Summary of Proceedings
Public Hearing
Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs
Held on Friday March 23, 2018

Subject matter: An Inquiry into the Waste Management Policies and initiatives of the state.

Venue: A public hearing was held on Friday March 23, 2018 from 10:20 a.m. to 12:14 p.m. at the J. Hamilton Maurice Meeting Room, Mezzanine Floor, Office of the Parliament, Tower D, The Port of Spain International Waterfront Centre, 1A Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain.

Committee Members
The following Committee Members were present:

- Ms. Sophia Chote SC (Chairman)
- Mr. Clarence Rambharat (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr. Taharqa Obika,
- Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn, MP

Witnesses who appeared
The following officials of the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Environmental Management Authority appeared:

- Ms. Marie Hinds Permanent Secretary (AG.)
- Dr. David Persaud Environmental Manager
- Dr. Marissa Gowrie Deputy Environmental Manager
- Ms. Andrea Julien Senior State Council
- Mr. Hayden Romano Managing Director, EMA
The following officials of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL) appeared:

- Mr. Ronald Roach Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. David Manswell General Manager, Communication Sales and Marketing
- Ms. Sylvia Derby General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services
- Ms. Maria Allong General Manager, Projects and Support Services
- Ms. Abigail Whitehall Corporate Project Administrator

The following officials of the Ministry of Public Utilities appeared:

- Mr. Gary Joseph Permanent Secretary
- Ms. Beverly Khan Deputy Permanent Secretary
- Ms. Melanie Phillip Senior Planning Specialist
- Ms. Arlene Johnson-Lawrence Senior Project Manager

**Key Issues Discussed**

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Environmental Management Authority:

i. A dry season assessment was being conducted on the level of contamination at the Guanapo Landfill;

ii. The last study into this country’s solid waste disposal methods was conducted in 2010;

iii. Waste management policies and objectives that have been included in macro level policy documents such as Vision 2030 and the Draft Revised National Environmental Policy (NEP);

iv. The status of the Government’s waste-to-energy initiative;

v. The initiatives being undertaken to reduce waste generation and to better manage waste;

vi. The lack of coordination among the stakeholders involved in waste management;

vii. The absence of a single entity or Authority with overall responsibility for waste management;

viii. The aims and objectives of the iCARE programme which is managed by the EMA;

ix. The estimated timeframe for the completion of the Waste Rules in 2019;

x. The role and function of the EMA in relation to waste management and the authority’s relationship with SWMCOL;

xi. The steps being taken by the EMA to provide additional and suitable recycling bins at schools and communities;
xi. The status of the EMA’s investigation into alleged breaches of environmental laws in Carlson Field;

xii. The fact that the EMA’s direct involvement in waste management initiatives has not adversely impacted its operational efficiency;

xiii. The rationale for the EMA implementing the iCARE programme instead of SWMCOL;

xiv. The entity with the responsibility for managing oil spills;

xv. The EMA’s inability to implement Section 61 of the Environmental Management Act;

xvi. The collection and disposal of biomedical waste;

xvii. The channels through which the public can get information on the proper disposal of the various types of waste; and

xviii. The initiatives being implemented to combat the creation of ad-hoc landfill sites.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL):

i. The need for a Waste Management Authority with the overarching responsibility for waste management;

ii. The status of SWMCOL’s efforts in filling vacancies;

iii. SWMCOL’s lack of resources to effectively and efficiently manage landfill sites;

iv. SWMCOL’s initiatives to reduce fires at landfill sites;

v. The use of a separate private facility for the collection and disposal of biomedical waste;

vi. The level of waste generation in Trinidad and Tobago;

vii. The initiatives being undertaken to recycle and reprocess tires for its use in downstream products;

viii. The mechanisms in place to track the importation and movement of toxic chemicals;

ix. The channels through which the public can get information on the proper disposal of the various types of waste; and

x. The initiatives being undertaken to separate waste at source.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the Ministry of Public Utilities:

i. The status of the Waste Recycling Bill; and

ii. The initiative being undertaken to manage waste in the work place via the Public Sector Recycling Programme.

This public hearing can be viewed on demand via our YouTube Channel.

https://youtu.be/yFwGGzbJGZY

Contact the Committee’s Secretary
Committees Unit

Thursday March 29, 2018