

Financial Services Regulatory Commission (FSRC) - St. Kitts Branch Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Conference 2018

The Financial Services Regulatory Commission (FSRC) - St. Kitts Branch, in keeping with its mandate to ensure that the public integrity of the financial services sector operating in St. Kitts and Nevis is maintained, hosted an Anti-Money Laundering/ Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Conference, at the Park Hyatt Resort St. Kitts, on Wednesday 5th September 2018. The Conference was held under the theme, “**Stronger Compliance to Cope with Emerging Trends in the Financial Sector.**”

The Conference was attended by 140 participants from 60 entities including Commercial Banks, Insurance Companies, Money Services Businesses and Corporate Service Providers. This is indicative of the strong emphasis placed on AML/CFT training by regulated entities for their Board of Directors, Management and Employees. The Conference was expertly moderated by Mr. Val Henry, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of VhCommunications and Marketing Agency.

Welcome remarks were given by Ms. Kerstin Petty, Director of the FSRC– St. Kitts Branch. She thanked all participants for their commitment to keeping abreast with the latest compliance initiatives and internal control measures to mitigate AML/CFT threats. Reverend Mark Christmas, Superintendant Minister of the Wesley Methodist Church invoked God’s blessings on the Conference.

Brief remarks were then made by Hon. Vance Amory, the Senior Minister of Nevis Affairs et al, on behalf of the Hon. Timothy Harris, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Affairs, who had travelled on official business. He underscored the challenges within the Federation’s financial sector amidst the introduction of crypto currency and the de-risking of financial institutions. He made salient points on ways to improve AML/CFT programs which comprised the development of an AML/CFT Manual, investments in due diligence software and ongoing training.

The featured speaker for the Conference was Ms. Laura H. Goldzung, President and CEO of AML Audit Services LLC, a boutique consultancy specializing in independent testing of AML compliance programs. Her expertise also includes customized training and the design and development of programs. Ms. Goldzung’s career spans over more than 35 years across multiple sectors of the financial services industry.

Ms. Goldzung made in depth and thought provoking presentations on the following topics.

- * *Fintech and Emerging Trends in Financial Crime*
- * *Compliance Officers: What are their Roles and Responsibilities?*
- * *Key Essentials of an AML/CFT Audit*

The common thread throughout the presentations was need for strong Compliance Officers to implement an adequate AML/CFT Compliance Program to combat financial crime.

Three (3) other impactful and insightful presentations were made by experts in the financial services sector.

1. Mr. Anthony Galloway, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the St. Kitts Nevis Anguilla National Bank discussed *Developing and Implementing Effective Internal Controls to Mitigate Financial Crime*. He also emphasized the significance of Management’s involvement in the implementation of an entity’s internal controls as well as the role of the Board of Directors in the oversight of these internal controls.
2. Mr. Wendell Lawrence OBE, founder of Caribbean Governance Consultants Inc, presented on the *Growth and Challenges in the Financial Services Sector of St. Kitts and Nevis*. His presentation encompassed a history of the financial services sector in St. Kitts and the evolution of financial services products. He concluded by discussing the changes and challenges met with the introduction of international standards and measures.
3. A presentation was made by Ms. Shawna Lake, Attorney-at-law, on the *Reporting Requirements: The Impact of the Common Reporting Standards (CRS) on Transparency and Beneficial Ownership*. Her presentation entailed an overview of the CRS, Requirements to maintain Beneficial Ownership, and emphasized the importance of drilling down to the ultimate Beneficial Owner.

The day’s proceedings culminated with an informative Panel Discussion on Planning for an AML/CFT Audit. The Panel consisted of Ms. Alamina Trotman, Internal Auditor at the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), Mrs. Avalette Wilson-Libur, Founder of AMLCCF and Ms. Leah Crag-Chaderton, Attorney-at-Law. Each panelist shared their experiences when conducting or preparing for an AML/CFT Audit. This brought a practical and holistic view of AML/CFT Audits and by extension, the need for robust internal controls and AML/CFT Programs.

The FSRC St. Kitts Branch expresses its sincere thanks to all participants for a successful Conference. It is hoped that the information shared in each presentation will equip entities with the knowledge and training to be proactive in the development and maintenance of effective AML/CFT compliance systems.

We look forward to your participation next year!

Based on the Evaluation Forms submitted, the participants expressed increased knowledge and better understanding of areas such as cryptocurrency and Common Reporting Standards (CRS). They also indicated that they were more adequately prepared for AML/CFT Audits in terms of the reporting requirements.

The majority of the participants rated the Conference as Very Good. The ratings given by participants are summarized in the pie chart below.

Subsequent to the Conference, the presentations were emailed to all participants. Kindly contact our office for further information on the Conference or if you did not receive the presentation slides.

The FSRC is committed to providing training opportunities for your Management and Staff. Stay tuned for more information on available training sessions in 2019 or feel free to contact our office if your entity has specific training needs.

