



CAJO
CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF JUDICIAL OFFICERS

Training and Education Report

Jury Trials in the Time of COVID-19

November 2020

The Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers (CAJO) brings together the region's Chancellors, Chief Justices, Judges, Masters, Registrars, Parish Judges, Magistrates, Tribunal Members, Executive Court Administrators, and other judicial staff. The first meeting of judicial officers across the region took place in June 2009 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and this marked the birth of the CAJO. With its own Constitution and membership, the CAJO was ably headed by Hon Mr Justice Adrian Saunders, President of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), who served as Chair from 2009 – 2019. The CAJO is led by a Management Committee which comprises judicial officers elected at the Association's Business Meeting held biennially. At present, Hon Mr Justice Peter Jamadar, Judge of the CCJ, serves as Chair of the Association with Hon Mme Justice Vivian Georgis Taylor-Alexander, Judge of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, as Vice-Chair. The Management Committee comprises 15 members from almost all countries in the region. The CAJO is also supported by its Research and Programme Coordinator, Elron Elahie. The CAJO provides a host of judicial education engagements for judicial officers across the region including its Biennial Conference, training programmes and workshops on various topics and areas of law and practice, and a biannual Newsletter, CAJO News.

Overview

The CAJO engaged, for the first time, a multi-prong approach to judicial education and information sharing that utilised pre-recorded information video products instead of only a live webinar presentation. Three Caribbean countries, Barbados, Guyana, and St Lucia provided a series of video products from their regions that highlighted their experiences with resuming jury trials during pandemic times, and shared multiple perspectives as well as feedback received on their policies and protocols. These videos were shared with registered participants on Friday November 13 2020.

From then until November 23, participants submitted their questions arising out of the information shared in the videos. These questions were then organised thematically. Then, on Friday 27 November, the CAJO hosted a live Webinar Q&A in which the submitted questions were discussed by a Panel which included Sir Marston Gibson from Barbados, Chief Justice (Ag) Roxane George, Justice Brassington Reynolds, Justice Priya Sewnarine-Beharry, and Justice Nareshwar Harnanan from Guyana, and Justice Vivian Georgis Taylor-Alexander and Registrar Daniel Francis from St Lucia. The Webinar Q&A also included a segment for participants' comments and sharing.

The programme was designed to include video knowledge products in lieu of live webinar presentations as the CAJO has noted the discourse and literature around 'Zoom burnout' and sought to find creative and innovative ways to share as much information as possible and promote critical reflective thinking and learning by not including both extended presentations and discussion in a two to three-hour frame.

Feedback

At the end of the three-part programme (video knowledge products, reflection and question submission, live Webinar Q&A), participants were asked to complete a feedback form assessing particular elements of the programme as well as its overall impact.

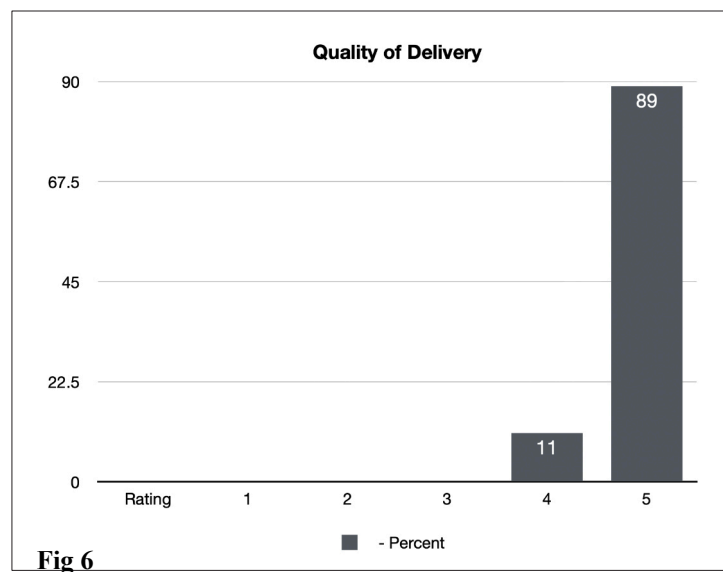
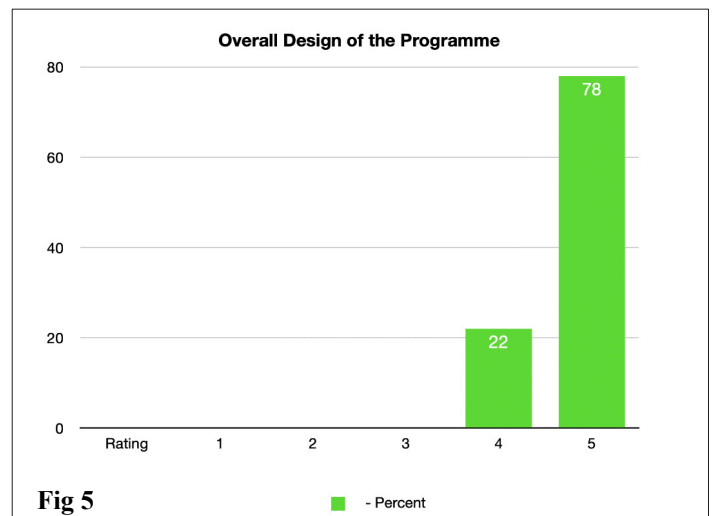
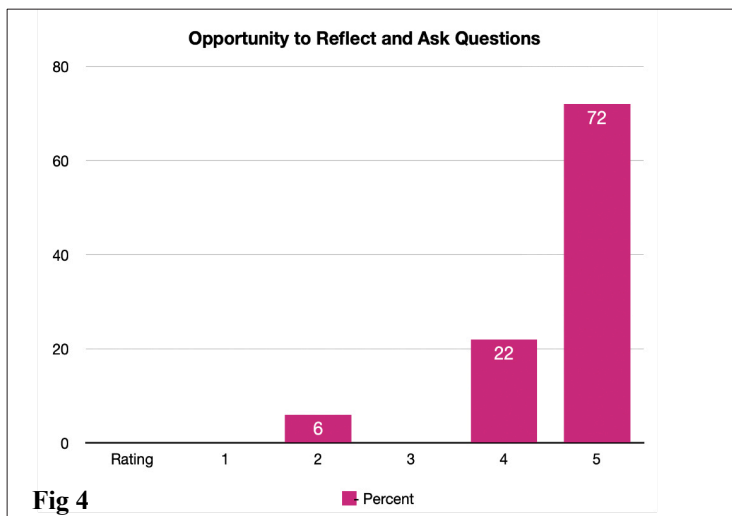
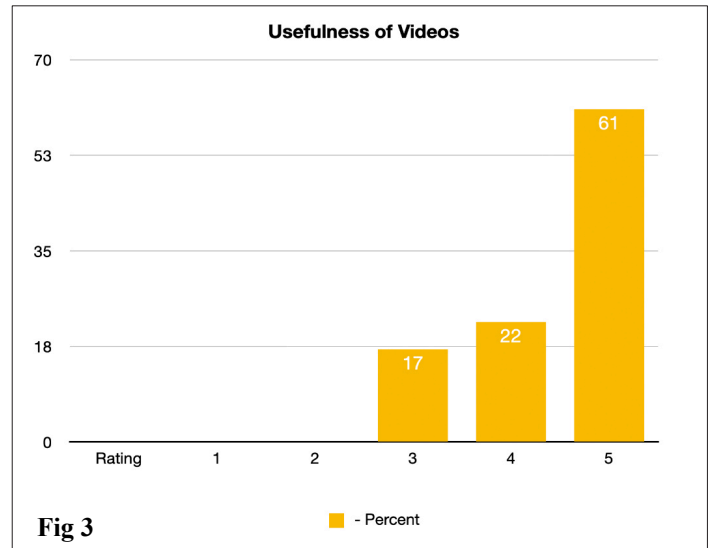
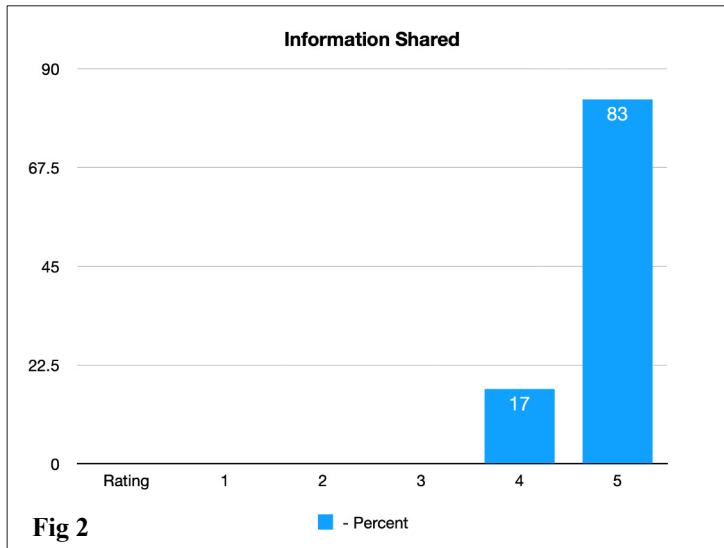
Participants were asked to rate (on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest) the information shared, the usefulness of the videos, the opportunity to reflect and ask questions, the overall design of the programme, and quality of delivery.

Below is a tabulated representation of the feedback received (Fig 1) as well as graphical representations on page 4 (Figs 2-6).

	1	2	3	4	5
Information Shared	0	0	0	17%	83%
Usefulness of Videos	0	0	17%	22%	61%
Opportunity to reflect and ask questions	0	6	0	22%	72%
Overall design of programme	0	0	0	22%	78%
Quality of programme delivery	0	0	0	11%	89%

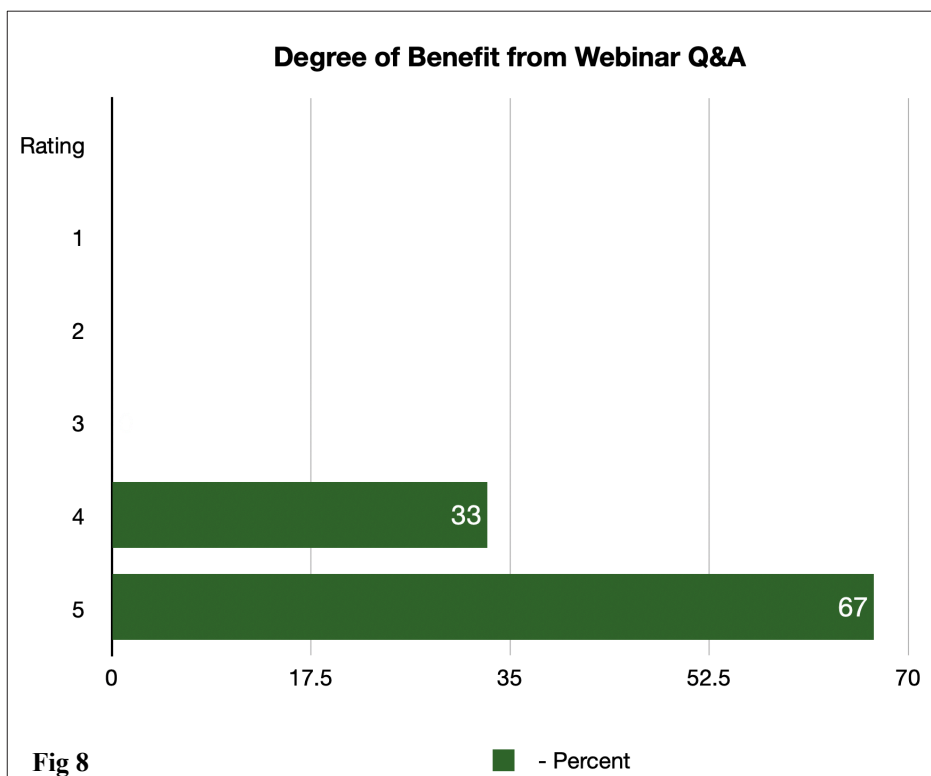
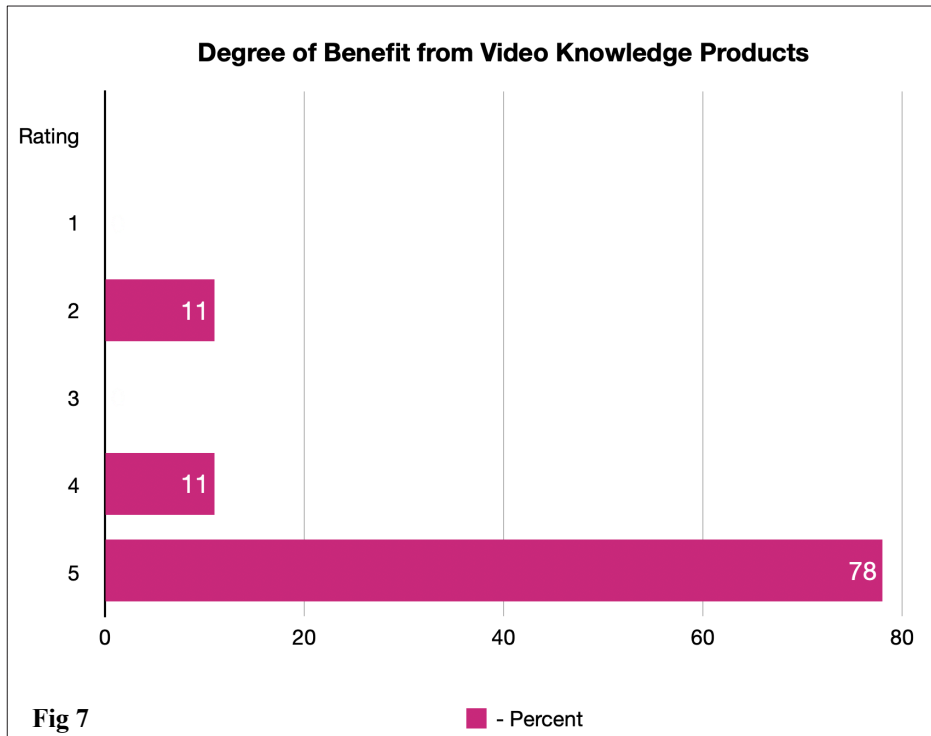
Fig 1 - Table of Responses

Feedback



Feedback

Participants were also asked to rate, on the same scale, the degree to which they benefitted from the video knowledge products and the webinar Q&A. Below shows graphical representations of their responses (Figs 7 & 8).



Feedback

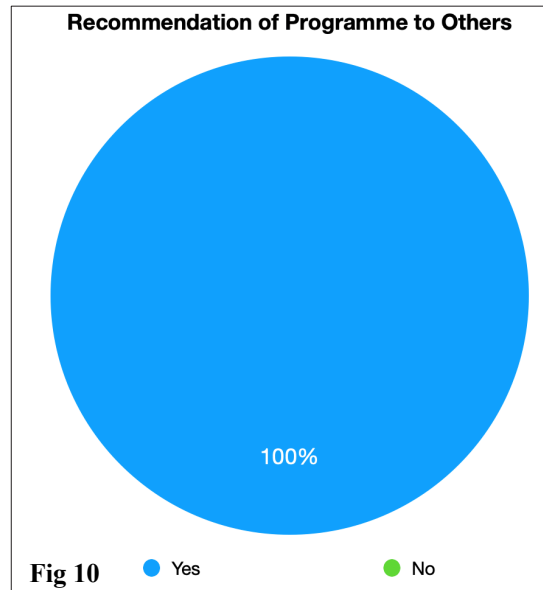
Participants were also asked to share comments and insights, particularly focused on what they found most useful, what was the biggest learning, and what they would suggest to improve the programme. Below is a table of their responses.

Most useful thing about the format of the programme	Most significant learning arising from the programme	Suggestion(s) to improve the programme
The opportunity to learn from other regions	The need to constantly innovate	Conduct a similar programme for Civil matters
Confidence-building from the different perspectives	How technology can be used to effectively deliver justice	Include perspectives from local Bars and practitioners
The provision of video knowledge products	How to manage multiple defendants in a trial	More time for the Webinar Q&A
The opportunity to reflect and ask directed questions	How to best ensure safety during a jury trial	More interaction from participants
The tiered approach which made sure that a lot was not crammed into the Webinar session	Managing anxiety around conducting a jury trial	None - the programme was excellent

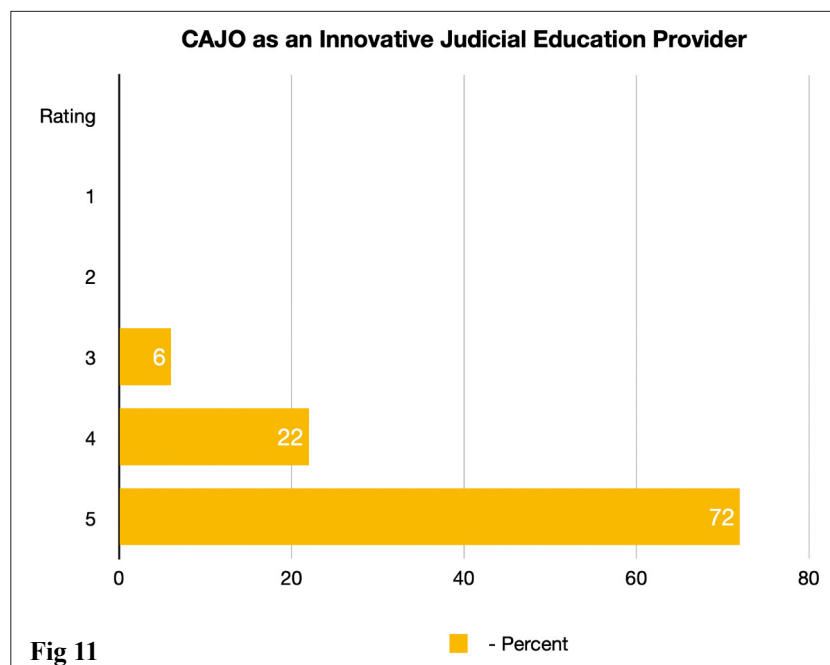
Fig 9 - Table of Responses

Feedback

Participants were also asked whether they would recommend this programme to other judicial officers and **100%** responded that they would.



The final question asked participants to rate (using the same scale of 1-5) the **CAJO as an innovative judicial education provider**. The average score was **4.44** and the graphical representation below shows the breakdown of responses.





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