



**MINISTRY OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES, PETROLEUM  
AND MINING**



**ANNUAL**

**TECHNICAL  
REPORT**

**2023  
2024**



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***N.B. Please note that all data presented within this Annual Technical Report 2023-2024 is for the January 2023 to December 2023 calendar year unless otherwise stated.***

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLS	Commissioner of Land and Surveys
DBMU	Debt Management Unit
DCLS	Deputy Commissioner of Lands and Surveys
DLSO	District Lands and Survey Officer
GPD	Geology and Petroleum Department
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LSD	Lands and Survey Department
LIC	Land Information Centre
LRD	Land Registry Department
NES	National Estate Section
NIWRA	National Integrated Water Resources Act
NHS	National Hydrological Services
MED	Ministry of Economic Development
MNRPM	Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining
PCPU	Policy, Coordination and Planning Unit
PPS	Physical Planning Section
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation +
SMS	Surveys and Mapping Section
SI	Statutory Instrument
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TC	Technical Cooperation

## 1 MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



### HON. CORDEL HYDE

#### Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining

**T**oo often we have taken for granted the work we do here at the Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining. We get caught up in the monotony of it, the monstrosity of it, perhaps the mundane nature of it.

But the truth is, more than anything else, we have been putting a dent in poverty, pulling thousands of people out of generational poverty - by this unprecedented transfer of wealth we do almost daily.

It is easy to take it for granted. But in subdividing acres of land into farmland and house lots and providing these at a modest price to first-time landowners; we are ensuring that these recipients and their families are never poor again.

It is the social justice nature of what we do, the riveting fulfillment of #PlanBelize that we do, the equitable transformation that we are delivering on behalf of our government and people.

That is, even as we fuel and help to drive the economy of Belize with the completion of the increased traffic of private land transfers, subdivision of private property, and conversion of national land into private property.

The traffic at the Ministry has been unparalleled and uninterrupted ever since this administration came to power, and there is no sign of it letting up anytime soon.

The challenge now is for us to move more aggressively into the digital era - to ultimately make this ministry practically a paperless one. That is, a ministry that will allow everyone to conduct their business online and easily so - from the pedestrian on the street to the housewife in the home to the motorist on the highway to the executive in a corporate office.

Our long-awaited transition to Landfolio 7 now makes that possible. We are working feverishly with our software provider to install a portal that will allow our lives to be that much easier - from the citizen customer to us the citizens' public servants.

Persons will be able to apply and get their lease approvals and purchase approvals online.

Landowners will be able to do private land transfers online, while law firms and banks will be able to conduct the bulk of their business with us online. It is an exciting initiative!

And one we cannot wait to launch!

At the same time, we will be modernizing the legislations that cover Mining, Hydrology and Petroleum respectively - making them more efficient and responsive to the developmental needs of our country.

Our staff is overloaded and may be tiring some, but I try to remind them often that what we do is a privilege and most gratifying. We have a wonderful opportunity to make people happy in ways unmatched. The joy we see in the faces of ordinary folks and equally in the faces of wealthier folks when we complete their land processes and hand them their document is priceless.

Simply unmatched!

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2023, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining implemented five (5) programmes that supports the sustainable management of the land, water, petroleum and mineral resources in Belize. The Ministry continued to tackle tremendous challenges but made important strides in achieving our goals and objectives.

- I. The Strategic Management and Administration Programme advanced modernization and innovation within the Ministry to enable more efficient delivery of services to the people of Belize. Landfolio 7, the newest version of the software used to manage, process and record land transactions was launched. The use of this web-based software enables various new applications including a portal that will see us eventually become a paperless Ministry. Human resources, our most important asset have been enhanced and re-organized to improve efficiency particularly through the scaling up of the Land Mobile Outreach programme and the establishment of a National Estate Project Unit that accelerates the processing of applications for first-time landowners across the country. In 2023, the Ministry collected **\$14,455,844.89** in revenue from land tax and rents, and purchase price.
- II. **12,331 Belizeans were able to obtain their documents for National Land in 2023.** **4,169** received their leases, grant fiats or land certificates and **8,162** received Direct purchase approval letters. **Direct Purchase Programme** is geared towards first-time landowners to enable them to access national land at a discounted rate and through an accelerated process. Proposed subdivisions were prepared for the creation of **17,473** new residential lots. A total of **7,220** new residential lots were surveyed and made available for distribution.
- III. During 2023, the Mining Programme's issuance of mineral rights was 22% higher than the previous year. Key challenges remain; insufficient budgetary support and limited human resources which requires the expansion of the organizational

structure. Until these challenges are addressed, it recognizes that effective execution of the mandate of the Mines and Minerals Act and associated Regulations will continue to be limited to administration of mineral rights.

- IV. For the year 2023, the NHS had a 6% increase in applications for water right allocations. The NHS has achieved major milestones including strengthening the organizational structure for support staff by hiring two (2) PE positions: Hydrologist and Senior Hydrological Technician; establishment of a Water Allocation System with (1) dedicated Officer; fostering inter-agency cooperation for IWRM implementation by partnering with several agencies both government and non-government and incorporating the use of technology in our surface water daily monitoring activities.
  
- V. The Geology and Petroleum Department continued to promote and regulate the oil and gas industry in Belize. **157,652.93** barrels of oil were produced in 2023 while sales for 2023 was **165,421.41** barrels. Petroleum revenues for 2023 was **\$4,906,405.10**. Six (6) PSAs were administered: one production i.e. BNE, and five explorations including BelGeo, Viva Energy, FCRL, US Capital Belize Corp and Princess Petroleum.

Multiple lessons were learnt throughout the year from the successes and the setbacks. The over-arching lesson that surfaced during the year is the need for a bold, transformative approach that is technology and people-centred, which will enable “leapfrogging” so that the MNRPM can overcome the decades of stagnation and endemic institutional challenges. Key success factors in charting this new approach are setting goals and targets that are ambitious but achievable; securing the necessary financing for implementation and employing appropriate change-management strategies and techniques to ensure staff and stakeholder buy-in.

### 3 INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining (MNRPM) has the mandate to ensure sustainable management of Belize's land, water, petroleum and mineral resources. It implements five (5) budget programmes and administers four (4) technical arms, namely, the Lands and Surveys Department, the Land Registry Department, the Geology and Petroleum Department, the National Hydrological Service, and the Mining Unit.

#### 3.1 Strategic Management and Administration

The Strategic Management and Administration Programme is executed under the leadership of the Central Administration team and is supported by five (5) units, namely Policy Coordination and Planning, Legal, Information Technology, Human Resources (HR), and Finance.

**Central Administration:** The Central Administration team consists of the Minister, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and their Executive Assistants.

**Policy, Coordination and Planning Unit (PCPU):** The PCPU leads the development, implementation, and monitoring of the MNRPM's policies, strategic planning, programmes and projects, and operational processes and procedures. It coordinates internally among the Ministry's departments and units; and externally with Public, Private and Civil Society partners to ensure meaningful cooperation, effective collaboration and the achievement of mutually beneficial goals.

**Legal Unit:** The unit provide support in ensuring that the Ministry and its Departments execute their functions in conformity with the law; and utilizes the law more effectively in executing its mandate and achieving its strategic priorities. The unit also assists with risk management in decision-making taking into consideration the legal regime in formulating realistic objectives and solutions.



**Finance Unit:** The unit consists of two sub-units, namely Debt Management and Accounts. Debt management's role is to facilitate the efficient collection of Land Tax and Land Rent, while the Accounts section is responsible for the day-to-day finance operations of the Ministry.

**Human Resource Unit:** The unit oversees the recruitment by the Ministry of the Public Service, develop and retain a high performing staff and foster a healthy, safe, and productive work environment for employees to maximize individual and organizational potential; and provides programs and services that create a work environment for employee empowerment.

**Information Technology Unit:** This unit builds and manages a high quality and comprehensive technology infrastructure; establish and maintain an effective operational environment; and deliver quality, prompt, cost effective and reliable technology services. It is headed by the IT Manager.

### 3.2 Land Management and Administration

The Land Management and Administration Programme is implemented by two departments: the Lands and Surveys Department (LSD) and the Land Registry Department (LRD). The programme objective is to effectively administer and manage Belize's land resources; ensuring efficient and equitable access to land and land-related services in pursuit of the goals of sustainable and resilient national development and poverty reduction.

The **Lands and Surveys Department** is the largest department within the MNRMP. The Department has a long history as the Surveys component can trace its origins to 1862 while the Lands Department was established in 1968; the two were fused into the Lands and Surveys Department in 1977. The LSD has evolved over time and currently has the prime responsibility for processes directly related to administering the cadastre, which provides information on the location, boundaries, use, and values of land parcels; land

use planning; and management of the National Estate. The Department is headed by the Commissioner of Land and Surveys. The LSD consists of five (5) sections shown below with their primary function.

- **National Estate Section (NES)** - Management and allocation of national lands
- **Surveys and Mapping Section (SMS)** - Authentication of plans for all legal surveys
- **Physical Planning Section (PPS)** - Land utilization; primarily private land subdivision and permitting use of the 66-foot reserve along water bodies and use of the seabed.
- **Valuation Section** - Valuation of lands for purchase, rent, taxation and acquisition purposes.
- **Land Information Centre** – Land information management and geo-spatial data services

The **Land Registry Department (LRD)** is comprised of the Land Registry and Land Titles Unit (LTU). The LRD functions to register land tenure and other interests over land in Declared areas of the country. The LTU records land titles and other interest for unregistered areas (undeclared areas). The LRD provides an up to date, impartial and trusted system of registering legal interests in land and enables the massive and continual movement in land interests between citizens, business, public bodies, and financial institutions to take place with confidence. It is head by the Registrar of Lands.

Both Departments' work closely together in implementing the Land Management and Administration Programme as there are intertwining workflows between various sections and units. The LRD also works very closely with the Ministry of Finance's Office of the Commissioner of Stamps which has the mandate to administer stamp duties in the private land transfer process.

### 3.3 Mining

The Mining Programme is implemented by the **Mining Unit**. The programme objective of the is to regulate the mining sector and provide services that will stimulate investment

for sustainable economic development, achieve optimal utilization of Belize's mineral resources through scientific and transparent mining practices, exploration and Geo-scientific research & development.

The responsibilities of the Mining Unit include:

- Facilitating the exploration of minerals
- Promoting the development of mineral resources
- Administrating the processing and issuance of Mineral Rights: *Prospecting Licences, Exploration Licences, Mining Licences and Quarry Permits*
- Enforcing compliance with the conditions of Mineral Rights
- Collecting and assessing revenues payable under the Mines and Minerals Act: royalties, fees, rentals, charges, etc.
- Preparing and disseminating reports, maps, and other mineral related data to the public

The Mining Unit is headed by the Inspector of Mines, who is complemented by four (4) staff.

### 3.4 Hydrology

The Hydrology Programme is implemented by the **National Hydrological Service (NHS)**. The programme objective is to enforce the Water Policy of the Government and implement Integrated Water Resources Management in accordance with the Law to enable coordinated management, development and use, conservation and protection of our water resources to provide a safe adequate and reliable water supply for the benefit of present and future generation of Belize. Assess the hydrology and water resources, monitor the changes in the resource, investigate uses of the resource, hydrological forecasting, publish hydrological information. The responsibilities of the NHS are broadly categorized as follows:

- Operational Hydrology: Surface water management, groundwater management, hydrological forecasting, inclusive of hydrological drought monitoring, flood forecasting: pluvial, fluvial, and coastal, water quality monitoring, water resources projects.

- Water Rights Allocation: water abstraction and well permitting and licensing
- Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM).

The NHS is headed by the Principal Hydrologist and has a staff of four (4) permanent and two (2) project staff.

### 3.5 Geology and Petroleum

The Geology and Petroleum Programme is implemented by the **Geology and Petroleum Department (GPD)**. The programme objective is to regulate the exploration and production of petroleum resources of the country and increase petroleum revenue. The mission of the GPD is to promote and regulate oil and gas exploration and production in a safe, environmentally and socially responsible manner with the assistance of international investors and other stakeholders to maximize the benefits from the country's petroleum resources for the economic and social development of Belize. The objectives of the department include:

- To promote exploration interest in Belize to the international oil and gas industry. Attract large and medium size International Oil Companies (IOC)
- To evaluate and analyse the petroleum system and petroleum potential of northern Belize (Corozal Basin)
- To revise the legislative and fiscal system for the petroleum industry, to modernize it, make it more equitable and more attractive to the international oil and gas community.
- To improve the operational efficiency of BNE for increased overall production of oil and for the stabilization of the average daily production of oil.

The GPD is headed by the Director of Geology and Petroleum.

The MNRPM implements these programmes to deliver upon its commitment to #planBelize Medium-Term Development Strategy 2022-2026, with Poverty Reduction, Economic Transformation and Growth, Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources; and Good Governance being priority objectives. In recognizing the vital role

this Ministry plays in advancing Belize's development, it has been undergoing a transformative process to ensure that it is delivering the improved services demanded by stakeholders and citizens. In 2023, the transformation continued with noted achievements and successes which will be outlined herein. Although progress is incremental, the MNRPM has remained resolute in working towards achieving its vision, mission and strategic priorities in the short, medium and long term.

## 4 VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In November 2023, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining engaged in a strategic planning process which yielded a new vision, mission and strategic priorities which will guide its programmatic goals and objectives over the next five (5) years.

### Vision

A prosperous Belize in harmony with our natural resources.

### Mission

Fostering national development and improving the quality of life for all Belizeans through responsible management of our natural resources.



## Strategic Priorities

### **PRIORITY AREA 1 – A TRANSFORMATIONAL POLICY, LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL MANDATE**

*OUTCOME 1: Modern, progressive, and people-centered land and natural resource governance fostering sustainable and resilient national development.*

### **PRIORITY AREA 2 - A PRODUCTIVE, PROGRESSIVE, AND AGILE ORGANIZATION**

*OUTCOME 2: The MNRPM is a well-tooled and equipped organization exhibiting the highest standards of performance and work culture.*

### **PRIORITY AREA 3 - DRIVING DIGITAL INNOVATION, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

*OUTCOME 3: Cutting-edge, secure, and data-driven digital and technological solutions supports sustainable land and natural resource management and enhanced service delivery.*

### **PRIORITY AREA 4 - BUILDING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE THROUGH MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT**

*OUTCOME 4: Strengthened and sustained positive relationships with stakeholders, partners, and the Belizean people.*



## 5 MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS BY PROGRAMME

### 5.1 Strategic Management and Administration Programme

**Programme Objective:** *Improve the quality of life for all Belizeans through responsible management of our natural resources thereby enhancing the socio-economic conditions conducive to growth and development of our country.*

*Annex 1 shows the organization of the units which implement the Strategic Management and Administration Programme within the Ministry.*

#### 5.1.1 Main Actions and Results Achieved

- I. **Mobile Outreach Program** is an initiative championed by the Central Administration of the Ministry which brings land services to the people. It is aimed at assisting the most marginalized who may not be able to ordinarily access services in Belmopan. Its implementation involves several units and departments of the Ministry including the Lands and Surveys Department, Land Registry Department, Policy Coordination and Planning Unit, Debt Management Unit and Legal Unit. During 2023, nineteen (19) Land Mobiles were hosted throughout the country where 5,441 persons were served, and 16,325 instruments were processed. This included the special mobile conducted in

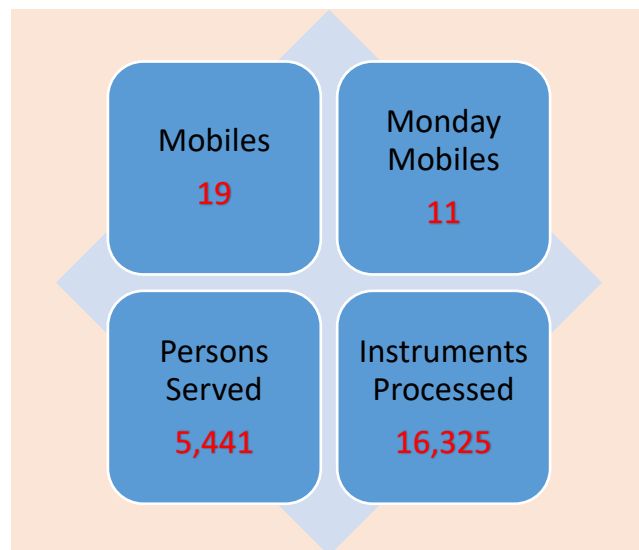


Figure 1 Performance indicators for the Land Mobile Outreach Programme in 2023

partnership with the RCC BPO Center where 410 instruments were accepted and processed for first-time landowners who are primarily young Belizeans.

Additionally, eleven (11) Monday Mobiles were conducted at the Belize City office where 440 instruments were processed.

- II. **Launch of Landfolio 7 Land Management Software.** In August 2023, the Ministry launched Landfolio 7, the newest version of the comprehensive land management software that the Ministry has been utilizing to manage, process and record land transactions. With the advent of the web-based Landfolio 7, work has begun with our developers to install a new portal that will see us eventually become a paperless Ministry – where people can apply and receive their approvals by the way of their phone or computer. Persons will be able to get their lease approvals and purchase approvals online. Landowners will be able to do private land transfers online. Law firms will register and be able to do all their transactions online without having to come into the office; and the banks and the law firms will be able to check their registers while also making direct payments online. Additionally, applications for private subdivisions will be lodged via the web. Overall, the launch of Landfolio 7 creates an enabling environment for the Ministry to catapult into the future with digital and online services.
- III. **Human Resources.** People are the most valuable asset within our Ministry, and in 2023 we have made great strides in increasing and enhancing our human resources across the Ministry. We are particularly proud of the establishment of a National Estate Project Unit that deals primarily with applications for first-time landowners. It has allowed us to churn out purchase approvals in record time for all our new subdivisions across the country.

#### IV. Policy Coordination and Planning

- In 2023, a director was onboarded to head the unit. The post of Director of the PCPU was vacant for some time but it is a critical role in ensuring the advancement of the Ministry's strategic objectives and programs.
- Updating of the National Land Use Policy. The updating of the National Land Use Policy and its subsequent adoption and implementation is a major priority for MNRPM and the government of Belize. In 2023, funding to support the updating process was secured and the procurement process to hire a consultant to support the Ministry in this work commenced. The actual updating process is expected to start in early 2024.
- The Ministry embarked on a strategic planning process in November 2024 and developed a strategic plan framework to guide its decision making, programming and actions over the next five (5) years.

#### V. Legal Unit

In 2023, approximately 33 claims have been filed in the courts of Belize involving the Ministry.

- 16 are actively being litigated in the high court.
- 1 is an appeal by Government of Belize to the Caribbean Court of Justice.
- 4 were settled by Government of Belize and the claimant.
- 1 was withdrawn by the claimant.
- The remainder are considered in-active, the claimant filed the case but not pursued it further.

#### VI. Debt Management Unit

**24,393** Land Accounts were either opened, closed or update during 2023. The table below shows that 13,158 accounts were opened, 317 were closed and 10,918 were updated.

Table 1 Land Accounts Opened, Updated, and Closed in 2023 - 2024

Account type	Land Accounts Opened	Land Accounts Closed	Land Accounts Updated	Total
Lease	6885	242	10,918	
Tax	6273	75	10,918	
<b>Total</b>	<b>13158</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>10,918</b>	<b>24,393</b>

- **21,930** accounts created during 2023 are left to be opened as shown in the table below. 83% of these accounts are for LRS instruments.

Table 2 Land Accounts to be Opened in 2023-2024

Outstanding NES Instruments	Outstanding LTU Instruments	Outstanding LRS Instruments	Outstanding FCT/TCT Instruments	Total
1,449	1,974	18,228	279	21,930

- There are **165,450** accounts of which **92,811** are Freehold Accounts and **72,639** are Leasehold Accounts.
- **\$14,455,844.89** was collected: **\$6,792,385.60** in land tax, **\$6,331,884.79** in purchase price, and **\$1,331,574.50** for rent of national land.

## 5.2 Land Management and Administration Programme

**Programme Objective:** To expand access to land and land-related services and enhance security of tenure through transparent, efficient, and accountable land administration and management enabling a better quality of life for all Belizeans.

### ***5.2.1 Lands and Surveys Department***

**Vision:** The Lands and Surveys Department (LSD) is efficient, transparent, accountable, innovative, and people-centric in its approach to the administration and management of Belize's land resources to assure social and economic well-being; and environmental sustainability.

**Mission:** To effectively and efficiently administer the processes that determine the highest and best use of land resources, its value, location, and boundaries; and to ensure equitable access and social justice in its distribution and management of land resources in pursuit of the goals of sustainable and resilient national development and poverty reduction.

#### ***5.2.1.1 Main Actions and Results Achieved***

##### **National Estate Section**

**Specific Objective:** Improve allocation and distribution of National Land to safeguard the right of every Belizean to access land in an equitable, affordable, and timely manner.

- I. **6,792** applications were accepted during 2023 at the **National Estate Section (NES)**. The chart below shows the number of applications accepted by application type. The greatest number of applications were for lease (1,299), followed by land certificates (1,171) and then direct purchase (1,045).

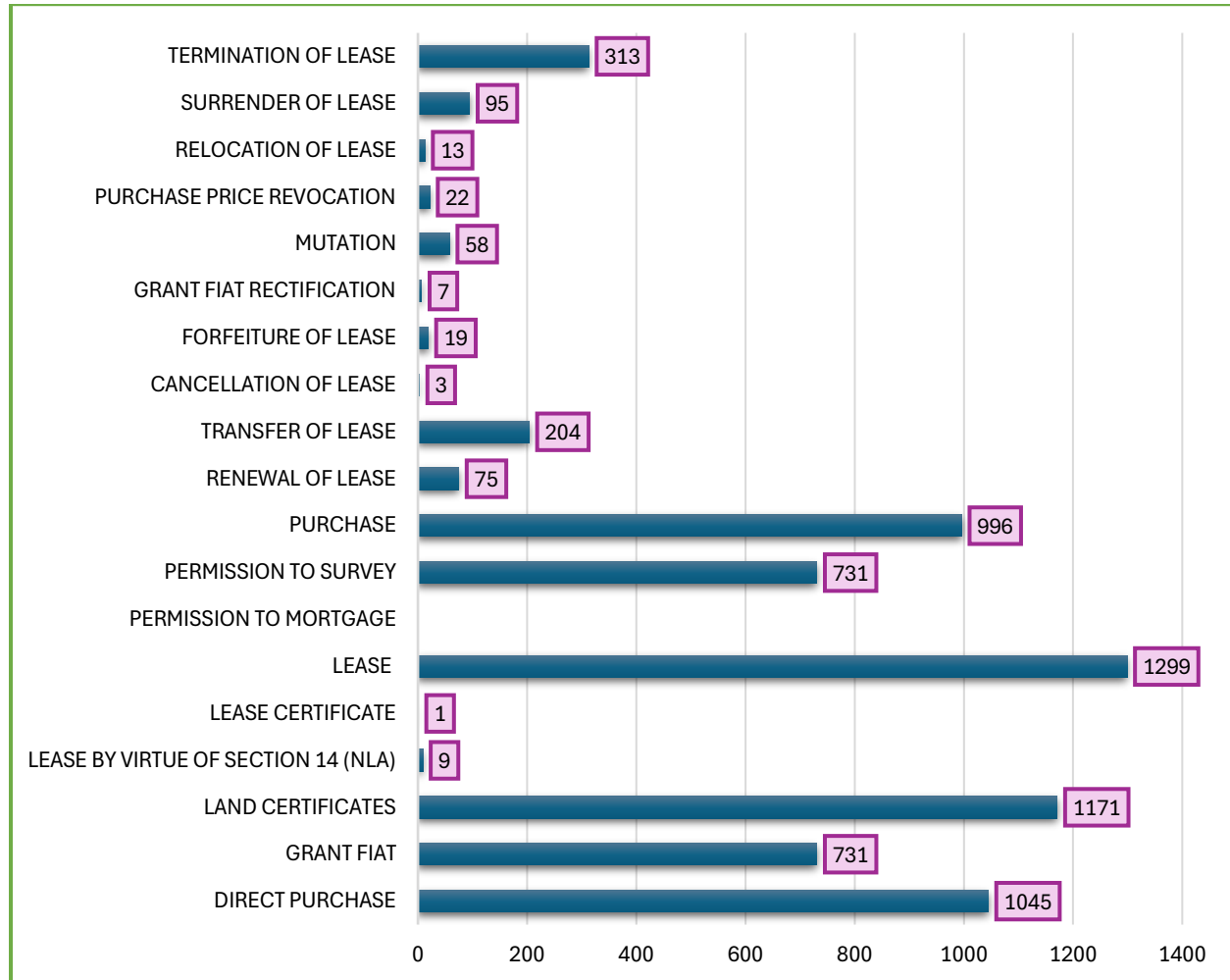


Figure 2 Distribution of Applications Accepted at the NES in 2023

- II. **12,331 Belizeans were able to obtain their documents for National Land in 2023.**
- **1,384** leases were issued. These individuals are now able to develop the land according to the lease conditions and may later apply to purchase. Leases can also be used as security for mortgages if permission is granted from the government.
  - **1,059** grant fiats were issued which is a freehold title document issued in Un-declared areas of the country.
  - **1,726** land certificates were issued. This is the freehold title document for declared areas of the country.

- **8,162** direct purchases were approved. The **Direct Purchase Programme** is geared towards first-time landowners to enable them to access national land at a discounted rate and through an accelerated process.
- This should have a profound impact on the quality of life of the ordinary Belizean as those land documents are the means to be able to access financing for agriculture, tourism or other business ventures or to build or expand their home, to help finance education and/or medical emergencies. When government transfers land to a citizen; it is transferring wealth. It is one powerful means by which government can help ordinary Belizeans escape generational poverty. Once you have land you will not be poor.

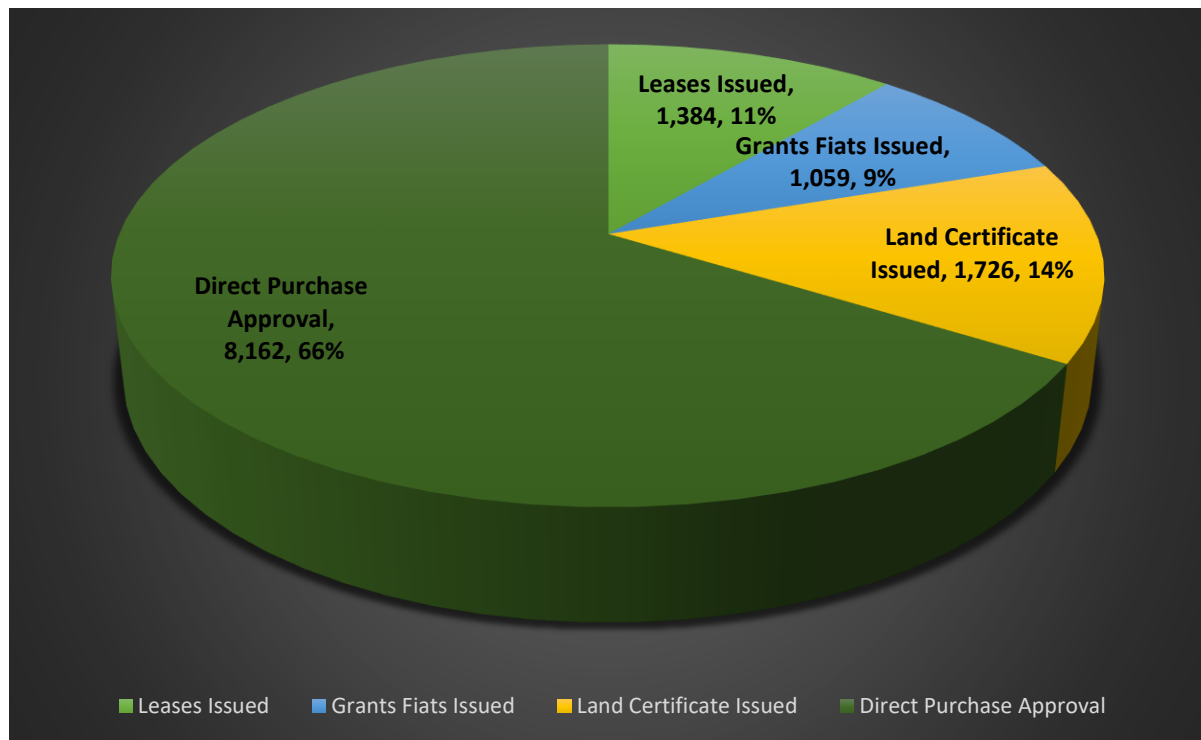


Figure 3 Land Documents Issued in 2023

III. **Residential Lot Survey Program.** In 2023, proposed subdivisions were prepared for the creation of **17,473** new residential lots. A total of **7,220** new residential lots were surveyed and made available for distribution. The chart below shows the number of proposed new residential lots, and the number surveyed by district.

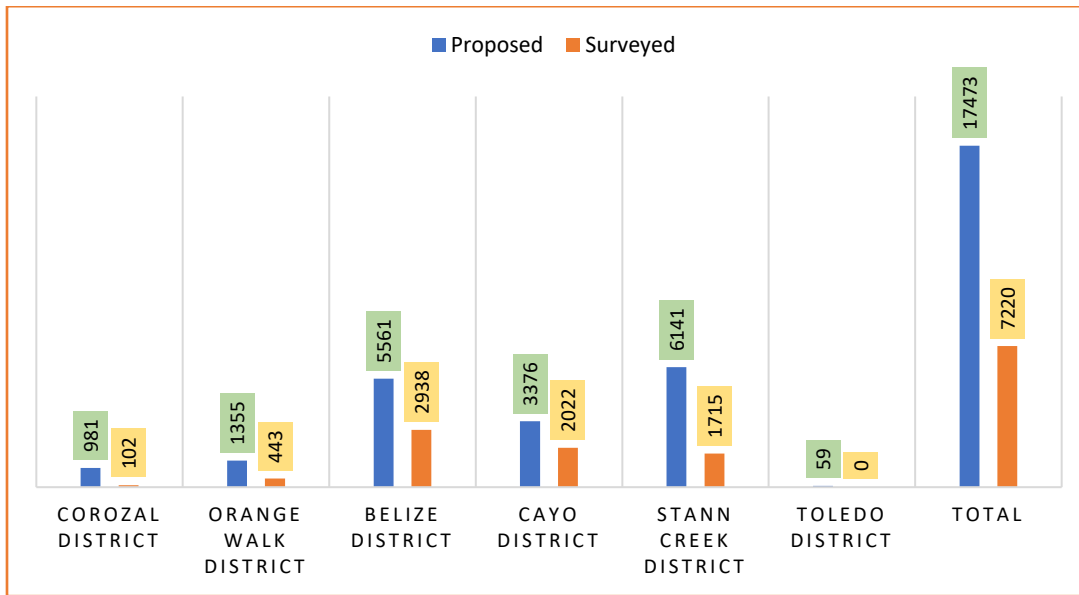


Figure 4. Number of Proposed and Surveys Lots in 2023

IV. **25,923** acres of national land were subdivided into 707 Agricultural Blocks for distribution. As the chart below shows 314 or 44% were in the Stann Creek District while 267 or 38% were in the Orange Walk District. 122 or 17% were in the Cayo District.

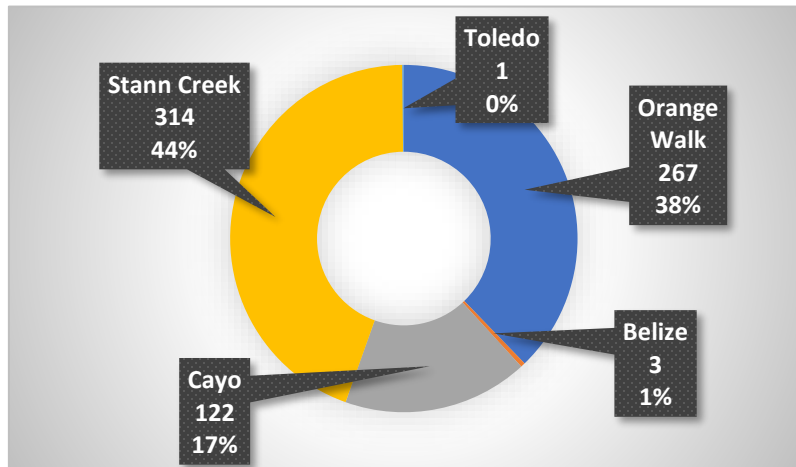


Figure 5. Agricultural Blocks Surveyed for Distribution by District 2023



## Surveys and Mapping

**Specific Objective:** To secure property rights by advancing the integrity of the cadastre ensuring the accuracy of the boundaries, dimensions and location of land parcels through regulating the Surveying profession and process.

- I. **834** survey plans were accepted for examination in 2023. This represents an 18% increase in the number of plans submitted between 2022 and 2023. In comparing 2023 to 2021, it shows that there has been an increase of 106% in the submission of plans. Therefore, the workload of the section has increased significantly over the last two years.

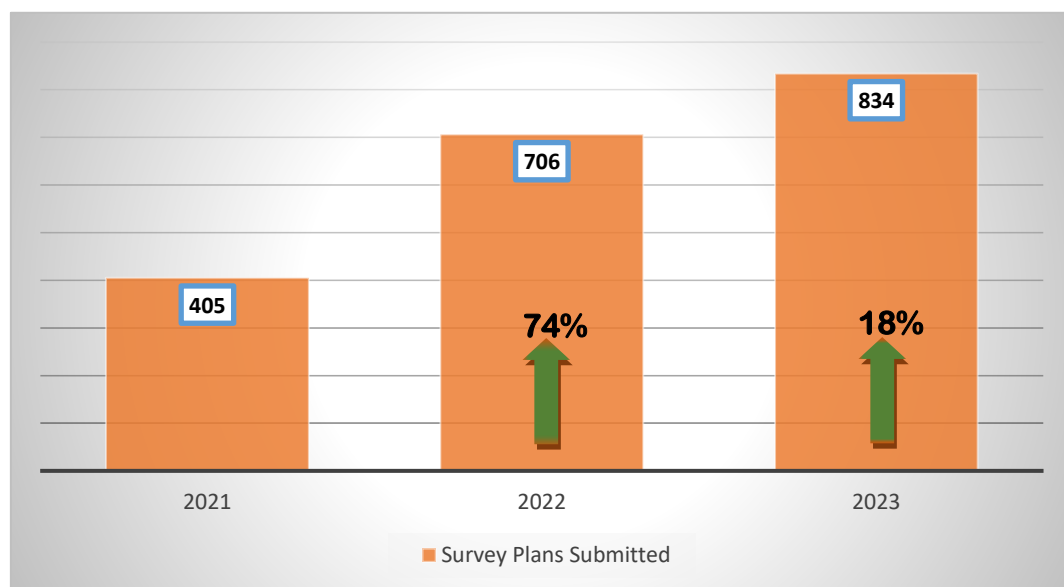


Figure 6. Survey Plans Accepted for Examination 2021, 2022 and 2023

- II. **713** survey plans were examined and approved during 2023. **657** were authenticated. This represents an 89% increase in production between 2022 and 2023.



Figure 7 Comparison of the Number of Survey Plans Examined/Approved in 2021, 2022 and 2023

- III. Since the introduction of Landfolio 7 in August 2023, Mutations require multiple steps. The Cadastre GIS Editor performs the GIS edits as per the survey plan attached to the instrument and based on the instructions handed down by the Land Registry under the “Edit Cadastre GIS” action. Within the same action, there is need for someone to “Approve” such edits. The third step in the processing of the instrument is an action for “Post Cadastre GIS”. At that stage, the work previously done in the version created for such instrument is reconciled with the Default Cadastral Layer and posted. This is the end of the GIS editing as the action is closed in Landfolio for other sections/departments to process the instrument further. In late 2023, the section engaged in a ‘Post Cadastre GIS’ clearing exercise, which mainly took care of those instruments that were brought from the older version of Landfolio and required a complete and comprehensive revision before posting. The figure below shows the number of instruments processed through the “Edit Cadastre GIS” and the ‘Post Cadastre GIS’ in 2023
- IV. **1,045** cadastre review instruments were processed in 2023. These were predominantly ‘Prepare Grant Fiat Plan’ (732); applications for Grant Fiat (NES) (312) and one (1) Grant Rectification.

Table 3 Number of Instruments Processed at the SMS in 2023

<i>Instrument Type</i>	<i>No. of Instruments Processed</i>
<i>Prepare Grant Fiat Plan</i>	732
<i>Application for Land Certificate (NES)</i>	0
<i>Application for Lease Certificate (NES)</i>	0
<i>Surrender of Lease (NES)</i>	0
<i>Application for Grant Fiat (NES)</i>	312
<i>Application for Lease Fiat (NES)</i>	0
<i>Grant Rectification</i>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,045</b>

- V. **357** 'Cadastre Review' for Permission to Survey applications were processed in 2023. There are basically two (2) instrument types which are shown in table below.

Table 4 Number of Permission to Survey Instruments Processed by SMS in 2023

<i>Instrument Type</i>	<i>No. of Instruments Processed</i>
<i>Application for Permission to Survey National Land (NES Declared)</i>	129
<i>Application for Permission to Survey National Land (NES Undeclared)</i>	246
<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>

## Physical Planning Section

**Specific Objective:** Strengthen sustainability and climate resilience in Belize by applying sound land use planning practices in regulating and managing land subdivision and utilization; and in supporting other development processes.

- I. **541** applications for subdivision of land were accepted by the Physical Planning Section in 2023. This represents a 22% increase in applications between 2022 and 2023.

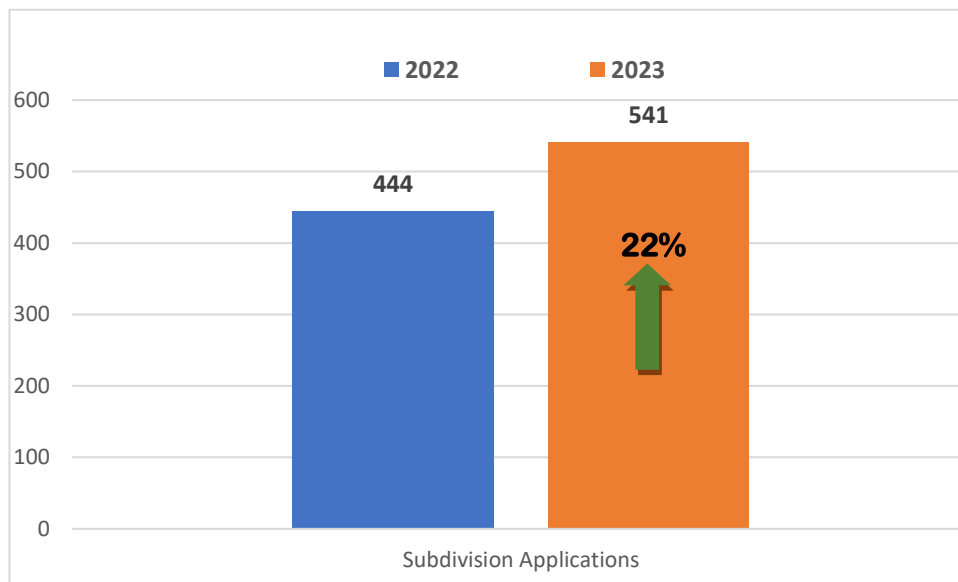


Figure 8 Applications Accepted by Physical Planning in 2022 and 2023

- II. **275** approvals for subdivision of land were issued in 2023. 158 were provisional approvals which is a 20% decrease from 2022. 117 were final approvals which is a 16% decrease from 2022.

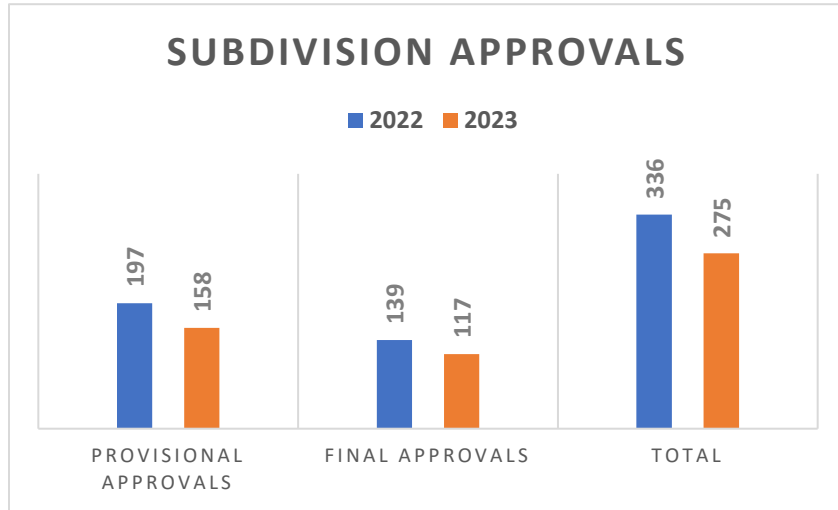


Figure 9 Subdivision Approvals in 2022 and 2023

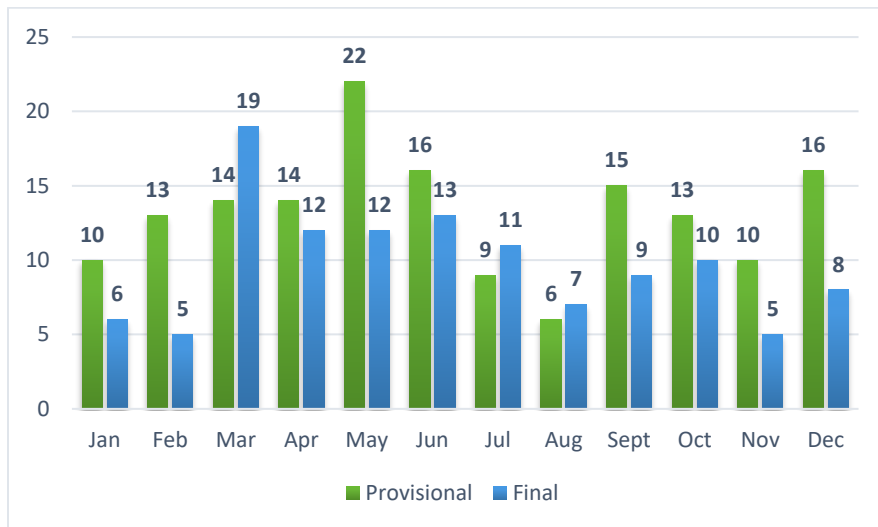


Figure 10 Number of Subdivision Approvals by Month in 2023

NB: At the beginning of the fourth quarter, we reorganized the Section to make it more efficient, and more responsive to address the perceived and real limitations detected, and it shows a gradual increase in productivity in the last three months.

- III. **84** applications for the use of the seabed were received in 2023. **17** were approved and **12** licenses were issued. This represents a 20% approval rate for seabed licenses which is a significant decrease from the 2022 rate of 60%.

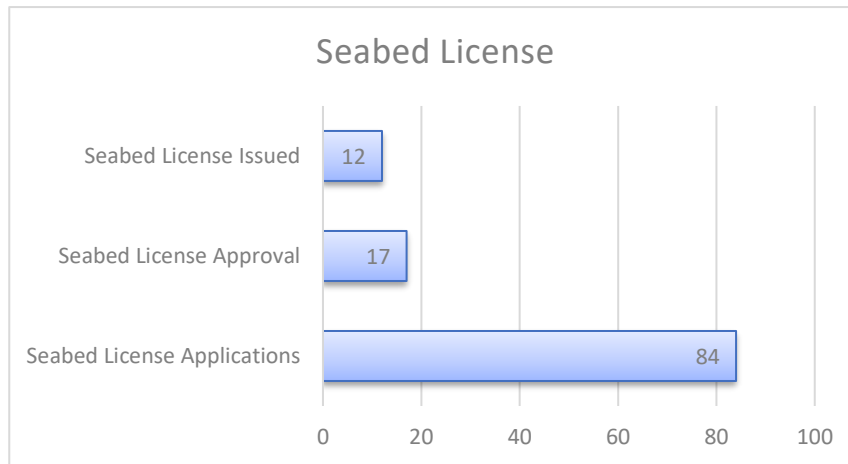


Figure 11 Seabed Licenses Submitted, Approved and Issued in 2023

**Valuation Section**

**Specific Objective:** Maximize the revenue base derived from the taxation, lease and sale of land resources; and affirm value for money in the land acquisition process through the provision of reliable valuation information and assessments.

- I. **1,289** instruments were vetted through planning review in 2023 for private transfers in undeclared areas under the Land Registry Department. **6,897** updates were made for Land Categorization for taxation purposes and Tax Rolls. There was a 33% decrease in tax updates in 2023 as compared to 2022. This decrease may be attributed to the implementation of Landfolio 7 where data entry is duplicated at several instances, which reduces productivity in this area.

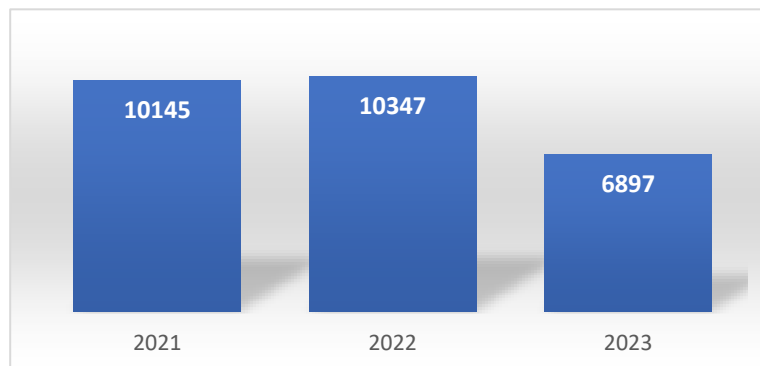


Figure 12 Number of Tax Categorization and Tax Roll Updated in 2021, 2022 and 2023

- II. **4,521** Purchase Price calculations were made during 2023. This represents a 34% increase in purchase price calculations during 2023 from 2022 figures. This significant increase can be attributed to the Ministry's focus on distribution of national land to first time landowners. It is also important to note that the work count on the Landfolio System is not a true representation of work done in office. Some parcel categorizations / calculations are done upon requests done via phone calls/emails from department management. In addition, there are many files brought in from National Estate Section for purchase price calculation that are not in valuation queue, hence they are not reflected in the landfolio system.

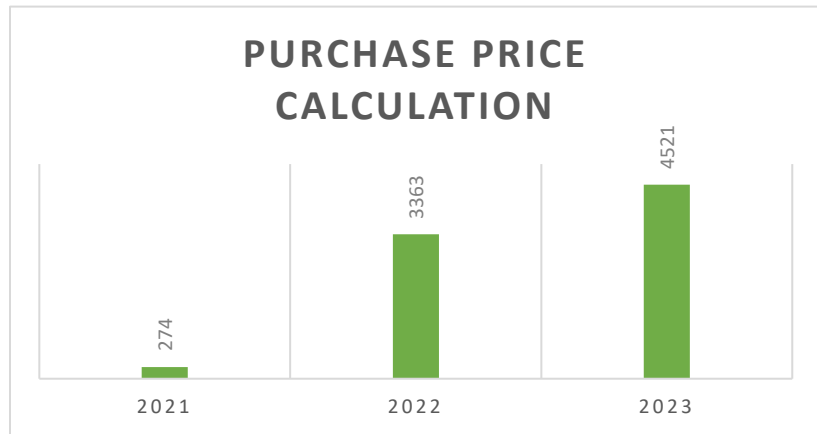


Figure 13 Purchase Price Calculations 2021, 2022 and 2023

- III. In 2023, the Valuation Section also completed 8 Estate duty calculations, 73 comparable research, and 63 opinions of value for land acquisitions

- IV. Three (3) Fiscal Cadastre/Values map for Benque Viejo del Carmen, Dangriga and Orange Walk Town were being produced during this period as well (between April-May 2023). This mainly consisted of meeting with key persons from the municipalities, zoning the target area accordingly and searching for comparable information to derive market value for properties in the different zones. Images to follow are Google Earth Maps with the zones gathered/agreed with its respective municipalities.



Figure 14 Fiscal Cadastre/ Values Map for Benque Viejo del Carmen

### Land Information Centre

**Specific Objective:** Advance the quality, management, and access to geo-spatial data to optimize land administration and management processes; and to support policy and decision-making for integrated natural resource management in Belize.

- I. **1,792** requests were processed and completed. 473 requests were in-kind, where fees were waived. In-kind requests are mostly referred to services and maps render to other section of the Lands and Survey Department, our Ministry, other governmental departments and ministries, statutory bodies, and local governments such town/city, and village councils.



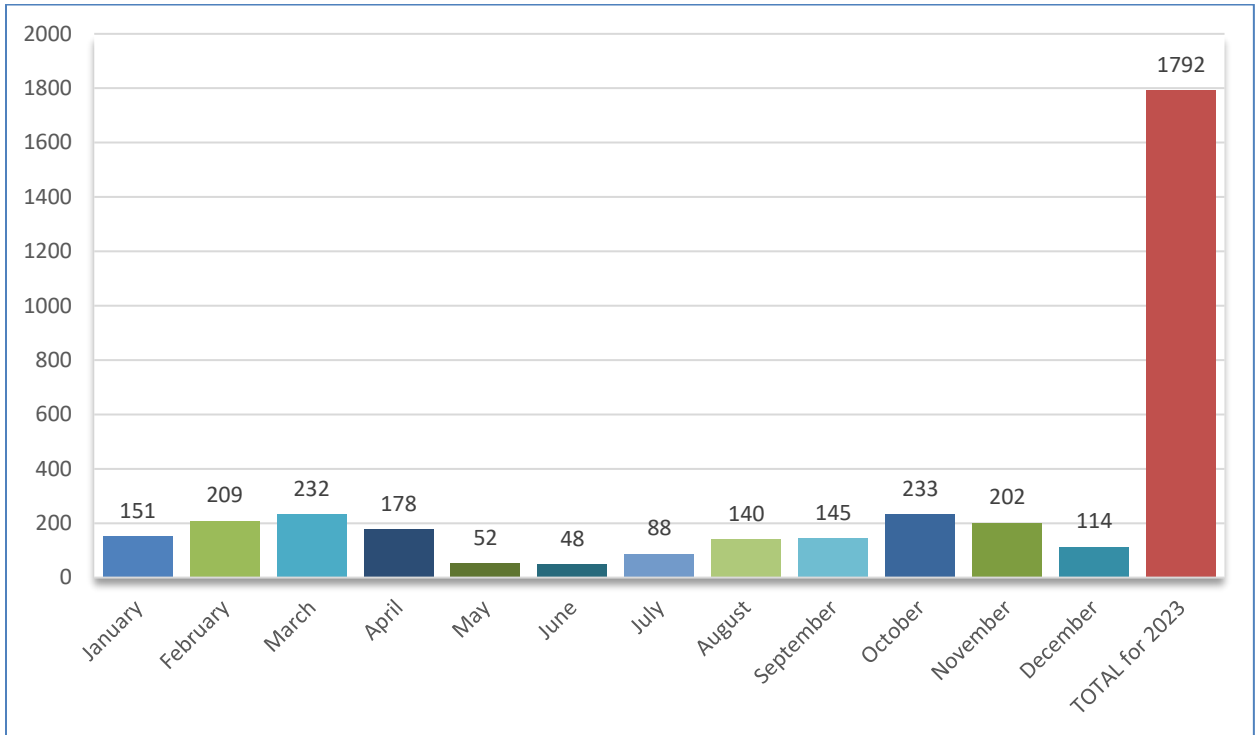


Figure 15 LIC Requests by Month in 2023

II. **71%** of the requests are from individual members of the public. 12% are from the Forest Department to support the issuance of forest licenses while the other 17% are jobs requested internally by other sections and MNRPM departments and by other government agencies. The graph below shows the percentage by the various categories.

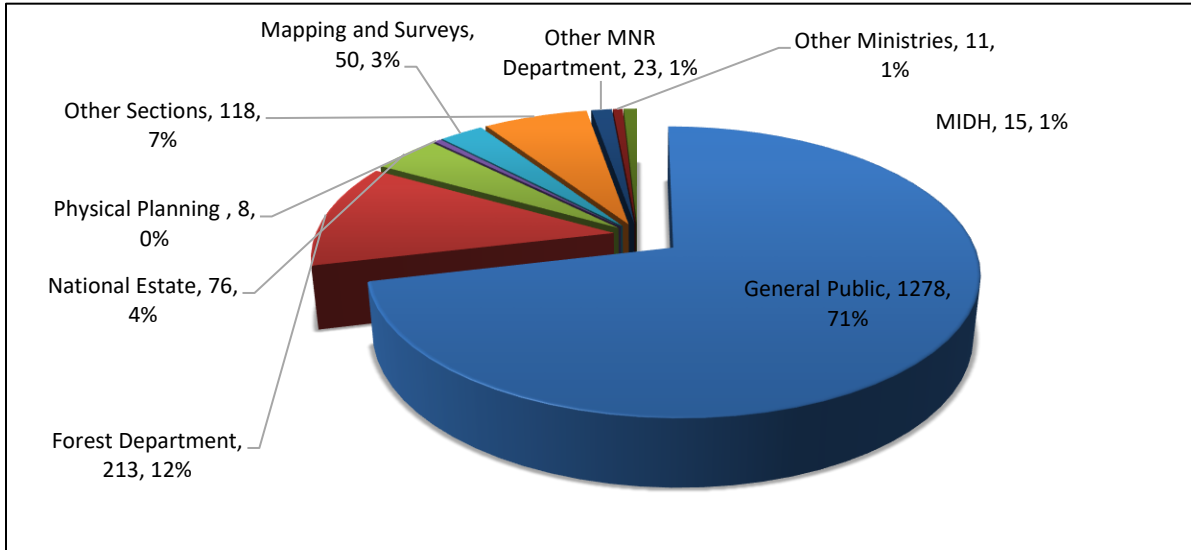


Figure 16 LIC Requests by Organizations

III. **\$34,960** was generated from these job/map requests particularly the sale of digital and hard copy maps. The In-kind value is estimated at **\$24,795**. Below is a table and graph representing monthly revenue collected and the In-kind values by month for 2023.

Table 5 Revenue Generated by the LIC in 2023

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
Revenue	1,835	3,625	5,000	2,095	2,465	2,340	1,145	3,025	2,055	4,060	4,045	3,270	34,960
In-kind value:	4,995	1,790	3,225	2,742	3,295	3,986	1,365	510	1,340	1,272	155	120	24,795

IV. **3,408** maps were produced because of the requests lodged for 2023. Requests for maps vary from surveys compilation, registration section maps, location maps, plotting of GPS coordinates, Forest Licenses Application Maps and Google Images. Several cadastral maps for villages, towns and registration sections are readily available, but that is not always the case with all the requests, sometimes technicians spend time creating the maps. Over the last year the requests number for Google Overlay has increased enormously; these maps are mostly requested by the public for unlocking expired lease accounts and for identifying location of their property. Below is a table and graph showing maps produced by month.

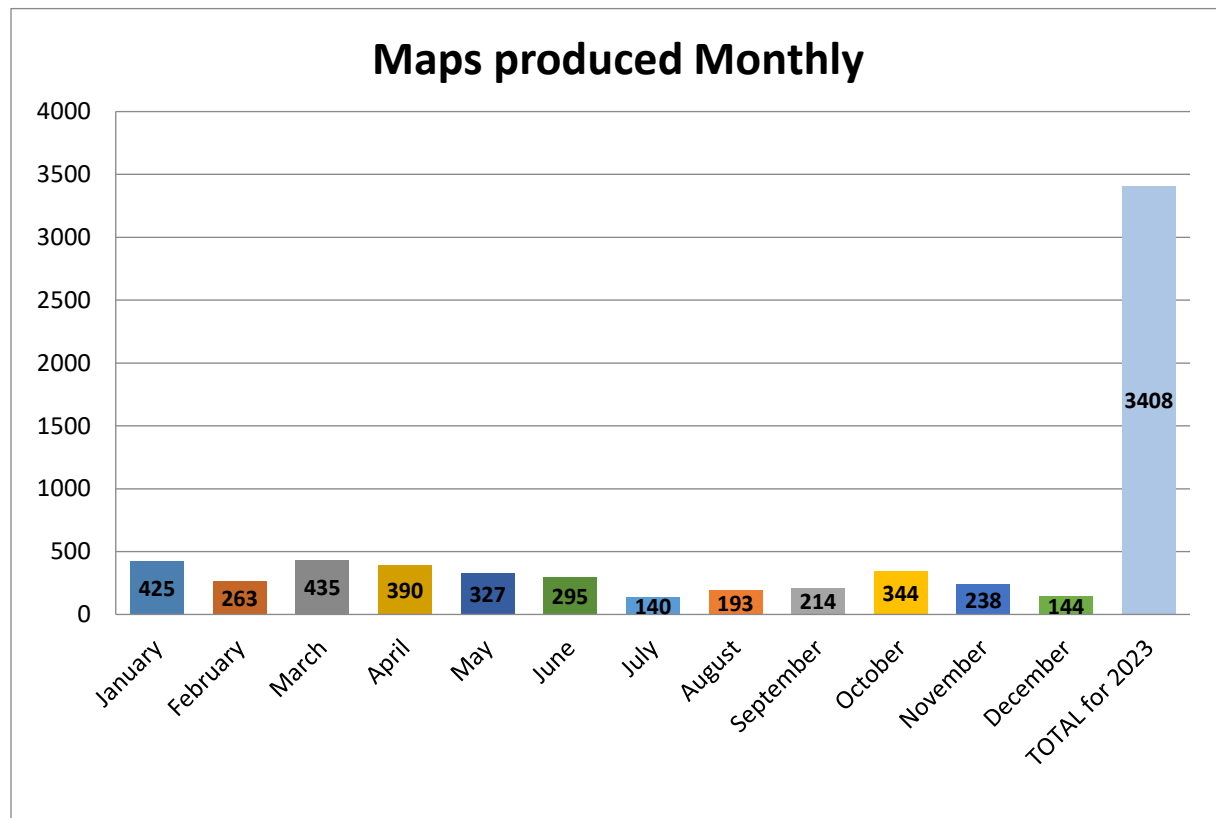


Figure 17 Map Production by Month in 2023

V. **8,321** new parcels were added to the compilation database, and **655** to the Survey Plan Centre Points database. LIC continues to update the compilations of survey for areas outside of the Compulsory Registration Sections along with the survey plan center point database. An updated and accurate cadastral database is important in

providing accurate and legitimate information regarding a parcel and land rights. The uses of such a database are many, taxation purposes, zoning and urban planning, land ownership claims, land value and land distribution which is one of the primary mandates of our department. This is continuous activity as plans are authenticated daily and it requires great effort to ensure all the newly authenticated survey plans are added. The chart below shows that the highest percentage of new parcels were added in the Stann Creek District (33%), followed by the Belize District (31%) and the Cayo District (27%).

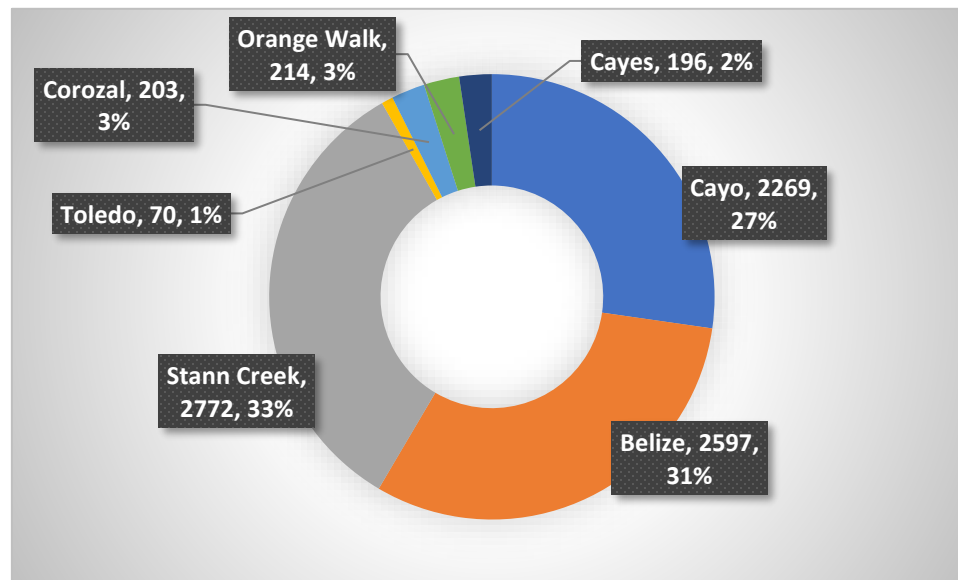


Figure 18 New Parcels added to the compilation database by District

- VI. **492** LIC Review actions were completed for the Permission to Survey process. This action was added to the LIC workflow in Landfolio in July 2023. It requires two steps: (i) creating a polygon or a shape on the Permission to Survey database with coordinates provided on sketch. This is done outside of Landfolio environment. Over **6,500** polygon shapes had been added to the Permission to Survey database at the end of December 2023. (ii) the LIC Map is attached to the instrument as a supporting document and a recommendation is made based on findings such as overlaps with another application, overlaps with existing surveys, private land or falls inside of a protected area. Once recommendation is done the action is saved and closed. Below is a breakdown of LIC Review actions closed by month since July 2023.

Table 6 Number of documents processed through 'LIC Review' by Month

July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
2	67	71	86	170	96	492

- VII. **73** mutation projects were completed, resulting in the creation of 3,238 new parcels added to the SDE Parcel Database. Mutations is another new workflow tasked to LIC in 2023. The LIC mutations process are done strictly for subdivisions for undeclared areas. The process consists of creating registers/records (parcel numbering) and shapes (polygons) for the National Estate Section to facilitate the process of lease and purchase applications. It is a very time-consuming exercise especially due to the slow processing within the Landfolio environment. Below is a table with the breakdown showing the total numbers of projects processed and number of new parcels created.

Table 7 Number of Mutations completed by Month at the LIC (Undeclared Areas)

	No. of Instruments	No. of Parcels Created
<b>September</b>	10	1,391
<b>October</b>	30	952
<b>November</b>	30	688
<b>December</b>	3	207
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>3,238</b>

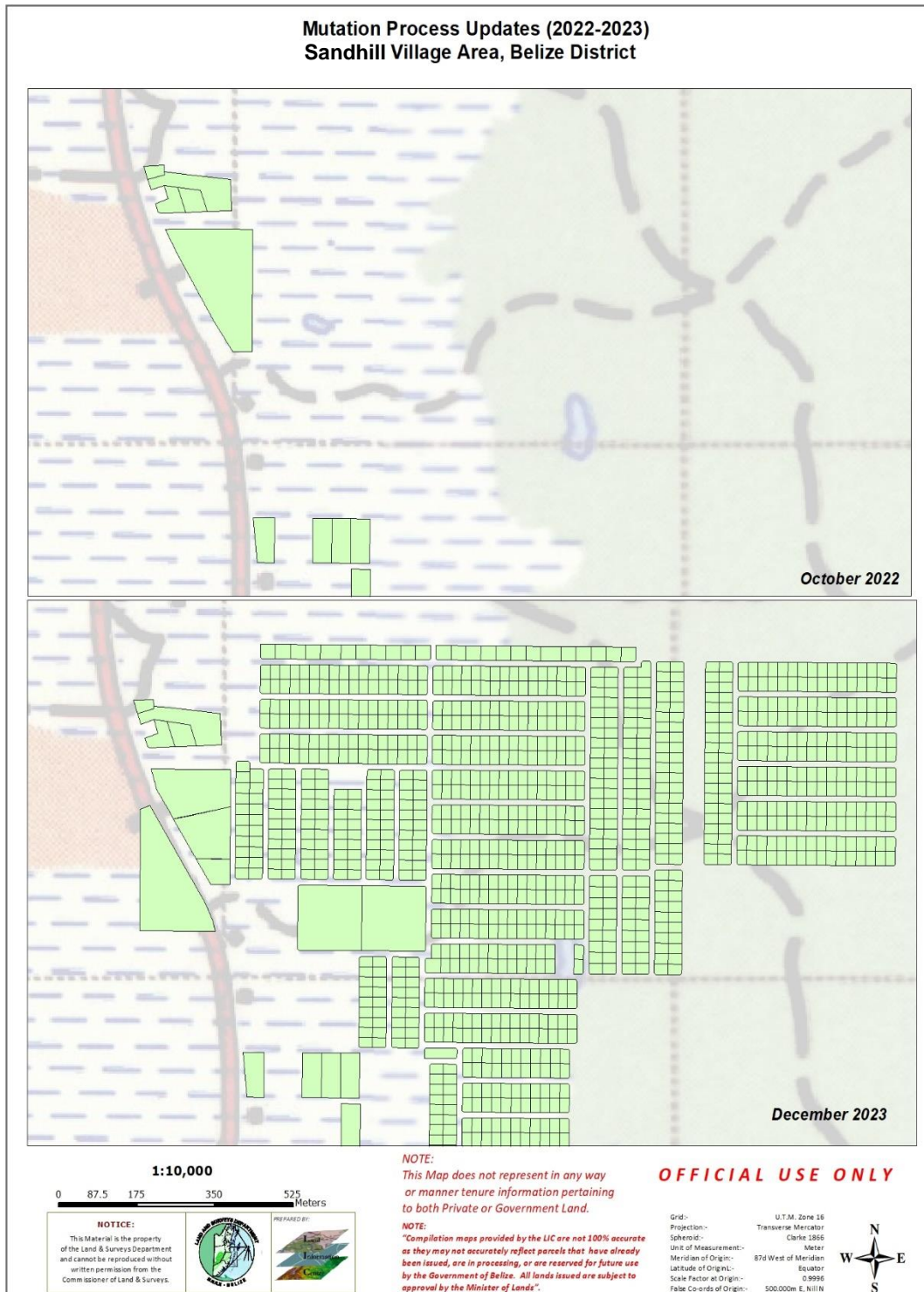


Figure 19 Map showing the mutation of parcels and updating of the database in undeclared areas.

VIII. **The Municipal Boundary Expansion Project.** This initiative was in collaboration with the Ministry responsible for Local Government. The LIC provided technical support to map the old/existing town boundaries and delineate the proposed town boundaries for municipal expansion for all 7 towns in country. After intense consultation with the local town bodies and the villages affected, a total of 15 proposed town boundaries maps were produce. A final round of consultation was done to present the maps, LIC then proceeded to finalize maps and created a detail description of the proposed boundary. Final description and maps will be presented to Cabinet for approval before gazetting and making these boundaries official. All maps, data and descriptions for the seven towns were handed over to Local Government in January 2024.

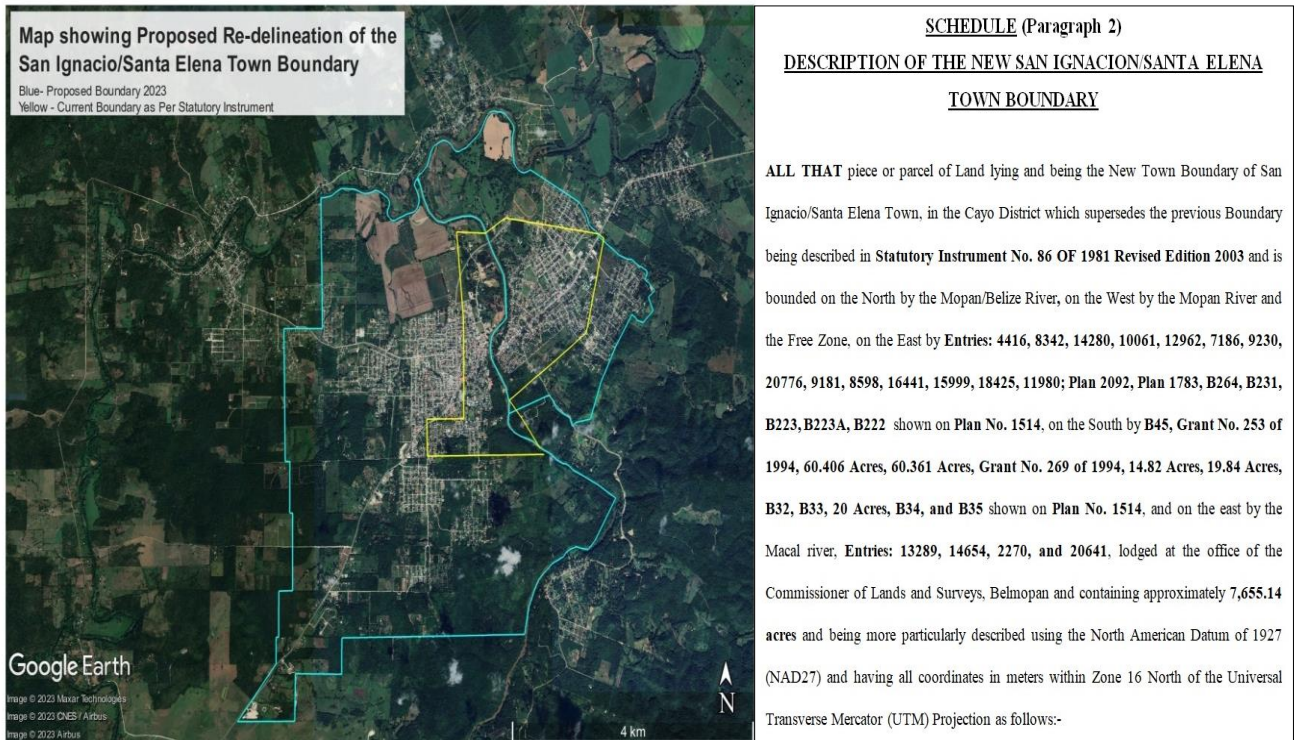


Figure 20 Map and new boundary description for San Ignacio/Santa Elena

### 5.2.2 Land Registry Department

**Vision:** An efficient land registry providing a secure, high-quality service and a customer-friendly land registration process.

**Mission:** To facilitate and safeguard property transactions by maintaining and extending a comprehensive system of registration of title in Belize and promoting its use.

**Strategic Objective:**

1. To maintain a reliable and accurate system of land registration
2. To optimize use and value of the Land Register.
3. To promote and facilitate Compulsory Registration in Belize

**Units of the Lands Registry Department and their Specific Objectives.**





5.2.2.1 Main Actions and Results Achieved

- I. **115** Compulsory Registration Sections exists as of 2023. There are **357,870** freehold titles and 24,239 leases registered under the Compulsory Registration System. The map below shows the spatial distribution of the compulsory registrations sections which are primarily in the north of the country. More than 50% of the country is not under compulsory registration (undeclared).



Figure 21 Map showing Registered and Unregistered (Undeclared) Lands in Belize

- II. **24,478** applications for transactions were received at the Land Registry in 2023. This represents an 18% increase over 2022 figures as shown in the figure below. It also indicated that approximately 94 transactions are lodged daily at the LRD.

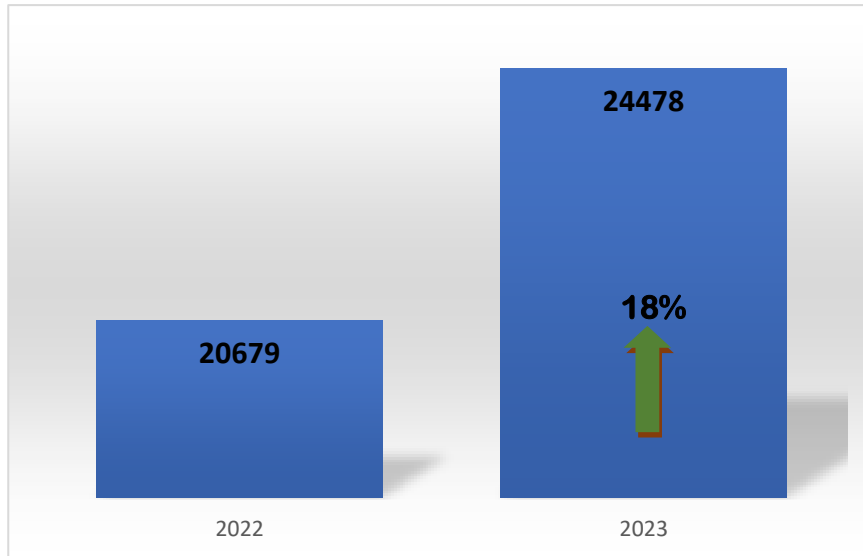


Figure 22 Comparison of the number of transactions lodged at the LRD in 2022 and 2023

The figure below further shows the transactions submitted by instrument type demonstrating that over 86% of documents submitted were for transactions under LRS or the Compulsory Registration System.

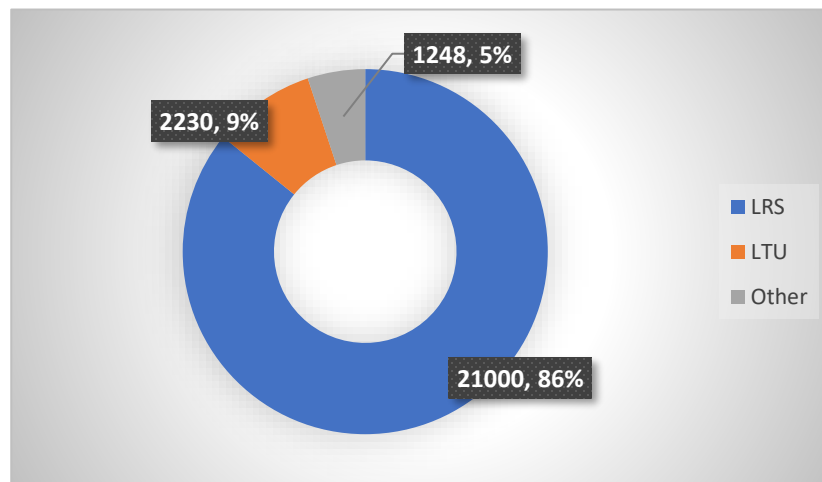


Figure 23 Number of instruments submitted by type in 2023

Table 8 Application/Instrument Type submitted to the LRD

Application/Instrument Type	Number Accepted
Transfer of Land (RL1)	10,651
Application for Land Certificate / Certificate of Lease (45)	1,925
Deed of Conveyance (LTU)	1,149
Transfer of Land (GOB)	970
Power of Attorney (RL15)	969
Bill of Sale (LTU)	881
Charge (RL8)	825
Discharge of Charge (RL9)	816
Notice of Revocation of Power of Attorney (RL16)	640
First Registration (RL19)	538
Mutation (RL25)	366
Variation of Charge (27)	361
Application for Lost Land Certificate / Certificate of Lease (44)	346
TCT - Memorandum of Transfer (LTU)	296
Surrender of Lease (RL10)	269
Power of Attorney (LTU)	249
Termination of Lease (32)	241
Transfer by Personal Representative (RL6)	218
Application for Prescription (38)	184
Deletion on Death of a Joint Proprietorship (29)	182
Deed of Gift (LTU)	176
Deed of Mortgage (LTU)	163
Rectification of the Register (34)	162
Caution (RL18)	133
Forfeiture of Lease (31)	133
Application to Combine/Sub-Divide Parcels of Land (26)	132
Transfer by Chargee in Exercise of Power of Sale (RL4)	130
Withdrawal of Caution (33)	107
Cancellation of Mortgage (LTU)	107
Mutation (GOB)	98
Application to be Registered as Proprietor by Transmission (RL17)	96
Lease/Sub-Lease (RL7)	88
Transfer of Charge (RL3)	79
Transfer of Lease (RL2)	79
Deed of Assent (LTU)	64
Up-stamping of Document (LTU)	58
Variation of Terms and Conditions of Charge (39)	48

Application/Instrument Type	Number Accepted
Discharge of Collateral Charge (RL)	42
Restriction (35)	36
Application for Lost FCT / TCT (LTU)	32
FCT - Certificate (LTU)	30
Collateral Charge (37)	29
Bill of Sale Renewal (LTU)	28
Revocation of Power of Attorney (LTU)	28
Restrictive Agreement (36)	24
Deed of Incumbrance (LTU)	22
Partial Discharge of Charge (RL)	17
General Power of Attorney (46)	13
Inhibition (42)	13
Agreement for Sale (LTU)	13
Deed of Release & Satisfaction (LTU)	13
Mortgage Debenture (LTU)	13
Registration of Strata Plan (RL52)	13
Removal of Restriction (41)	12
Deed of Assignment (LTU)	12
Deed of Rectification (LTU)	12
Debenture (LTU)	11
Grant of Profit (RL12)	9
Agreement (LTU)	8
Cancellation of Incumbrance (LTU)	8
Supplemental Deed (LTU)	7
Removal of Inhibition (43)	6
Assent (LTU)	6
Transfer of Lease (GOB)	5
Cancellation of Debenture (LTU)	5
Deed of Appointment (LTU)	5
Memorandum of Transfer (LTU)	5
Partial Cancellation of Mortgage (LTU)	5
Severance of Joint Proprietorship (30)	4
Deed of Assignment of Mortgage (LTU)	4
Deed of Disclaimer (LTU)	4
Deed of Release (LTU)	4
Mining License (LTU)	4
Supplemental Debenture (LTU)	4
Supplemental Deed of Mortgage (LTU)	4

<b>Application/Instrument Type</b>	<b>Number Accepted</b>
Supplemental Mortgage (LTU)	4
Assignment of Mortgage (LTU)	3
Conveyance and Settlement (LTU)	3
Deed of Assent & Conveyance (LTU)	3
Guardianship Appointment (LTU)	3
Memorandum of Agreement (LTU)	3
Transfer of Undivided Share (28)	2
Cancellation of Agreement (General) (LTU)	2
Covenant (LTU)	2
Grant of Easement (RL11)	1
Release of Profit, Easement or Restrictive Agreement (RL13)	1
Cancellation of Agreement for Sale (LTU)	1
Charge (LTU)	1
Deed of Easement (LTU)	1
Deed of Rectification and Confirmation (LTU)	1
Incumbrance Application (LTU)	1
Indenture (LTU)	1
Lease (LTU)	1
Legal Charge Application (LTU)	1
Revocation of Receiver (LTU)	1
Settlement Agreement (LTU)	1
Transfer of Mortgage (LTU)	1
Variation of Mortgage (LTU)	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>24,478</b>

The table above shows the various application/instrument types accepted at the Land Registry Department in 2023 arranged in descending order. Transfer of Land (RL1) represents the greatest number of applications at 10,651 by a large margin. Application for Land Certificate / Certificate of Lease (45) at 1,925, Deed of Conveyance (LTU) at 1,149, Transfer of Land (GOB) at 970, Power of Attorney at 969 and Bill of Sale at 881 are next top applications.

III. **25,154** instruments were processed by the Land Registry in 2023. These included 21,979 LRS instruments, 2,242 LTU instruments and 933 'Other' types of instruments.

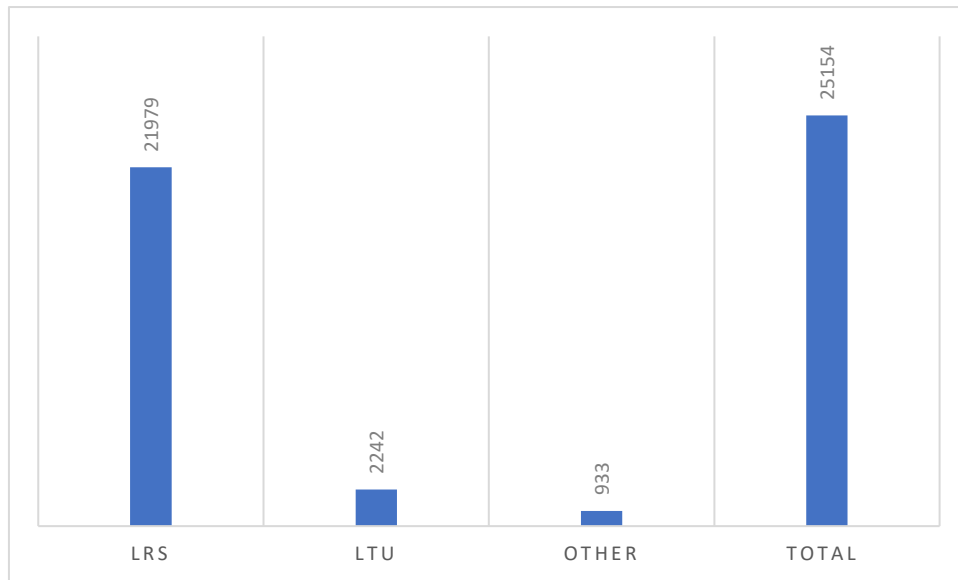


Figure 24 Number of instruments processed by the LRD in 2023.

### 5.3 Mining Programme – Mining Unit

**VISION:** Realizing the mineral wealth of Belize

**MISSION:** To develop the mineral industry of Belize in accordance with mining legislation, acceptable international standards, and sound environmental practices for the benefit of all Belizeans

**Programme Objective:** *To regulate the mining sector and provide services that will stimulate investment for sustainable economic development, achieve optimal utilization of Belize's mineral resources through scientific and transparent mining practices, exploration and Geo-scientific research & development.*

**Strategic Objectives:**

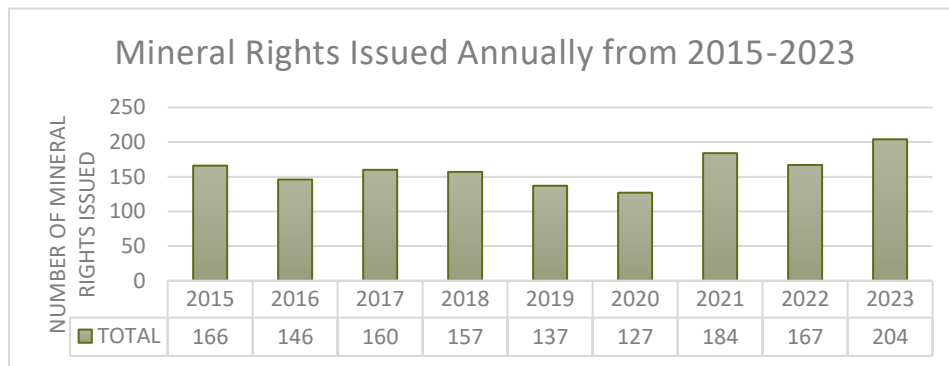
1. To facilitate the exploration of minerals
2. To promote the development of mineral resources
3. To administrate the processing and issuance of Mineral Rights: *prospecting licences, exploration licences, mining licences and quarry permits*
4. To enforce compliance with the conditions of mineral rights
5. To collect and assess revenues payable under the Mines and Minerals Act: royalties, fees, rentals, charges, etc.
6. To prepare and disseminate reports, maps, and other mineral related data to the public.

**5.3.1 Main Actions and Results Achieved**

I. **204** mineral rights were issued in 2023. In 2023, the total number of mineral rights issued in 2023 was 22% higher than the previous year. The types of mineral rights issued by the Mining Unit under the Mines and Minerals Act and are listed in the Table below. Permits are issued anytime in the calendar year by the Inspector of Mines. Licenses require approval by the Minister with the recommendation of the Inspector of Mines.

**Table 9: Types of Mineral Rights issued under the Mines and Minerals Act**

<b>Mineral Rights</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Expiration</b>
<b>Licenses</b>	<i>Non-exclusive prospecting licenses (NEPL)</i>	1 year
	<i>Reconnaissance licenses (RL)</i>	1 year
	<i>Exploration licenses (EPL)</i>	3 years
	<i>Mining licenses (ML)</i>	Up to 20 years or life of the deposit
<b>Permits</b>	<i>Non-commercial quarry permits (NCQP)</i>	All expire on December 31 of year issued
	<i>Quarry permits (QP)</i>	
	<i>Registered Quarry permits (RQP)</i>	
	<i>Registered Artisanal permits (RAQP)</i>	



**Figure 25: Mineral Rights Issued Annually from 2015-2023**



The Table below shows the types of mineral rights and total number issued from 2015 to 2023.

**Table 10: Mineral Rights issued between 2015-2023**

MINERAL RIGHTS	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ML	6	5	1	5	4	7	7	2	5
EPL	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	0
QP	4	10	8	5	13	4	3	2	3
NCQP	6	3	8	3	7	3	4	3	5
RAQP	10	6	4	5	8	3	9	9	8
NEPL	6	2	1	0	4	0	1	0	0
RQP	134	120	138	139	98	109	160	150	183
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>204</b>

Of the total Mineral Rights issued in 2023, most [90% or 183] are Registered Quarry Permits (RQP).

- II. **\$330,097.68** in revenue was generated by the Mining programme in 2022. This was slightly lower than the revenue generated in 2022.

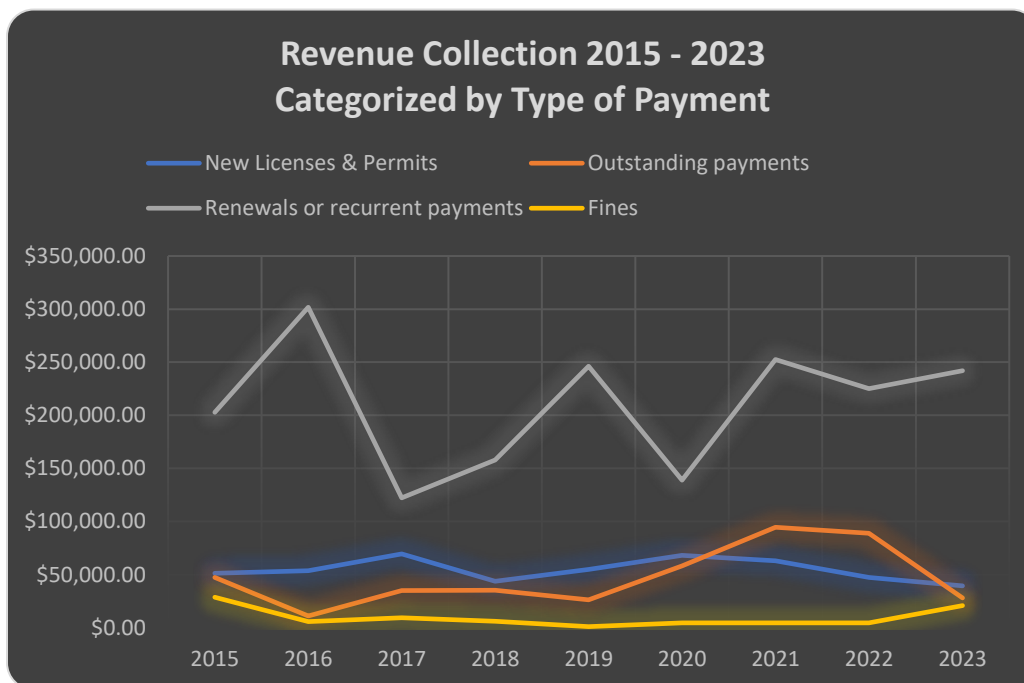
**Table 11: Revenue collected by the Mining Unit for 2023 by Quarter**

Quarter	Period	Revenue Collected
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	January – March 2023	\$95,946.56
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	April – June 2023	\$132,481.99
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	July – September 2023	\$56,997.32
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	October – December 2023	\$44,671.81
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$330,097.68</b>

A more in-depth analysis of the revenue collected for the period 2015-2023 is presented below. **Figure 2** which shows the comparison of annual revenue categorized by *type of payment* such as payments for:

- permit renewals or recurrent payments for active licenses
- new permits or licenses (at new locations)
- outstanding fees (arrears)
- fines (for offenses)

The trend shows that fines are the lowest, as to be expected, while revenue for permit renewals and existing license fees and royalties accounts for most of the annual revenues in the mineral sector. For 2023, the pie chart in **Figure 3**, shows the revenue disaggregated according to the type of payments that were made between January to December 2023.



**Figure 26: Revenue Collection Categorized by Type of Payment (2015-2023)**

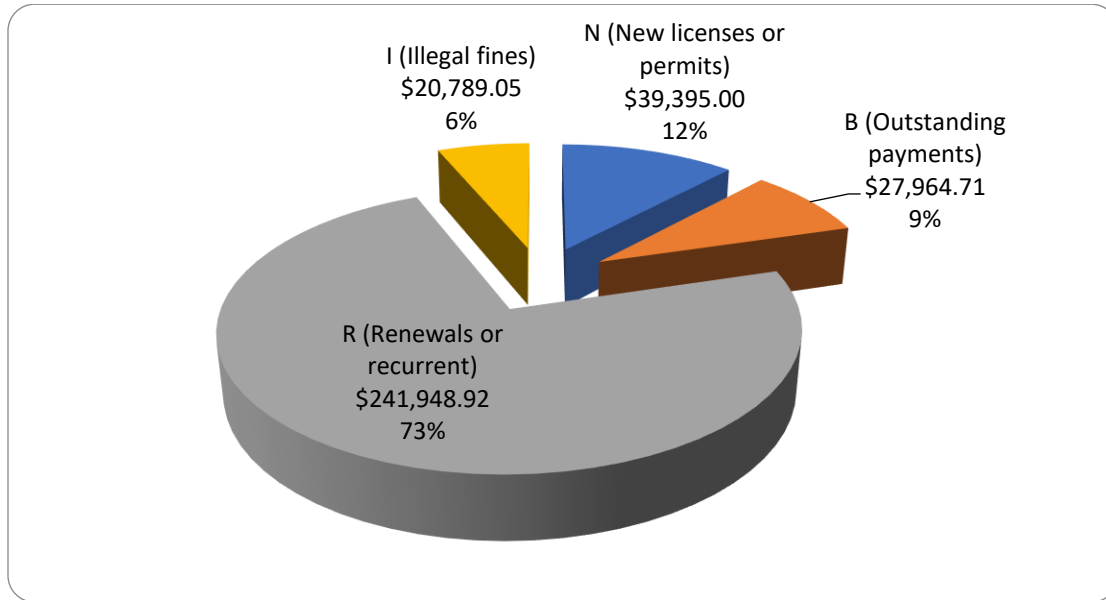


Figure 27: Revenue collected based on the type of payments 2023

The bar graph in **Figure 4** shows the comparison of annual revenue for the period 2015-2023 categorized by the **district** where the mineral right is located. 2023 data indicates that most of the revenue is collected from the country's central region of the Belize and Cayo Districts. Mineral right issuance is concentrated in these districts where most of the infrastructure, tourism, and land development projects are focused. The two northern districts show a marginal increase due to the ongoing upgrade of the Phillip Goldson Highway and the Corozal-Sarteneja Road projects. However, the northern and southern districts would see an increase in revenue collection with an enhancement to the human resources assigned to the Mining Unit. This is because the Unit is aware of unregulated rural road projects that are being undertaken without the regulation of the Ministry. The revenue collected is not an indication of the mineral extraction going on but rather an indication that the Unit's ability to maintain monitoring presence is limited staff availability.

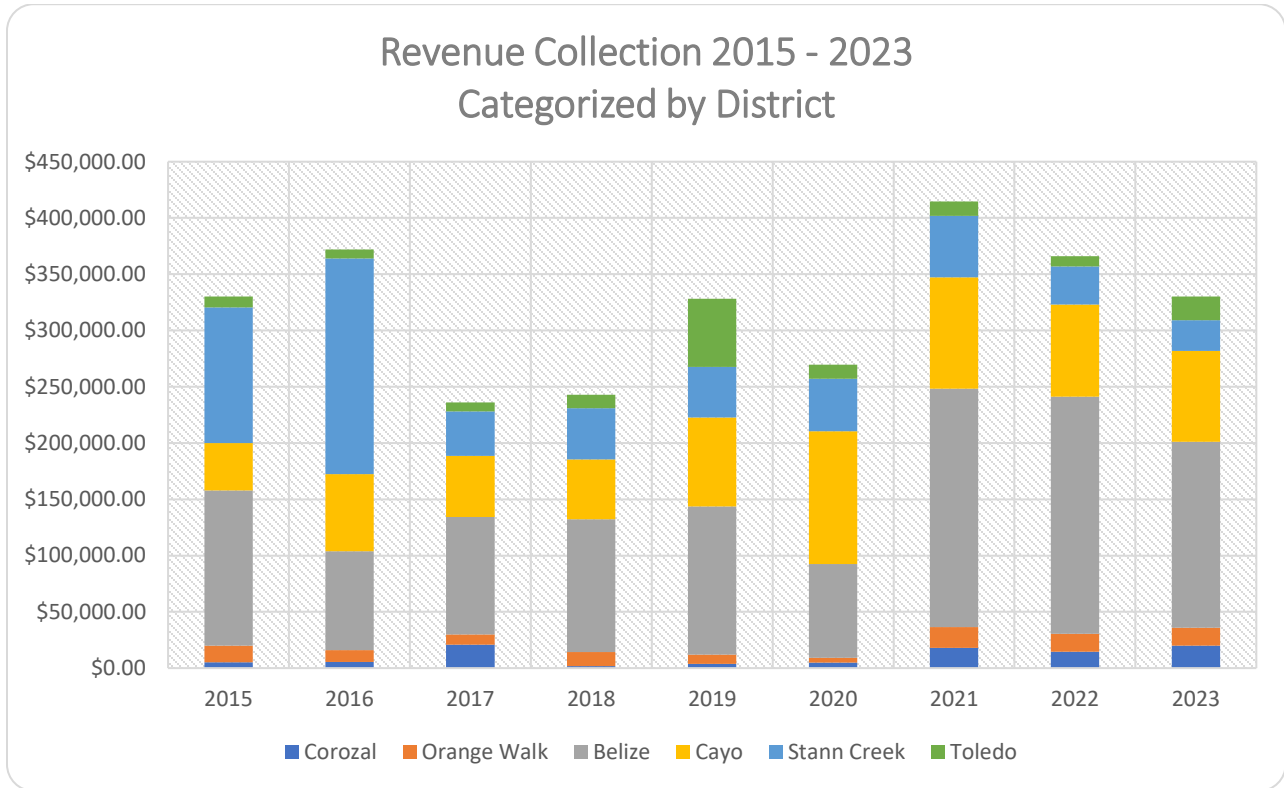


Figure 28: Revenue Collection Categorized by District (2015-2023)

The pie chart in **Figure 5** and map in **Figure 6** show the 2023 revenue disaggregated according to the district where mineral rights are issued. The Belize District accounts for 50 % of the revenue collected for 2023, reflective of the demands on the National Aggregates Quarry, a quarry that supplies aggregates to most of the infrastructure developments in Belize District and its cayes.

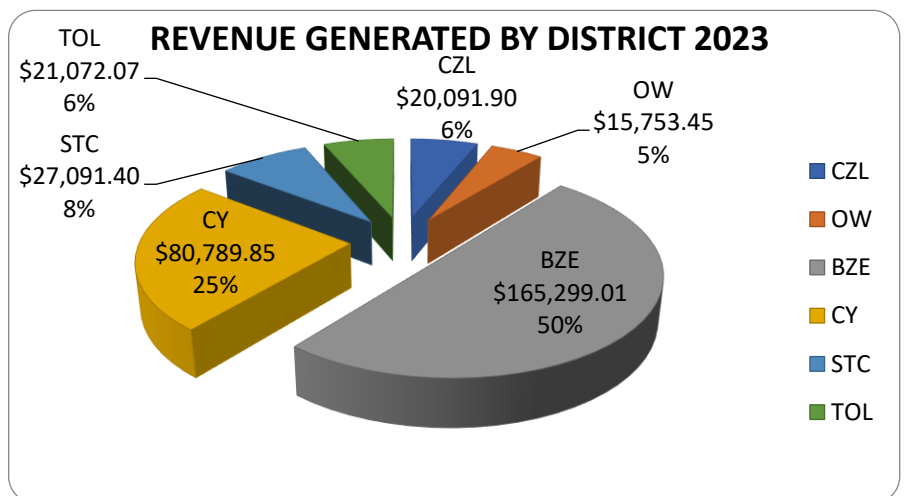


Figure 29: Revenue collected according to district for 2023

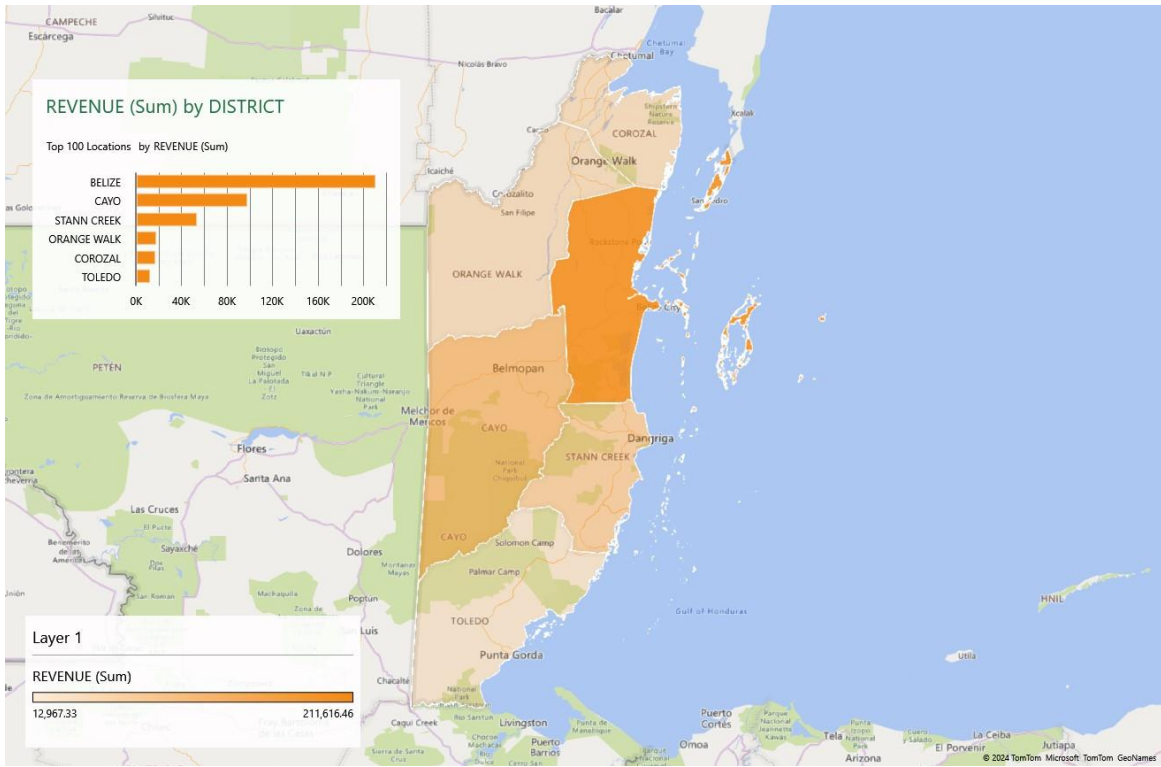


Figure 30: Distribution of revenue collected within Belize

#### 5.4 Hydrology Programme – National Hydrological Service (NHS)

**Vision:** To be the sole entity responsible for the sustainable management of water resources to meet the economic, environmental, and social needs of Belize.

**Mission:** To provide timely, accurate and quality based hydrological data, forecasts, and information about all hydrological phenomena for the country of Belize to enable the sustainable use of the country's water resources and aid in preservation of life and property of the citizens via our core values.

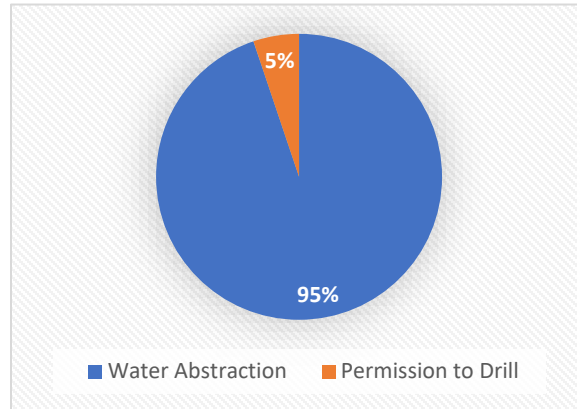
**Programme Objective:** *To enforce the Water Policy of the Government and implement Integrated Water Resources Management in accordance with the Law to enable coordinated management, development and use, conservation and protection of our water resources to provide a safe adequate and reliable water supply for the benefit of present and future generation of Belize. Assess the hydrology and water resources, monitor the changes in the resource, investigate uses of the resource, hydrological forecasting, publish hydrological information.*

**Core Values:** To provide professional, accurate, reliable service and data collection for the benefit of our stakeholders.

The vision, mission and core values of the NHS are aligned with the targets enshrined in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #6 primarily, secondary to the associated SDG goals and the Government's Water Policy and IWRM legislation.

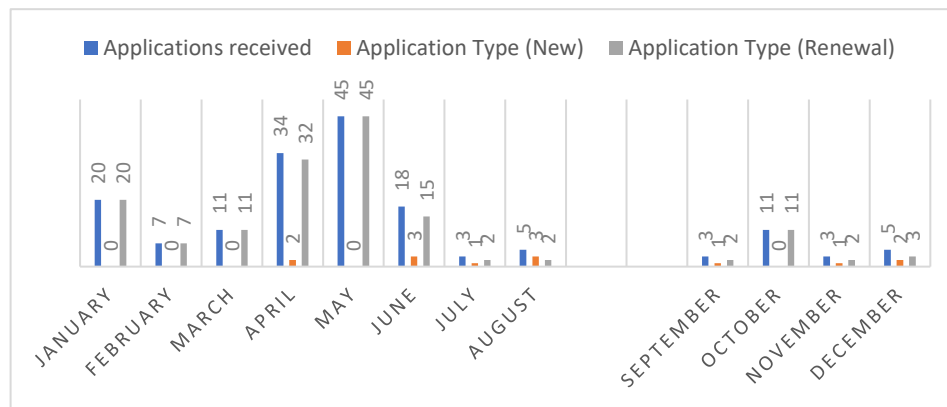
**5.4.1 Main Actions and Results Achieved**

- I. **174 Water Rights/Allocation** applications were received in 2023. This is a 6% increase from 2022. Water Rights/Allocation involves the water abstraction license, its renewal, and Permission to drill activities. Majority of the applications, 95% are for Water Abstraction while only 5% are for Permission to Drill.



**Figure 31 Comparison of the type of Water Rights issued in 2023**

- II. **165 applications** were for Water Abstraction. Peak application receipt times are in the month of March followed by the month of April as shown in the Monthly Water Abstraction Application Trend for the year. Most of the applications received for processing are for the renewal of existing water abstraction licenses, whereas new applications were at a low of thirteen (13) applications.



**Figure 32 Applications for Water Abstraction by Month in 2023**

- III. An administrative application fee has been charged to recover the administrative costs as recommended of \$500.00 per application. For 2023, total cost recovery is \$87,000 with water abstraction accounting for \$82,500 and permission to drill for \$4,500.00.

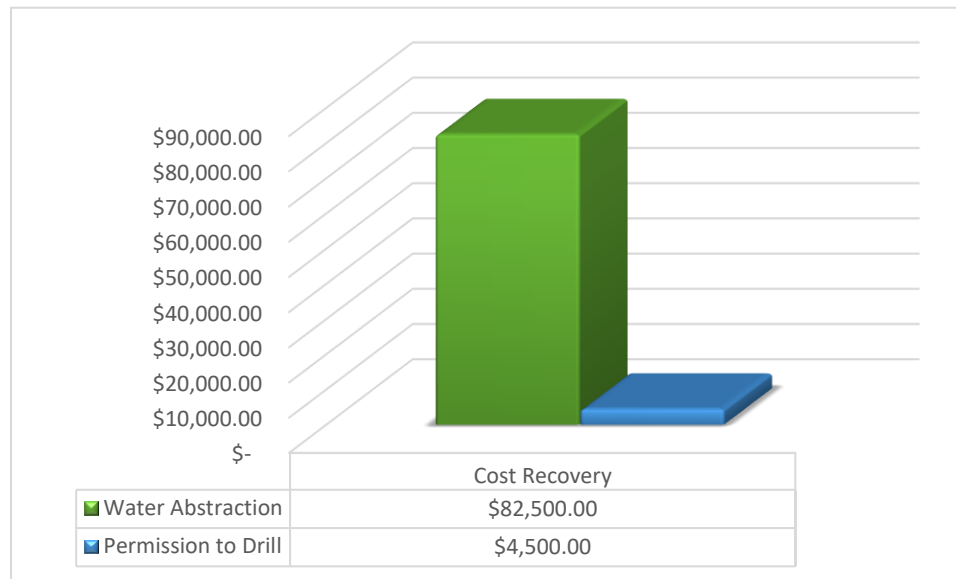


Figure 33 Cost recovery for water abstraction

- IV. For the year 2023, the NHS has achieved major milestones in alignment with the programmatic strategies presented for the Fiscal Year as follows:
- Strengthened the organization structure for support staff by hiring two (2) PE positions: Hydrologist and Senior Hydrological Technician
  - Establishment of a Water Allocation System with (1) dedicated Officer.
  - Fostering inter-agency cooperation for IWRM implementation by partnering with several agencies both government and non-government.
  - Incorporated the use of Technology in our surface water daily monitoring activities:
    - i. securing advanced hydrological equipment for surface water actions such as: Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) and water quality testing equipment.
    - ii. Established the ensuite hydrological software – Water Information Systems by Kister’s International (WISKI) – as the country’s repository for all water data being utilized by the National Hydrological Service and the Department of the Environment.
  - Expanded and improved the hydrological observation networks.
    - i. the Belize River by adding three additional stations.



- ii. utilizing the DEWETRA Platform to inform flooding and flood outlooks over a 3-day forecast period for the New River.
- iii. Installed groundwater monitoring stations for installation in the northern districts.
- Strengthened the Government's water policy, strategy, and action plan for the sector by updating to streamline IWRM actions to allow for continued sustainable use of the country's water resources.
- Secured grant financing to advance the sustainable management, conservation, use, and allocation of the country's water resources.
  - i. Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness and Preparatory Support Grant used to make significant process toward the finalization of a National Adaptation Plan, inclusive of Roadmap and Financial Strategy for the water sector and Standard Operating Procedures for Flooding.
  - ii. InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) grant funding used to complete well drilling and groundwater management training for the NHS and partners such as the Ministry of Rural Transformation to advance the implementation of IWRM in the country as well as to strengthen the NHS' Flood Early Warning Network.

## 5.5 Geology and Petroleum Programme – Geology and Petroleum Department

**Vision:** A robust petroleum industry and the leading revenue earner contributing to the economic growth and development of Belize.

**Mission:** To promote and regulate oil and gas exploration and production in a safe, environmentally and socially responsible manner with the assistance of international investors and other stakeholders in order to maximize the benefits from the country's petroleum resources for the economic and social development of Belize.

**Programme Objective:** *To regulate the exploration and production of petroleum resources of the country, to increase petroleum revenue and to provide geological service.*

### 5.5.1 Main Actions and Results Achieved

#### I. Production and Sales

- **157,652.93** barrels of oil were produced in 2023. Cumulative production was **12,725,475.52** barrels.
- Sales for 2023 was **165,421.41** barrels and Cumulative sales was **12,309,114.17** barrels.
- Petroleum revenues for 2023 was **\$4,906,405.10** and Cumulative petroleum revenues is **\$490,772,492.30**

#### II. Contract Administration

- Six (6) PSAs were administered: one production i.e. BNE, and five explorations including BelGeo, Viva Energy, FCRL, US Capital Belize Corp, and Princess Petroleum

- These PSAs are located on land and comprise 1,196,824.06 acres.

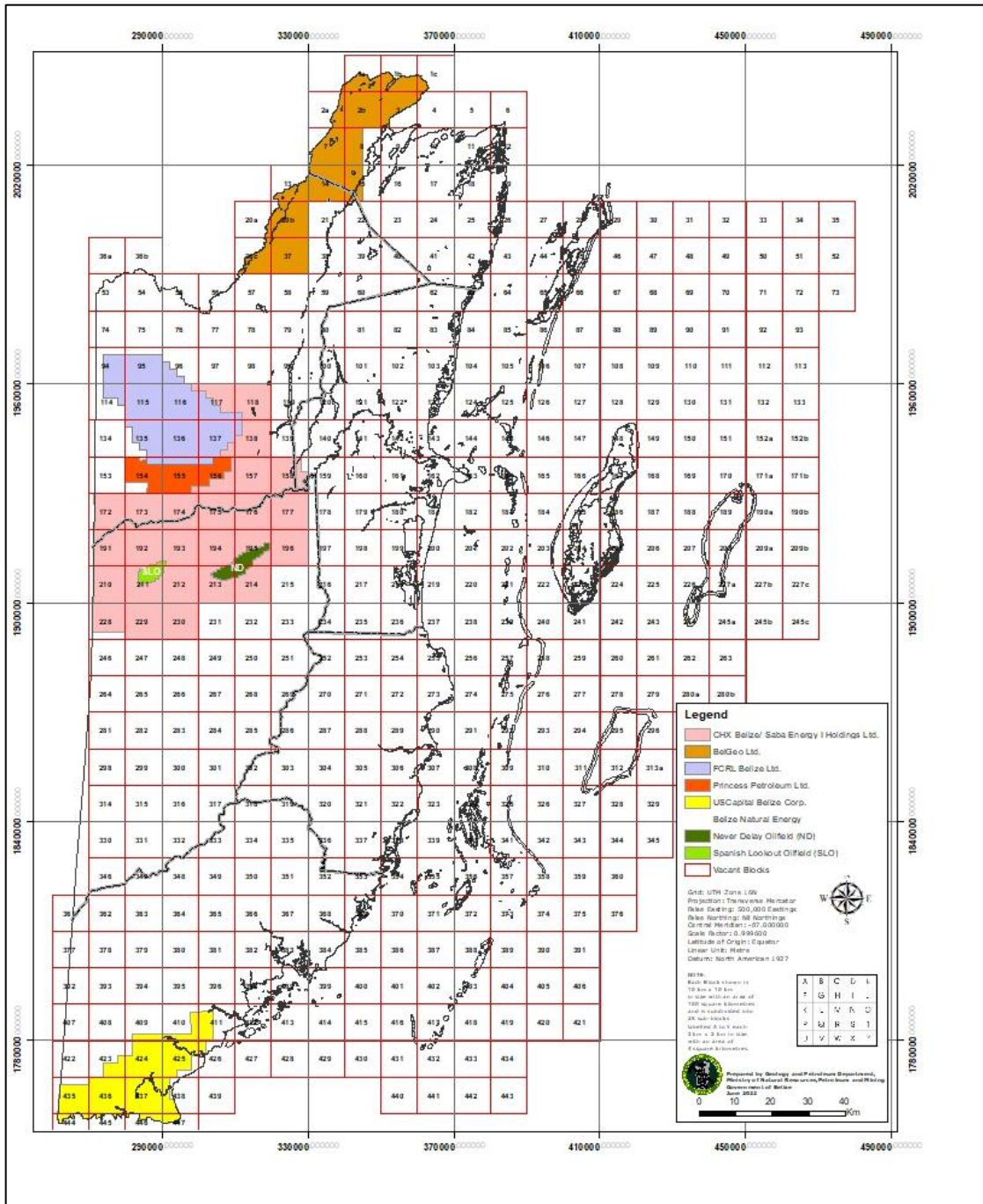


Figure 34 Map Showing PSA Holders

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### III. **Other Activities**

- **Revision of the Petroleum Regulatory Framework** - The GPD completed the review of the draft revised Petroleum Act, Regulations, Model PSA and Petroleum Accounting Rules and submitted with comments to the consultants for the preparation of the final drafts.
- **Development of a Management Information System (MIS)** - A Management Information System for Contract Administration and Petroleum Accounting was developed with the help of the Commonwealth Secretariat for effective and efficient administration of PSAs and keeping of petroleum accounts records. The Petroleum Accounting Assistant travelled to London, England in May 2023 to work with the Commonwealth Secretariat to develop the MIS and receive training in its use.
- **Production Optimization** - The GPD continued to implement field interventions to keep oil production at the optimum rate while decreasing water production, lower the production cost, and reduce the decline rate to extend the life of the oil fields.
- **Petroleum Auditing** - Audit of BNE and Viva Energy for 2021-2023 commenced.
- **Seismic Surveying** – US Capital completed the planning of 97-line kilometres of 2D seismic and 57 square kilometres of 3D seismic in southern Toledo District and presented this programme to stakeholder communities for commencement in 2025.
- **Exploration Drilling** - BelGeo purchased and commenced the refurbishment of a drilling rig to drill in 2024 two (2) prospects they have identified from previous seismic. The rig is currently the only drilling rig available now in Belize and the other PSA holders will have access to contract the rig to drill exploration wells. US

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Capital identified preliminary locations for three (3) exploration wells and presented this drilling programme to stakeholder communities for commencement in 2026

- **Stakeholder Consultations** - Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) consultations with indigenous Maya communities in Toledo for consent for US Capital to carry out exploration activities was conducted with five (5) Maya Villages. Consent Agreements were signed with the villages of Sunday Wood, Midway, San Felipe, Crique Sarco and Boom Creek.



Figure 35 FPIC Consultations in Toledo

- **Geological Mapping Project** - Carrying out of geological surveys of the entire landmass of Belize to produce official geological maps for scientific purposes. The Geological mapping project was re-commenced. An additional 300 square kilometres of northern Belize was mapped. An additional 1,000 square kilometres of new base maps were acquired for mapping.
- **Corozal Basin Study** - Study of the petroleum systems of the producing Corozal Basin to advance the understanding of the petroleum potential of the Basin to increase the chance of success of making new commercial discoveries The

Basin study continued with the collaboration with industry partners to publish the findings in scientific journals and the development of a Basin Study Report

- **Field Studies** - Re-evaluation of the Spanish Lookout Oilfield to access potential additional reserves A Kingdom project was established with the importation of all relevant seismic, well and engineering data to access the Yalbac reserves for development and production
- **Promotion of Exploration Opportunities** - To promote the petroleum potential of Belize to attract exploration investment, the GPD attended the AAPG Energy Opportunities Conference in Mexico City in March 2023. The GPD attended the AAPG/SEG International Meeting for Applied Geoscience and Energy (IMAGE) in Houston, TX, USA in August 2023. One (1) oil and gas company applied for a PSA for vacant exploration blocks in southern Belize District.



Figure 36 Pictures of IMAGE 2023 Expo

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## **6 LESSONS LEARNT**

In 2023, the MNRPM continued to make incremental strides towards achieving its goals and objectives. Multiple lessons were learnt throughout the year from the successes and the setbacks. These are detailed in the table below. However, the over-arching lesson that surfaced during the year is the need for a bold, transformative approach that is technology and people-centred, which will enable “leapfrogging” so that the MNRPM can overcome the decades of stagnation and endemic institutional challenges. Key success factors in charting this new approach is setting goals and targets that are ambitious but achievable; securing the necessary financing for implementation and employing appropriate change-management strategies and techniques to ensure staff and stakeholder buy-in.

### **1. Finalize and Implement the MNRPM Strategic Plan**

- The MNRPM underwent a strategic planning session in late 2023. The plan is currently being finalized for implementation. This is key in setting the strategic direction of the Ministry over the next five (5) years and ensuring we are meeting goals and targets.

### **2. Implementing Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation Protocols**

- Over time many of the Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation (MRE) protocols and processes have been eroded. This makes it difficult to track the progress of the various departments and units of the Ministry and to conduct analysis of where resources need to be allocated for improved functioning. New MRE protocols and processes will need to be implemented in tandem with the Strategic Plan to evaluate the plan's progress.

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### **3. Optimize Integration of Technology**

- The MNRPM has been lagging in its integration and use of technology. This is particularly evident within the Land Management and Administration programme. Landfolio 7 was implemented in 2023 but it has been a major adjustment. Digitization is also urgently needed as there are numerous documents (eg. Deed Books, Survey Plans) that are still paper-based. The Ministry also has great potential to optimize its use of geospatial technology to enhance efficiency and accuracy.

### **4. Improve Communication and Public Engagement**

- Both internal and external communication requires much needed improvement. Proper communication channels between management and staff are often not employed which leads to a breakdown in chain of command. There is need to improve the public engagement to enhance the image of the Ministry. This requires developing and implementing a communication strategy and plan.

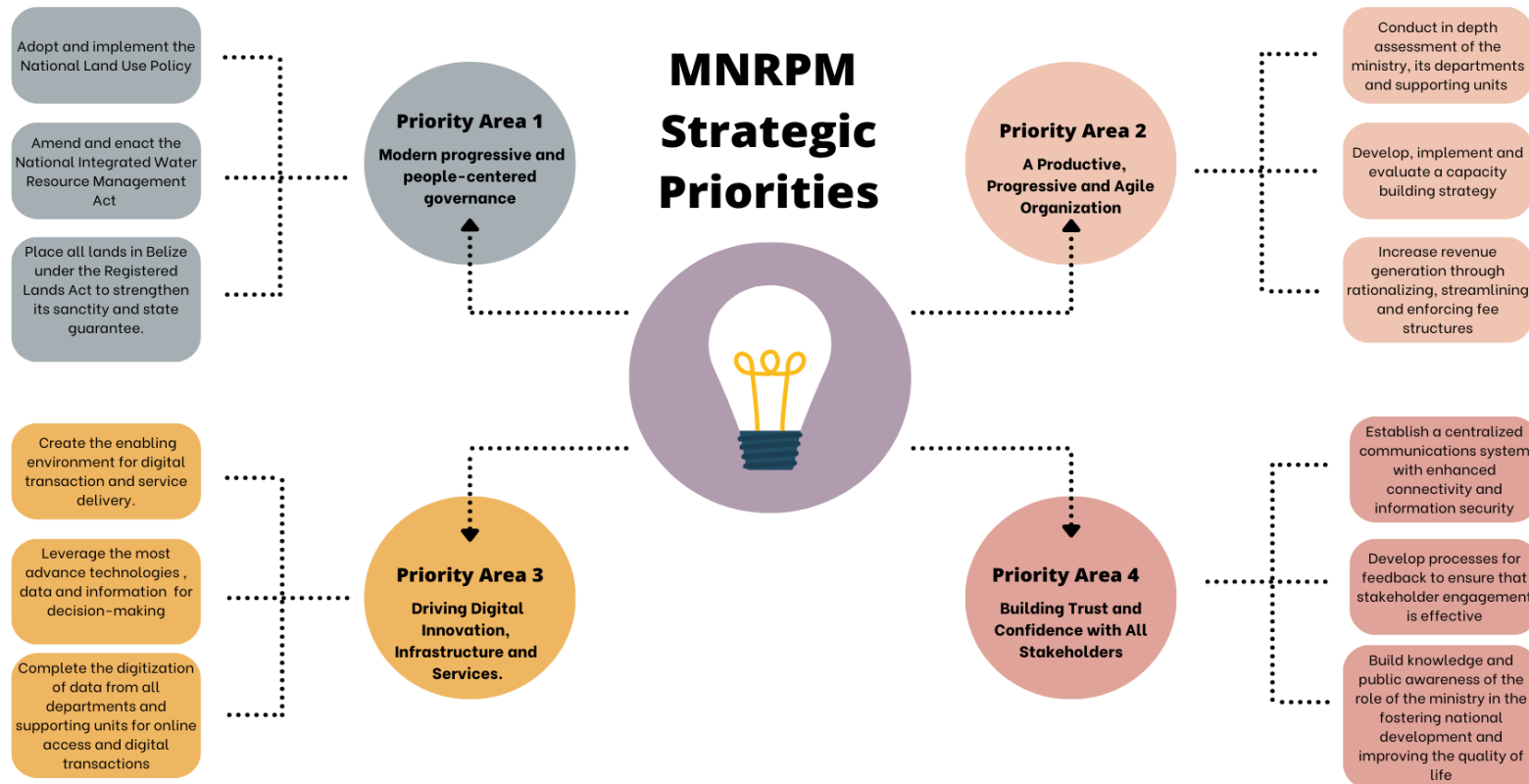
### **5. Enhance Human Resource Capacity**

- There is continuous need to enhance the human resource capacity of the Ministry. Over time, succession planning was not taken into account which led to the erosion of some of the technical capacities within certain departments and units. Special training programmes are needed as well as attracting individuals with a level of technical capacities and skills.



## 7 FUTURE PRIORITIES AND PLANS

The MNRPM recognizes that it cannot be ‘business-as-usual’; bold and innovative approaches are required to bring about a paradigm shift. The figure below outlines the current strategic priorities and initiatives to be undertaken.



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## **8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The MNRPM has a tremendous mandate to sustainably manage Belize's land, water, petroleum and mineral resources for the use and benefit of current and future generations. Since 2020, the MNRPM has been undergoing a transformation to improve its execution of this mandate and ensure that the Belizean people are receiving the services that they require.

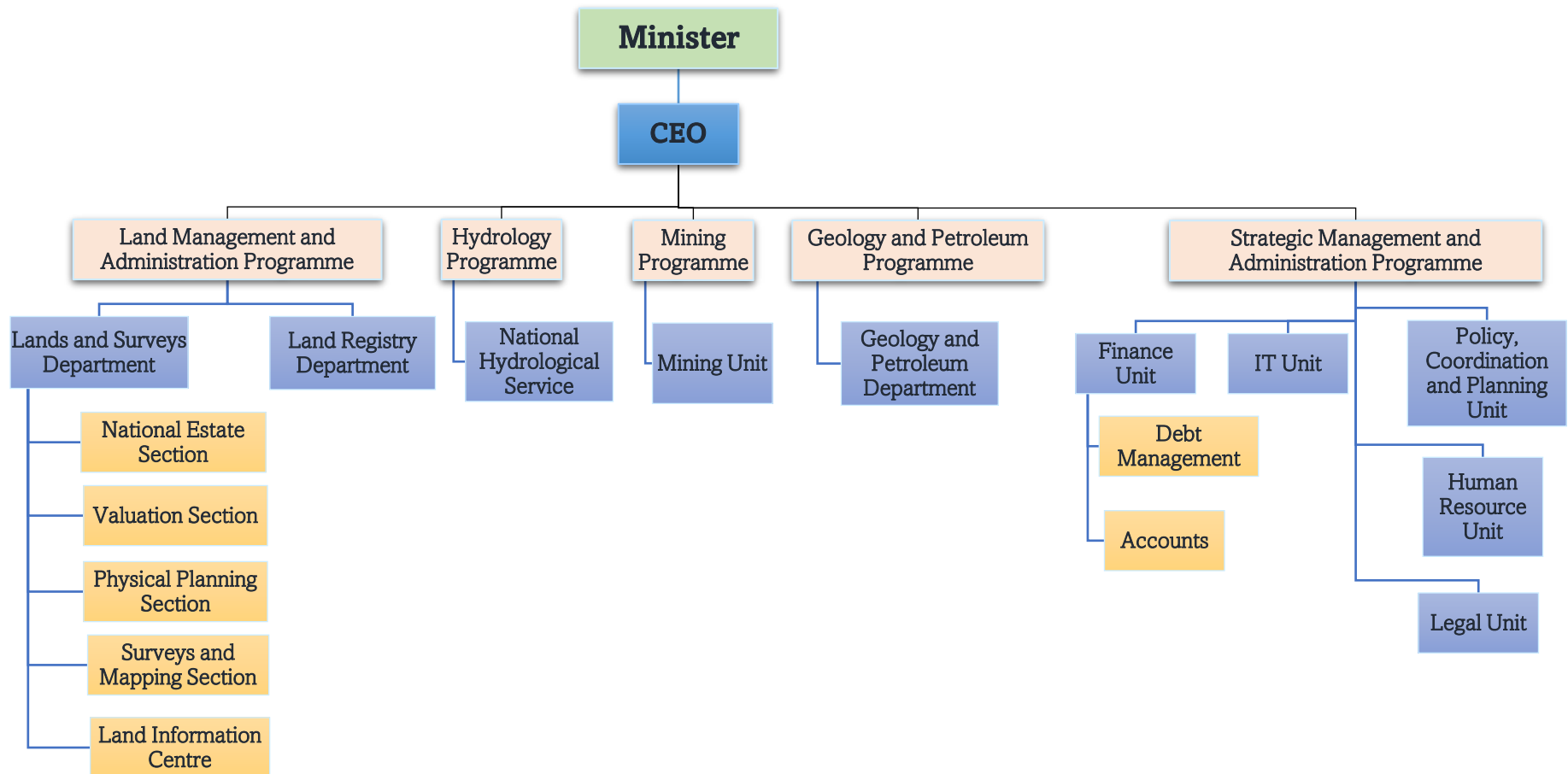
The MNRPM recognizes the need to accelerate this transformation and as such is embarking on new approaches and innovation to realize its goals and targets. Top priorities for 2024 and beyond include:

- I. Adopting and implementing the National Land Use Policy as a framework for sustainable land and natural resource management in Belize.
- II. Conduct in-depth assessment of the Ministry, its departments and supporting units with a view to re-structuring, building and sustaining teamwork, streamlining records management and inter-dependency processes, and optimizing and re-defining operations.
- III. Create the enabling environment for digital transaction and service delivery.
- IV. Build knowledge and public awareness of the role of the ministry in the fostering national development and improving the quality of life for all.

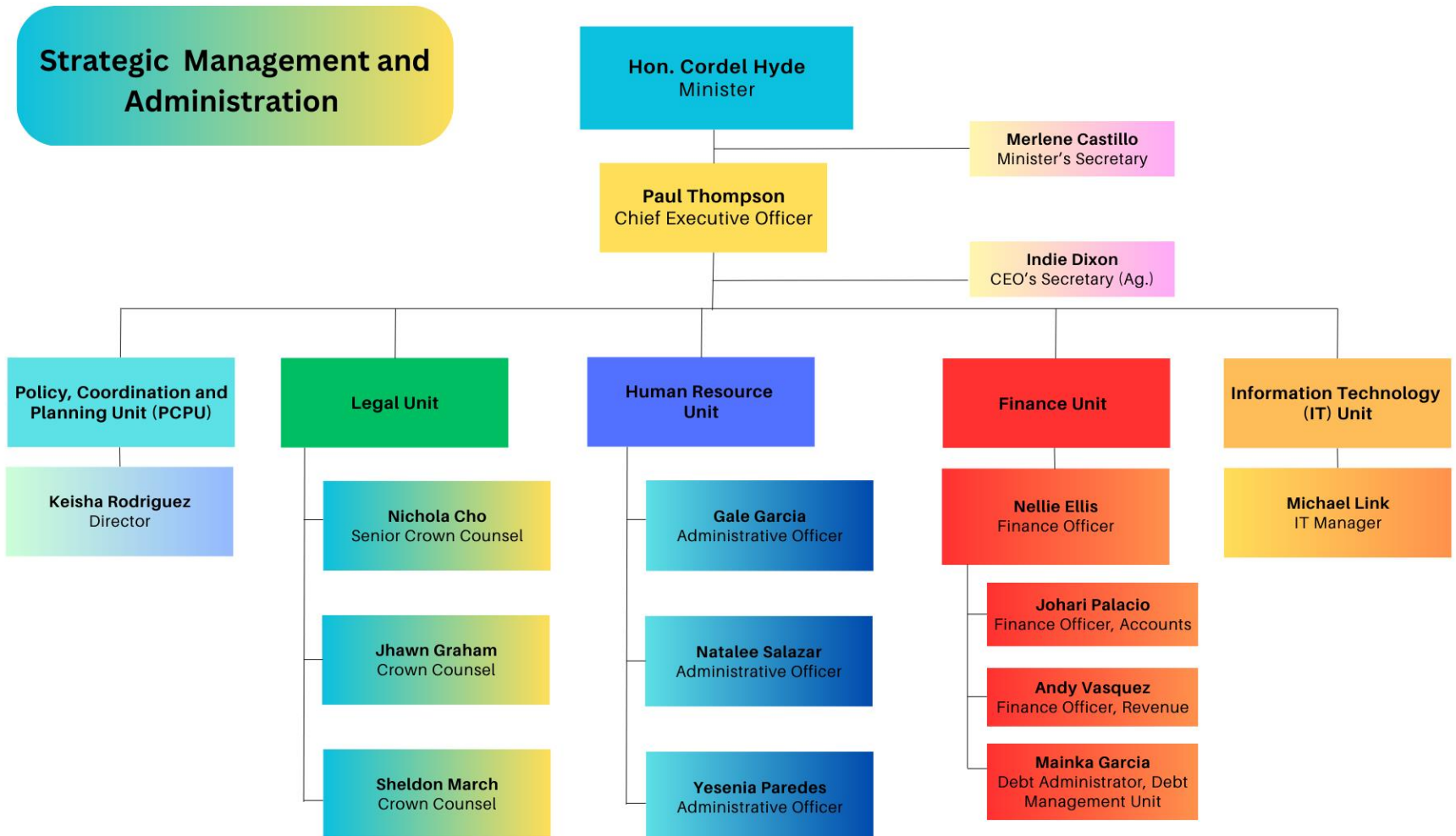
It is confident that it can garner the support and access the necessary resources to bring about these changes that can catapult Belize's development.

## 9 ANNEX

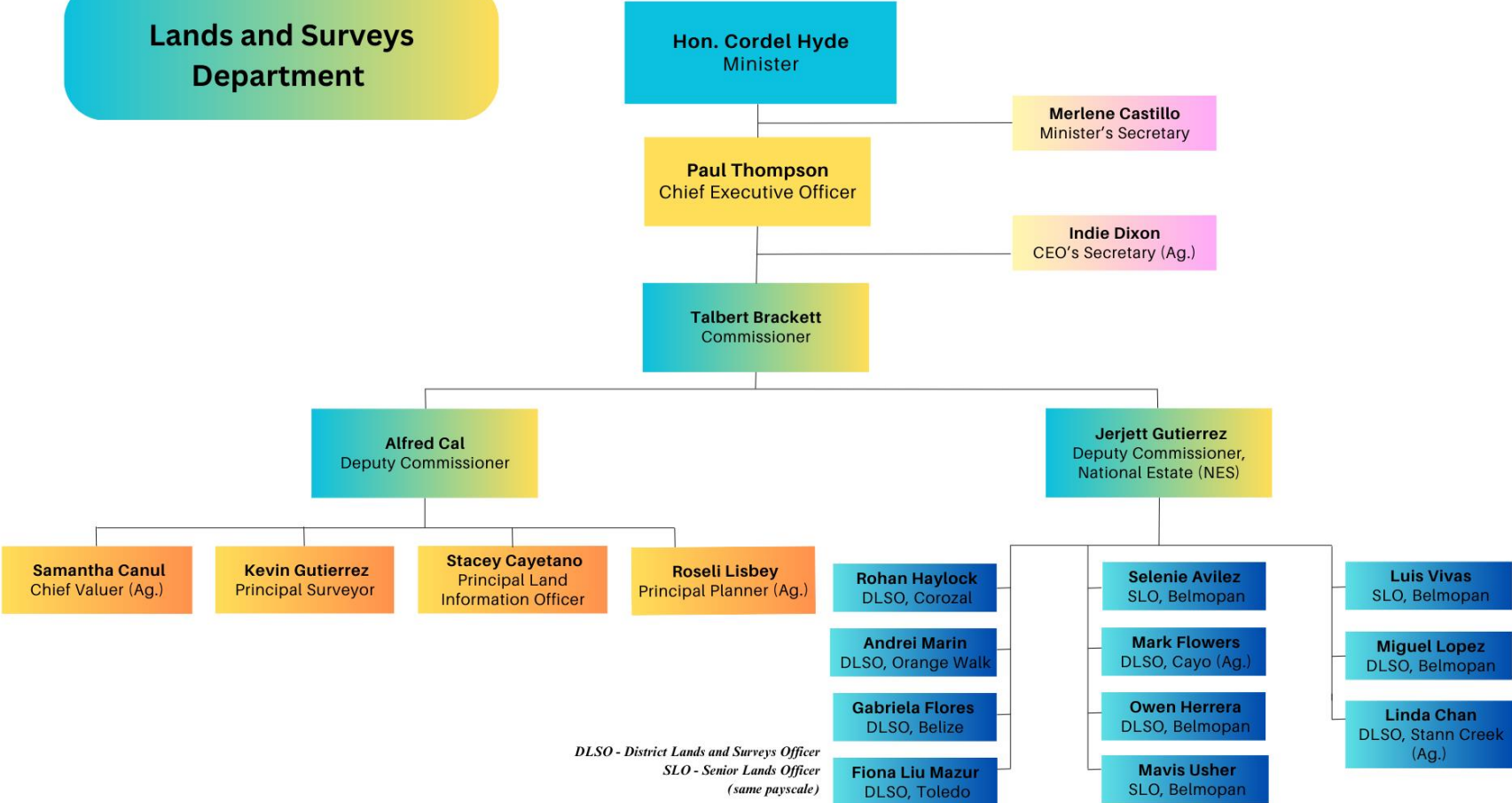
### 9.1 Organizational Structure



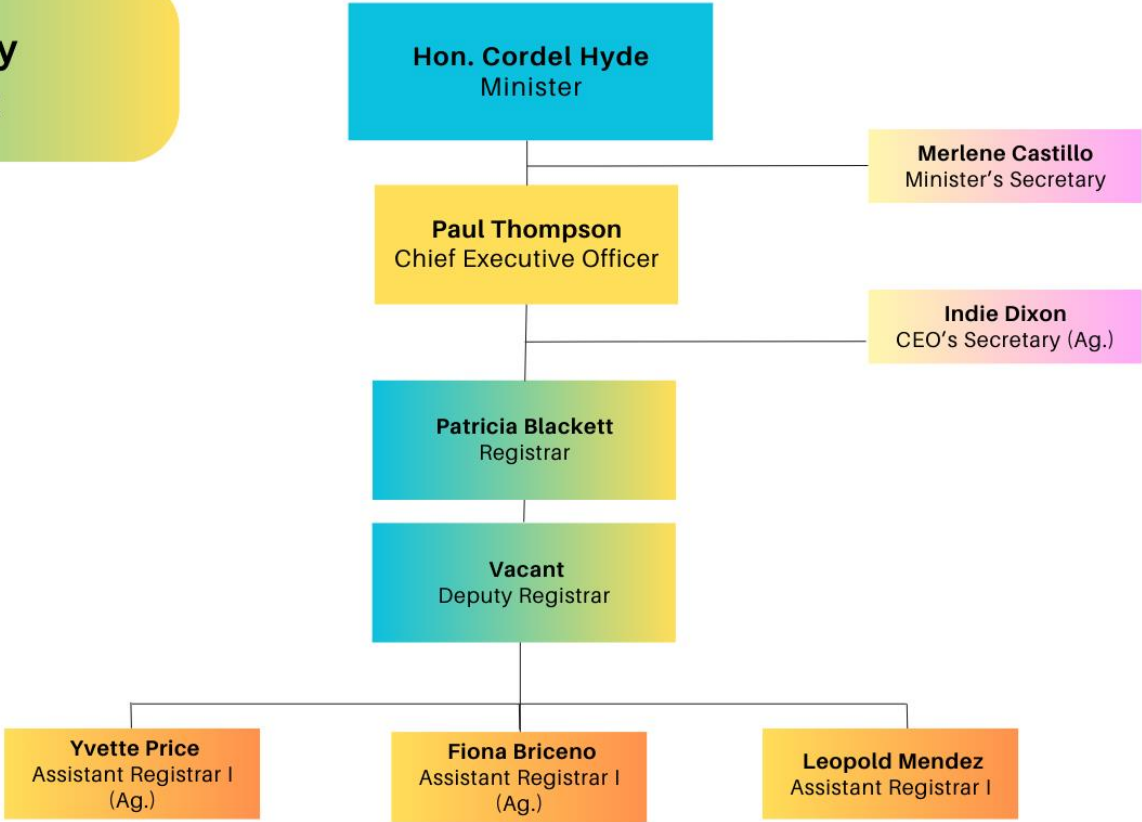
## 9.2 List of Senior Staff



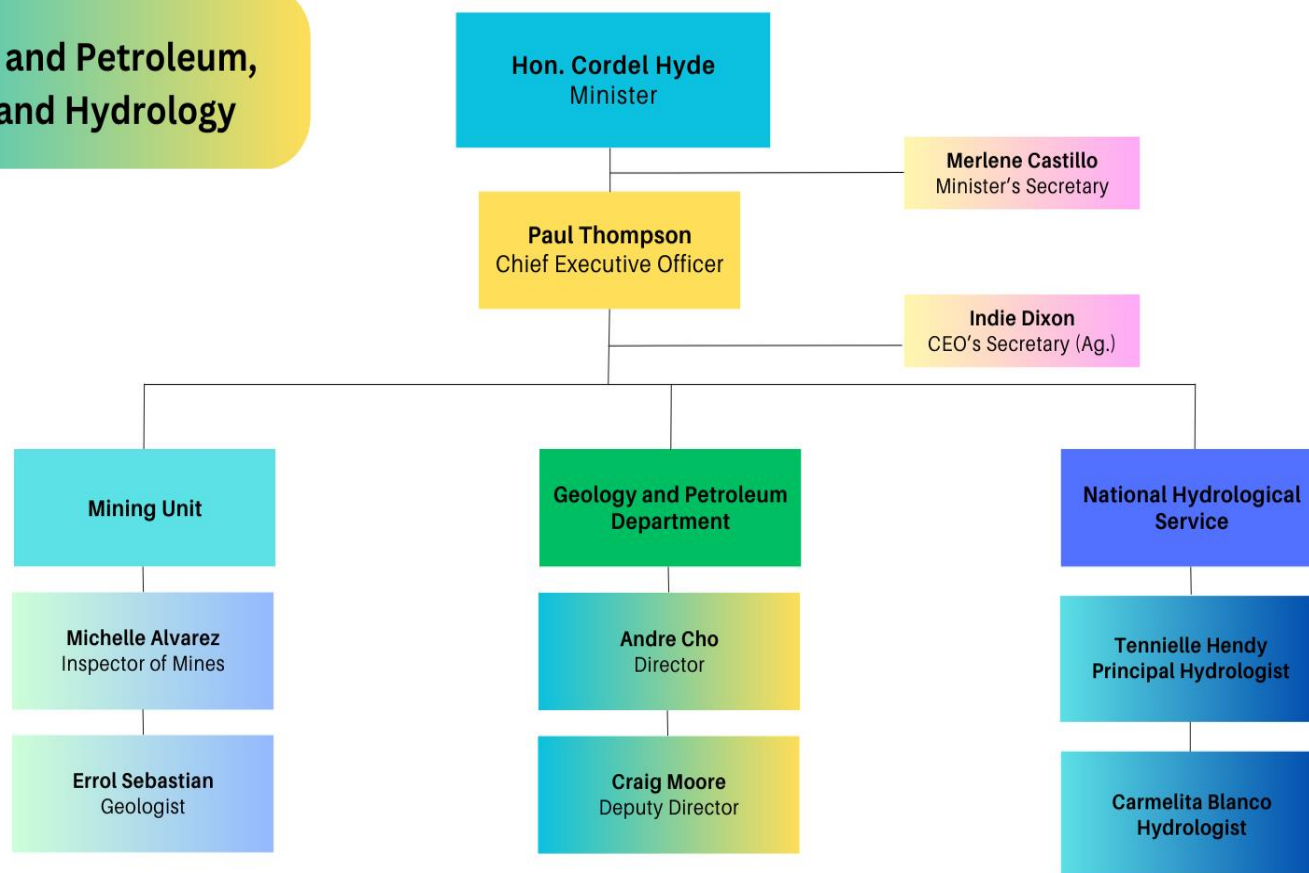
**Lands and Surveys  
Department**



**Land Registry  
Department**



**Geology and Petroleum,  
Mining and Hydrology**



### 9.3 List of publications, policies, laws, and/or project proposals and reports of the Ministry

	Initiative/Project	MNRPM Programme	Purpose/Objectives	Proposed Start Date	Funding Source/Partners
I.	<b>Design a Digitization of Historical Records Strategy for the Land Registry - Digital Innovation to Boost Economic Development in Belize</b>	Land Administration and Management – Land Registry Department	To support the development of a Strategy and Plan for the implementation of the Historical Records Digitization Programme for the Land Registry Department	4th quarter 2024	IDB – Funding Partner  Executing Partners - Central Executing Unit (CEU), MED; E-Governance and Digitalization Department
II.	<b>Blue Cities and Beyond Project – The MNRPM submitted several activities to be included for funding under this project/programme</b>	i. Land Administration and Management – Land Registry Department  ii. Hydrology – National Hydrological Service	Develop a National Spatial Development Plan for Belize  Develop a National Geospatial Policy and Legislative Framework for Belize and implement the Belize National Spatial Data Infrastructure (BNSDI) to improve governance,	2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2025	World Bank  Executing Partners - Central Executing Unit (CEU), MED



	Initiative/Project	MNRPM Programme	Purpose/Objectives	Proposed Start Date	Funding Source/Partners
			<p>quality and access to geo-spatial data in Belize.</p> <p>Establish a Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS) Network in Belize.</p> <p>Develop a National Water Master Plan including Water Quality Control Strategy and Plan</p>		
<b>III.</b>	<b>ESRI Advantage Programme</b>	<p>ALL MNRPM Programmes</p> <p>Lead by the Strategic Management and Administration and Land Management and Administration Programmes</p>	<p>The Advantage Program is a collaborative engagement between MNR and Esri Global that provides access to Esri Global experts and key services that can help MNRPM to maximize the impact and effectiveness of the Government of Belize's investment in Esri's GIS technology.</p>	November 2023	<p>MNRPM funded, Executing Partners - Esri Global, Inc. (Esri Global) and Total Business Solutions Limited (TBSL) local Esri Distributor</p>

	<b>Initiative/Project</b>	<b>MNRPM Programme</b>	<b>Purpose/Objectives</b>	<b>Proposed Start Date</b>	<b>Funding Source/Partners</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>National Land Tenure Analysis within Belize Mangrove Landscape. Strategy for Reef Resilience in Belize ACTION #2: Coastal-Marine Land Tenure Analysis</b>	Land Management and Administration – Lands and Surveys Department: Land Information Centre	The initiative will combine use of remote sensing and ground-truthing to create an updated geo-spatial database containing information for land parcels, including land-owner information (where possible) and other attribute data (parcel size, land use etc.) of the coastal-marine areas with existing mangrove cover, that is, a 10 km area of interest on the mainland of Belize and all cayes.	May 2024	World Wildlife Fund – Funding and implementing Partner  CZMAI – Executing Partner