



COMMANDER KELE-ANN BOURNE JESSEN

Commander Kele-Ann Bourne Jessen has served with distinction for over twenty-four (24) years in the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (Coast Guard). She is currently the Defence, Military, Naval, Air and Space Attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Washington, D.C., with accreditation to Canada.

Commissioned in 2003 following officer training at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, United Kingdom, she became the first female officer from Trinidad and Tobago to graduate from the Royal Navy Young Officers' Course. For her outstanding performance, she was awarded the Admiralty Binoculars.

Her career includes major operational and command appointments. She commanded TTS HIBISCUS (CG12) and later became the first female Commanding Officer of a Standard Patrol Class vessel, TTS CARLI BAY (CG28), leading its maiden voyage from the Netherlands to Trinidad. Ashore, she headed the Marine Ship Safety and Port Facility Security Unit, where she successfully implemented the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code across national ports. This achievement earned commendation from the United States Coast Guard.

From 2019 to 2021, Commander Bourne Jessen served as Foreign Liaison Officer to the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) in Key West, Florida. There, she developed *Operation Carib Shield*, a strategic initiative aimed at countering illicit trafficking and enhancing regional security cooperation.

A trailblazer in her field, she was the first female officer to attain the rank of Commander in the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard and the first female officer to ride on horseback in the national Independence Day Parade in 2014.

Her academic achievements include a BSc in Management Studies (First Class Honours), an MSc in Operational Maritime Management (University of Trinidad and Tobago), and an MA in Defence and Strategic Studies (U.S. Naval War College). She is also a certified Mediator with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Above all, Commander Bourne Jessen takes pride in her most rewarding role, being a mother to her one-year-old daughter, Kenna-Rose.