mental health issues among personnel, the Ministry is resolute in its commitment to intervene and mitigate the risk of further loss of life. To address this pressing concern, the MNDBS, operating through the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), has actively sought assistance from partner nations, including Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

2.1.2 Among these collaborations, the Mexican Army has emerged as a valuable ally, providing specialized mental health training tailored to the unique needs of Belize's security forces. This initiative represents a significant stride towards enhancing the overall well-being and resilience of BDF and BCG personnel, equipping them with essential tools and strategies to effectively identify, address, and cope with mental health challenges. Moreover, the partnership with Mexico signifies not only a commitment to immediate concerns but also fosters long-term cooperation and capacity-building efforts. By leveraging the expertise and resources of international partners, Belize aims to develop comprehensive and sustainable solutions to support the mental health needs of its security forces. This initiative underscores the importance of cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange in tackling shared challenges within the realm of national defence and security. Through ongoing engagement with partner nations, the MNDBS seeks to foster a culture of resilience and well-being within the BDF and BCG, ultimately ensuring their readiness and effectiveness in safeguarding Belize's sovereignty and security.

## **2.2 Signing of MOU Between MNDBS and Ministry of Education**

2.2.1 The Ministry of National Defence and Border Security (MNDBS) and the Ministry of Education (MOE) have solidified their commitment to providing educational opportunities to Belize's armed forces by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This agreement signifies a joint effort to empower military personnel with access to quality education, thereby enhancing their professional development and personal growth. The Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) played a crucial role in facilitating this collaboration, providing invaluable insights from a comprehensive assessment conducted to gauge the educational needs within the armed forces. This assessment, led by the CDS, illuminated existing educational levels among military personnel and identified areas where additional support and resources are required to meet the evolving demands of the defence sector.

2.2.2 The Ministry of National Defense and Border Security recognizes this shortcoming and is committed in developing and implementing policies that will see a significant improvement in the level of education in subject areas that will vastly improve the quality of reports written by soldiers/sailors and officers. While initially this proposal is focused mainly on English education

(Technical Writing), it also aims to address several other areas of concern where the service members seem to be lacking the expertise and require further educational development. Providing them with the tools needed will enable efficiency, accuracy, and effectiveness in the conduct of their duties and will also assist in the transition to a second career post-retirement from the armed forces.

2.2.3 Through the MOU, both ministries have pledged to leverage their resources and expertise to design and implement tailored educational programs and initiatives for armed forces members. These initiatives may include scholarships, training courses, vocational programs, and other educational opportunities aimed at promoting lifelong learning and skills development among military personnel. This partnership underscores a holistic approach to human capital development, recognizing the intrinsic link between education, professional advancement, and overall mission readiness. By investing in the educational advancement of its personnel, Belize's armed forces are equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to excel in their roles while fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation within the military ranks. Ultimately, the signing of the MOU represents a significant milestone in ongoing efforts to support and empower members of the armed forces, positioning them for success both in their military careers and beyond, thereby strengthening the capabilities and resilience of Belize's defence forces in safeguarding the nation's security and sovereignty.

### **2.3 8<sup>th</sup> Multinational Security Conference**

2.3.1 The Multinational Security Conference serves as a crucial platform for Belize to communicate its strategic vision, ongoing efforts, and specific requirements for military assistance with its allies and partners. This conference underscores Belize's commitment to security cooperation and military capacity-building, particularly for the Belize Defence Force, the Belize Coast Guard, and the Joint Intelligence Operations Center. Spearheaded by the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), the 8th iteration of the Multinational Security Conference was impeccably coordinated and executed, drawing the participation of key allies and partners including Canada, Mexico, the UK, the USA, and Taiwan.

2.3.2 The success of the 8th Multinational Security Conference has highlighted its pivotal role in fostering meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and coordination among participating nations. It

provided a valuable opportunity for Belize to showcase its security priorities, challenges, and objectives, while also facilitating the exchange of best practices, expertise, and resources in addressing common security threats and concerns. Recognizing the importance of broader engagement, the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security (MNDBS) is actively considering strategies to expand the participation of additional partner nations in future iterations of the conference.

2.3.3 By broadening the scope of participation, Belize aims to further enhance the effectiveness and impact of the Multinational Security Conference, ensuring that it remains a dynamic platform for promoting regional stability, security, and cooperation. Through continued collaboration and dialogue, Belize and its allies can work together to strengthen security capabilities, mitigate security risks, and safeguard the sovereignty and well-being of the region. The Multinational Security Conference stands as a testament to Belize's commitment to multilateralism and collective security, serving as a cornerstone of its broader security architecture and partnerships in the international arena.

## **2.4 Posting of Military Attaches**

2.4.1 The Ministry of National Defence and Border Security has proposed the deployment of three military attachés to key diplomatic missions: Mexico, Washington, D.C. (USA), and the United Kingdom (UK). These attachés are poised to play pivotal roles in advancing Belize's national security interests and diplomatic endeavours. In Mexico, where a shared border and an ongoing territorial dispute with Guatemala necessitate close cooperation, the military attaché will foster collaboration with Mexican military authorities, coordinate joint border security initiatives, and contribute to peaceful resolution efforts. Additionally, in Washington, D.C., the presence of a military attaché will reinforce ties with the United States, a vital regional ally, facilitating engagement with the U.S. Department of Defence on matters of mutual security concern. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, another significant partner, the military attaché will promote defence cooperation and support Belize's international defence and security objectives.

2.4.2 However, it's notable that the Cabinet has approved the posting of only one attaché in Mexico. Despite this adjustment, the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) played an instrumental role in the process, actively engaging in the submission of proposals and conducting

cost estimates for Cabinet approval. This collaborative effort underscores the commitment of the MNDBS and the CDS to strategic planning and effective resource allocation in furthering Belize's defence and security objectives on the international stage.

2.4.3 It was collectively agreed that, to ensure a comprehensive and impactful approach, the deployment of attachés should involve an alternation between representatives from the Belize Defence Force and the Belize Coast Guard. The officers selected for these roles will hold no less than the rank of Lieutenant Colonel for the BDF and Commander for the BCG, respectively. This alternating structure aims to bring a well-rounded perspective to Belize's diplomatic and security efforts by encompassing expertise from aerial, terrestrial, and maritime domains.

### **3. FUTURE PLANS**

#### **3.1 Review of National Defence Plan**

3.1.1 The review of the national defence plan is a periodic and essential process, requiring approval from the National Security Council to shape and realign defence and security strategies in response to evolving threats and economic conditions. This ongoing assessment is crucial for ensuring Belize's sovereignty and the safety of its citizens. It's worth noting that this review is not a static event but rather a continuous process that considers changing security dynamics. By regularly updating the national defence plan, Belize remains agile and prepared to address emerging threats effectively, demonstrating a commitment to adaptability and readiness in safeguarding the nation.

#### **3.2 BCG to Adopt BDF Pension Regulations**

3.2.1 In an effort to ensure equity in salaries and benefits across both military services, a comprehensive review of salary scales, pension regulations, and other benefits is currently underway. This initiative aims to enhance morale and welfare for members of both the Belize Defence Force (BDF) and the Belize Coast Guard (BCG). Notably, in January 2023, the Coast Guard Board approved the review of BCG pension benefits with the goal of aligning them with those of the BDF. Subsequently, on January 22nd, 2024, Cabinet approved the adoption of BDF pension regulations by the BCG.

3.2.2 The Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) played a pivotal role in facilitating this process, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring parity and fairness within the armed forces. Moving forward, the CDS will continue to collaborate closely with the BCG to finalize the necessary steps for implementing the updated pension regulations. This concerted effort underscores the government's dedication to improving the welfare and livelihoods of service members across both military branches, fostering a sense of unity and cohesion within Belize's defence establishment.

### **3.3 Development of the National Defence Strategy**

3.3.1 The development of the National Defence Strategy is in the future plans in the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). This strategy will serve as a comprehensive blueprint outlining the country's approach to national security and military defence. It encompasses an assessment of current and potential threats, articulates overarching defence objectives, and outlines the means and methods by which these objectives will be achieved. The aim of the Defence Strategy is multifaceted: it seeks to ensure the protection of the nation's sovereignty, safeguard its territorial integrity, and promote stability. Additionally, it aims to enhance the military's readiness and capabilities to effectively address evolving security challenges, while also fostering collaboration and interoperability with allied nations and partner organizations. Ultimately, the National Defence Strategy endeavours to provide a coherent and adaptable framework for securing the nation's interests and promoting peace and security in an increasingly complex environment.

### **3.4 Conduct a Review of the Office of the CDS and the CDS Act.**

3.4.1 Conducting a review of the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and the CDS Act involves a comprehensive assessment of the organizational structure, functions, and operational effectiveness of the office, as well as an evaluation of the legislative framework governing its activities. This process will entail identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Additionally, it involves analysing past performance, benchmarking against best practices, and considering evolving strategic priorities and emerging security challenges to ensure alignment with national defence objectives. The aim is to enhance the efficiency, responsiveness, and



accountability of the Office of the CDS and to refine the legal framework underpinning its mandate, ultimately strengthening the nation's defence capabilities and resilience.

## MINISTRY OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT

1. **Effective Coordination and Collaboration:** The Ministry's Annual Technical Report underscores the importance of coordination and collaboration among various agencies, both domestically and internationally, in combating transnational criminal activities. It highlights the success of joint operations and the value of partnerships with regional and international allies in enhancing Belize's security posture. Moving forward, continued emphasis on fostering these relationships and streamlining communication channels will be crucial to address emerging threats effectively.

2. **Adaptability and Innovation:** The report identifies the need for continuous adaptation and innovation in response to evolving tactics employed by transnational criminal organizations. It emphasizes the importance of staying ahead of these threats through technological advancements, such as the procurement of state-of-the-art surveillance radar. Incorporating innovative solutions and leveraging emerging technologies will be essential in maintaining the effectiveness of deterrence strategies and enhancing the Ministry's operational capabilities.

3. **Investment in Training and Capacity Building:** The report highlights the significance of ongoing training and capacity-building initiatives to enhance staff capabilities and operational readiness. Training events, both local and international, play a crucial role in skill development, interoperability, and preparedness for joint enforcement operations. As such, prioritizing investment in training programs and ensuring continuous professional development will be key in equipping personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively combat transnational threats.

4. **Strategic Resource Allocation:** The report emphasizes the importance of strategic resource allocation to optimize operational effectiveness while managing budget constraints. By identifying key priorities, such as personnel salaries, fuel procurement, and equipment maintenance, the Ministry can ensure efficient utilization of resources to support its mission. Additionally,

conducting regular reviews of operational expenses and identifying areas for cost-saving measures will be essential in maximizing the impact of available resources.

**5. Continuous Evaluation and Improvement:** Lastly, the report highlights the importance of continuous evaluation and improvement in refining deterrence strategies and operational tactics. By conducting thorough assessments of past operations, identifying lessons learned, and implementing corrective actions, the Ministry can enhance its effectiveness in countering threats to the defence of Belize. Establishing a culture of continuous learning and adaptation will be critical in staying ahead of evolving threats and maintaining Belize's security in the long term.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the comprehensive overview of the achievements of the Belize Defence Force, the Belize Coast Guard, the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff and the Joint Intelligence and Operations Center highlights the collective efforts and commitment of Belize's armed forces to safeguarding the nation's security and territorial integrity. Despite facing various challenges, including technological and procurement obstacles, the ministry remains steadfast in its mission to protect Belize's sovereignty.

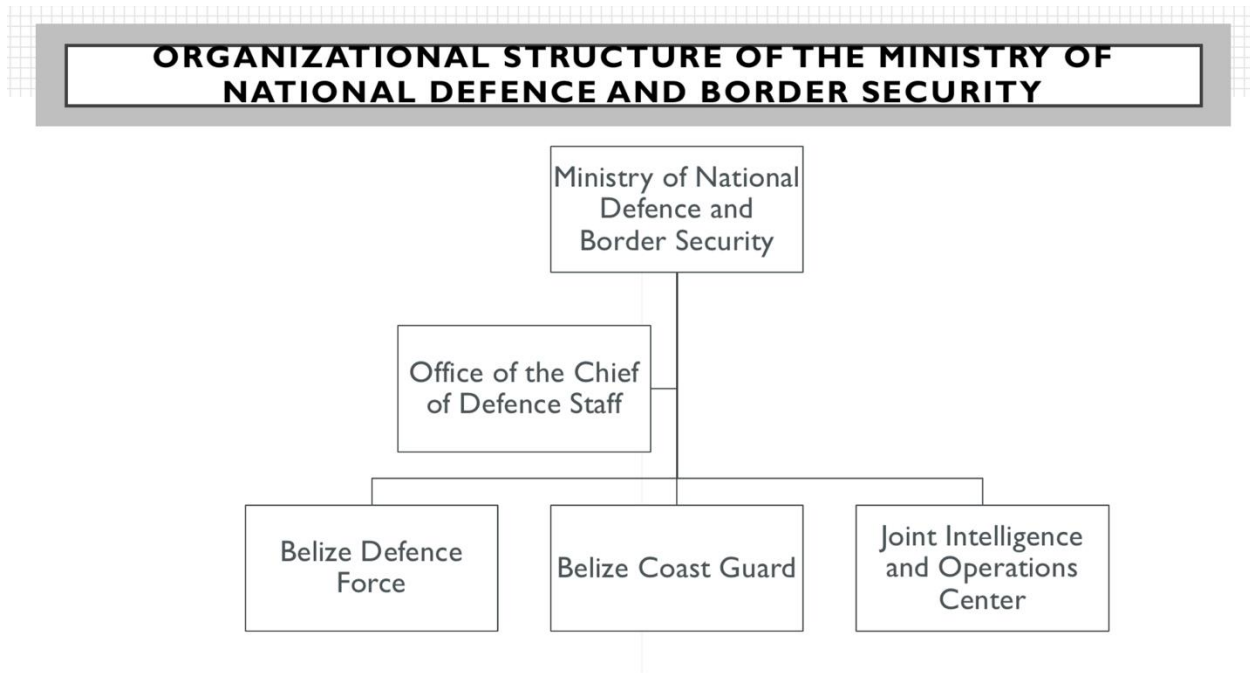
The report underscores the importance of strategic planning, collaboration with international partners, and continuous improvement through lessons learned and future plans. It also emphasizes the critical role of investment in training, welfare initiatives, and infrastructure projects to enhance operational capabilities and readiness.

By implementing recommendations for budget allocation, operational enhancements, and strategic initiatives outlined in the report, Belize's defence and security objectives can be further advanced, contributing to regional stability and cooperation. Overall, the report provides a comprehensive insight into the achievements, challenges, and future plans of Belize's armed forces, reaffirming our dedication to protecting Belize and our people.

Ends.

## Annex 1

### Organizational Structure of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security



1. Ministry of National Defence and Border Security: This top-level entity is responsible for overseeing the entire defence sector in Belize. It provides strategic direction, formulates policies, and ensures effective coordination among all divisions and units within the ministry.
2. Office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS): This office is important to provide strategic guidance to the armed forces. It handles strategic planning and policy, international relations, security cooperation, national defence plan reviews, legislative affairs, and overall office management and administration.
3. Belize Defence Force (BDF): The BDF is tasked with the defence of Belize. It includes various commands such as Operations, Training and Doctrine, Logistics and Support, Personnel and Welfare, Finance and Resource Management, and Infrastructure Projects. Each command focuses on specific aspects of military operations and support to ensure comprehensive national security.

4. Belize Coast Guard (BCG): The BCG ensures maritime security. Its divisions include the Commandant's Office, Operations, Training and Education, Logistics and Engineering, and Maritime Law Enforcement. These divisions work together to maintain operational readiness and enforce maritime law.
  
5. Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC): The JIOC is crucial for intelligence and operations coordination. It includes divisions focused on intelligence analysis, operations coordination, training and development, and technology and surveillance. This center is key to gathering intelligence, coordinating joint operations, and managing surveillance technology to address transnational threats effectively.

This organizational chart demonstrates the hierarchical structure and functional divisions within the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security, highlighting the roles and responsibilities of each component in safeguarding Belize's sovereignty and security.

## **Annex 2**

### **Professional Staff of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security**

Here is a list of the professional staff of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security of Belize, based on the provided image:

1. Minister: Hon. Florencio Marin
  
2. Minister of State: Hon. Oscar Mira
  
3. Chief Executive Officer: Brig. Gen. (Ret'd) Dario Tapia
  
4. Chief of Defence Staff: Admiral John Borland
  
5. Commander Belize Defence Force: Brigadier General Azariel Loria
  
6. Commandant Belize Coast Guard: Rear Admiral Elton Bennett
  
7. Director Joint Intelligence and Operations Center: Commander Freddie Ku (BCG)

## Annex 3

### **Budget and Investments for Programs of the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security**

Here is a list of budgets and investments for programs in the ministry:

#### **Belize Defence Force Infrastructure**

1. SARSTOON Forward Operating Base (FOB) Functionality, under the *Belize Integral Security Programme (BISP)*, a BZ\$60-million project funded by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), which is intended to strengthen the capacity of the BDF, enabling officers to provide improved security for citizens including Communication Equipment and Solar Equipment (2023):

- Budget/Investment: BZD \$1,000,000

#### **Belize Defence Force Equipment Acquisition**

1. Equipment procured under the *Belize Integral Security Programme (BISP)*, a BZ\$60-million project funded by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), which is intended to strengthen the capacity of the BDF, enabling officers to provide improved security for citizens including Communication Equipment and Solar Equipment (2023):

- Budget/Investment: BZD \$146,450

## Annex 4

### List of publications prepared by the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security

1. The Watchstander, Newsletter of the Belize Coast Guard
  - Volume 5 Issue 1, 31 March 2023.
  - Volume 5 Issue 2, 30 June 2023.
  - Volume 5 Issue 3, 21 September 2023.
  - Volume 5 Issue 4, 30 December 2023.
  
2. The Belizean Soldier, Annual Magazine of the Belize Defence Force
  - Volume 3, January 2023

([https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dsDmomjZflq7\\_ZhTEZ3lnmgkAK\\_3XYOj/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dsDmomjZflq7_ZhTEZ3lnmgkAK_3XYOj/view?usp=sharing))