

RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT

Research and Documentation Department is the Legal department of the Court and primarily houses the library of the Court. Headed by a Director, the department comprises two divisions –the Research and Legal Affairs division and the Library and Documentation division.

The Research and Legal Affairs Division is presently staffed by one professional staff as the head, assisted by five legal officers. The division's main functions include:

- ❖ Conducting in-depth legal research on applications pending before the court.
- ❖ Analysing facts on issues presented by parties and summarizing same for use by Judges.
- ❖ Applying facts as presented by parties' to applicable legal norms.
- ❖ Proffering legal advice and opinions on various issues of interest to the Court.
- ❖ Drafting and vetting contract agreements to be entered into by the Court.
- ❖ Providing considered legal opinions on cases filed for use by the Honourable Members of the Court.
- ❖ Representing the Court in various fora within and outside the Community.
- ❖ Compiling and updating community legal texts relating to the court.
- ❖ Liaising, on behalf of the Court, with international organizations for the enhancement of technical cooperation.
- ❖ Provision of general legal services, including recording and production of meeting reports, and;
- ❖ Any ad-hoc responsibility assigned by the Management.

The Library and Documentation Division is headed by a Senior Professional officer, a professional Librarian who is assisted by four General Service Staffs. The library is organised into three operational rooms: A Reading Room equipped with computers for desk research, a second room equipped with shelves containing different categories of books, and a third room containing ECOWAS Community publications.

Most of the materials in the Library are law-related, covering the following areas of law:

- ❖ Legal reference books in the fields of international law, including the laws of International Organisations
- ❖ Community Law
- ❖ Comparative Law
- ❖ National laws (national laws of the Member States of the Community)
- ❖ Language dictionaries and legal dictionaries
- ❖ Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law
- ❖ European law
- ❖ Administrative law

❖ Other areas of interest to the various departments of the Court.

Presently, the catalogue of the Library includes:

- 2000 English and Reference books;
- 1582 French books;
- 516 Portuguese books;
- 300 Books on ECOWAS Member States Legislations.

The Library, which also houses documents on ECOWAS Institutions, is open to Staff Members of the Court although it can also be accessed by external users upon request.