The Standing Finance Committee of the whole House resumed its deliberations on the Bill and Estimates.

[Chairman: Mr. Forde]

10.00 a.m.

Mr. Chairman: Good morning. Day two of Standing Finance, Thursday October 11, 2018. The meeting of the Standing Finance Committee will resume.


Mr. Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of National Security to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes. Proceed, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as the country knows, the Ministry of National Security carries the responsibility for, broadly speaking, the safety and security of persons in Trinidad and Tobago, and importantly our citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. There are a number of bodies that fall under the ambit of National Security: we have the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, our life guards, our immigration, our fire services, our cadet force, and a number of other bodies; the Probation Services Division, the ODPM, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management, and a number of other bodies, including law enforcement agencies, the SSA and others. The Ministry of National Security has received the second largest allocation under the budget, and it is the intention of National Security to bring the bodies closer together, and working closer together and knowing what is going on with each other, especially with respect to the sharing of intelligence, to try and create a more
effective environment in fighting the scourge of crime.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my predecessor, Ret. Maj. Gen. Edmund Dillon, who did yeoman service and set a great foundation there for me to try and fill his shoes. And I thank all of the heads of the various agencies and arms of National Security for their full support and for their energy in working together to provide a more safe and secure environment in Trinidad and Tobago, and last but not least, all of the public servants who fall within the apparatus of National Security for their full support and hard work and dedication. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: I would like at this time to welcome the senior executives of National Security, welcome to Standing Finance Committee.

Question proposed: That Head 22 stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $2,794,178,200 for Head 22, Ministry of National Security, is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under six Sub-Heads to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure and the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. We now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 121 in the recurrent expenditure booklet. Item 001 General Administration, page 121. Item 002, Fire Service, page 121 and page 122. Item 004, Prison Service, page 122. I recognize the Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: 004, Prison Service, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance, I note there is an increase in $28.1 million, could the Minister indicate what are the changes we could expect in the Prison Service to accommodate that increase in expenditure?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the increase of the...
$28.1 million in salaries and cost of living allowance for the Prison Service is to assist in this fiscal of providing for a number of vacant posts that exist in the Prison Service that they are going to try to fill out. Of course that falls under the Service Commission but we are going to do it. I believe there is also some—so really what it is, is for us to be able to fill some of the vacant posts under the permanency of the Prison Service.

**Mr. Charles:** Minister, could you tell us the present establishment of the Prison Service and the increase you are speaking about?

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Young:** Thank you. The establishment, the total establishment, approved establishment of the Prison Service is 4,211. Right now we only have 2,910. So as you see, there is quite an expansive—over 1,300 vacant posts there. We are all aware of the difficulties that the Prison Service is currently undergoing so we going on a recruitment drive this year in the hope that we would be able to attract more officers to the Prison Service.

**Mr. Charles:** So, Minister, that 1,300—

**Hon. Young:** It is actually, 1,301 vacant posts.

**Mr. Charles:** One thousand, three hundred and one vacant posts, and you are expecting this year fiscal to recruit approximately?

**Hon. Young:** We have found varying difficulties throughout National Security in terms of recruitment over the recent times and recent years not only limited to the Prison Service; we are aiming this fiscal to recruit 500.

**Mr. Charles:** Five hundred?

**Hon. Young:** Yes.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you.
Mr. Chairman: Member for Oropouche East, a follow-up on that. Member for Naparima, hold on.

Mr. Lee: I just want to follow up on that question.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Oropouche East, you will give way to the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre?

Dr. Moonilal: It would be my honour.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you. It is just a follow-up to the last question by the Member for Naparima. Minister, you mentioned 1,301 vacant positions, could you tell me, for my own appreciation, how many prison officers were recruited during 2018, the last fiscal year?

Hon. Young: Just give me one second I will get that information—290 officers.

Mr. Lee: So then it was 1,301 plus 290 I presume, right?

Mr. Young: Prior—well, no, there may be some issues of attrition and this type of thing.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to all colleagues and staff, and the leadership of the protective services. If I may crave your indulgence, Mr. Chairman, I was actually collecting some documents, and so on, when we passed through Personnel Expenditure, if I can ask one small question of a factual nature on Personnel Expenditure before going to the Prison, because it is the same headline, I think, Personnel Expenditure; is it?

Mr. Chairman: Okay, I will give way, Member.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, at Remuneration, I think it is 01, 14, page 121 I am on,

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Remuneration to Cabinet-Appointed Committees, I noticed the increase of $239,000, is it possible—not now necessarily, but to just get a list of the Cabinet-appointed committees that are operating now through this Ministry that would be sustained by that figure?

**Hon. Young:** Yeah, I could give you that now: the Defence Force Commission Board, the Work Permit Advisory Board, Trinidad and Tobago Cadet Force Advisory Committee, the National Drug Council, the Protective Services Compensation Committee, the Advisory Committee for the Power of Pardon, Mercy Committee, the NCPP Inter-Ministerial Committee, that is the National Crime Prevention Programme. We also are getting—we have to process some outstanding fees for September 2018 and August 2018 with the Seized Assets Advisory Committee, the National Emblems Committee, the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing and Terrorism Committee. Those are the committees.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Okay, great. Thank you. Could I ask you my second question on the same matter?

**Mr. Chairman:** Proceed.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Taking note of the issue of recruitment of prison officers, Minister—

**Hon. Young:** So we are going back? We are going forward now? Where are we?

**Dr. Moonilal:** Yeah, we are going before we were originally.

**Hon. Young:** Okay.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Well, clearly, it is probably not one of the most attractive jobs these days to be a prison officer, but, is there any new strategy, new recruitment policies, and so on, that the authorities are considering for both vetting and
recruiting ably qualified persons given the sensitivity of this to both security and intelligence?

**Hon. Young:** The answer is, the process and procedure is basically going to remain the same. As you have identified, it is a difficult time and period, not only for the Prison Service but across the board in attracting persons to the National Security apparatus. We will be utilizing the social media more for the advertising, et cetera. The vetting, we are upping the ante, so to speak, on the vetting side and that will include the polygraphing of prisons officers and other members of law enforcement going forward.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the issues have been raised by my colleagues, but, Minister you indicated that there are 1,300 vacant posts currently existing. At some point in time would you care to probably furnish us with the information in terms of the different levels that this 1,300 vacancies consist of?

**Hon. Young:** The Commissioner of Prisons, one vacancy; Deputy Commissioner of Prisons, one vacancy; Assistant Commissioner of Prisons, one vacancy; five vacancies for Superintendent of Prisons; two cadet officers; four Assistant Superintendent of Prisons; 14 prison supervisors; 12 Prison Welfare Officer Is; 161 Prison Officer IIs; 1,079 Prison Officer Is, and 21 Prison Service drivers.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** I recognize the Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, when we were dealing with pension and gratuities yesterday with the Ministry of Finance we were told to, well, get the data from the various line Ministries, and I noticed that at page 119 of
the *Recurrent Expenditure*, which is just dealing with pension and gratuities—

**Hon. Young:** But hold on, that is a completely different—pensions and gratuities was dealt with yesterday.

**Mr. Singh:** No, no, but we were told to deal with the line Ministry for an explanation.

**Hon. Young:** Anyway, I do not have a problem, go ahead.

**Mr. Singh:** Okay. You have Prison pensions, you are seeing a significant increase in Prison pensions—

**Mr. Chairman:** And the line number is, Member?

**Mr. Singh:** Line number 38, at page 119, Prison Pensions and Prison Gratuities. You got it?

**Hon. Young:** Yeah. Significant increase of 2.9—

**Mr. Singh:** No, no, but what it is that you have is an increase over a period of time, so it means that also that you have a pension and gratuity with an ageing workforce, and within the context of your lack of recruitment, are you increasing your recruitment to deal with this significant, I would say, increase in pension and gratuities for the establishment?

**Hon. Young:** First of all, I would like to say that the increase for the Prisons Pensions in this fiscal is only $2.9 million, $3 million approximately. As you would be aware, one of the gifts that was handed to the country on the way out of the last administration was the back pay issue. As you would be aware, hon. Member, the back pay issue means an increase in your remuneration. So immediately with any increase in remuneration of any public service officers, you would also be aware, the formulas that are utilized for the calculation of pensions mean that you now have to increase. So what these increases over time would be...
is a combination of things. One, catering for the various increases, because when
you leave the service whatever your last salary would have been, so when that
increases obviously the pension amounts increase.

And then, two, there would be more recruitment over a period of time, even
though when we are looking at the Prison service here we see 1,301 vacant posts,
but that does not cater for who may have come and who may have left during the
fiscal year, et cetera, and persons who have crossed the period of time for
qualification of pension. So it is all of those various elements that go into the
increases in pensions and gratuities over a period of time to make sure it is
properly funded, so when people become eligible for their pensions and gratuities
there is sufficient funds there to dip into to get it.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Naparima, you still have a question?
Mr. Charles: Yes, I do.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Item 03—

Hon. Young: Where are we now?

Mr. Charles: 004, 03, Overtime, page 122.

Hon. Young: We are going forward again now?

Mr. Charles: I was there before.

Hon. Young: I know, but your friend took me backwards. Where, on which page,
sorry?

Mr. Charles: On page 122, 004, 03.

Hon. Young: Yes, Overtime.

Mr. Charles: I take it that the significant overtime is a result of the fact that you
have 1,300 short, amongst other things.
Hon. Young: Yes.

Mr. Charles: In fiscal 2018 the estimate was $60 million but you only spent $48 million.

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Charles: If the intent is to recruit 500 in this year, in this fiscal year, then why it is—and presumably that should reduce the need for overtime, why is there an increase of $2 million?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you. As you would have quite correctly pointed out, you would have seen in the last fiscal, even though $60 million was budgeted, only $48 million was utilized. So one can never predict with any degree of complete certainty what is going to happen over the next fiscal. So I am hoping that next year when we are back here you would point out the same thing, that even though you were estimated at $50 million which was an increase of $2 million over what was spent, not over what was budgeted, we have reduced that even more through, as you said, the process of recruitment, but also as well the reduction in overtime. Because as you know, overtime takes place for a number of reasons, so I am hoping over the period of time there is going to be a reduction on overtime, but if not you plan for the worst, and that is the figure we were allocated.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Just going back to the Member for Naparima’s question on overtime, but I want to put it in a different way: Given that your complement of staff is over 4,000 and—

Hon. Young: Two thousand, nine hundred is the current amount of staff, establishment is 4,200.
Mr. Lee: Your establishment is four thousand and something, you are short 1,301.

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Lee: I am trying to relate your present complement of 2,000 to your overtime bill that is existing presently, because it would affect your overtime if you are short 1,300, because it is about the security of the prisoners and the Prisons, and so forth. But over time I have noticed, in 2017, the reduction of overtime, so I am trying to understand if the complement, your vacant positions were being filled over time—

Hon. Young: But I just said that.

Mr. Lee: No, I do not know. So I am just asking to try and relate the overtime wage bill to your present complement of staff.

Mr. Chairman: Hold on. I think he would have answered that just now. He gave a brief with regard to the Member for Naparima.

Hon. Young: I could assist the Member very briefly.

Mr. Chairman: You want to expound on it?

Hon. Young: Well just because I know my friend from Pointe-a-Pierre may have had his head down in something else. But as I just said, in the last fiscal we recruited over 290 officers, so the answer is, yes. Over time there is a recruitment process that is going on. We are hoping for an extra 500 this year. Overtime is not as simple as number of officers, et cetera, as I said a short while ago there are instances that will come up that will lead to overtime. You could have a lockdown of the prison where we are not going to allow shifts to change, et cetera, for some security reason that will immediately result in overtime and other unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: The substantive question was asked already.
Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Chairman, just for the Minister to clarify, I continue to hear as we deal with issues of pensions and salaries and cost of living, and so on—

Mr. Chairman: Member, hold on, we have passed that stage, I would have given the Member for Chaguanas West the opportunity to go back—

Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Chairman, I am under Prison Service.

Mr. Chairman: Give me your line number, please.

Mr. Indarsingh: Overtime, 03 and 04, and so on, and 01, that these benefits are realizing through the collective bargaining process and definitely not gifted, so I would like the Minister to clarify for me what is this terminology of gifts being given to public officers.

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Young: That is the question? Okay, I will repeat what I said, on the way out of the last administration they gifted to the taxpayers of Trinidad and Tobago a back pay lump-sum payment of almost $6 billion, over $5 billion to be paid.

Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell us the line Item that he is alluding to?

Hon. Young: I am responding to your question, you wanted to know about the gift.

Mr. Chairman: Hold on. You referred to the statement he made, he is clarifying it now.

Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Chairman, about the collective bargaining process, is the collective bargaining process, outlined by the labour laws of this country, is that a gift in the Constitution of this country?

Mr. Chairman: The Minister will be able to answer accordingly. Go ahead.
Hon. Young: Thank you. As my friend may know, because I have not seen many judgments at the Industrial Court with his name on it in terms of practice, a collective bargaining process which results or should result in a collective agreement, when it comes to public servants is supposed to, if it is done correctly, be approved by the Cabinet or by a Cabinet subcommittee called the Human Advisory Committee. So I do not know if this is an administration by my friend on the other side that that did not happen between 2010 and 2015, but for the public of Trinidad and Tobago that is what is supposed to happen. The CPO, the Chief Personnel Officer is the person who interacts, her and her department, with the various arms of the public service when it comes to negotiation of collective agreements, but it has to be, or should be sanctioned by the Cabinet, because ultimately that bill has to be footed by the Treasury. And my recollection is during the period of 2010—2015, and in particular close to the elections in 2015 there was a lot of advertisement by that administration that they have granted 15 per cent as an increase in salaries, 5-5-5, for the period that was in question at that time.

Dr. Moonilal: Chairman, could I just clarify? So the Minister is saying that the workers today, in the case of these workers under your Ministry, are still receiving the benefits from the former administration?

Mr. Chairman: Okay, let us move on now, Member for Caroni Central. Thanks for the comments.

Dr. Tewarie: A question on the recruitment issue that was being discussed out of the 004, 01, the Minister mentioned that there are general problems with recruitment in the National Security system, and we appreciate and understand that; what are some of the peculiar problems with prison officer recruitment?

Mr. Chairman: Again, Member, the Member, from my recollection that question
was asked more than once and he would have given the necessary information.

**Hon. Member:** No, it was not.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, it was.

**Hon. Member:** No.

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, it was.

**Dr. Tewarie:** I think that there was a general response on National Security recruitment.

**Mr. Singh:** Or challenges in recruitment.

**Hon. Young:** In the interest of pressing on, Mr. Chair, I will repeat it.  [Crosstalk] Member for Caroni Central, I will give the answer.

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister.

**Hon. Young:** As happens with recruitment across the whole public service, as you know, there is a process. There has to be an advertisement process. In National Security there is an extra vetting process, there are exams that need to be done, and these types of things, even to trigger that process one has to get the Service Commissions to carry out that. So that is the first issue, the bureaucracy of recruitment. The second is, and it is no secret, there is a level of danger associated with carrying out your duties and your functions as a prison officer. That is just it. So you have to first of all have a cadre of people who are willing to enter the Prison Service knowing that within recent times, and when I say recent it is not within the last few months, the last few years, but for quite a while now there is a danger associated with carrying out the duties of a prison officer. So by definition you are going to have a limited number of personnel who are willing to recruit themselves in.

**Dr. Tewarie:** The reason I asked the question is because I think that there is a
general sense—I mean nobody knows for sure—that part of the endangerment process for prison officers is the fact that depending on how they conduct themselves with prisoners inside they are liable to exposure outside as citizens. And I wondered if that were a particular issue and consideration, because it seems—I mean, it is general knowledge that sometimes prisoners can in fact have a lot of power within the prisons for conducting business outside.

**Hon. Young:** What is the question?

**Dr. Tewarie:** The question is whether that is a particular issue in the recruitment process of prison officers, and whether it is a—it seems to be a fear factor in people making themselves available in that, or whether the compromise of the system is a problem which needs to be resolved.

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister, can you assist?

**Hon. Young:** Yeah, of course. The answer is, you try as best as you can during the vetting process in the recruitment to identify the potential in this process for what you have described. The reality is the vetting process is not going to eliminate, and it is possible whilst you are in the service that you be drawn into for one reason or the other what you have just described. The Prison Service is working very closely now and very carefully under the National Security apparatus with its brother and sister agencies, the TTPS, the TTDF, the SSA, et cetera, for us to try and clamp down and narrow the scope for that type of behaviour within the prison system.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Naparima, Member for Oropouche East? Okay. Item 005, Regiment, page 123. Item 006, Coast Guard, pages 123 and 124. I recognize the Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you. To the Minister, Item 01, Salaries and Cost of Living
Allowance, given the fact that there is a need to lock down our borders, an increasing realization that we have a refugee problem, one would anticipate that attention would have been paid to the recruiting staff in the Coast Guard to ensure that we have a service that is operational and can deal with the issues that we face. We are purchasing new vessels in the Coast Guard, and in that context I am asking, why did we not budget for the increase for the new staff to be trained in Australia, and whatnot, and instead there is a decrease?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much. Again, I mean I am looking at this figure, quite frankly, of $426,440, and there is no way that is the proper salaries wage bill for the Coast Guard. I am now being told this is actually the civilian staff arm, so that answers the question. Well, well spotted. But you are right, that is the intention of the Coast Guard because we are going to have to recruit heavily in the next fiscal year for the new vessels that we expect to take delivery of. So this is just the civilian staff.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, in light of the fact that you are identifying that line Item as being civilian staff, how many civilian staff are in fact employed and what is their primary function, please?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Young: Their primary functions would be the administrative side, you know, the accounting side, the logistic side, the secretarial side, the HR side. So it is the normal administrative functions that are carried out with any organization.

Mr. Chairman: You could give the amount, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Young: No, we will seek the amount.
Mr. Chairman: So that will be provided. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Minister, the civilian, this is in respect to your Ministry, right?

Hon. Young: No, no, no, this is the Coast Guard alone.

Mr. Lee: For $426,000?

10.30 a.m.

Hon. Young: Correct, it is in the Ministry of National Security, assigned to deal with the Coast Guard.

Mr. Lee: And that will also apply for the regiment part also.

Hon. Young: Correct, correct; and actually Naparima, when you look down below at 23 that is where we see the full Coast Guard complement, 198 million. It is a decrease, correct. When I come back at the mid-year you will support my endeavour for more.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, in light of the fact that in line Item 23 there is a decrease, is it as a result of the Coast Guard having a full complement of staff?

Hon. Young: The answer is no. What it would have been is attrition of some leaving, et cetera. But as you would know when you are dealing with the Budgets Division of the Ministry of Finance, they make these decreases, et cetera. So as I said, at mid-year you can expect me to come back under this line Item, but also we may shift and vire money around if necessary, because we would have to be recruiting more over the next year.

Mr. Chairman: Item 007 Immigration, page 124.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, line Item 01. Can you explain or give this House how many vacant positions are there, and how many staff are being currently employed in the Immigration Department, and of course the vacancies?
Hon. Young: On the permanent establishment you have 405 positions. Right now there are 121 vacant. We have 284 permanent and 129 acting.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Overtime: I see a decrease of $2.5 million. Given the fact that increasingly immigration is a crisis: we have a refugee crisis, we have transborder movement of drugs and what not, we have planes arriving and sometimes immigration officers are not there. Could the Minister explain the 2.5 million decrease in the overtime, given that it will take some time before the recruitment kicks in?

Hon. Young: I did not specifically refer to recruitment under Immigration, but you are right, there will be some recruitment process taking place. What this is, I am hoping, is a reflection of a more efficient immigration service. And as you keep repeating that there is a crisis with refugees, there is no current crisis with refugees. We do have a situation where there has been an increase in persons seeking refugee status, and that is something that we are currently addressing.

You also referred to, on occasions seeing—and I believe you mean the Immigration Hall—the incoming hall at Piarco being filled with passengers waiting to be processed by Immigration. On many of these instances, as soon as we get word of it and look into it, there are actually fully manned cubicles, and all are actually manned. What has happened, is for one reason or another a flight has been delayed and it has been a culmination of more flights arriving than were expected, et cetera. We do our best to process it during that period of time, and certainly under this administration, as far as I am aware, and certainly since I have been in the chair, any time there has been an instance of that and we contact the Chief Immigration Officer, herself and her staff move very quickly and expeditiously to make sure each one of those cubicle booths is fully and properly
manned.

**Mr. Charles:** Minister, you indicated that there is no refugee crisis. The Chief Immigration Officer, I think, said that there are approximately 200 people appearing on our shores weekly, and I got the sense from listening to that—I think it was a joint select committee—that the Immigration Department was not up to the task of the over—and like all countries, Colombia has the same problem, Brazil has the same problem, I am overwhelmed by this thing.

I think all of us—and this is anecdotal evidence—in San Fernando we are aware of a presence of a large number of people who we recognize are not citizens. Is it that the number of immigration officers are not adequate to the task, and do we have to increase—and I am dealing here with Salaries, 01—do we have to man up to the responsibility, lest we be overwhelmed? I heard 40,000 Venezuelans, somebody said, I heard from my friends in the UN that it could be more like 60,000. So the question is, are we dealing with that issue from a human resource standpoint?

**Hon. Young:** The answer is yes. Let us deal with it sequentially. Certainly in my travels, and in particular within recent times, there have been occasions when I fly into, for example, JFK, Houston, Gatwick, that I have spent over an hour in the line waiting. So it is not something that is peculiar to Trinidad and Tobago.

The answer is there is an increase influx of non-citizens into Trinidad and Tobago. This is not only an issue for Immigration, it also deals with Customs and Excise. We need the TTPS there to perform, ensuring safety and security on some of the other ports of entry into Trinidad and Tobago. So when you are referring to San Fernando, I assume you are referring to the Kings Wharf area and other areas down there. It is something that we are discussing.
I would not say for a moment that our Immigration Department is not up to the task of performing the duties. As you identified in other countries like Colombia, we see the photographs, we see what is happening on the borders with Colombia, even Guyana and some of these areas. So it is something we are aware of. We are working along with Immigration. We are trying to introduce more use of technology to ensure that it all feeds back into the main server system, et cetera. So we are working on it, and at this stage it is not a crisis. The 40,000 figure is the official figure from the UN as to the number of Venezuelans who are in Trinidad and Tobago in that immigration status. It may be more, it may be less.

Dr. Tewarie: Can I follow up on the immigration issue? Besides the arrangements we have under CARICOM for the movement of skills and so on, are there any other clear policy framework issues that guide immigration in relation to the process of immigration, especially given the situation with Venezuela?

Hon. Young: That is a very, very, broad question, and you then tried to narrow it down to Venezuela. So is it that you are asking specifically about Venezuela, or you are asking in general, what is the Government’s immigration policy?

Dr. Tewarie: Well, I think it finds pointedness with the Venezuela situation, yes.

Hon. Young: So again, we do not have our heads buried in the sand with respect to Venezuela. We are looking very closely at it. We are in constant conversation with the Venezuelan authorities as well. There are a number of Venezuelans who we have picked up, finding that they have overstayed the length of time that they are allowed to be here. The current Government policy is you are not required to have a visa to enter Trinidad and Tobago from Venezuela. You are allowed 90 days here and then you are supposed to go back. So that is the current policy. We are trying to man it as much as possible.
There are persons who slip through the cracks. I mean, constantly as Minister of National Security you face a number of files of persons who have overstayed their 90-day. Again, I would like to thank the Immigration staff for the yeoman service that they do, in particular the special unit that has to go and pick up illegal immigrants and process them, and sometimes put them in the Immigration Detention Centre. So it is an issue and a live issue that we are dealing with.

**Dr. Tewarie:** So the real issue is overstaying?

**Hon. Young:** I think it is a combination, because overstay is if you come in legally. There are persons who are coming in illegally via unauthorized ports of entry.

**Dr. Tewarie:** In Cedros for instance we have—the way that the immigration and security system is set up, you have Coast Guard, you have police, you have Immigration.

**Hon. Young:** Customs.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Customs, everything there, et cetera. I mean, has anything changed in the way they operate in that part of the country, given how the situation is emerging now?

**Hon. Young:** We intend to put more resources down in Cedros, because that is a very live port of entry, and you are finding persons—and a lot of them just come for day trade to get stuff and to go back, et cetera, but it is an area that we have to allocate more resources to and we are looking at.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, you had indicated in line Item 01, that there were 121 vacant positions, I believe that was how much you had indicated. How soon will your Ministry be taking action to put out—to fill these positions?
Hon. Young: The Permanent Secretaries at the Ministry have been meeting with the Service Commissions to try and get them to assist us in filling these vacancies across the board.

Mr. Chairman: Item 008, Probation Service, page 125. I recognize Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, line Item 01. How many positions are vacant and filled in the probation services?

Hon. Young: Recently we took a note to Cabinet where we increased the complement of probation officers. So we recently added—we have increased it to 36. There are currently 34, this is of probation officers, and we are currently filling the vacancies. So we have 18 vacancies in the Children’s Court probation officers’ arm. They are currently being vetted and we hope to have completed in November, and then another 18 probation officers, sorry, which are being addressed by the Service Commission.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Would there be required any other positions beside the officers?

Hon. Young: Currently, no. Currently we think the administrative staff can handle it.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Okay, thanks.

Mr. Chairman: Item 009, Forensic Science Centre, page 125. I recognize Naparima and then Chaguanas West.

Mr. Charles: Thank you; 009, 01, the Forensic Science Centre admittedly is not up to the challenge. I am not saying this reflects on the people working there. It could be an issue of infrastructure, processes, et cetera. I think all of us admit there is a problem. However, in 2018 there was 7.9 million estimated and only 5.9
spent. Now, why would you have money available and you know that there is a crisis into personnel and what not, and you do not spend what you have?

**Hon. Young:** I can tell with my friend and I, he is going to be utilizing the word “crisis” throughout the day. There is no crisis as far as we are concerned, but as you are aware, there has been a difficulty for many years, decades in fact, of recruiting pathologists to the Forensic Science Centre, and this is where a large bulk of that would have come in. So you would recall that last year Dr. Alexandrov left, so immediately that created the vacancy. What I can tell you is we have gone to the UNDP, they have a recruitment programme. We have engaged them. We have told them we need to get three qualified pathologists, and they are assisting us with that. So I am happy for the extra, almost one and a half million dollars, because I hope in the next fiscal to build out the pathology complement at forensics.

**Mr. Charles:** Could the Minister tell us how many pathologists we have on staff, and how many we require?

**Hon. Young:** Two.

**Mr. Charles:** Because the same Russian, Alexandrov, said that there is a deficiency in terms of pathologists not being there at the site of a murder scene. So therefore the witness—they could pick up things that would help in solving crime, and that is not the policy, although it is abroad in First World—so the question is, how many and you said we needed—

**Hon. Young:** The establishment provides for four. We currently have two. We have Dr. Burris in Tobago, we have Dr. Hughvon Des Vignes in Trinidad. We have gone and asked for three, and I am hoping that we get the three.

**Mr. Charles:** Minister, could you tell us how many we really need? There must
be some clinical analysis. To have a First World crime-fighting capability we need their best practices, and we need one per 100,000 population and what not. How are these numbers determined that we need three, for example?

**Hon. Young:** Well, I actually said that the current establishment provides for four. So the current establishment recognizes that we need four. Trinidad has a population of 1.3 million, so when you are dealing with—you keeping using the terminology “First World countries”—you are dealing with hundreds of millions of persons. What you do is that you look at a town that may be the equivalent of one million persons, a town in the United States, and they do not usually have over a complement of four to six in those circumstances. I take your point, it is something we will look at. We are struggling to even fill the four established positions. Certainly, I would like more and we will take a look at it.

**Mr. Charles:** And a final question: If we have a problem of recruitment and it is a job which no one likes, of course. So we have to incentivize it, recognizing the realities of the problem we face, because we will be continue coming up and recruiting people from abroad.

**Hon. Young:** What do you suggest for the incentivizing?

**Mr. Charles:** The salaries, increase in salaries, increase in terms and conditions.

**Hon. Young:** I will recruit you in my support for an increase in salaries towards Forensic Science Centre.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thanks Mr. Minister.

**Mr. Singh:** Mr. Chairman, a lot of what I was going to ask with respect to the complement of pathologists was asked by my colleague and answered. However, in the context of incentivizing, we have a National Scholarship Programme and that therefore there ought to be alignment between the developmental needs of this
country with the scholarship programme. So I want to suggest that.

**Hon. Young:** My friend for Chaguanas West, you will be happy to know that one of the first things we did as an administration, under the guidance of the Ministry of Planning and Development, along with Education, is look at exactly that. We looked at what the needs of the country, not only here are, but across the board, and one of the areas that we felt we needed to offer the scholarships for, and the support to get persons to study, is in pathology under forensic science and we have in fact offered the scholarships. We have teamed up with, for example, the UK and other countries to ensure in their offering of scholarships to our nationals, this is one of the items, and we are trying that. Thank you very much.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Chair. Hon. Minister, could you just give us some understanding of, one, the accreditation of the Forensic Science Centre. You know, we have been trying to accredit that for a long time, and the Prime Minister when he went to Jamaica, he said he saw something there which he likes. Could you give us an appreciation of that? Secondly, the issue of the DNA—for the storing of DNA for security services in the country. That was something that was passed in the Bill, and whether you have completed the storage of all security officers within the forensic lab. And third—

**Hon. Young:** Storage of security officers?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** The DNA.

**Hon. Young:** You scare me there man.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And the third one is, the infrastructure at the Forensic Science Centre is dilapidated. Could you comment on these three please?

**Mr. Chairman:** Now, again Member, we have not identified any line Item—

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yes, 009.

**UNREVISED**
Mr. Chairman: But I think in terms of information, I will give the Minister the opportunity to respond.

Dr. Gopeesingh: 009 is the line Item.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much. Now is an opportune time to remind my friends in the House, as well as the population of Trinidad and Tobago, we have actually secured gratis funding from the Chinese for the construction of a new DNA centre. That project, DNA and forensic centre, is being done in two phases. So that is actually going to be the breaking of ground very soon after this budget. So that will take care of the last thing that you raised. So we are going to be constructing a state-of-the-art forensic science centre, as well as—it is going to be like an “L”—the DNA side for storage and for all of the work associated with the DNA.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Completion time? What will be the completion time?

Hon. Young: Completion to be in 2020, I believe, or towards the end of 2019. I am pushing to try and get it done by the last quarter of 2019. When you spoke about accreditation, there is not currently an accreditation problem in Trinidad and Tobago, and the use of what goes on at the Forensic Science Centre for evidential purposes in our local courts. Where the accreditation issue comes in, is if the evidence in Trinidad and Tobago has to be utilized in foreign courts. So it is something that we are looking at and we are working with different agencies, both I believe in the United Kingdom as well as the United States for that accreditation. What the Prime Minister had seen was actually at UWI, when we had gone—on his visit to Jamaica—and he had seen these state-of-the-art facilities built in UWI, by the Chinese. That is what triggered the conversation with the Chinese, and we have managed to negotiate and agree for that. I cannot remember what was the
second issue you had raised.

**Mr. Chairman:** Storage, DNA.

**Hon. Young:** Okay, well, I have answered the storage, not of the security officers, but there was a problem with the storage of DNA, and mould et cetera, and we have worked towards the resolution of that.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** But meanwhile, is there going to be any attempt to at least alleviate the plight of the forensic pathologists in the conduct of the infrastructure?

**Hon. Young:** That is now a different question.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** It is still posing a problem and you cannot let them continue to work under those conditions.

**Hon. Young:** I intend after the budget to go and visit myself. That is what I have been doing. I want to go and see for myself on the ground and see what exists. When I do that visit I will then see what we can do.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** May I be permitted a last question, Chair? Hon. Minister, there are at least three more qualified pathologists in Trinidad who have tremendous experience in forensic pathology as well. They might not be accredited as forensic pathologists because there is a specialist qualification for that. Is there any attempt to bring them on board while you are waiting for these two other people? They are very well qualified, like Dr. Daisley and one or two others.

**Hon. Young:** We have tried as you are aware, and I remember my predecessor talking about it previously. We are constantly advertising. There have been discussions and conversations, they have not come on board.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Okay, all right. Thank you, Chair.

**Mr. Chairman:** Oropouche East follow-up, and then we will go to Couva South, Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**UNREVISED**
Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much for the information. Let me say, I mean, I truly feel robbed that we did not have the opportunity to hear you in the budget presentation.

Hon. Young: “Doh worry”, there is plenty time for you to hear.

Dr. Moonilal: But I personally feel robbed.

Mr. Chairman: Member.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, could I just ask, the building of the forensic centre by the Chinese, what is the estimated cost of that? You are hearing me? [Interruption] Diego Martin North/East, please.

Mr. Chairman: One second. Members we are going fine, let us keep it that way.

Dr. Moonilal: Hon. Minister, the estimated cost of the forensic science complex—it is a complex—sponsored or gifted by the Government of China, and where is the location? The exact location, where is it intended that you will construct it?

Hon. Young: The gratis amount is US $10 million. So they have donated US $10 million which completes the first phase. It is a two-phase project, and it is going to be located in the Mount Hope area just off of the highway.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Chairman. Minister, as it relates to manpower at the Forensic Science Centre, this whole issue of firearms and the whole question of being seized by the police in the judicial system and so on, do you have the complement that is needed in relation to ballistic testing and so on?

Hon. Young: No. What we have been using is the police armourers to assist, in particular, from the point of view of determining for evidential purposes, et cetera. But yes, there is a need there to increase the number of personnel.

Mr. Indarsingh: Going forward, how many do you need and what is the intent of
recruitment and so on?

**Hon. Young:** We actually have the full complement of scientific officers and firearm technicians, but it is something we need to look at in terms of increasing the complement.

**Mr. Chairman:** Cumuto/Manzanilla, you still have a question?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** No, no, not at this point.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, with respect to the criminal division, the criminal courts, when a ballistic report has to be tendered in court, it takes an inordinate amount of time for these reports to be submitted. Is there any way in which these things can be resolved, or you have to hire more technicians and so? What really causes these inordinate delays, because sometimes you have to wait over a year to get a report, and then of course the matters keep adjourning?

**Hon. Young:** Thank you very much. I will raise that with the Director of the Forensic Science Centre. I smile because I am sure we could ask your friend to your right. It is something you face for example, in the Civil Courts with doctors. You are always waiting on doctors’ reports. It is how they prioritize the time and how they find the time to sit down and do the reports, et cetera. We will look at the use of more technology, for example, maybe adding some business operators to do the addition of typing, et cetera, but it is something I will raise with them.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 012, Lifeguard Service, page 126. I recognize Chaguanas East—Chaguanas West, oh, it is East and West, okay. Go first Chaguanas West, and then Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just raising something that I had raised in the previous budget, Finance Committee level. In my interaction with the
lifeguards at various stations throughout Trinidad, you find that they feel that when they were in the Ministry of Tourism they were better located, and therefore when they are located in the Ministry of National Security, they come like the bastard child. So I want to just say Minister, please, whilst you are very close you are not able at this point in time to do portfolio allocation in terms of gazetting lifeguards away from you. I want to suggest that you pay special attention to the lifeguard service.

**Hon. Young:** All right. I agree with you. Traditionally the lifeguards feel hard done by. They were one of the first bodies that I have met with coming in. I have met with them. I have told them that they are going to get prioritization in the Ministry of National Security going forward. I have told them that the reason that they are there is because they are an important element in the provision of safety and security, because once you are at our nation’s beaches you need to be safe, and you need to be secure, and that is provided by the lifeguards should you get into difficulty there.

One of the battles I had at the Ministry of Planning and Development in the whole PSIP planning, et cetera, was to ensure that the lifeguards got what they had asked for. They did not quite get the amount, but I have told them that we are going to focus on getting them some of the equipment that would make their jobs a little safer and a little easier. So I am giving them the attention.

**Mr. Karim:** Hon. Minister, line Item 01. There is an increase in the salaries and COLA of 170,000, and the explanation is that this is to provide for vacant posts with the incumbents. But might you be able to tell us, what is your present complement, and how many vacant posts this is to cater for? I will have a subsequent question after.
Hon. Young: If I could remember it was in the 30s, I think it was 33 positions, or 39 throughout. We only have about 27 filled, and there is an attrition process taking place there, and we are losing some of the lifeguards because—for some of the reasons identified by Chaguanas West. They move on and come out of the career. So I have spoken to them and the union, NUGFW. You would remember comrade Lambert, and we are putting some emphasis and focus on it.

Mr. Karim: Okay. Line Item 29, Overtime. When you fill posts and vacancies it is a corollary as a matter of fact that the overtime might go down. But this 660, I heard you coming down on the radio, is it to prepare in the event of extenuating circumstances or additional duties and so on?

Hon. Young: Well, I actually, when I was going through the line Items, thanked my colleague, the Minister of Finance, because obviously him and his staff heard our cry, and you would see that have given the lifeguard service an increase of 3.1 million under this Heading. So we do not want, and we are going to try to avoid in the next fiscal, situations where there has to be utilization of overtime. But the truth is again, the recruiting process takes more time than one would like. I do not know what the availability of persons who have a desire to be lifeguards are out there, so the Ministry of Finance has kindly given us an increase to cater for the situations, which often happen on public holiday weekends, where the lifeguards need to be paid overtime, et cetera.

Mr. Karim: My final comment, Mr. Chairman, is that there is no doubt that the lifeguards play a critical role in the safety of our lives and those of our families and friends when we go to the beach. But are you satisfied, or maybe the other question is, what plans do you have for the improvement in lifeguard facilities in the presence of wherever they are in the country?
Hon. Young: No, I am not satisfied. As you know, one of the difficulties you face constantly in the public service is the maintenance of facilities. I have, again, promised the lifeguards that I will tour the facilities with them once the budget is over. But just from my common knowledge, and the elements that the lifeguard facilities face by definition, being on the seashore, et cetera, they are not, there is some extra maintenance to be done.

What I was actually surprised to hear, and they had one of the officers there at the meeting, is that there is actually a maintenance section of the lifeguard services, and there are vacancies there, and they are begging to be able to go and do the work that they are tasked with doing. So that is one of the ways I intend to get it done.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva North. Item 015, Cadet Force, page 126. I recognize the Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, why is it that we have not been able to expand the amount of Cadet Force services within the education programme? I have been fighting that for five years while I was Minister, and I am sure my colleague now would be making all attempts to increase that.

Something is radically wrong with the management of the Cadet Force when you have a lot of top heavy people inside of there, you got to look at that, and it is not trickling down. And a lot of money being spent on paying cadets at the highest level, all your generals and everybody, I know they are here, they are listening to me, but it has been a failure to put them in the schools and—

Hon. Young: Member for Caroni East, you are pushing at an open door. In fact, two areas that my personal belief we should increase in the school system, are the
use of the Scouts and the use of the Cadets.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Agreed.

**Hon. Young:** I am happy to report to you that they have actually increased in the last fiscal and we are now covering the Cadet Force, we have them in 75 schools.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Very good.

**Hon. Young:** Does it need to increase? The answer is, yes. Will we focus on it? The answer is, yes. But I agree with you completely.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** 125 schools.

**Hon. Young:** Correct.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas East.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And the Boy Scouts, anything?

**Hon. Young:** Correct. I agree.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Hon. Minister, in a sense following up from that question—

**Mr. Chairman:** Again, the lower end of the Chamber. Members, at the lower end, please, let us listen in. Members at the lower end. Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** In a sense following up from the Cadet Force question in schools. I recall in my days at Presentation San Fernando, there was a boy who joined the Cadet Force, and this is the question I am going to raise—and he eventually rose to the very highest ranks in the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment.

Now the Cadet Force in schools it seems as though it is an extra-curricular or co-curricular, it is treated like that. But do you have any intentions of creating the Cadet Force academy that will see these young boys in the schools, and it is mostly boys, who will be able to articulate further on in the profession as opposed
to only CSEC? Do you have any plans from those?

**Hon. Young:** The answer is, the structure does exist. Right? So I agree with you. For example, when I was in school some moons ago there was a choice. Do I join the Scouts or the Cadets? I was attracted to the Cadets, I ended up in Scouts which is something I do not regret, but you very often see what you just described which are persons who get involved in the Cadet Force go on to find a career in the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force or the Police Force, even the Fire Services, et cetera. So it is something that should be encouraged and will be encouraged. You also have programmes like the CCC and MiLAT and these types of things, where you have persons graduating out of those programmes and then joining our arms of service.

**Mr. Karim:** Because the answer I wanted to get from you is, will you give active consideration to a potential Cadet Force academy to make sure we articulate—

**Hon. Young:** But as you rightly said, the Cadet Force is an extra-curricular activity in secondary schools. So I do not know if what you are articulating is maybe a plan for like a Sandhurst or, what is the one in the US?—West Point.

**Mr. Karim:** What I was trying to do is to actually ask you whether you will want to give an active consideration to not only see it as co-curricular, but something that will be able to give them a qualification within a formal set, and I will tell you why.

**Hon. Young:** It could be discussed with the Ministry of Education.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Naparima, you still have a question?

**Mr. Charles:** 01, again, it is a pity the Minister did not speak in the budget, because I am sure he would have taken the opportunity to articulate, why.

They talk about it is a priority, the Cadet Force and [Inaudible] 70s that has
increased. But at the same time, $970,000 was estimated in 2018, allocated, but only $730,000 spent. So it seems to me that we talk, and I do not want to say there is a crisis with at-risk youth and what not, and it is a challenge, we recognize it, we allocate money, but then we do not spend. Could the Minister explain why?

**Hon. Young:** Why they did not use the full amount?

**Mr. Charles:** Yes.

**Hon. Young:** When you look in the explanation, you will actually see it includes now a provision for vacant posts with incumbents. So once again we have found ourselves—because this is the establishment in the Ministry appointed to deal with the Cadet Force. Once again, it is the Service Commissions are not being able to recruit persons into the permanent posts, so your point is taken.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Just a final question on Cadet Force. Line Item 04, an increase of $670,000 plus. What do you intend to do with that? Is it to fill the vacant positions? If so, how many positions or if you intend to create new ones?

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister.

**Hon. Young:** At this stage there is no intention to create the new ones because we have vacant posts. So, yes, I would like to fill vacant posts over the next fiscal.

**Mr. Karim:** Might you be able to say how many of those?

**Hon. Young:** Two.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay. That is a big salary increase.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 016, Air Guard, page 127. I recognize the Member for Oropouche West first.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, I am looking at Line 09, Rent/Lease - Vehicles and Equipment.
Hon. Young: Goods and Services, I do not think we have reached there as yet.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. Not there as yet, Member. So, I recognize the Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Chair. With respect to the Air Guard, you have Item line 23 and 24, Salaries and Allowances. I would like to ask: How aircraft are in the current fleet of the Air Guard? And what is the staff complement associated with the Air Guard currently?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Young: Yeah. I could start off by answering, the asset fleet of the Air Guard, we currently have the two C-26 planes, both of which are working and operational but as, you know, they are quite old and aged, so we have been looking at the options for replacement. We have not quite reached there as yet but we continue to maintain those planes, and they continue to be utilized in a number of different operations.

With respect to the other part of the fleet that, I assume you mean the air fleet, the rotary wings which are the helicopters. There are four helicopters which we transfer to National Helicopter Services Limited because we thought that the charges that we were incurring from the foreign operators were too high, and we are actually working on getting three of those back up in the air to be utilized, two of them, by the Air Guard and one by the National Helicopter Services for commercial operational where they could earn money off of it.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East? You are good?

Dr. Gopeesingh: My colleague from Chaguanas West asked the question about the complement.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East, are you okay?
Mr. Singh: Yeah.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No the staff complement. Good.

Hon. Young: The establishment is 94 for Air Guard officers. So let me just go through the officers first. Right? So the total establishment for officers is 94. We have 55 as the posted strength, so we have 39 vacancies. When it comes to the other ranks within the Air Guard, the total establishment is 398. We actually have 327 posted and then that means we have 71 vacancies.

Mr. Singh: Follow up question, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the four helicopters, were those helicopters the helicopters that were bought for the OPVs? Is that those you are talking about?

Hon. Young: I think that was the helicopters that the Member for Siparia used to use to fly to and from Port of Spain, if I remember correctly, because one of them was used for that. I remember that. They are AWs, the AgustaWestland helicopters. You remember them?

Mr. Singh: Yeah.

Hon. Young: I never flew on it.

Mr. Singh: The AgustaWestland—

Mr. Chairman: Members. Minister of Finance—

Mr. Singh: The AgustaWestland helicopters. [Crosstalk]

Hon. Young: Yes. I think they were originally purchased—

Mr. Chairman: Minister, hold on, hold on. Minister of Finance and Naparima, again, you all are free to have a have a side bar; feel free. No problem. I am recognizing Chaguanas West and then I will hear the Minister.

Mr. Singh: Thank you. I am dealing with the AgustaWestland helicopters, and you said that you had indicated that and which was part of the OPV arrangement
prior to the People’s Partnership Government. But you said that those were not part of the National Helicopter Service. What is the nature of the contract? Did you put and terminate that contract? And is there a cost associated with the contract?

**Hon. Young:** The OPV contract was terminated under your administration.

**Mr. Singh:** No. I am talking about the helicopter part of it, the AgustaWestland—

**Hon. Young:** No. It ran its life. So the only part that was left on it was the maintenance side.

**Mr. Singh:** Yeah.

**Hon. Young:** And we felt that the cost being incurred by the country was an exorbitant cost that could not be continued and we felt that National Helicopter Services, because they bought an AgustaWestland helicopter and were maintaining it themselves, et cetera. So, we are utilizing the National Helicopter Services for value for money.

**Mr. Chairman:** Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Hon. Minister, in the terms of the line Item 23, can you indicate to us, how many vacancies you have for helicopter pilots?

**Hon. Young:** It was not that specific.

**Mr. Chairman:** It was not that specific. You could that information now, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Young:** I will have to submit that.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay. In writing. Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** Point-a-Pierre, you still have question? Proceed.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you. Minister, your assets that you just talked about in respect to the Air Guard, you mentioned two C-26 planes.
Hon. Young: Yes.

Mr. Lee: Correct? That is in operation right now? And your total present complement of staff at the Air Guard, you have 327 and 55. It is 382 thereabout. Right? I am trying to understand what 382 individuals do at the Air Guard to run two C-26 planes?

Hon. Young: Well, as I had said, we have these two C-26 planes, there were also the AgustaWestland helicopters.

Mr. Lee: Which were sent to the National Helicopter—.

Hon. Young: They are being maintained by National Helicopters for use by the Air Guard. So you continue to maintain that complement of Air Guard officers. What we often do is that supplement them into other tasks within the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force, the same way you would see coast guard officers performing duties on land, et cetera, et cetera.

So, we are making sure that all of the various officers and personnel that we have throughout the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force which include the Air Guard officers are being utilized.

We want to get those helicopters back up in the air so that they will be able, those who are the trained pilots, et cetera, engineers, et cetera, will be able to perform those duties. They are currently working, they have military duties, they have patrols, also we utilize them for airport supplementary security and ceremonial duties.

Mr. Lee: And that is all seconded them throughout—

Hon. Young: No. It is not seconding, those are the duties you would assign.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: You still have a question on 016, Chaguanas East? All right. So
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we are moving on. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 127, Item 001, General Administration, pages 127 and 128. I recognize the Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, might you be able to give us some details with respect to line Item 17, that increase of $2.4 million on training? What does that involve? And with respect to training, could you disaggregate for us for local training versus foreign training?—if there is such a component.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Young:** Sorry. Which line Item?

**Mr. Karim:** Line Item 17, Training.

**Mr. Chairman:** 17, Training.

**Hon. Young:** All right. This as you would be aware is under General Administration, so this is training in the Ministry. All right? So this is not training for the other arms of law enforcement throughout the Ministry, they would each have their own training Items. So this is for public officers who provide their services in the Ministry to get various training during the year for them to better complement what is taking place in the national security arena with what was—

**Mr. Karim:** Is there a specialized—it is specialized training of any—? Because this is a substantial increase, eh, from what we had last year. I do not know if you have any specific information with respect to the allocation increase?

**Hon. Young:** It is really for us just to have the ability to send persons—

**Mr. Karim:** Across.

**Hon. Young:** Yeah. Correct.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**UNREVISED**
Mr. Singh: Thank you, Chair. With respect to Item 03, Uniforms, it was mentioned in the budget that there will be a change in the uniforms in the police service, they are coming subsequently, but is there a policy position throughout the national security apparatus? Is there going to be a uniform change? I am just using this line Item to find out a policy position.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Young: Member for Chaguanas West, these uniforms where the estimate is $52,500 for a 12-month period, and this is for the staff at the Ministry of National Security. So what it would be is to boost the morale and get some Polos where they have Ministry of National Security and these types of things in place, and they estate constables that we may have, et cetera, I actually—so it has nothing to do with the change of the police uniforms.

Mr. Singh: No. I agree with that. I said they are coming subsequently. But I wanted to know across the Ministry of National Security apparatus, and you are the line Minister, whether there was going to be a consequent change of uniforms for the prison service, the regiment and so on having regard to the catalyst of the police service?

Mr. Chairman: Member, that is an overall general question you are asking there.

Mr. Singh: But I have a line Item to ask you.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, you want to, you care to answer?

Hon. Young: This line Item—

Mr. Chairman: No. But he just explained that.

Hon. Young: Not at this point in time.

Mr. Singh: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: So we have the Member for Oropouche West and then Caroni
Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, I will point you to line 09 for Rent. And when we look at the revised estimates for 2018, we see it is $90 million, then in 2019, $235 million. We have almost an increase of—

Hon. Young: What line Item?

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: 09.

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 9.

Hon. Young: Right.

Mr. Chairman: Rent/Lease.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: So, we are seeing almost $145 million increase. And I always recall you speaking about “value for money”. So the question is: Has the Ministry done any cost benefit analysis to determine whether to purchase or to rent? And then I will follow up with a subsequent question.

Hon. Young: What this is actually for is a current claim that TSTT is claiming a large sum of money from the Ministry for the CCTV camera system. And in our continued drive for value for money, we have told TSTT, that is not the correct amount. So that is currently in discussion between ourselves and TSTT, and it is in the event that an agreement is reached with TSTT, we will be able to pay them. So that is for the CCTV camera systems.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: And with respect to the vehicles.

Hon. Young: Well you would see that it is vehicles and equipment, so it is for equipment, it is not for vehicles.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Do you know how many vehicles?

Hon. Young: I just said, it is not vehicles. It is for CCTV camera system.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: So even though there are vehicles here.
Hon. Young: Correct. We are not buying any new vehicles there.

Mr. Chairman: That is the line Item.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Okay. All right.

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Contract Employment, number 16, could you give an appreciation of these contract officers what do they do in the Ministry of National Security, and how many?


Dr. Gopeesingh: An appreciation of the amount of contract officers?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 16, Contract Employment; the amount.

Hon. Young: This is contract employment throughout the whole Ministry of National Security, and the administrative side of it, total number of positions 1,369; number filled, 943; vacant without incumbents, 426.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And the various areas within national security—

Hon. Young: Well, yeah. It is wide-ranging. You would have some for defence, some for dealing with the police, you will have some for dealing with the other areas of national security, the ODPM, et cetera.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: No. The question was asked.

Mr. Chairman: The question was asked. Chaguanas East, you still have a question?

Mr. Karim: No.

Mr. Chairman: Pointe-a-Pierre, you want the floor?

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. To Minister, it is in keeping still with Goods and
Services, just over on page 128 which is still under Good and Services. Line Item 36, Extraordinary Expenditure. In 2018, was budgeted $50 million, utilized $67 million, and 2018 is estimated extraordinary to be $70 million. What is “extraordinary” and what is anticipated in 2019 to be unusual? And what was that money spent on, the $67 million in 2018?

Hon. Young: Covert operations.

Mr. Lee: Covert operations. So in 2019 you expect an unusual covert operation for an additional $3 million?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Mr. Lee: So why does that price keep increasing? Is it more covert or it is costing more to covert or the finder’s fee is more expensive? I do not know.

Mr. Chairman: Member, I think the Minister has been clear in his statement, very clear.

Mr. Lee: No. I do not.

Mr. Chairman: Do you care to add anything, Minister, again? So we will go to Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: I think my question was asked.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Chair. Item line 43, Security Services. This is internal security services that is contracted out?

Hon. Young: MTS.

Mr. Singh: MTS. Okay. Good. Thanks.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East, now.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Does that, the covert expenditure that you are speaking about, does that include the vehicles that are rented from time to time under anonymous
type, and you will only see a blue light behind you? And what is the cost of that type of covert thing for rental of vehicles?

**Hon. Young:** The majority of this is actually you would have heard us discuss recently the upgrade in the radar system. So this is really for the upgrades in the radar system.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Okay.

**Hon. Young:** I know what blue vehicles you see with blue lights flashing.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** I know that you just joined national security, but—

**Mr. Chairman:** Member.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** I am being—

**Hon. Young:** You are being facetious, but that is okay.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** I am being fair. There is an area of expenditure under “covert” where you rent vehicles and they do not know, the population would not know that—

**Mr. Chairman:** Member, he did not specify what the “covert” meant. He just made the direct statement.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** I am under line Item 36, Extraordinary Expenditure which the Minister said—

**Hon. Young:** I am very aware of the operations that you are talking about, in the rental and lease of vehicles for covert operations.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yeah.

**Hon. Young:** Obviously from a national security point of view, I am not going to give any details with respect to that whatsoever.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** No. I ask in respect of the numbers of the vehicles, but what is cost of the entire thing for that? And who are you renting?
Hon. Young: Well I am not going to get into any of that.

Mr. Chairman: Members, hold on.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No. You are spending State money without the citizens understanding how their money is being spent.

Mr. Chairman: Member—

Dr. Gopeesingh: No.

Mr. Chairman:—one second. The Minister has made it clear with regard to the information he can divulge at this time. So any other question, Member?

Dr. Gopeesingh: No. I am very upset about it because it is very sad that you are sending X amount of millions and you have about 36/70 million here.

Hon. Young: No. But I have told you that that $70 million the vast majority is for the upgrade of the radar system that you all did not properly maintain during you time.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Do not go there—

Hon. Young: Well I did not want to go there but if you are pushing at words.

Dr. Gopeesingh: You are in Government, so do not go back there.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chair, I am objecting. This is a question and answer session not a debate. This is going on for too long in opinion, respectfully, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: I hear you. Members, okay. One second. Right.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I am asking the question: How much money is for the radar system improvement? And how much money is allocated for the rental of the vehicles?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister, can you be specific in terms of giving that information?—based on the radar and based on the vehicles?

Hon. Young: No.
Mr. Chairman: Okay. He is unable to.

Dr. Gopeesingh: If we had debated that the Minister was on the floor—

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, this is going on too long.

Mr. Chairman: I understand, Minister of Finance. I just want to be clear on the Member’s request. Right. Couva South, you have question?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes, Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Chairman. Just under, we are under Goods and Services—

Mr. Chairman: Line Item.

Mr. Indarsingh:—09, the Minister indicated that the majority of this $145 million plus has to do with the CCTV camera system and so on.

Mr. Chairman: We are still on Goods and Services, page 127, line Item 09.

Mr. Indarsingh: Yeah. Mr. Minister, constituents— [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: No. It is not that he has gone back. We are still on the— [Crosstalk]

Hon. Young: The page before.

Mr. Indarsingh: We are still on the line Item.

Hon. Young: Yeah.

Mr. Indarsingh: Crimes have been perpetrated against the constituents of Couva South from time the time, murders, carjackings and so on, and I have interfaced with the police service—

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, this is not—

Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Finance Minister, you presented the budget. It is my responsibility to—
Mr. Chairman: Couva South, but you address the Chair.

Mr. Imbert: You are wrong. This is not a debate.

Hon. Young: You should have spoken in the budget. They did not let you speak.

Mr. Chairman: Listen. Members.

Hon. Young: Because they did not let you speak in the budget. This is not now the time to speak, ask the question.

Mr. Indarsingh: I am getting there.

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance. I mean, Minister of National Security, one second.

Mr. Chairman: Listen.

Mr. Indarsingh: You cannot tell me how to speak.

Hon. Young: I just did.

Mr. Chairman: Members, again, according to the procedure, you can give a little preamble prior to the thing, again, but let us keep it tight and crisp, come to the question, Member.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: No it is not five minutes, Member. It is not five minutes.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your guidance. I am simply asking the Minister, based on the crimes and constituents going to the police stations in the constituency and in central Trinidad, they are being told by officers of the police service that the majority of these cameras are not working. And I am asking the Minister, based on the substantial sum of money that is being allocated here, could he assure the national community that this CCTV system is fully functional?

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Minister.
Hon. Young: The answer is, the CCTV system is functional. There are a number of cameras that are not working which form part of the dispute, and which is why we have not just stamped it, rubber stamped it.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I object.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Dr. Gopeesingh: You find your voice today.

Hon. Imbert: I have my voice every day.

Mr. Chairman: Members, as the Chair of the committee I am not going to get into any crosstalk with any Members. All right? The procedure is clear. It is not five minutes, it is the preamble. Right? The Chairman will determine the extent of the preamble before the question is posed. All right? No lengthy preambles before the question is posed. No lengthy preambles as we go forward. And again, if the Minister gives a response whether the Member is pleased with it or not, again, the necessary feedback will not be entertained. I will now recognize the Member for Couva East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: By virtue of what my colleague just asked, what are you going to do in terms of more cameras in hot-spot areas in central Trinidad as has been promised year in year out by your regime to increase the amount of cameras for detection of crime?

Mr. Chairman: And the line Item that you are on is Extraordinary?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: And again, you are posting a question which basically—

Dr. Gopeesingh: No. No.

Mr. Chairman:—was asked already.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Is the line Item which speaks about—

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Hon. Young: Equipment?

Dr. Gopeesingh:—Vehicles and Equipment, the rental of—he said that they have to pay for TV cameras with TSTT.

Hon. Young: The National Security Council is addressing the improvement of the CCTV camera system throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But that is a vague answer, Minister.

Hon. Young: And that is as far as we are prepared to go because you do not want to tell the whole criminal element and society how you intend to come at them.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But would it not be nice to tell the entire criminal society that you have CCTV cameras across the country so it could be a deterrent?

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Right.

Hon. Young: Of course, that is just what I just said.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yeah. And this is an imperative for this Government if you want to make—

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, this is not a question. You are debating the matter.

Mr. Chairman: I now recognize the Member for Tabaquite.

Dr. Rambachan: Mr. Minister, how many CCTV cameras have you installed in the last three years?

Mr. Chairman: Minister, that information can be provided.

Hon. Young: I will provide it subsequently.


Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item under Fire Services 17, Training. Why is that, the budget allocation for 2019 is $5.3 million, an increase of $4.8 million? What is envisioned in that aspect of training for the 2019 fiscal?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.
Hon. Young: The fire services have asked for an increase in their training, so this is to facilitate that. Also, there is a certain amount of training that has to take place to reach the higher echelons of the fire services, but can only be conduct away. So it is to provide for opportunity under that.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: What is percentage of the training is conducted away? You said some is to be done away.

Hon. Young: What I have told the fire services and in particular the association, what I am going to attempt to do is reach out to some of our international partners and ask them whether they can conduct some of the training here locally including train the trainer. But for the highest level of fire officers in the service, it actually is part of the regulation that that training be conducted in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Karim: Engineers of the UK.

Hon. Young: Yeah.

Mr. Karim: Mr. Chairman, I just want to continue a subsequent question. Line Item 22, Mr. Minister, part of the explanation is that it includes provisions for fire guardians. Could you tell us how many of the fire guardians in 2018, 3.3 were employed? And how many do you intend to employ, again, in the 2019 allocation?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Young: In 2018 fiscal, we had 90. We are hoping to increase that by 45 this year.

Mr. Karim: Okay. And the training for these people will be done all locally?

Hon. Young: Yeah. Yeah. All the training for that will be done locally.

Mr. Chairman: Tabaquite.
11.30 a.m.

**Dr. Rambachan:** Thank you. Item No. 13, Maintenance of Vehicles. Mr. Minister, I note that you have a very hefty provision of $1.118 million this year for maintenance of vehicles, but I also note that although you had planned to spend 7.3 in ’17, you only spent 3.5 in ’18. I am very concerned about the state of fire service vehicles, especially as I see them in Chaguanas, and where I discern a virtual graveyard of vehicles. I want to know whether there is a planned preventative maintenance programme for fire service vehicles in the fire services. And if so, is this plan available for scrutiny? In other words, do you have records to show that if you say that you have a preventative maintenance plan, that this plan is carried through with the efficiency and effectiveness that one would expect?

**Hon. Young:** Okay. As you would be aware, there have been issues, even though—so you see in 2018 there was $3 million allocated, as the estimate, but they actually spent 3.5. So they spent over what they were supposed to in that period of time. So, in the previous year they actually spent 7.3. So, with that decline in the last fiscal, obviously that affects the proper maintenance of vehicles, et cetera, from 7.3 to 3.5 spent. So, fortunately we have gotten an increase of 6.6, taking it up to 10. It is not the fault of the fire services for the lack of maintenance. What has happened over the last year, as you all would have heard from the Minister of Finance, there have been occasions where, quite simply, all they have been able to do for the month is pay salaries. This affects the maintenance of vehicles, so we are hoping in this year to get the releases to be able to carry out a lot of that maintenance.

**Dr. Rambachan:** Are these maintenance services done in-house, or are they
contracted out?

**Hon. Young:** I actually went and did a tour of the fire headquarters, there is a garage there. They try to do as much as possible in-house. The CFO and his executive did say they are going to try to utilize the in-house a lot more going forward.

**Dr. Rambachan:** One more question, Mr. Chairman, on Item 15, Maintenance of Equipment. Recently, the fire services from Siparia came to “out some fires”, bush fires, and it was appalling to see the quality of hoses that they had to work with. The hoses were just difficult to work with. What are you doing to replace all of these defective hoses that the fire services keep complaining about? And which the public sees, so that, you know, it is really very difficult for them to do their jobs.

**Hon. Young:** Noted. Obviously if we could we would replace all, so it is something we will focus on.

**Dr. Rambachan:** You see, Mr. Minister that is why I asked the question—

**Hon. Young:** No, I understand.

**Dr. Rambachan:**—with preventative maintenance. Because I do not believe that there is a Preventative Maintenance Programme. If there was, then you will find that these problems would be identified earlier up, and action will be taken. So, I do not think, to be fair, it is not fair for you to say that they have been strapped for money. I do not think—

**Hon. Young:** Wait, wait, wait, wait.

**Dr. Rambachan:** The requisite kind—

**Hon. Young:** Mr. Chairman, what does he mean, it is not fair for me to say? That is a fact. Is he suggesting I am not telling the truth? Two things: There is a
preventative system in place; and two, there have been issues with the release of cash to everybody in the Government across the board, and if we were left with more money we would have been able not to be in that position.

Mr. Imbert: I confirm there are cash flow issues, and there is no singling out of any entity. Everybody has been made to make do with less.

Mr. Chairman: I now recognize Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Chairman. With respect to materials and supplies, and I think my colleague spoke about the leaking hoses and of that nature, but I wanted to find out, in the context of the increase in fine, as in the budget speech, what is the enforce—is there going to be a difference in the fire service? Because the first time you see a fire you do not call the police. You call the fire service. And, is there going to be a coordinated effort in order to enforce that so that we prevent the bush fires from taking place? Deliberately that is.

Hon. Young: Mr. Chairman, I did not understand the question.

Mr. Singh: There is an increase in the fines? Okay?

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Singh: The first call and the first response is to the fire service where there is fire.

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Singh: In order to enforce that fine, that penalty, that is now imposed, is there going to be a level of coordination between the fire services and the police service in order for the follow up?

Hon. Young: Yes. Yes, and utilizing the fire guardians.

Mr. Chairman: Couva North, still have a question?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.
Mr. Singh: My neighbour likes to set fire.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 37, Janitorial Services, Minister in 2018 it was $3 million—[Interruption]

Mr. Chairman: Minister, please.

Ms. Ramdial:—in 2019 it is $5.7 million. It is a sharp—

Mr. Chairman: 37, Janitorial Services.

Ms. Ramdial: 37, Janitorial Services—

Hon. Young: Yes.

Ms. Ramdial:—I have noted a sharp increase by $2.7 million, can you explain that?

Hon. Young: Yes. What that is, is to cover moneys owing to the persons who were providing the janitorial services.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: It was asked already.

Mr. Chairman: It was asked. Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Hon. Minister, might you be able to indicate to us under line Item 13, what is the complement of your fire trucks and how many of them are not working?

Hon. Young: Under line Item what?

Mr. Chairman: 13, Maintenance of Vehicles, number of vehicles in the fleet and those that are not working.

Hon. Young: Just give me one second.

Mr. Karim: “Doh take no answer from the floor, you know.”

Hon. Young: We have 261 vehicles, and 58 recommended for fire tenders.
Mr. Karim: If I may be more specific. How many of the fire tenders in the fleet, and how many of those fire tenders are in operation?

Mr. Chairman: Fire tenders only.

Hon. Young: Thirty water tenders, 19 in service.

Mr. Karim: So, 11 not working?

Hon. Young: Correct, which is why we want to do the maintenance that Tabaquite was talking about to get them back in service.

Mr. Chairman: Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 08, Rent, Lease, Office Accommodation, Storage. 2018 was budgeted $4 million here, you utilized $2 million; now in 2019, you went back up to the $4 million, so there is a $2.1 million increase.

Hon. Young: That is to pay rent outstanding.

Mr. Lee: Outstanding rent.

Hon. Young: Same thing like janitorial.

Mr. Lee: And a second follow-up.

Mr. Chairman: Sure.

Mr. Lee: Line Item 03, Uniforms, an increase of $3.6 million.

Hon. Young: I would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his staff for this increase. What we found is the uniform being utilized by fire services need upgrading and replacement, because after you go into a number of fires over a period of time they deteriorate. So, I am hoping that we would be able to purchase new uniforms. Not a change in uniforms, but new uniforms to provide them with.

Mr. Chairman: Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Chairman. To the Minister, could you just
give us the current status of the Mayaro fire station?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item, please?

Dr. Moonilal: I am on Repairs and Maintenance, buildings under fire.

Mr. Chairman: Number?

Dr. Moonilal: 21, page 129—

Mr. Chairman: All right, thank you.

Dr. Moonilal:—fire service, 21, Repairs and Maintenance, buildings. Could you give us the current status of that Mayaro Fire Station because there was some news a few months that it was not operational or had problems with the building, and would we at this time have a full complement of equipment there to service the area?

Hon. Young: You would recall that after the ribbon was cut, I think the sign fell down the next day.

Dr. Moonilal: Yes.

Hon. Young: It was under your administration.

Dr. Moonilal: No, who pulled it down?

Hon. Young: It is operational. It is operational.

Dr. Moonilal: You put back the sign?

Hon. Young: If who put back the sign?

Dr. Moonilal: You put it back?

Hon. Young: You put back the sign?

Dr. Moonilal: Well, you know it fall down.

Mr. Chairman: Please, no crosstalk. Answer the question.

Hon. Young: I have answered, it is operational.

Mr. Chairman: It is operational. Follow-up question. [Crosstalk] Pardon?

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Dr. Moonilal: It is operational with full complement of fire tenders, and equipment, and so on?

Hon. Young: It is operational. There is not the full complement of staff, but it is operational.

Dr. Moonilal: You are welcome.

Mr. Lee: Staying in that same line Item, Minister, Repairs and Maintenance of Buildings. Recently, we had an issue with the fire service station in Mon Repos. How is that treating with in this line Item, Repairs and Maintenance to Buildings?

Mr. Chairman: 21.

Mr. Lee. Line Item 21, the status of that Mon Repos fire service station?

Hon. Young: The Mon Repos fire station, the electrical issues are being addressed.

Mr. Lee: Is the station operational as we speak?

Hon. Young: Yes. Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Item No. 004, Prison Service, page 130. I recognize Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Minister, Item 40. 004, Item 40, Food and Institutions. Seems to be the normal, it is around $14—$16 million allocated for and spent. That figure. And the question is, why would $15 million be allocated in 2018, but a whopping $25 million spent in that same year. And putting $16 million, is that realistic in that context?

Hon. Young: I do not know if the expenditure of $25 million at our prison services is a whopping figure. When you divide that by 12 that is just over $2 million a year, and that is to provide not only the officers, but also the inmates with food, et cetera, and we had outstanding bills that had accumulated from before that were addressed during that period in time. Sixteen million we will attempt to make
do. We may very well be back during the mid-year to supplement that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, that same line Item, is there any attempt for the inmates to actually plan to grow their own food?

**Hon. Young:** That has been attempted. The truth is, yes, there is some attempt, but it will not be able to fully supplement the amount of food required.

**Mr. Chairman:** Tabaquite.

**Dr. Rambachan:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Item 43, Security Services. I see an allocation of $47 million for security services, can you explain, what is the nature of those services?

**Hon. Young:** Where? Which line Item?

**Mr. Chairman:** Line Item 43, Security Services, why the increase?

**Dr. Rambachan:** No.

**Mr. Chairman:** What is the amount?

**Hon. Young:** Yeah, that is for the provision of the drive to get prisoners there on time, the Amalgamated Service.

**Dr. Rambachan:** Amalgamated. Mr. Minister, I thought you were setting up a system where you would not have to use that amount of transport, and you will have electronic courts, or what have you?

**Hon. Young:** Correct, videoconferencing facilities.

**Dr. Rambachan:** Can you say, what is the status of that, so that this amount of money could be reduced?

**Hon. Young:** What is?

**Dr. Rambachan:** What is the status of those video-conferencing calls?

**Hon. Young:** That is a line Item under the Development Programme.
Dr. Rambachan: All right, we will ask it there.

Mr. Chairman: Item 0—

Dr. Gopeesingh: On that same Item, the Security Services, and you said for transportation of the prisoners from A to B, and so on?

Hon. Young: From prison to court.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Have you seen the driving of these security services vehicles, because they can endanger many, many lives, particularly along the roads? I want to ask you, whether you would be kind enough to consider giving these drivers, and the entire thing, a reminder that lives are involved when they are travelling with the rapidity of the speed endangering lives all around, and I want to make a special plea for a reduction in their speed. I know they are security, but they overdo it.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, point taken. All right, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Young: Point taken.

Mr. Chairman: Item 005, Regiment, page 131. I recognize Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Item 40, Food and Institutions, a point I raised in the budget speech. In 2017, $21 million was spent, the allocation was reduced to $17 million. In terms of how much was spent, it was $10 million. You would recall, Chairman, that there are reports that the soldiers are eating channa and rice, and they are not well fed.

Mr. Chairman: Question, please!

Mr. Charles: Yes, I know. The question is, why was $17 million allocated and only $10.5 million spent in the context of complaints from officers—sorry, soldiers, that they were not well fed? Is it true, and explain the reduction in expenditure?
Hon. Young: All I can answer when he asked, is it true? It is true that $10.5 million was spent, as opposed to the 17 that was allocated. Again, this falls under what we have discussed before, and difficulties with the cash and releases of cash. So, you would see now the increase of the 9.9 in this year is out to pay some outstanding bills.

Mr. Chairman: You have a follow-up Naparima?

Mr. Charles: Yes, I have a follow-up.

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead.

Mr. Charles: $2 million was allocated to the headquarters for food, and $2 million spent. Would one not have expected that the burden be shared between the officers and the ranks in the Regiment?

Hon. Young: I stand here without fear of contradiction, I am sure that is what happened.

Mr. Chairman: Item No. 006, Coast Guard, page 132; Item 007, Immigration, page 133. And I recognize Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, would you be able to give us an explanation as to why this dramatic decrease in line Item 15, Repairs and Maintenance, Equipment? And while I am asking that question, could you also confirm for us, what is the maximum waiting time now for a passport, if that is aligned with it?

Hon. Young: I do not know how that falls under Repairs, Maintenance and Equipment. But what I can tell you is, in the fiscal 2018, equipment was upgraded and that type of thing. So, that is what you saw happen there, and that is not going to happen this year.

Mr. Karim: Okay. Has it had any impact in terms of the delivery time of a
passport?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Mr. Karim: And what is the minimum or maximum time?

Mr. Chairman: He made his own line Item, boy. You made your own line Item.

Hon. Young: Two months for a new passport is the maximum, and four weeks for a renewal, maximum.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay, thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 51. Could you advise how many staff have been relocated, and has there been an increase in the relocation of overseas staff?

Mr. Chairman: You could provide that information now, Minister?

Hon. Young: Yes. During this fiscal we expect to relocate 14 staff.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: How many in all? What is the total complement?

Hon. Young: Well, it is on rotation.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Okay, so 14 is the total and they are going to be rotated?

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East, you still have a question?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, Mr. Chair. The repairs and maintenance buildings, Minister, would you care to comment on the oft-repeated statements of the Immigration Detention Centre being a very poor centre in terms of facilities, any idea on that?

Hon. Young: The extensive work to be done there would be under the DPP, but this year there was extensive work done to the IDC, and they have significantly improved the conditions there. But this line Item is really for the offices and stuff
like that.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Well, why—can I be permitted to ask you, how many people are at the detention centre now?

**Hon. Young:** At this current period in time, 144 persons.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And are they going to be there for long or you intend to send them out?

**Hon. Young:** [Laughs] I “cyar” answer that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Again, we will move on. Caroni Central.

**Mr. Imbert:** We will be varying.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** What is that, Imbert, you are being rude again?

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Minister and also Caroni Central, I already—[Crosstalk]—Hon. Member, again, I already conversed with the Minister. [Crosstalk] Caroni Central, question?

**Dr. Tewarie:** Item 15, Repairs and Maintenance Equipment, does that include the coast guard vessels?

**Hon. Young:** Immigration. This is under Immigration.

**Mr. Chairman:** Page 133.

**Hon. Young:** So that is like the passport system, et cetera.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay.

**Hon. Young:** So we could move on to probation—

**Mr. Chairman:** Chaguanas East, you had a question here?

**Mr. Karim:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Right, proceed.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, with respect to line Item 51, I noticed in 2018 we did not use—
Hon. Young: Use what, probation?

Mr. Karim: Immigration.

Hon. Young: We moved on to probation, you know. We are at relocation of overseas staff.

Mr. Karim: I have not migrated as yet to the other page.

Hon. Young: Okay, good.

Mr. Karim: So, with respect to line Item 51, I noticed in the 2018, why was not the full amount used? And you have an increase of 6, would you be able to tell us how many staff will be relocated to—

Mr. Chairman: That was just asked by Cumuto/Manzanilla, and the answer was—

Hon. Young: Fourteen.

Mr. Chairman:—14, or something like that.

Mr. Karim: Which locations?

Mr. Chairman: You want locations now?

Mr. Karim: Yes, because if they are relocating that is different. [Crosstalk] If they are going to Guyana to relocate, it is different to Washington, you know.


Mr. Karim: Any allocation for the new mission in United Arab Emirates?

Hon. Young: Not as yet. Once it is set up we will do it.

Mr. Karim: I thought it was established. Well, you said that.

Mr. Chairman: Members! Members, okay. We now go to Item—[Interruption] Minister of Finance. [Crosstalk] Minister of Finance, okay. [Crosstalk] I spoke, I mentioned, I identified with the Minister of Finance already.

Mr. Imbert: Line Item please.

Mr. Lee: Thank you. Minister, page 141, Air Guard, line Item 13, Maintenance of Vehicles.

Hon. Young: Line Item?

Mr. Lee: 13.

Hon. Young: 13, yes.

Mr. Lee: Maintenance of vehicles, a $6 million increase in this Air Guard maintenance of vehicles, could you specifically state what that hefty increase of $6 million is for?

Hon. Young: To pay outstanding bills for maintenance of the vehicles in the last fiscal, and also to get the—when we say vehicles, this is not plane and helicopters here, eh, this is land transport vehicles, and the helicopters. Sorry, I am told it is also to clear some outstanding bills for the helicopters.

Mr. Lee: Minister, I just want to—when you look at the Air Guard and the complement of staffing there, there are over 355 and the money that is spent over $133 million for the Air Guard, are we getting value for money in that Air Guard display?

Mr. Imbert: This is Repairs and Maintenance. It has nothing to do with salaries.

Mr. Lee: Not only salaries. The total allocation of the Air Guard.

Mr. Imbert: We are dealing with maintenance only.
Mr. Chairman: Member, you all care to identify another line Item in order to—

Mr. Lee: Well, if I look at the total allocation under 016, Air Guard, it is $53 million for the Air Guard for 2019 in respect of Goods and Services, it is a hefty bill amount for an air guard that we really—and I am asking, what is the value at this stage of the air guard for the citizenry of Trinidad and Tobago, of that bulk of money, $53 million, plus the salaries of $80 million, that is $133 million? So, I am just trying to get the Minister—and he talked, it is nothing about the Minister—

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, this is an Item of Repairs and Maintenance and not salaries and—

Mr. Chairman: Again, Minister of Finance, the Member is asking for clarity with regard to the Air Guard and the total sum identified.

Mr. Lee: The Minister understands what I am trying to say.

Mr. Chairman: Again, I am going to post it to the Minister to give him the opportunity to answer.

Mr. Lee: He understands what I am trying to say.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed. Okay Member. Proceed, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you for the opportunity to thank the men and women who serve on a daily basis under the Air Guard. I assume it is not that you are attacking the members of the Air Guard, and the answer is, yes, we will continue to ensure that for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago we get value for money.

Mr. Charles: Item 40, Food at Institution.

Mr. Chairman: 40?

Mr. Charles: Item 40, Air Guard, 016. Am I correct?

Hon. Member: Yes, yes, yes, go ahead.

Mr. Charles: 3.5 in 2018, estimate 5.5; 3.5 spent, and 2019, $5.2 million spent,
an increase of $2 million. The question I am asking, I understand it that there are 355 staff in the Air Guard, and when I look at the Regiment where there are 7,000—I do not know the figure, but it is significantly more; $10 million was spent in the Regiment and a significant $3.5 million spent for 355. Could you explain proportionately the expenditure that—

Mr. Chairman: Member, again, we have already went through the personnel expenses. We are now on Goods and Services. So, again, you need to be specific with regard to Goods and Services versus the personnel that we would already gone through.

Mr. Charles: So, let me ask, are we at Item 40 on page 141?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Charles: Well, I am asking. I am asking why—

Hon. Young: Okay, let me answer. I want to answer.

Mr. Charles: $3.5 million for 355 persons, and it does not seem consistent with expenditure and so on.

Hon. Young: I do not know to what he is referring. What you can do is just do the quick math. Again, this would have fallen under a strain on cash flow during the period of time, because you will see that the $2 million extra this year is to pay outstanding bills. It is arrears, simple.

Mr. Imbert: It is arrears.

Hon. Young: I do not know why they keep picking on us feeding our national law enforcement.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, might you be able to—

[Interruption]
Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister, please!

Mr. Karim: Might you be able to remind us as to specifically what training is involved in line Item 17?

Hon. Young: Line Item 17.

Mr. Chairman: That is training?

Hon. Young: Yes, this would be sending the pilots for the C26 to the simulators, and the same thing for the helicopter pilots. They have to undergo consistent—but why you are looking so perplexed? It is the same thing you were trying to—it is simulator training for both the helicopters as well as the C26 planes—

Mr. Karim: Are you going to be—sorry.

Hon. Young: Re currency training.

Mr. Karim: Are you going to be utilizing the simulator facility at the UTT for helicopters?

Hon. Young: If it can be certified, then, yes.

Mr. Karim: It is available at the Camden air strip.

Hon. Young: Yes, yes, yes.

Mr. Chairman: Item 017, Immigration Detention Centre, page 142; Item 018, Volunteer Defence Force Reserves, pages 142 and 143. Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Immigration Detention Centre—[Interruption]

Mr. Chairman: Members, please! Please! I would identify the line Item—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I had my hand up.

Hon. Member: Her hand was up.

Mr. Chairman: Madam—Member, I notified—I got your attention when I already identified Item 018, please.
Mr. Imbert: You cannot go back.

Mr. Chairman: Please, Members, let us keep it tight. Yes, I would want to give everyone the opportunity to ask their question, but remember I also need to ensure that we get the thing. Detention Centre, okay, I will give you the opportunity, Madam.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, line Item 21, can you indicate if there is an increase in buildings in the maintenance/repairs due to the—

Hon. Young: Work that was done.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Is this current?

Hon. Young: This is to pay some of the bills that were incurred for the improvements we made to the IDC, and to continue to maintain the facilities and improve them where we can.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And it is adequate?

Hon. Young: We will do our best to make it do.

Mr. Chairman: All right. Item 018, Volunteer Defence Force Reserves, pages 142 and 143; Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 143; Item 001, General Administration, page 143. I recognize Tabaquite.

Dr. Rambachan: No, I was on 144, sorry.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Item 002, Fire Service, page 144. Member for Tabaquite.

Dr. Rambachan: Thank you. Under Fire Service, 01 Vehicles, and 04 under Minor Equipment, what vehicles do you envisage purchasing for the sum of $25.3 million in the fiscal year?

Hon. Young: Okay, it is a wrecker. A high-water pressure, high-volume pressure pump vehicle, and then also vehicles for Mayaro.

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Dr. Rambachan: And the vehicles for Mayaro, what, fire tenders?

Hon. Young: Fire tenders, yes.

Dr. Rambachan: So, you have 19 fire tenders in operation now and 11 not operational. Right? Is it possible for you to give us a distribution of where those 19 are located?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Rambachan: And where the 11 are broken down?

Hon. Young: Yes. Yes.

Mr. Chairman: You would provide that, Minister?

Hon. Young: Yes, we will.

Dr. Rambachan: And finally, the other Minor Equipment, you have $15 million that you intend to spend.

Hon. Young: This is for the hoses, and the air tanks, and those types of things. And to make sure they utilize the maintenance plan. I agree with you.

Dr. Rambachan: No, please.

Hon. Young: And it is across the whole public service.

Dr. Rambachan: Do not think I am being facetious about that.

Hon. Young: I do not think you are.

Dr. Rambachan: Because I am very serious about the questions I ask. I am very genuine.

Hon. Young: I know.

Mr. Chairman: Item 004, Prison Service, page 144; Item 005, Regiment, page 144; Item 006, Coast Guard, page 145; Item 007, Immigration, page 145; Item zero 008, Probation Service, page 145. I recognize Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, how many
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vehicles—

Mr. Chairman: Line Item.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Line Item 01, Vehicles. The probation office at this time, do they have any vehicles?

Mr. Chairman: Minister, line Item 01, Vehicles.

Hon. Young: They are making a submission behind that there is one on loan from the Ministry’s administration, and I would like that transferred to them.

12 noon.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: All right. And therefore in light of the intensity of the work, would one vehicle be sufficient?

Hon. Young: We will see if we can purchase one in this fiscal year.

Mr. Chairman: Item 009, Forensic Science Centre, page 146; Item 010, Fire Service (Tobago), page 146; Item 012, Lifeguard Service, page 146. Member for Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: Quick question. On the vehicles there, I see this 2019, 940 for vehicles. Is it just ordinary ground transportation vehicles or something else?

Hon. Young: What is that, sorry?

Dr. Tewarie: The vehicles that are identified in 01 under Lifeguard Service, is it just cars or is it some other equipment?

Hon. Young: There is need to replace an ambulance there as well. It is not the jet skis.

Mr. Chairman: Item 014, Defence Force Headquarters, page 147; Item 015, Cadet Force, page 147; Item 016, Air Guard, page 147. I recognize the Member for Tabaquite.

Dr. Rambachan: Thank you. Under Vehicles, the C-26 aircraft, both operational
you said? Thank you. Given the cost of maintenance of those aircraft, has the Government considered the replacement of those aircraft?

**Hon. Young:** I think you may not have been here earlier, but I did say that, yes. So we are looking at it at the various options, leasing, et cetera. [Crosstalk]

**Mr. Imbert:** Stop asking the same questions, over and over. [Crosstalk]

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister of Finance, Minister of Finance, we are going well, please, please.

**Mr. Imbert:** No, we are not going well.

**Mr. Chairman:** Please, please, Minister of Finance. [Crosstalk] Item 017, Immigration Detention Centre, page 148; Item 018, Volunteer Defence Force (Reserves), page 148; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 148; Item 001, Regional Bodies, page 148. I recognize the Member for Caroni East.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Just under 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, on page 148, line Item 05, IMPACS. Is that the contribution to the Caribbean—

**Hon. Young:** Correct.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And it says it increased. There is a little increase there.

**Hon. Young:** Correct.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** So we pay $15 million towards the Caribbean Security Programme?

**Hon. Young:** It has been allocated.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Are we the largest contributor?

**Hon. Young:** Yes, we are.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Do you have any idea what is the total contribution from Caribbean countries?

**Hon. Young:** Poor.
Mr. Imbert: “Dey doh pay at all.”

Dr. Gopeesingh: “Dey doh”—[Laughter] But you pay all, eh.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva North? You okay? Member for Pointe-à-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. I do not know—005, Non-Profit Institutions. Is it okay to ask a question there?

Mr. Chairman: Where are you?

Mr. Lee: 005, Non-Profit Institutions.

Mr. Chairman: No, I am coming to that now. [Crosstalk] Item 004, International Bodies, page 149; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions, page 149. I recognize the Member for Pointe-à-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you. Minister, Vision on Mission, the 7.2 allocation that you are giving them this year, I want to thank you for that for them. Does it include—and you know there are two outstanding shelters, the Wallerfield, and then they are trying to complete the Claxton Bay Female Rehab Centre. Do you know if this allocation of 7.2, includes assisting them to get those—

Hon. Young: Yes. As you would have seen, this administration took a decision, it was a Cabinet decision actually, to increase the allocation to Vision on Mission from 2.8 million, now to 7.2. So that is just under a 5 million increase and it is to assist them with the projects you have identified as well as the continued good work that we as an administration think they are doing, and we thank Mr. Wayne Chance and his organization for.

Mr. Chairman: Item 007, Households, page 149. Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, might you be able to tell us—I am on line Item 04 and 05. Might you be able to tell us the cost
Hon. Young: I will and I will provide it.

Mr. Karim: Do you have an idea as to how many trainees in each of these, CCC?
Hon. Young: I want to give you the accurate information—we have it there?

Mr. Karim: Oh, you have it there? So how many in CCC and how many in MiLAT and what is the cost per trainee of each of these two programmes?

Hon. Young: All right, they do not have the cost per trainee. We currently have 816 in CCC and we have about 72 in the Cadets of MiLAT, currently, and we are looking to take on another 103. No, actually sorry, those are two, it is two different years. Sorry, yes, sorry, so we actually have 175 in MiLAT, currently in the programmes, 175. So we have 72 graduating in 2019 and 103 graduating in 2020. In the CCC, we have, currently, 816 in training.

Mr. Karim: How many MiLAT Centres do you have?
Hon. Young: One.

Mr. Karim: Mausica?
Hon. Young: Yeah.

Mr. Karim: Mausica. All right. So you will give me the cost per trainee in writing when you calculate it, based on the allocations.

Hon. Young: Now, you know—I could tell you how much funding they have now and you could divide it.

Mr. Karim: Yeah, I know but if you could—

Hon. Young: Because there is no scientific way of calculating it because of course as you know—

Mr. Karim: I did not calculate it yet. But I know the officers—

Hon. Young: Yeah, we will provide it, we will provide it.
Mr. Karim: They may have it right away.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I am just following up in addition to my colleague’s question. How many Civilian Conservation Corps trainees are trained on an annual basis?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item?

Dr. Gopeesingh: He said that there are 800 plus in the school, the same line Item, 04 and 05, but I will ask on 04. How many trained per year and could you give us the number of trainers who do the training for these trainees?

Hon. Young: For the CCC?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes.

Hon. Young: The 1,600 trained a year and the number of trainers, are—120.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So one trainer trains approximately—

Hon. Young: Well, you cannot work it out like that, because some programmes will have two, three, depending on the type of programme, to make sure it is properly safe and these types of things.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, I just want to make a small observation.

Hon. Young: “Um hmm.”

Mr. Chairman: Quickly please, Mr.—

Dr. Gopeesingh: The amount of trainers to trainees has been extremely superfluous, too many and it is top-heavy and you are spending a lot of money on the trainers up there and the trainees are not coming.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, thanks Member.

Hon. Young: I would just like to say in response to that, actually the number of trainers went up during 2010 to 2015 and we are in the process of reducing it to get it more in alignment with international best practice.
Mr. Chairman: Member for Naparima, you still have—? Item 009, Other Transfers, page 150. Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Item 05, Crime Stoppers Trinidad and Tobago Limited. I see 2 million was spent last year and 2 million has been estimated, allocated. But the Minister of Finance in his budget address did speak about an additional 2.5 million with respect to the 25 most wanted criminals and any individual assisting with their—

Mr. Imbert: What is the question?

Mr. Charles: The assisting would have access to that fund. The question is: Why is it 2 million and the additional funding has not been allocated?

Mr. Chairman: Member, it is two different aspects.

Mr. Charles: What is that?

Mr. Chairman: It is two different aspects.

Mr. Imbert: I will answer that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: When the budget documents were sent to the printer, the new provision had not yet been finalized. This is common place in a budget. What will happen during the year, if demands are made upon Crime Stoppers to pay the 100,000 for any wanted criminal who has been convicted, a transfer or virement will be applied for and it will be made and adjustments will be made in the mid-year review.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, two line Items. The first one, 01, can you advise how many persons have applied under the Criminal Injuries Compensation and how many were in fact successful?
Hon. Young: I will provide that, yes.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And the other line Item 10, Office of Disaster Preparedness. Would the office be providing training to communities in light of the fact of how—

Hon. Young: That is a current ongoing programme and they work very closely with the municipal corporations and making sure their first responders have sufficient levels of training, et cetera. So yes, the answer is yes, it is still currently ongoing.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: You indicated that the regional corporations—but the regional corporations are separate to the communities and sometimes the communities are in fact first responders in certain instances. And therefore I would like to recommend that training be afforded to communities.

Hon. Young: Noted.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, line Item 02. Strategic Services Agency. I see an increase by 30 million. Could you care to elaborate a bit on that?

Hon. Young: No.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Chair. Back to line Item 10, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management, ODPM. I would like to find out the complement of staff in this organization. Because you see, from my experience you have a serious problem when you have a real disaster in flooding and so on. So the complement of staff—and I think Minister, since you are new on the job perhaps you can take a fresh look at this organization and its integration into the
communities.

Mr. Chairman: Staff Complement.

Mr. Singh: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Chairman. Minister, might you be able to give us some details as to the line Item 17, The Movant/ Laventille Initiative.

Hon. Young: This is an initiative that fell under National Security working along with the Ministry of Education on working through a school or schools in this area.

Mr. Karim: Will you be kind enough to give consideration to my constituency, the Enterprise initiative.

Hon. Young: Yes, I am sure if you write to me, it will be given active consideration.

Mr. Karim: You will get that letter tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am on 02, Strategic Services Agency. And I know the Minister has indicated that he would not be in a position given the nature of this, to explain an increase and I will grudgingly accept that. [Crosstalk] But could I ask a question—

Mr. Chairman: Member, again, please.

Dr. Moonilal: Could I ask the question in a way that does not involve at all security—

Mr. Chairman: Question please.

Dr. Moonilal: —but organization. I see here, this includes the provision for a National Operations Centre and training academy. Is it that in this fiscal you are returning to a National Operations Centre linked to that organization? Because it
said, 02 includes that, in our Explanation Note.

And the other related point is that, if that is so, Mr. Minister, then the figure may be actually too low as opposed to too high. Because there may be much more resources required with an integration of three agencies as opposed to one, because the Actual for Strategic Services Agency was 103 million in 2015. It went to 207 million in 2017. Now you are estimating 190, but you have included the NOC, which may be reincarnated now and the National Security Training Agency.

**Mr. Chairman:** You care to comment there, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Young:** There is no reincarnation of the NOC. We will be the first administration properly utilizing the NOC and calling it the National Operation Fusion Centre and making sure that everybody under there is properly utilized. When you do the math and you look at it, you all want—[Crosstalk]

**Dr. Moonilal:** So the fusion centre is there? Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** Again, again. All right. You are okay there, Mr. Minister? I now move to the Member for Caroni East. Member for Couva South. No? Member for Caroni Central. [Crosstalk]

**Dr. Tewarie:** Just a simple question—

**Mr. Chairman:** Hold on. I know. The Member for Caroni Central I am recognizing.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay, just a simple question on Strategic Services Agency. In 2018, you spent 30,000 less.

**Hon. Members:** Thirty million.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Thirty, sorry, million. And in 2019, you allocated the same amount. What explains the fact that you did not spend the 30 million in 2018?

**Mr. Chairman:** You could shed any light there, Mr. Minister?
Hon. Young: Yeah, what this would have been is a combination again of the whole cash flow item. But you would see that what we are saying is what we believe the proper estimate or sufficient estimate, annual estimate, is the 190.

So you will see the Estimate for 2018 was 190, we have come back at 2019, it is at 190. We were only able to spend 160, and as I say, that is as a result of cash flow.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item is 23. Any reason or rationale for the discontinuation of the Community Comfort Patrol system?

Hon. Young: That was actually a decision taken since 2017.

Dr. Gopeesingh: You have any rationale for the decision or you prefer not to?

Hon. Young: We did not think it was good value for money.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given the significant traffic challenges and jams we have in the Chaguanas area, line Item 16, do you plan to increase the amount of traffic wardens in the Chaguanas area?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item, 16.

Hon. Young: This is the Transit Police Unit. The traffic wardens fall under Ministry of Works and Transport.

Mr. Karim: These are the people on the PBR too?

Hon. Young: Yeah, correct. And throughout.

Mr. Chairman: Members, at this time I would like to suspend the sitting for approximately 15 minutes, until 12.30 p.m.

12.16 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee suspended.

12.30 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee resumed.
Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we will now move on to the *Draft Estimates of the Development Programme*. Yes, new book. Consolidated Fund, page 48, Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Chief Whip, you all have the new book, right?

Mr. Lee: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Nice.

Mr. Lee: Page 48.

Mr. Chairman: Page 48 to 53. Question? Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: 015, Construction of Coast Guard Facility at Galeota; 021, Refurbishment of Facilities at Staubes Bay in Tobago and Hart’s Cut. And I did not see anything in respect of Cedros. And given the fact that Cedros is critical to a particular problem we face, why has no allocation been made. Under the Head A., Coast Guard, 015, 021, 040, 042, and I did not see anything for—it is just a question, we are with coast. The Cedros facility, the base, given that that is critical to our—I would have thought that would be the priority.

Hon. Young: Well, first of all you would see that some of the Items Members referred to—so 015, Construction of Coast Guard Facility at Galeota, there is nothing there for this year. Staubes, there is nothing there. What is the other one you referred to? Tobago, there is nothing there.

Mr. Charles: And Hart’s.

Hon. Young: Hart’s Cut. So we are focusing on Hart’s Cut this year and we have allocated 3.5 million to get the work done there.

Mr. Charles: So the question is, you are satisfied with the facilities at Cedros?

Hon. Young: Well, it is not the priority Item right now in this fiscal for down at Cedros. I intend to go and visit down in Cedros and see what is there and if there is work that can be done, then we will look into it. As you are aware Cedros is an
area that we are focusing on. Well, we will focus by where the patrols are and that type of thing.

**Mr. Charles:** Yeah. I have visited it on about five occasions and I did not—

**Hon. Young:** You are one of those that go backwards and forward between Venezuela and Trinidad?

**Mr. Charles:** No, no, I am not like you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Caroni Central.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Item 019, Purchase of Vessels for the Coast Guard. Are these new vessels or are they payments on vessels that we already have?

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister.

**Hon. Young:** Under this Item we are looking to acquire some interceptors this year to supplement the fleet.

**Dr. Tewarie:** So it is additional vehicles.

**Hon. Young:** Yes.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Can I ask Minister, on this line Item: How are the existing vessels in Chaguaramas deployed? Because a lot of the time many of the vehicles are stationed in Chaguaramas and not really deployed. I mean, is there a plan, a strategy for that?

**Hon. Young:** There is. What you would not see is for example, the vessels that are stationed in Charlotteville in Tobago, down in Galeota and stuff as well. So it is rotational. And what we are doing is, we are utilizing—what the Coast Guard are doing is utilizing the vessels that are available, sea worthy. And we currently have them out on patrols, et cetera, and we will station them in certain places and do a rotation. So the ones you see in Chaguaramas are some that need work and this type of thing.
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Mr. Chairman:  Member for Mayaro.

Mr. Paray:  Thank you very much, Chairman.  Minister, with line Item 050, Construction of Coastal Erosion Protection at Galeota.  I just want to bring it to your attention that that area, it is really in dire need of attention, but what is more important is that there are exposed condensate lines—

Hon. Young:  Correct.

Mr. Paray:  And I was just hoping that you would have been having conversations with the relevant oil companies in engaging the refurbishment of that area.

Hon. Young:  The answer is, yes, and in fact we had the Ministry of Works and Transport get their engineers down there, et cetera, and come with a plan, because I am very familiar and aware of the line that you are talking about and the rust and corrosion that is beginning or has been taking place on it.  So we will engage some of the other, the multi-nationals, et cetera, for assistance.

Hon. Member:  Just one follow-up in terms of—

Mr. Chairman:  Your mike, your mike, Member.

Mr. Paray:  In terms of the additional vessels, more specifically to Galeota.  I know in the Galeota area there is an issue with the port.  Any conversation with NEC in terms of being able to facilitate the coast guard vessels to berth in the port down on that side?

Mr. Chairman:  Minister.

Hon. Young:  There are conversations taking place.

Mr. Paray:  Nothing, beyond the conversations as yet.  All right.

Mr. Chairman:  The Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh:  Thank you, Chair.  Line Item 165, Base Infrastructure for Camps at La Romaine (South), Felicity and Forres Park.  There is an allocation of $7.7
million. Minister, this is agricultural land that is in Felicity and it is land being occupied by farmers who are planting a significant amount of sweet potato. And you would be close to one of the persons who do.

Mr. Chairman: Member, please.

Mr. Singh: I think that—I want to know, what is the status of this matter? Because there has been no consultation in the community about the sale.

Mr. Chairman: You could shed any light there, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Young: No need to, no need to get worried about it. This work is going to be done in La Romaine.

Mr. Indarsingh: Land grabbing.

Hon. Young: Who is that, Dulalchan?

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva South, please, you know those comments, you want it on Hansard, Member? [Crosstalk] But still the Hansard will pick it up hon. Member. Come on Members. Item 005, Multi-Sectorial and Other Services, pages 53 and 55.

Mr. Indarsingh: You now know why Dulalchan did not get the work. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: You all finished now, Members? Infrastructure Development Fund, page 180. New book. [Crosstalk]

Hon. Member: I did not know we were doing all in one. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Item 005, Multi-Sectorial and Other Services, pages 53 to 55. [Crosstalk] I called that, I saw no hands.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, let us move along please. You passed it. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: No, no, no. Members, listen, it is a stipulated procedure of how it is done. Item 005, Multi-Sectorial and Other Services, pages 53 to 55. I looked up and I saw no hands. Chief Whip, Chief Whip, that is the procedure. We call
the pages from when to when and you all identify. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, we have eight more Heads to do.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Naparima, where do you have a question?

Mr. Charles: I have a question on 006, page 53. Establishment of an Electronic Monitoring Programme for Trinidad and Tobago, which you have been here, on page 53. We have been hearing about this since 2016.

Mr. Chairman: Line Item?

Mr. Charles: Line Item 006. And the question is, this is critical to our war on crime.

Mr. Chairman: Question.

Mr. Charles: Why was 6 million estimated and only 500,000 spent in a critical area?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much. That 500,000 was for the research being done and also the RFP process, et cetera, that went out. The evaluation you will be happy to know that Cabinet has recently taken a decision to award and to have—[Crosstalk] well, let me finish—and to have implemented this electric monitoring bracelet system in this fiscal and it will get done.

Mr. Charles: It will get done in this fiscal?

Hon. Young: It will get done in this fiscal, yes.

Mr. Chairman: The Member for Mayaro.

Mr. Paray: Thank you Minister. Item 012. Could the Minister give us a little update on how the Establishment of the Custodian Unit, how it is coming along in terms of its progress, the DNA Custodian Unit?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.
Hon. Young: I touched on it earlier. The answer, it is coming along very well. We have the custodian in place. The custodian is doing his work. The staff are there and as I said we will be building a new facility, state-of-the-art facility to deal with it in this fiscal.

12.40 p.m.

Mr. Charles: Item 007, Establishment of an Offender Management Programme. Nothing was spent. Estimated $1 million in 2018, nothing spent. Could you just tell us what this is and why it seems to be not a priority?

Hon. Young: I do not know if it is right to say it is not a priority. This is the computerization of a system. What we have been discussing is, we have actually been discussing how the Canadians could assist us with the system that they utilize, and we have been trying to get proper value for money and see if we could even get some systems donated, et cetera. So it is very active.

Mr. Charles: It is the computerization of?

Hon. Young: As it says, the Offender Management System. So like when you are arrested and you go into the system, we monitor you all the way through. This is when your court date would be; this is what has happened for your court date; this is your next court date, et cetera.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Minister line Item 032: Citizen Security Programme. I am seeing an increase by—no—$4.4 million. Yes, there is a decrease, actually. Can you account for that?

Hon. Young: The Cabinet is currently looking at the continuation of the programme.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Page 54, Minister, under Equipment and Vehicles—

Hon. Young: Which number?
Mr. Lee: Page 54, 008: Acquisition of Naval Assets, $20 million is allocated there. Could you describe, what are those naval assets, first? And then I have a follow-up.

Hon. Young: Boats.

Mr. Lee: And then on page 55, 009: Acquisition of Two Naval Patrol Vessels, $24 million. How different are those two versus what you just described?

Hon. Young: What we just described is the continuation of payments for the Chinese vessel and then—

Mr. Lee: Which line Item is that you are talking about?

Hon. Young: That is the first one you talked about, 008. And then this acquisition of two naval patrol vessels is the acquisition of two Cape Class vessels from Austal.

Mr. Lee: From Austal?

Hon. Young: From Austal.

Mr. Lee: So, is $24 million the total payment for—

Hon. Young: No, no, no. That will cover the deposits and this type of thing.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West?

Mr. Singh: Chair, the question has been asked by my colleague, the Chief Whip.

Mr. Chairman: So I can go to Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: It is the same question, but you said two vessels from Austal and I thought there were two different sources—

Hon. Young: That is the fast ferries.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay.

Hon. Young: These are naval vessels for the Coast Guard.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay, separate and distinct from the Tobago arrangements.
Hon. Young: From the fast ferries, correct.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Item 053 on page 54: Institutional Strengthening of the Forensic Science Centre, $1 million; nothing spent—$1 million allocated. And 001: Extension and Modification of Facilities, Forensic Science Centre, $1 million, 001. So I am taking the two together, because it deals with the Forensic Science Centre.

Hon. Young: Correct.

Mr. Charles: 053 and 001, in the context of the fact that they, again—the Forensic Science Centre is critical. It seems to be moneys allocated and not being spent. Is there a reason in these two cases?

Hon. Young: The money will be spent in this fiscal.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 010: Acquisition of Vehicles for Ministry of National Security. I see this is a new project for $10 million. Can you explain?

Hon. Young: Which one, sorry?

Ms. Ramdial: 010: Acquisition—

Mr. Chairman: 010: National Operations Centre; Construction Project.

Hon. Young: No, that is payment of the bills that were left behind. Sorry, National Operations, 010, not so?

Mr. Singh: No, no, it is under page 55.

Hon. Young: Sorry. Acquisition of Vehicles—

Mr. Chairman: Member, you are on 010, not so?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Which is page 54—

Ms. Ramdial: No—
Hon. Young: No, they have two 010s.


Hon. Young: It is to acquire vehicles for the Ministry of National Security.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, 010 at page 54: National Operations Centre. Is it the same thing what you were saying before is the National Operation Fusion Centre? How is this different? Is this the same thing?

Hon. Young: It is the same place.

Mr. Lee: Minister, page 54, 011: Construction of Probation Hostels. In 2018, a budgeted of $1 million. Nothing was spent, and now you have $200,000 in respect to construction of probation hostels. Could you enlighten us what that is about?

Hon. Young: That is for land acquisition.

Mr. Lee: In what location?

Hon. Young: From a security point of view we do not want to disclose the location.


Question put and agreed to.

Head 22 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you Mr. PS and the technocrats and senior officers from the Ministry of National Security.

At this time, Standing Finance Committee is suspended to 1.45 p.m.

12.47 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee suspended.

1.45 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee resumed.
Madam Chairman: This meeting of the Standing Finance Committee is now resumed. We are at Head 64: Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, page 319.

Head 64: Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, $2,176,150,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of National Security to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, Members of the House, executive of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Commissioner of Police, Mr. Griffith. Ma’am, as we are all aware, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is tasked constitutionally with the responsibility for the safety and security of Trinidad and Tobago. We welcome the new Commissioner and his acting Deputy Commissioners and the other executives here, and we are ready to proceed.

Question proposed: That Head 64 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the question is the sum of $2,176,150,000 for Head 64, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Head and Item to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure and the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. We now shall proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. Sub-Head 01: Personnel Expenditure, page 319. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the hon. Minister, line Item 01 and 02. Will this increase, hon. Minister, make provision for the SRPs who will be put on par—because there is a request for them to be put on par with their colleagues. They do not have the same benefits and they do the same job.

Hon. Young: Sorry, I did not get the last part.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: The SRPs, if this increase will allow for the—make provision for the SRPs to be put on par with their colleagues in the police service. They are not on the same—they do not get the same benefits.

Hon. Young: No, but that would not fall under the budgetary Item. This allows for the hiring of more SRPs. But with respect to what you have just raised, that is a policy decision that I am sure will be looked at.

Mr. Charles: Item 01, the 10 million increase, and it says: includes provision for vacant post with incumbents. Would the Minister care to give us an idea, which posts?

Hon. Young: We will have to provide that.

Mr. Charles: No problem. Thanks very much. Item 03: Overtime monthly-paid officers. And I have read in the—

Hon. Young: Which one, sorry?

Mr. Charles: Item 03. And I have read in the public forum the idea that the Government is going to look closely at the overtime, but I see in 2018 the estimates were 300, so they estimated $300 million but spent $66 million more. And I see in 2019 it is 311, decreased by $55 million. Could the Minister tell us some of the steps there are being taken to reduce overtime so that we would not have another situation when the revised figure ends up higher?

Hon. Young: Correct. One of the things that has happened in the past couple months is there has been a review of the overtime and audit of the overtime. There were certain discrepancies that were discovered, so certain measures, additional approval measures, have been put in place and that is one of the items and one of the steps that have been taken to reduce, if there was, in fact, this inflation. And there is a strong belief and evidence to support that there was an inflation of the
overtime figures. So there are measures that have been put in place, including audit measures and approval measures.

Mr. Charles: So therefore, we could have some comfort in the mid-year review that it would not be a similar exercise where we would be called upon to increase the—

Hon. Young: To decrease the overtime.

Mr. Charles: To increase the figure for overtime. The measures, you think, you are satisfied with them?

Hon. Young: No, but what it does is, those measures will lead to a decrease in the figure for overtime.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, could you give us an idea of the complement of the police service that will—under the salaries and cost of living and wages and COLA?

Hon. Young: Seven thousand, two hundred serving officers, 3,100 SRPs.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So the SRPs is in addition to that?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But are those 7,200 positions filled, or that is supposed to be?

Hon. Young: Yes, that is filled, because they are serving officers.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Serving officers. All right, thank you.

Dr. Rambachan: Minister, of the 10,300 available officers, how many officers are actually working? When you consider that you have officers who are suspended, officers on sick leave, officers on vacation leave, how many officers are actually working?

Hon. Young: The estimate at this stage is about, from that figure, about 500 are not actively working.
Dr. Rambachan: Five hundred actively working.


Dr. Rambachan: So, is it that—do the officers work on shifts?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Rambachan: And what is the length of a shift?

Hon. Young: Eight hours with a 40-hour work week.

Dr. Rambachan: So what then would you say would be the complement of officers on any shift?

Hon. Young: I do not have that information. What you are asking at any given point in time—

Dr. Rambachan: How many officers are manning the country on an eight-hour shift?

Hon. Young: We will have to provide that information.

Madam Chairman: That information would be provided in writing, yes?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have 10,000 officers and I was told last year that the sanctioned strength of the police is 7,000, some figure like that. Correct?

Hon. Young: Correct. So it is 7,200 serving officers.

Mr. Charles: But when one does the analysis, we have about three or four times police per capita than comparative countries like Canada and the United States, I am told; per capita. I think you are aware of that.

Hon. Young: I do not think it is as much as three or four, but we do have a higher ratio.
Mr. Charles: But we do have a higher ratio.

Hon. Young: Yes, depending on—with certain North American and Scandinavian countries, yes.

Mr. Charles: Excellent, thanks. Has there been any—I know a manpower audit was done. But has there been any attempt to determine what ought to be our sanctioned strength of the police service, given our culture, the particular realities—environmental realities we have in Trinidad.

Hon. Young: There have been several studies over the past few years, including the most recent which was laid in Parliament, and then the National Security Joint Select Committee looked at the Prof. Deosaran Report. So the answer is, yes, there have been a number of appraisals, reports, studies, done over the years. The most current one that we are looking at and going to work from is the Deosaran Report.

Mr. Charles: And did it give a figure for an ideal?

Hon. Young: It did, yes.

Mr. Charles: Could you tell us, please, approximately?

Hon. Young: Well, it was laid in Parliament. I cannot remember the figure, but I am sure we could find it in the Parliament.

Mr. Charles: Because this will speak to recruitment and to those issues.

Hon. Young: Correct. But remember you have attrition with retirement leave and these types of things. But, yes.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Hon. Minister, the staff complement for the police service, is it 7,200-plus, or is it—

Hon. Young: You heard what the Commissioner was just telling me. The sanctioned strength is 7,884. So we have 7,200. So the quick mathematics, that is 684 short.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And will the policy that you will have to make, obviously, look at putting the SRPs who may be qualified into those positions?

Hon. Young: SRPs, as you may know, some of the SRPs are already retired police officers, et cetera, so you have to look at who can be absorbed from the SRP into the permanent police force. So that is something that I understand is constantly ongoing, et cetera.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And how many positions are there for the SRPs?

Hon. Young: How many positions—right now we have a total of 2,965 SRPs, which includes male and the female—that is the current strength—and then we have 374 retired officers who are precepted into the SRP.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And on line Item 58, these medical expenses are related to—

Hon. Young: Fifty-eight?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Five-eight.

Hon. Young: What page is that?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Same page, 321.

Madam Chairman: What page, Member, are you on? We are on 319.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Sorry, sorry.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Ma’am. To the hon. Minister, just about two or three quick questions. You said earlier about the 500 police officers that are not in service at the time for one of several reasons—

Hon. Young: They are not on duty.

Dr. Moonilal: On duty. Could you undertake to provide to us a breakdown of that, of the 500? For what purpose it would be? And also for the persons themselves, how long an individual officer will not be on duty because of a certain
reason?

Hon. Young: The Commissioner of Police has actually recently asked for that to be done, so when it is done we will take a look at it and if it can be provided it will be provided.

Dr. Moonilal: Sure. The other question here is, you spoke of the shortage or shortfall in the numbers, at 684. How many officers is it intended that this year, in the fiscal 2019, you would try to recruit, to work on that 684?

Hon. Young: About 500, two batches.

Dr. Moonilal: Five hundred?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Moonilal: Okay. And finally, at 06, if you could just give us a short detail on the remuneration to board members. What boards these would be—what boards are identified that would be provided for in this Head?

Hon. Young: That is the examination board.

Dr. Moonilal: Only the examination board?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Moonilal: Okay, thank you.

Dr. Rambachan: Mr. Minister, I am getting some problems reconciling your figures. You said there are 7,200 officers—

Hon. Young: Serving officers.

Dr. Rambachan:—serving and 3,100 SRPs, right?

Hon. Young: Um-hmm.

Dr. Rambachan: And of that amount, only 500 are not serving at any one point in time.

Mr. Charles: Actively serving.
Dr. Rambachan: So am I to assume that those are officers on suspension and sick leave? What about the percentage of officers who are on leave, of this 10,300 or the 7,200? What percentage of officers are on leave? I am trying to establish really how many officers are on the ground during a shift.

Hon. Young: No, no, hold on. You are mixing things up. Let me answer them sequentially.

Dr. Rambachan: Okay.

Hon. Young: So, I told you the figure that are not actively on duty; for suspension, sick leave, et cetera. It is roughly around 500. There are actually 6,694 that can be placed on duty.

Dr. Rambachan: Right.

Hon. Young: All right? And then—that is in the establishment. And then 1,977 for the SRPs. All right? And then out of that—and it would not be the SRPs; it would be the establishment—there is about a 15 per cent who are on leave at given points in time, outside of the suspension and sick leave, your normal leave, your vacation leave and these types of things.

Dr. Rambachan: That is about 1,000; 1,050, 1,060.

Hon. Young: Yes, correct.

Dr. Rambachan: So you have about 6,000 officers now, of the 7,000—

Hon. Young: Correct, out of the establishment, correct.

Dr. Rambachan: And if you divide that in three shifts or two shifts?

Hon. Young: Well, you see, depending on the different branch or the different area of the service that you are in, you may be on a shift system. Guard and Emergency is 24/7. You could get called out, et cetera; Special Branch. So it is not a simple as that. But go on.
Dr. Rambachan: And this 7,200 you are talking about, does this include officers who are doing administrative duties?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Rambachan: So then active policing in terms of people who are in the police stations, who are on the front line, as I want to call it, actively—how many officers are really available in active policing? Because if you have the administrative people in the administration, that is a different thing to the people who are operational on the front line.

Hon. Young: Well, I mean, it kind of, what you may be suggesting or implying there, contradicts with the statement that Naparima made a short while ago. Because the statement he was making is that our ratio is higher than First World—North America and some Scandinavian countries. So when you do that analysis of the two, I am not quite sure what the answer is, or what it is that you are asking. But the ratios are not below where they should be.

Dr. Rambachan: I want to ask the question, but 30 seconds to make the preliminary, Madam Chairman, is simply this. There is a feeling outside in the population, many times when you call a station: “We do not have policemen available”. And I am trying to establish, really, how many police officers are on active duty on a shift that we do not get this kind of comment being made. That is what I am trying to get at. And it cannot be 7,000.

Hon. Young: But we have established it is not going to be 7,000.

Dr. Rambachan: Right. And then when you establish that it is about 6,000—

Hon. Young: Correct. But it will be even less, because when you take out Guard and Emergency, you take out MOPS, you take out these types of things—

Dr. Rambachan: Right. So it begs the point—
Hon. Young: About 1,600 to 2,000, I am told, in the station.

Dr. Rambachan: Right. So now you come down to 4,400 officers and you have two shifts, basically. So is it that the country is at any one point in time manned by an equivalent of about 2,200 to 2,500 policemen on the shift?

Hon. Young: Yes. But you have operational arms that you can call out should there be a need for an emergency basis, and this type of thing. But, yes.

Dr. Rambachan: In the context, therefore, of the crime situation as we have it, is there not a case now, therefore, for the precepting of officers in the defence force to supplement the police service and make it more highly operational in terms of crime fighting?

Hon. Young: No.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Chairman. Minister, taking note of the—sorry, line 03 in terms of the overtime. Taking note of this 15 per cent more so reduction in terms of the overtime, and also taking note that there may be some fluff, 15 per cent reduction from 366 to 311—15 per cent—and taking note that there may be some fluffing going on in terms of the overtime, do you think with that reduction that—and a lot of the policing is strategic; it is not planned. You know, in the night you have to pull together a team to do raids and so on. Do you think by putting this control on it, we may end up putting a little pressure on the police service to deliver on some of those types of activities which are not planned? And what do you think the police will be putting in place to avoid a reduction in that type of overnight service and so on?

Hon. Young: The answer is no. What has been put in place is a proper accountability and a transparent system where we are making sure that the taxpayer gets value for money on payment of overtime. This will, in no way,
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money from other Heads, et cetera.

**Mr. Charles:** Supplemental.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Could the Minister indicate, what are the areas, the priority areas, for training in fiscal 2019?

**Hon. Young:** One of the things that the Commissioner and myself are doing is we are speaking to the Police Social and Welfare Association for the officers themselves to identify some of the areas that they would like us to access this type of training; and one of the areas, for example, is how to deal with gangs and these types of things. But we would leave it for the officers to identify where they think the prioritization of training should be, in the most instants, and then, of course, the Commissioner and his executive will decide the other areas: fraud, computers, et cetera.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have three line Items. The first one, line Item 61, Insurance, is this for active officers on duty?

**Hon. Young:** No.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Okay. Is there an insurance for—

**Hon. Young:** It is self-insurance. The State self-insures. So if officers are injured on duty, et cetera, the State pays for it.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** And line Item 58, is this for the active officers on duty?

**Hon. Young:** The medical expenses, yes. So this is a fund that they will be able to access, but we also utilize the state public health sector system and, again if this is not sufficient we will vire money.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** And 51, final, can you advise how many officers—

**Hon. Young:** Sorry, which one? 51? Right. Relocation. Uh-huh.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:—are relocated as overseas staff?

Hon. Young: Right now we have two, but there is a drive for us to increase that.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 03 under Goods and Services, Uniforms. It was mentioned in the budget that there was going to be a change in the uniforms.

Hon. Young: Which number?

Madam Chairman: 303, Uniforms.

Mr. Singh: Page 319. Has the design been completed for these new uniforms?

Hon. Young: It is currently being looked at. There is a design that has been proposed.

Mr. Singh: I want the hon. Minister to take into consideration that the Star of David is a colonial relic and it is a sign of Judaism, and after 56 years of independence you may want to contemplate a new insignia for the police service.

Hon. Young: Thank you very much.

Dr. Bodoe: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, line Item 13, Maintenance of Vehicles, and I am speaking to the estimate of $34 million for Maintenance of Vehicles. Three related questions: one, the number of vehicles that would be serviced by this allocation; two, the number of vehicles that would be out of service at any given time; and three, the average time that vehicles will be off the road for service?

Hon. Young: All right. The number of vehicles currently is 1,758. The number that are operational are 1,350. So we have 428 non-operational vehicles. The Commissioner of Police has been looking at—well, he is currently doing an audit, out of those 428 what can be brought back to be road worthy. To answer the last question is an impossibility because, as you would know, you could send your
vehicle in and they tell you one day, they tell you two days, it could turn to three weeks, et cetera. So it is impossible to say for 428 vehicles what is the average time, and it would be depending on what it has gone in for.

Dr. Bodoe: Just a follow-up, Minister. In terms of the number of vehicles that are operational, are you satisfied that those numbers are adequate to provide the service that the public requires?

Hon. Young: I know what the Commissioner and his executive are looking at, is getting the best value out of what is operational. You will hear launched very shortly an addition of some vehicles to the fleet and those vehicles are going to be specifically utilized for basically a response unit, and that would give them a better capability at getting where they need to get in terms of crime.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am on line Item 13, on page 320. Am I okay with that?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Karim: Okay. With respect to the Maintenance of Vehicles, Minister, you indicated that there were 428 vehicles that were non-operational, I just want to indicate that sometimes citizens like us may be pulled off the road and charged for defective vehicles, and when I look at some of the police vehicles you could see clearly—well, I am not the using the words of the Minister of Finance, but that you could see clearly now that some of them “delighting” and so on. Can you tell us, of the 420 that are non-operational, how many of those are defective because you must do a little audit?

Hon. Young: As I indicated a short while ago, there is currently an audit taking place.

Mr. Karim: Okay. And let me just ask the other question then. For an average
police station—for example, I live in the Freeport area—how many vehicles will you say are available actively to service the geographic catchment area of Freeport?

**Hon. Young:** Four to five.

**Mr. Karim:** Four to five? And those are actually in operation?

**Hon. Young:** Yes.

**Mr. Karim:** And is that considered, Minister, to be acceptable in terms of the active policing of a geographic area like Freeport?

**Hon. Young:** What I just indicated, this unit that is going to be revived, revamped and resourced, the response unit, it is going to be driven by intelligence as to where we locate the bays for some of those vehicles. Some of the larger more-spaced-out constituencies, we will supplement the stations by positioning some of those vehicles there.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay. In terms of ensuring that the 428 become operational that you mentioned, can you indicate where these vehicles are repaired? I know VMCOTT was set up as well, but can you indicate what is the—

**Hon. Young:** As you would be aware, throughout Trinidad and Tobago there are a number of garages that do the work for it. Also, we utilize the dealerships when they are under warranty. As a Cabinet, we have recently asked that VMCOTT be properly utilized to provide service for all government vehicles which would include police vehicles.

**Mr. Karim:** Last one on that. What percentage of the vehicles would you say are being serviced by VMCOTT as opposed to these private garages?

**Hon. Young:** Not enough.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Madam Chair, to the hon. Minister. Hon. Minister,
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Head 64 Trinidad and Tobago Police Service

line Item 17 under Training. When you look at the Auditor General’s Report of 2017, hon. Minister, you would see that TTPS, together with the fire service—but I know that we are dealing with TTPS right now, but there are others—that are listed in the Auditor General’s Report as having provided no statistics, no data as it relates to the use of IT and technology, and there is no reporting mechanism. Under line Item 17, can you say whether or not this training would reflect the recommendations of the Auditor General’s Report as it relates to their recommendations in the area of service delivery through IT and technology?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Mr. Padarath: Could the hon. Minister indicate why there has been no reporting by the TTPS? If there are trained persons in the TTPS to provide this data and statistics, why has there been no reporting for the past few years?

Hon. Young: I am not certain on what you are referring to specifically.

Mr. Padarath: Minister, are you saying that you are not aware of the Auditor General’s Report?

Hon. Young: But what are you referring to specially and what does it have to do with IT?

Mr. Padarath: I am referring to line item 17, Training.

Hon. Young: Training, correct.

Mr. Padarath: Auditor General’s Report said the TTPS does not have competent qualified persons, so I am asking whether or not this Training Item in 17 will equip the TTPS to have these competencies?

Hon. Young: The Commissioner of Police will hire persons where necessary.

Mr. Padarath: So are you then saying that there is no one at this point and that is why there has been no reporting as stated in the Auditor General’s Report?
Hon. Young: I do not even accept for a moment what you are saying is correct and accurate.

Mr. Padarath: So therefore, Minister, you are saying that you do not know what is in the Auditor General’s Report on the TTPS.

Hon. Young: I said that I am not accepting for a moment that what you are reflecting is in the Auditor General—

Mr. Padarath: So therefore, you have not read it.

Hon. Young: Would you allow me to finish?

Madam Chairman: Member? Member? [Crosstalk] Member for Princes Town! Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Just a few questions, please. Just a few questions to the Minister. Minister, given—[Crosstalk]

Madam Chairman: All right, please.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, given the Item on page 319—I am at Uniforms, just to follow up on an earlier question. This is the provision for fiscal—I am at 03, Uniforms. This is clearly the provision for 2019, $8 million. Is it anticipated in fiscal 2019 that you would complete the re-outfitting of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service with the new uniforms; and if so, this would not be able to provide that type of the funding. So you are putting in place some other funding for that project?

Hon. Young: What we have said is that we are looking at and discussing with the TTPS the possibility of change-out of the uniforms. They have made a submission, it is being looked at. But you are right, if that decision is taken and we are able to complete a proper procurement process that will not be a sufficient amount of the money. What you can do is you vire money.

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Dr. Moonilal: Vire money and go back to the Ministry of Finance.

Hon. Young: If we get it done by the mid-year review, we would supplement in the mid-year review.

Dr. Moonilal: Another issue I would just like to raise. I am at 320, Item 96. Minister, clearly you would have equipment, vehicles, and what have you in the police service that depends on super gasoline. Now, in the budget that took a hit, have you factored in the increase in the cost of fuel for the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service because of the raise in the price of gas which would not have been in the documents so far?

Hon. Young: Yes, it was factored in by the Ministry of the Finance. So they recognize that in the mid-year review if there is a need to supplement they will.

Dr. Moonilal: Oh, so you would look at the mid-year review for that. So six months from now we will do that because the $10 million—

Hon. Young: No, it is 20.

Dr. Moonilal: It is 20. The 20 is the same as the last year—

Hon. Young: Yes, correct.

Dr. Moonilal: In fact, the 20 is slight lower.

Hon. Young: Well and we are also putting GPS into the vehicles and we will make sure that they are being used more efficiently and acceptable. If we have to come in for more gas we will.

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, because the actual the 2017 was 26 million, it is down to 20 with an increase in the price of fuel. May I go on to another issue? Now, in the budget delivered by the very wordy Minister of Finance, the wordy Minister of Finance—not worthy, wordy—the Minister outlined a programme and an initiative of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service under your Ministry for National
Security and told us that you would outline in the debate much more. Again, we did not hear from you so could I ask, given that a major accent as announced in the Finance Minister’s budget deals with IT, would it have been useful, Minister, to have a new line Item for the police service that deals with the provision of IT—

**Mr. Imbert:** Madam Chair, can we speak about a line Item that does not exist?

**Dr. Moonilal:** Madam Speaker, let me then speak—I am speaking on goods and supplies, Material and Supplies.

**Mr. Imbert:** Madam Chairman, I am asking for clarity. Can we speak about a line Item that does not exist?

**Madam Chairman:** No.

**Mr. Imbert:** Good. Move along.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Madam Chairman, I am speaking about Materials and Supplies of which IT service is one.

**Madam Chairman:** Under what Item? You want Item 12?

**Dr. Moonilal:** Yes, that is exactly where I am. What I am saying, Minister, is that given the emphasis played on IT and driving policing in the 21st Century with the use of IT, have you factored in the budget at any point in time the need to purchase equipment whether it is laptops, or iPads, or smartphones for the police service; and where will we find it in your estimates? Guide us.

**Hon. Young:** Under Minor Equipment.

**Dr. Moonilal:** So it is a Minor Equipment purchase.

**Hon. Young:** Under Minor Equipment Purchases you will see things like Office Equipment, other Minor Equipment, et cetera.

**Madam Chairman:** We have not reach there as yet.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Notwithstanding that that had a decrease, but we have not reached
there yet.

**Madam Chairman:** We have not reached there as yet.

**Hon. Young:** And it is also going to be in the Development Programme as you would imagine.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Could I go on to my next issue? On Medical Expenses and I am on page 320—

**Madam Chairman:** Item 58.

**Dr. Moonilal:** 58, yes. Does this include medical expenses for former police officers, retired police officers to visit the doctors and so on? And I am asking this question in the context of a complaint made by a former police officer, as a constituent, that when you leave the police service you do not have the benefit of going to the police service doctor so to speak. You have to pay. Would Medical Expenses include that?

**Hon. Young:** Yes.

**Dr. Moonilal:** So are you saying that former retired police officers can still get free medical—

**Hon. Young:** No, you asked me whether this is the line Item that covers that, my answer was yes. It is the line Item that covers—

**Dr. Moonilal:** But does it cover it for former and retired police officers? Yes or no.

**Hon. Young:** They would all be familiar with what their terms and conditions are, and what they are covered with.

**Dr. Moonilal:** So you do not know. But you could check, you do not have to tell me now. I do not need the answer now. It is just an issue I am raising. I am raising for the benefit of yourself and the Commissioner that former police officers

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who have served many, many years they have a complaint about not accessing medical services when they leave. The Member for Toco/Sangre Grande may have some idea of this as well. Thank you.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Thank you, Madam Chair; 16 on page 320, Goods and Services, Contract Employment. I wanted to ask what quantity of that 54 million involves contract officers who are retired officers, who have been rehired?

**Hon. Young:** We will have to provide that.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay. I can get that information? Good. The other thing I wanted to ask is that when you account for the serving officers of 7,200, that would include these contracted officer or contract officers here?

**Hon. Young:** No, that could fall under SRP, it could fall under the administrative side.

**Dr. Tewarie:** So this would be separate?

**Hon. Young:** Yeah.

**Dr. Tewarie:** So it would not include the regular—

**Hon. Young:** No.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay. All right, fine.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Minister, you indicated that you considered four vehicles per station—

**Hon. Young:** Four to five.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Four to five adequate. How many police stations we have in Trinidad so we can get an idea of how many vehicles needed to be outside?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Seventy-seven stations in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** So it is close to 400? 77 by 5 is 385. Yes, it is close to 400. So the other 800 could be outside of the police station?
Hon. Young: Correct, and that is the point that these—those that are assigned to the stations. As you would be aware there are other patrols, there is the highway patrol, there is investigations, CID, and the others.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I just want to get an idea of what is supposed to be in and what is supposed to be out. Madam Chair, the Police Training Academy, what has happened to that; is there any—

Hon. Young: It actually won an award last year, an international award for being—

Mr. Imbert: What line Item is that?

Madam Chairman: Is it in terms of—

Dr. Gopeesingh: Under training.

Mr. Imbert: Which line Item is that?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Under Training.

Mr. Imbert: Which line Item is that?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Oh God, 17. Look at it and educate yourself, nah. [Crosstalk]

Hon. Young: The police academy actually won—

Madam Chairman: Order! Order!

Hon. Young:—an international award last year for the level of training that is taking place, and they have actually just signed just three MOUs with three international universities to ensure the continued training of police officers.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Would you be kind enough to give us an idea of how many officers—

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Academy is on page 323, under 009, 02, Other Transfers. You are way ahead of us. It is on page 323, 009, 02.
Madam Chairman: The question that Caroni East should have asked is whether the police academy comes under this Item of Training.

Hon. Young: And the answer is no.

Dr. Gopeesingh: He has no respect for you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Imbert: I do.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Minister at page 320, 17 Training, within recent times there have been incidents or instances where persons who were alleged to have been suffering from mental health issues were shot and killed by officers of the police service in responding to certain situations and scenarios, could you tell us what plans are there within the police service; if there is a special unit or what type of training to emerge as it relates to dealing with these scenarios?

Madam Chairman: Member, I think before you get there you most probably would want to ask, what this Training Vote is utilized for because there is an underlining assumption which may be wrong. So maybe you might want to consider that. If you are asking that to the Minister, I will allow it.

Hon. Young: This vote is to deal with, as I had suggested earlier, international training being provided to officers, for example, firearm training, polygraphers, and other police skills. What you have referred to as you quite rightly said at the beginning are allegations. So there are certain allegations. I am not here to deal with allegations, but the police service has taken note of the concern that in today’s day and age there are persons with mental health issues that they may need to address and they are working actively on indicating to the officers of the TTPS how those issues should be addressed if they are confronted with it.

Mr. Paray: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Minister, line Item 03
under Uniforms. I just wanted to find out if in terms of the fact that in recent times we have found uniforms in the wrong places other than in the homes of police officers, if any consideration for this new uniform that we are going to get, if RFID tagging can be an option in order to identify who is the owner of all these uniforms?

Hon. Young: Correct. As you know RFID tagging is quite an expensive proposition. So that would increase the cost. But one of the factors that we actively considering in the change of uniform is it being more difficult to be counterfeited and proper accountability issues as the police officers were issued with them. If that can be worked into the budget, then yes, it is a good idea.

Mr. Paray: Just one more Item. Line Item 99 under EAP. I noticed from 2017 to now the figures are pretty much low—$300,000, somewhere around there—I am wondering if noting the level of stress that comes with this job, is it that our police officers are not accessing the service, or is it a cultural reason why they are not going towards it, or is it not in use in terms of this Employee Assistance Programme?

Hon. Young: What this line Item is actually been utilized to do is a number of workshops, et cetera, to assist them in stress-related items and issues. As you quite rightly point out, it is something that is real and it is actively being looked at.

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoe: Thank you, Madam Chair. The question was answered in a response.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Line Item 99. I know that in other jurisdictions, hon. Minister, that it is almost mandatory for officers to be on an ongoing evaluation, will the Ministry consider having that ongoing re-evaluation
Hon. Young: That is something that will have to be discussed with the police service. What I can tell you, last year over 400 officers accessed under this line Item, the EAP services and the conferences and discussion that took place. That is something that can be raised with the executive and the welfare association.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And on line Item 13, I know Chaguanas East and Caroni East raised it and you answered stating that you are looking at vehicles going out, but particular what caught my attention when you indicated that the areas that are vast, the constituencies where it is pretty vast, that you will be looking at putting vehicles in those places, would Cumuto Police Station be one of those—

Hon. Young: They would not be limited to the police stations. What we are going to use is use this unit to properly navigate Trinidad and Tobago and supplement where needs to be supplemented. So I am sure that the police are looking at the statistics. All of this is going to be done on the basis of data. I have seen that the police has the data as to where crimes are being committed across the country, et cetera, and the types of crimes. So that will drive where the resources will be allocated.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And in regard to that statement, my area is pretty vast and, of course, to get from one area to—

Madam Chairman: Member, is it a question?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. Would you consider even in Tamana an area for a police post as it is very far. And in line Item 21, Repairs and Maintenance, if this takes into consideration repairs to the Cumuto Police Station?

Hon. Young: Well again, what this Repairs and Maintenance of buildings is for, is yes. All of the police stations and whatever repairs they require during the next
fiscal year.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister, line Item 36, Extraordinary Expenditure. Firstly, does it have the same definition and meaning as what was in the Ministry of National Security this morning where you had mentioned it was for covert operation? Now if that is so, the 500,000 is very small, so I am asking what is the—

Hon. Young: No.

Mr. Lee: No. So it is not for covert operation.

Hon. Young: It is like for ID parades.

Mr. Lee: ID?

Hon. Young: Parades.

Mr. Lee: ID parades. Okay.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 13, Maintenance of Vehicles. It has been brought to my attention, Madam Chair, and through the line Minister, that several of the new car dealerships regard the police as bad pay, that they do not have a reputation of meeting their commitments notwithstanding they get the service, I want to know whether there is an allocation here to deal with this matter within this Item?

Hon. Young: Well, you would have seen that there is an increase of $2 million, so that will be going towards the payment of outstanding invoices, et cetera.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Earlier on hon. Minister, you mentioned about international training for officers, can you indicate whether or not this line Item will deal with any new biodata system and software? Biodata with respect to citizens’ data, any new systems and software for officers who will be trained in this particular area? And I really want to thank the Parliament for
furnishing me with a copy of the Auditor General’s Report, a hard copy, and Minister the “fake news” you referred to can be found on page 73, Chap. 5—

**Madam Chairman:** Member! Member! Member for Princes Town. Member for Oropouche West.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Chair. Hon. Minister, it is just for my edification, line 23, what does Fees represent of 7 million— [Crosstalk]

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Princes Town. One minute. One minute, please. Member for Princes Town! Member for Princes Town, I will ask you to leave the Chamber and when you are ready to behave in a manner consistent with what we are doing, you are free to come back. Please? Member for Oropouche West.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Yes, thank you. Line 23, hon. Minister, as I said for my edification, what does the Fees represent of 7 million?

**Hon. Young:** Yes, it deals with the different licences for software, translation, and that type of equipment and software licence fees.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, earlier you spoke in reference to a question from the Member for Couva South in relation to persons with psychiatric problems and training of police officers, could you tell us where we are at in terms of procurement of non-lethal equipment to deal with such situations?

**Mr. Imbert:** Line Item, please.

**Madam Chairman:** Member, the process is maybe if you find a line Item—

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Line Item 17.

**Madam Chairman:**—you could ask whether it covers the line.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Thank you so much. I apologize.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Item 17 is training.

Mr. Imbert: It cannot be that.

Mr. Ramadhar: Well, the training in the use of non-lethal—

Mr. Imbert: “Doh” try that.

Madam Chairman: Yes, Member, for the question?

Mr. Ramadhar: Yes, I am asking in terms of the—

Hon. Young: When the items are procured, there will be appropriate training.

Mr. Ramadhar: Thank you very much.

Dr. Rambachan: Again under Item 13, I am concerned about these 428 vehicles that are non-operational for a specific reason. Is the Minister aware of the number of vehicles that are used on a daily basis to escort equipment across the country, and whether that is a productive use of vehicles of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service?

Hon. Young: The answer is—I mean, how does one measure productivity? Because what those police vehicles are supposed to be doing is ensuring the safe transportation of unusual items. You see large containers, et cetera, across the country. So they are ensuring the safety of persons who are using the roadways. So, is that not the fulfilment of the police’s duty to protect and serve? I think it is, yes.

Dr. Rambachan: Is the Minister aware that on a lot of occasions that those very vehicles are running at a speed that is breaking the law with respect to what those vehicles should be running?

Madam Chairman: Member, I will not allow that under the—

Mr. Imbert: This is Repairs and Maintenance.

Madam Chairman: Member, I would not allow that under the Item.
Mr. Imbert: Not, operation. It is Repairs and Maintenance.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance, I have already said that I would not allow it under the Item.

Mr. Imbert: I know but that is the fifth person asking the same question over and over.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Police Service (Tobago), page 321.

2.35 p.m.

Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, Police Service (Trinidad), page 321; Item 002, Police Service (Tobago), page 322; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 322; Item 001, Regional Bodies; Item 004, International Bodies; Item 005, Non-profit Institutions. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 01, the Police Youth Clubs, which are very important.

Hon. Young: Which page are we on?

Madam Chairman: Page 322 at the foot of the page.

Hon. Young: Non-profit, yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The Police Youth Clubs. You can give us an idea. I mean, it is a good thing but how many are there and what are your plans for it and so on.

Hon. Young: There are over 130 police youth clubs that are assisting over 8,000 members.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And plans for the future?

Hon. Young: To continue it and to increase the numbers as we can, as the police service can.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right, okay. I will not ask you about the programmes, I will read it up myself.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, those 130 police youth clubs, do they all have permanent homes? Facilities?

Hon. Young: No.

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoe: Thank you, Madam Chair. In regard to the allocation, Minister, same line Item: Police Youth Clubs, I see you intended to spend 6 million in 2018, but were only able to spend 3 million. Is it that you are having a challenge in terms of resource—

Hon. Young: That would have been the cash flow issues.

Dr. Bodoe: Sorry?

Hon. Young: Those were the cash flow issues.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Households. Member for Pointe-à-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, line Item under 007; 02, Compensation to the Estates of Members of the Protective Services. 2018, you had budgeted 3 million; 2018 revised, you spent or incurred 1 million and estimated 1 million again. Could you tell us how many families or estates the 1 million was paid to in 2018, and why only a $1 million estimate in 2019?

Hon. Young: I think you may be thinking that is the payment of the $1 million for any police officer killed in the line of duty. No, you know it is not that, right? So what it is, is that there is currently one application inside. I cannot tell you how many applications were processed for 2018. In the two months I have been there, I have signed off on a few of them. So this is when a police officer passes away and you pay the one-month salary or the two-month salary immediately and this type of thing.

Mr. Lee: But you could provide that in writing, how many for—
Hon. Young: None last year, I am told.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The line Item 02, Trinidad and Tobago Police Academy, to which I was referred earlier on and—

Madam Chairman: No, we have not reached Item 009 as yet, we are in 007. Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Police Academy, could you give us an understanding of how many police officers are trained on an annual basis and then the length of period of training from joining in the recruitment exercise to completion?

Hon. Young: All right. It is two batches a year and as I just indicated earlier, that is about 250 a batch, so we come up to about 500. Six months.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And your training, let us say for last year, how many would have been trained and what do you project the training to be?

Hon. Young: Two batches every year.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Of 300 each?

Hon. Young: No, 250 each.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Is there any retraining programme in that Police Academy?

Hon. Young: Yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And for what areas?

Hon. Young: All different areas.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay, all right.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a question with respect to the line Item 02, Trinidad and Tobago Police Academy. Is this academy accredited by or...
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intends to be accredited by the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago?

**Hon. Young:** Yes it is. Yes, it is accredited. It is registered and on the road to accreditation. They are working on it.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay, so the accreditation process has started?

**Hon. Young:** Yes, correct.

**Madam Chairman:** Caroni Central.

**Dr. Tewarie:** On the same police academy thing, Minister, we have a situation in Trinidad and Tobago in which over time, crime has escalated. The Police Academy trains the police recruits. Do they train higher up people?

**Hon. Young:** The answer is yes. There are a number of courses, as I have just indicated to my friend for Chaguanas East, the answer is yes. And what we are looking to do, and we intend to assist the police service out of the Ministry of National Security and I have already begun the discussions with some of our allies, is getting more courses put into the Academy and more relevant courses: CSI, use of technology and those types of things, what to look for in fraud cases, et cetera, et cetera. So that is taking place and we want to increase the amount.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay, well, that is what I was getting at, which is that obviously, the training needs to change to be able to address—

**Hon. Young:** Correct, and the police service has recognized that and to their credit, they have been working towards it. When I had indicated earlier that last year, the Academy received this very prestigious international award, it is because exactly that. They are doing it.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Same line Item. Is there any formal or intent to be any formal relationship between the police youth clubs
and the police training academy?

Hon. Young: I am sure there will be visits and this type of thing but at this stage, no, there is no formal relationship. So if you are suggesting that the members of the youth clubs go to the Academy for training, et cetera, no.

Mr. Karim: If I may suggest and also ask a question?

Hon. Young: Yeah, it is something that can be looked at.

Mr. Karim: You see, the corollary of it or the parallel could be in terms of the relationship of the Cadet Force in the schools and the future in terms of Trinidad and Tobago Regiment. I am asking you to consider, if possible, an alignment so that these young persons could have an impact, a positive impact in their environment and their schools in which they go to.

Hon. Young: And that is exactly the mandate of the police youth clubs and I am happy to report that they have been meeting a high level of success and the police should be applauded for the work they have been doing with these youth clubs. Because exactly what you have described, has been taking place.

Mr. Karim: And just, Madam Chairman, if I may suggest and I will ask again so that you consider it, that there should be a deliberate programme and a strategy for an alignment in terms of what they are doing in terms of the curriculum and what they could do in terms of the future academy.

Hon. Young: Noted.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, we will now move onto the draft—last question. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: With your training of 600 new recruits per year, 300 every six months—

Madam Chairman: Member, the number is 500.
Hon. Young: You keep adding 100, it is 500. It is 250 and 250.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right, 250. What is your attrition rate in the police service on a yearly basis?

Hon. Young: About 250. So you are really adding a 250 a year.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, we will now move onto to the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund, page 132; Item 004, Social Infrastructure.


Madam Chairman: Page 132, new book. I thought it was very early for us to start there. Member for Pointe-à-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item; under B, Police Service, 001, Improvement Works to Police Stations, $2 million increase. Could the Minister indicate what police stations are earmarked for improvements and what police stations they did in 2018?

Hon. Young: All right, so this is the type of infrastructural work to be carried out at various police stations. Last fiscal, work was completed at Caroni, Crown Point, Moriah and Woodbrook. This fiscal, we are looking at Charlotteville, Biche, Erin, Manzanilla, Cedros, Rio Claro.

Mr. Lee: Line Item 038, Minister, Establishment of new facilities for Traffic and Highway Patrol Branch, nothing was done in 2018. I see you bumped it up to 1.5 million. Has a new location been identified and what is the—because I understand the Traffic Highway Branch is established somewhere in Aranguez South, so I do not know if it is moving to a new location.

Hon. Young: We are currently waiting for a property to be assigned by Public Admin. It is temporarily, as you say, in Aranguez but we are waiting for a
permanent home.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 013, Refurbishment of Police Commissioner’s Residence. I notice, Madam Chair, to the line Minister, that there was 250,000 allocated and it is estimated 250,000 in 2018.

**Hon. Young:** Which number?

**Mr. Singh:** 013, Refurbishment of Police Commissioner’s Residence. Has this residence been completely refurbished?

**Mr. Lee:** “Nah, dais for the swimming pool.”

**Hon. Young:** There was a lot of work done, it is not completed as yet, but we are going to look at it. If we need, we will approach Planning and Development for movement of funds to deal with it. It is almost complete.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Mayaro.

**Mr. Paray:** Thank you. Minister, line Item 041, Establishment of Police Youth Club Facilities, I am looking at the $1 million allocation. I am assuming this is not to build facilities, it may be to upgrade facilities, rental spaces. Would this fund be used to get things like computers, desks and chairs and so on for clubs where they are getting rental spaces for? Would that fund be able to drawdown on that?

**Hon. Young:** So during the last fiscal, we were able to utilize this fund to, exactly as you say, properly outfit and provide the type of equipment that would be useful in the police youth club to Matelot, Morvant, Flanagan Town, Oropune, Sangre Grande. This year, we hope to deal with Penal, Woodbrook, La Brea, Caroni, Moruga, Maraval and St. Clair.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** The question was partially asked, Establishment of Police—Item
041. And in identifying the areas which you have listed, has attention been paid to where at-risk youths are located? I will tell you, and they are doing quite a lot of good work in Barrackpore Secondary School, but the persons who join tend to be persons who are not at risk. So therefore, the question is, is an attempt made to deal with the at-risk youth in the building of these facilities, establishment and curriculum?

**Madam Chairman:** So you want to know if the location of the—

**Mr. Charles:** —and the curriculum is targeted specifically—

**Hon. Young:** Yes, the answer is yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Pointe-à-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** To the Minister, line Item 046 on page 133, Purchase of Vehicles for the Police Service, in 2019, an allocation of 2 million. Could the Minister state how many vehicles this $2 million will bring?

**Hon. Young:** Okay. This is for expansion of the fleet and we are looking at, at least five vehicles.

**Mr. Lee:** Five vehicles. And line Item 047, $4 million has been allocated for Equipment for the Police Service. Could the Minister identify what pieces of equipment—this $4 million?

**Hon. Young:** Public order equipment, so in accordance with the new use of force policy, cyber security systems and surveillance equipment.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Items 058 and 059, Upgrade of Facilities – Anti-Kidnapping Unit, of $1 million, and Expansion of Polygraph Suites. Is this physical facilities being dealt with or is it other things?

**Hon. Young:** What do you mean by that?
Mr. Singh: Well, whether or not you have any kind of equipment purchases and so on rather than—

Hon. Young: All right, so for the first one, Upgrade of Facilities for the Anti-Kidnapping Unit, right now, we are aware and the police service is going to place some focus and emphasis on it, the accommodations are a little less than ideal so it is to ensure that they are properly accommodated. So that is the physical infrastructure, et cetera.

The next Item you talked about, Expansion of the Polygraph Suites, this is that—it is really to expand the area being utilized and to add some polygraph interview suites, because we are polygraphing a lot more. As you know, I was answering one of your friends this morning with the prisons service and the whole vetting, et cetera, et cetera.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 029, Refurbishment of Riverside Plaza, I believe, every year I am seeing this same line Item. So what is the current status of this refurbishment?

Hon. Young: Well, it has been refurbished over the past few years. There are a number of police units that are now utilizing those premises, et cetera. So what we are doing is making sure it is properly maintained and that the civil works, electrical upgrades, plumping, air conditioning, installation of IT, fire, safety, security systems are upgraded.

Mrs. V. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: And line 039, Expansion of Facilities at the Homicide Area, East. Where is this area exactly?

Hon. Young: On the compound of the Arouca Police Station.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Hon. Minister, line Item—
I have three line Items—041, first one, I need to make a plug for my Cumuto
police club, if the hon. Minister would consider, they need a—
Hon. Young: It is not me. The TTPS are here and I am sure they have heard your
pleas.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: For line 046, again, a plug for a police vehicle for Cumuto
Police Station. “I have to, they listening.” And finally, line Item 056, this is a new
project. What does this project entail?
Hon. Young: Which one? 056, Social Work Unit East. This unit is temporarily
housed at the Police Headquarters and this is the unit that is charged with
providing social and psychological support to police officers. So what we want to
do is find a better location to provide this level of service to our police officers. So
that is what this is for. We are not putting it in Cumuto.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I noticed it says “East”, is it because it is a pilot project
and you started it in the East first? I do not know, I am just asking.
Hon. Young: They have these units throughout so this is the one for the East.
There is one in south and this type of thing already.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: Just a quick question, Minister. Expansion of Polygraph Suites—
Hon. Young: Which one? Yeah, 059.

Dr. Tewarie: I just wanted to ask if—because I heard you say something just
now—polygraph tests are going to become a normal part of the recruitment
process in the national security system.
Hon. Young: Yes.
Dr. Tewarie: So this is being established as a procedure.
Hon. Young: This is an expansion of what is already there because we recognize the need and the necessity for it, yes.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. On page 134, under Administrative Services, Items 001 and 003, Development of a Computer System for Police Service, there is an allocation.

Madam Chairman: Just one minute, please. We have not reached Item 005 as yet. Okay. So I will call Item 005—just let me ask, Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: I was going to go on the same Item.

Madam Chairman: All right, so we move on. Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Yes, Madam Chair. So you have the Development of a Computer System for the Police Service and an allocation of $20 million, could the hon. Minister indicate whether this is an in situ computer system or is it going to be an operational aspect to this that you have the link between the—

Hon. Young: Operational.

Mr. Singh: Okay. And secondly, Item 003, Transformation of Police Service, there is a significant allocation of $4 million. What does this entail?

Hon. Young: For the transformation? There are a number of areas that have identified that need specific resourcing in the police service that they expect that would assist them in the transformation of the police service. So for example, some of the key initiatives will include: reorganization; more integrated deployment of the K9 resources; key anti-crime strategy; institutional development through process reviews; reengineering significant investments in the next generation of leaders through personal development and succession initiatives; the
implementation of a rebranded community relations programme to improve the engagement between the TTPS and the citizenry and to win public trust and confidence.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** I was going to ask a question but “I eh seeing it here” but if I could relate it—well, in terms of the transformation and I know the Minister just indicated that some of this money is going to be spent in community improvement relations and one of the ways in which you might do that is through the construction of police stations. Will there be one for consideration for the Enterprise area?

**Mr. Imbert:** Madam Chairman, what line Item are we on?

**Madam Chairman:** I believe 003.

**Mr. Imbert:** We are certainly not on police station construction so it could not possibly be.

**Mr. Karim:** No, no, I know, I just ask. I do not think you were listening.

**Mr. Imbert:** I was, that is why I will stop you.

**Madam Chairman:** Members, if we could go on, Member for Chaguanas East, you may be able to ask your question in the next area. Okay?

**Mr. Karim:** Okay.

**Madam Chairman:** So page 223, Infrastructure Development Fund; Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Member for Pointe-à-Pierre.

**Hon. Young:** New book? Same Book.

**Madam Chairman:** Same book, page 223.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Page 223 to the Minister, specific line Item 009, Construction of Besson Street Police Station. In 2017, $9 million was spent.
Madam Chairman: Could we have one conversation so that I can hear the question?

Mr. Lee: I understand Besson Street Police Station has been opened and it is active. Now, I see $14 million estimate for the construction of Besson Street Police Station. So the question is: What is required for this increase of $14 million to a new police station? What has to be done? Is a new contractor been appointed in place for this?

Madam Chairman: The question you are asking is?

Hon. Young: I can answer what the $14 million is for, that is the final account to close off.

Mr. Lee: Oh, it is arrears.

Hon. Young: Yeah, Besson Street is completed, the police are utilizing it and this is the final payment.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you for your guidance, Madam Chair. And I suspect the Minister will agree, I can raise that question here now.

Hon. Young: Which one?

Mr. Karim: With respect to the Enterprise police station. There was a commitment given by the former Minister of National Security.

Hon. Young: No, but there is no line Item here saying—

Mr. Karim: No, well, the Item I am dealing with is Item number—under 004, B, Police Service.

Hon. Young: No, but this specifically identifies what are the police stations going to be constructed.
Mr. Karim: I know, I know, I am just asking whether there will be any consideration. I just want you to tell me yes or no.

Hon. Young: I will have that discussion with the Commissioner of Police and his Executive, as to what can be done in the—

Mr. Karim: All right, so I am pleading on behalf of the constituency.

Hon. Young: You do not need to plead, we will look at it to see what can be done in Felicity.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Sir. That is a better answer than the Minister of Finance.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East, you are no longer asking?

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, no, I am asking the question. Minister, is it possible to give us an idea of the site of the new St. Clair Police Station you are building?

Hon. Young: Oh yes, work has commenced. It is Serpentine Road, where the old NIHHERST building used to be, et cetera.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right, thanks.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, if you would consider again, Tamana. Thank you.

Hon. Young: But I understand there is a new police station in Cumuto.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: The area is very vast, Sir. When you come.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 016 and 017, Minister, can you give us an update with respect to the construction of these police stations? Line Item 016, 017.

Hon. Young: I know, in Tobago. What is the question?

Ms. Ramdial: An update with respect to the construction of those police stations. Is it completed? [Crosstalk]
Hon. Young: The Old Grange Police Station, construction is in progress and we are looking to complete this year and then the Roxborough Police Station, construction is in progress due for completion in the second quarter of next year.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Page 223, 64, 12, B, 009, Construction of Besson Street; 010 St. Joseph; 013, Maracas.

Madam Chairman: Question?

Hon. Young: What is the question?

Mr. Charles: The question is why none of these are in UNC areas? “Yuh doh have to answer.”

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the question is that the sum of $2,176,150,000 for Head 64: Trinidad and Tobago Police Service stand part of the Schedule.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 64 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Commissioner and your technical people and the Minister of National Security.

Head 03: Judiciary, $364,076,700.

Madam Chairman: Okay, Members, we are going to start at page 11. I will now invite the Attorney General to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is gives me great pleasure to confirm the outstanding work of the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Madam Chair, the Judiciary has been on a fast-track of development. It
has broken all boundaries, in particular, in its establishment of its divisions of court in the last few years with this Government’s tenure in tow.

We are very pleased to say that in particular, under the Family and Children Division, that the two Children Courts are in active gear. We have had a significant amount of redevelopment already organized for the proclamation of the Criminal Division and we intend to approach this Parliament to consider further divisioning aspects. We, of course, have on the horizon the introduction of specialist courts under the provisions of the Criminal Division and in anticipation of that, the Judiciary has taken the opportunity to rationalize its accounting in meeting with a commitment given by the Minister of Finance in his first budget presentation which was for judicial autonomy.

In that journey towards judicial financial autonomy, we have come forward with certain amendments which will no doubt form the subject matter of questioning from my friends opposite and in those circumstances, we are very pleased to receive the questions that Members may have relative to the Judiciary. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Attorney General.

Question proposed: That Head 03 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $364,076,700 for Head 03: Judiciary, is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure and the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure, Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure at page 11; Item 001, Judiciary Trinidad; Item 002: Judiciary Tobago.

3.05 p.m.
Item 003, Judiciary Family Court; Item 004, Judiciary Children Court; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 14. Item 001, Judiciary Trinidad. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick question to the Attorney General. Line Item 08, there is a stark increase at $10.8 million in 08. Could the AG add some clarity what that is about?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Sure. Madam Chair, it is incumbent in answering the Member’s question to point out something that perhaps Members may not have appreciated under the Sub-Head for the Judiciary 03. If Members note, between pages 11, 12 and 13—[ Interruption]  

Mr. Lee: Madam Chair, we are on line—

Hon. Al-Rawi: Yes, I understand.

Mr. Lee: Page 14.

Hon. Al-Rawi: I understand and I am answering you.

Mr. Lee: Page 14, line Item 08.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Yes, Madam Chair. I am explaining the line Item of increase but my learned friend is not listening.

Mr. Lee: No, we are dealing with line Items.

Madam Chairman: Attorney General, the mischief in what you are doing—

Mr. Lee: Correct.

Madam Chairman:—may lead us to be going back. And, therefore, I would really—I understand the need you might feel to give a very fulsome answer, but I prefer we restrict ourselves to the Item under consideration so that we do not open the gates for going back.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Thank you Madam Chair. I will try my best to work out what I
just have by way of guidance. The increase is directly related to the previous pages. If you do not want an explanation on that, I will just leave it that way. There have been decreases and increases which have to be factored as a whole. What you make of that answer is up to you.

**Mr. Lee:** Okay. Line Item 16, Madam Chair? Contract Employment, $29,470,000. This year it is an estimated $95 million. Could the Minister give us an appreciation what that contract employment would consist of and the levels?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Sure. I will repeat the same answer for the previous question.

**Mr. Lee:** What is that?

**Madam Chairman:** Member for St. Augustine.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Thank you, very much. At line Item 23, under Fees.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Sorry, 23 under?

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Fees.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Yeah.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Could you please give us some enlightenment as to the payment of pathologists from the Judiciary of 3.8 million?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Sorry, what page are you on?

**Mr. Ramadhar:** I beg your pardon, page 14. Fees, (i) Payment to Pathologists and Funeral Agencies of 3.8 million from the Judiciary?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Regrettably, I need to repeat the same answer that I just gave for the first one.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** Well I truly do not mean any disrespect. It is just that I have never seen, and maybe I have missed it over the years, that the Judiciary pays funeral agencies?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** That is correct.
Standing Finance Committee (cont’d)
Head 03 Judiciary

Mr. Ramadhar: For what purpose?

Hon. Al-Rawi: For the movement of bodies, et cetera.

Mr. Ramadhar: The Judiciary?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Yes. Where there is an intersection in the line of what the Judiciary manages, there are direct charges, some of which include that very head of expenditure.

Mr. Ramadhar: Thank you. We will talk offline.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: I will take these line Items collectively: lines 10, 12 and 15. Under line 10, you are seeing just relatively small increases, 200,000 with office stationery and supplies, then materials and supply, 260,000 increase, and then for repairs and maintenance of equipment, 50,000. My question is: Do you think this is sufficient, in light of the fact that recently, we had a judge have to adjourn matters because he could not get the paper and so to do Consent Order. We had the complaint about printers, no toners in the courts, and so. Do you think this is sufficient?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Sure. The Judiciary is moving to an on-demand arrangement. So instead of buying en bloc and in bulk, the position will be that you are on demand for printing, for other services, et cetera. What that results in is value-for-money management. So we do not just buy, find out that we have overbought or underbought that the users are required to estimate demand and, therefore, move to a more efficient procurement cycle, so we do not have wastage. And to answer your question specifically, yes, we believe that the increase upward from the estimates from 700,000 to $750,000 is an appropriate increase—$750,000 in total, because we will be printing less. But, we recognize that we may need to allocate a little bit
more money and, therefore, we have gone for the slight increase upwards.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: It is just an observation, Hon. AG. Perhaps the person who is taking the inventory needs to be more efficient, so you just do not—

[Interruption]

Hon. Al-Rawi: So there would be no more inventory. It would be up to the user who is taking the inventory—individual users. So if you know you are using two reams, somebody else is using 10, there is no longer one person who is not aware of the individual user requirement. The user says what the requirement is and therefore we purchase what is required as opposed to what is expected.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine.

Mr. Ramadhar: Well could we have an explanation as to how a judge could not deliver a judgment because he did not have paper, if this is an improvement in the system?

Hon. Al-Rawi: Well, first of all, that was a rather curious position in and of itself. But the fact is that the Judiciary has just been using too much paper of its own. They were doing too many copies, multiple copies. But as you will know—as I have sat here, I have received a judgment electronically. And, therefore, it is unusual for somebody to say: “I am not delivering a judgment”, when it can be delivered electronically. Judgments are sent electronically all the time—the pdf copies. As you know, as a practitioner JSOs reach out to you. All court orders come by way of electronic mail in any event, and in any event, under the Evidence Act, an electronic version is as good as a paper version. So I could not quote understand that quite public utterance.

Mr. Ramadhar: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Judiciary Tobago; Item 003, Judiciary Family
Court; Item 004, Judiciary Children Court. Sub-Head—Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. AG, I do not understand. I know what has happened here but the decrease.

**Madam Chairman:** Item?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Item 01.

**Madam Chairman:** 01?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** There is no 01.

**Madam Chairman:** Under 004?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** 16. Under 003 we have 16.

**Madam Chairman:** We are under 004, Judiciary Children Court at page 17.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Okay. So we have line Item 16.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Yep.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** I understand what has happened, but in tallying the figures what has in fact been transferred—can the Judiciary facilitate, in terms of carrying out its duties with a reduced figure?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** The Judiciary is not reducing any figures.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** When you tally the figures and you look at what is in the Judiciary it does not add up, the allocation.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** So the Judiciary is not reducing anything here. What is shown as decreases in the columns here actually went to Trinidad and therefore, we have—but, Madam Chair, asked me not to go there because those were on the previous pages and nobody asked a question. So there has been no decreases.

**Madam Chairman:** Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, Judiciary Trinidad, page 18. Item 003, Judiciary Family Court; Item 004, Judiciary
Children Court; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 19. Item 002, Commonwealth Bodies.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** AG, some of us may appreciate what this is, but could you, for the benefit of many others, explain what this means, this Transfers and Subsidies for Commonwealth Bodies, please?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Sure. Thank you. Hon. Member, under the specific Items appearing under this Sub-Head, you will see Judicial Education Institute, Membership Fees, Mediation Board, et cetera, Commonwealth Bodies, the Commonwealth Magistrates’ Association, Commonwealth Bodies. So this is judicial membership, for instance in judicial education bodies, et cetera. And these are simply our fees for membership there so that we take the benefit of their participation in training and education and continuing education.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 009, Other Transfers. Hon. Members, we shall now move on to the *Draft Estimates of Development Programme*. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme Consolidated Fund, page 4. Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services.

**Mr. Lee:** Can I go to “F” Public Buildings at the bottom of the page?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, because they are all under Multi-Sectoral and Other Services.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Chair. AG, F 002, Acquisition of Property for $2 million in 2019. Could you identify what that property location is and what it is going to be used for?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Sure. Madam Chair, the Judiciary, in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Works and Transport, the Office of the Attorney General has established a functioning committee to deal with the judicial
development of buildings and structures; specifically, the rationalization of properties required. In the period 2010 to 2015, there were no works conducted in respect of any buildings or properties, whilst there was a journey along producing judicial complexes which never materialized. With that in mind, this working committee has come together to identify suitable accommodation because there are certain courts, et cetera, which are in need of significant repair, and the preliminary work of identifying a number of properties is what is captured for this 2019 estimate here. So it is not identified for any one specific property. It is to function in that buildings committee where we can do the identification and retrofitting, if necessary, of certain properties that the Judiciary is now identifying for its utilization.

Mr. Lee: So is it more like a recurrent expenditure?

Hon. Al-Rawi: No, no. In any public administration consideration of buildings for the Judiciary, we have to identify. There have to be structural estimates. There would have to be engineering reports. There would have to be surveys. There would have to be a number of things to be done. And this buildings Item is really for all of that work, which is why it is so small a number.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for St. Augustine.

Mr. Ramadhar: Thank you. AG forgive me, but could you tell us when it was the Chaguanas court, as one example, had been rehabilitated or repaired?

Hon. Al-Rawi: When it was?

Mr. Ramadhar: The Chaguanas Magistrates’ Court, because you did say shortly, and maybe I am wrong, that there was no repair or so between ’10 and ’15.

Hon. Al-Rawi: So, the Chaguanas court was intended to be a much larger venture.
Mr. Ramadhar: Yes.

Hon. Al-Rawi: It turned out to be, if I am not mistaken, it was about less than the actual accommodation. So, what we got in the end for the Chaguanas court was a reduction in size as opposed to a redevelopment. So the Chaguanas court actually caused a loss of capacity because what was touted as a development for Chaguanas resulted in a loss of space for Chaguanas. So if you recall, the facility as it was opened was deemed to be entirely inadequate to deal with the caseload and volume load in Chaguanas.

Mr. Ramadhar: Yes. But could you remind us as to whose responsibility it was in terms of building and/or repair? Under whose authority and responsibility was that during that period?

Madam Chairman: Member, I am not really going to allow this. I am not even seeing a Chaguanas court under this.

Mr. Ramadhar: Well, on a wider perspective then.

Mr. Imbert: No.

Madam Chairman: Just one minute. Let me hear the question.

Mr. Ramadhar: In terms of the responsibility for rental, repair or build, was it specifically under the Judiciary’s responsibility?

Hon. Al-Rawi: If you recall, the Ministry of Justice was established specifically to treat with all of this. There were four Ministers of Justice—

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, what line Item is this?

Hon. Al-Rawi:—and we did not have any development of the courts in those positions.

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman, which line Item are we on, may I ask? No, I am serious.
Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: We have eight Heads to get through today.

Madam Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: Yes, Madam?

Madam Chairman: I think the Attorney General—you have delegated this to the Attorney General, and therefore, if the Attorney General chooses to answer—

[Desk thumping]

Mr. Imbert: It is my fault.

Madam Chairman: Well I am not here about fault.

Mr. Imbert: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Okay, so hon. Members, the question is that the sum of $364,076,700—[Interruption]

Dr. Gopeesingh: Madam Chair, I was waiting for you to go on page 6.

Madam Chairman: We are at Item 005.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, I just want to ask one question on that. The transformation of the court recording system.

Hon. Al-Rawi: Sorry, I am not hearing the Member.

Madam Chairman: What Item number?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Item 006, AG, which is the transformation of the court recording system in the Judiciary.

Madam Chairman: Page 4, 006.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Page four, line Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services, General Public Services, Administrative Services. With the terrible situation in terms of court recording system in the Judiciary where there are serious complaints about transcribing things in handwriting and then there is not the automated type of
thing, how is this little bit of money going to help that?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Sure. I would invite the hon. Member to read the Judiciary’s annual report, where there is a full dedicated section on exactly how far they have come along with their IT systems, because they are using mask technology to do voice transcription and other facilities. It is worth a good read. It has been published and it is in proper form.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yes, but would this money cover that?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** I would invite you to have a look at the annual report to see exactly how it has been done.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** You are the Minister.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Yes, I am. It is provided here. Plus we have a mid-year review in the event. But the Minister of Finance has done something which is exceptional. He has—by allowing for the budgeting in this position between Trinidad and Tobago and removing it from subdivisions—allowed the Judiciary to use its money more efficiently, because they can vire from head to head as they see fit.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right, okay.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 03 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you, Attorney General.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you to the Judiciary.

**Madam Chairman:** Thanks to all the members of the Judiciary.

Head 30: Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development—We are at page 201. *[Crosstalk]*

Head 30, Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development, 371 million—*[Crosstalk]* Could Members indicate when they are ready to start? *Head 30: UNREvised*
Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development, $371,242,000. I will now invite the Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you, Madam Chair, Hon. Members. We are indeed honoured to once again be invited to meet with the distinguished Members of the Standing Finance Committee to discuss our budgetary allocation for the fiscal year 2018/2019.

Madam Chair, we at the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development have been contributing to the turnaround in the economy by working towards our vision of decent work, industrial peace and opportunity for all. This includes the promotion of decent, productive and sustainable employment, whilst encouraging labour market efficiency, still yet attempting to create and sustain a peaceful industrial relations climate.

Last year, Madam Chair, I would have indicated to the committee that the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development, we have been doing more with less. I am pleased to report that we have actively demonstrated this by harnessing the internal resources and capacities within the Ministry to undertake some key strategic actions, such as development of our homegrown strategic plan. We are very, very proud of that, Madam Chair. We did not spend a single cent contracting any consultant or any firms to develop our strategic plan. We utilized our in-house resources.

We are also redesigned the Ministry’s website and also a draft national workplace policy on sexual harassment. We have continued to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue in the process of advancing the labour legislative agenda, which we committed to in the official policy framework and the National
Appropriation (Financial Year 2019) Bill, 2018  
Standing Finance Committee (cont’d)  
Head 30 Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development

Development Strategy, Vision 2030. Madam Chair, we as a team at the Ministry, are indeed very proud for our historic achievement. From 2016 to present, the Ministry conducted 18 multipartite stakeholder consultations on 10 pieces of legislation, unheard of over the last 20 to 25 years. Over the past year alone we conducted stakeholder consultations on the Trade Union Act, the Employment Standards Bill, the Occupational Safety Health and Policy and draft regulations, a draft national workplace policy on sexual harassment. Four draft policy position papers have been tabled to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago with regard to amendments to the Industrial Relations Act, the Retrenchment and Severance Benefits Act, the Co-operative Societies Act, and the Trade Union Act. Madam Chair, we have also been placing significant focus on occupational safety and health and strengthening the Occupational Safety and Health Agency to be become more effective and efficient.

Madam Chair, I just want to remind this honourable House that when I assumed duty in 2015, the inspectors from the OSH agency, they were all operating from home, and I leave that for all of us to draw the correct conclusion.

In this regard, we are proposing that the OSH Agency head office be relocated to Aranguez. This move would allow for a better, well-organized workspace as well as to provide additional space to accommodate the full complement of staff to more efficiently monitor and service the citizenry of Trinidad and Tobago.

Madam Chair, we have doubled our efforts at the Ministry of ensuring value for money and efficiency and effectiveness of our programmes, as well as sustainability. To this end, we have started the review of a number of programmes and projects to ensure higher-level delivery of quality service to the people of
Trinidad and Tobago.

In closing, Madam Chair, I would like to state that my team and I at the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development has proven its commitment, loyalty and resilience through hard work and long hours. Together we, with our creative efforts, we have been able to develop and implement a number of in-house solutions to resolve the multiple challenges we face. Given the limited resources, I can assure this House that in the coming year, the Ministry will continue this trend and focus on value for money, through greater efficiency, productivity and accountability.

I thank you, Madam Chair, for this opportunity for this brief opening statement.

**Madam Chairman:** It seems that some Members are being challenged at this time. So that you know, Members are always free to walk out, regain their composure, whether it is a laughing fit they are having or whatever, and come back and join us.

*Question proposed:* That Head 30 stand part of the Schedule.

**Madam Chairman:** Hon. Members, the sum of $371,242,000 for Head 30: Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Head and Items to be found in the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*, the *Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly* and the *Draft Estimates of the Development Programme*. We shall now proceed to consider the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*, and we are at page 201. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration.

**UNREVISED**
Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister, under 01, Salaries and Cost of Living, could the Minister inform this meeting how “much” vacant posts currently exist at the Ministry?

Madam Chairman: How many vacant posts are available?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: The Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development; there are 192 vacant positions within the Ministry.

Mr. Indarsingh: And how many officers or employees are in acting positions?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: One hundred and twenty-seven.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay, thank you. With respect to remuneration to board members, Minister could you—I see there is an increase of 1,191,000.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: May I enquire what number you are at hon. Member?

Madam Chairman: Item 06.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Okay. Yeah?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes. I see that there is an increase of $1,191,940 in terms of the 2019 estimates. Could you account for why this increase has occurred?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes, most certainly. There are 13 boards operating within the Ministry and for this fiscal we intend to re-establish three additional boards, that is labour migration, national steering committee on the elimination of child labour and the standing national labour market council.

Mr. Indarsingh: So, these three boards that you are saying would be reactivated or reconstituted will result in this increased allocation?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes, plus the 13 that we have operating.

Mr. Indarsingh: No, your 13 would be operating, but I am saying—so any of the boards are being reclassified to incur additional expenditure?
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I do not quite understand what you mean by reclassified.

Mr. Indarsingh: Well, Madam Minister, you belong to the Cabinet and of course, there are boards that may be classified as an A board, a B board, or a C board, and if they have been reclassified, let us say a board has been moved into a different classification, board members’ fees or remuneration would be increased. I am simply seeking your guidance if any of the boards under your purview have been reclassified.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Indarsingh: Well, I think you should be aware of.

3.35 p.m.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 01, Salary and Cost of Living Allowance. Hon. Minister, with this figure, will it include the persons who are on the On the Job Training Programme, the staff?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: No. You will find that under the separate heading, On the Job Training Programme.

Mr. Karim: So, it is not included in the Ministry’s allocation?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes, it is. But under the On the Job Training Programme.

Mr. Karim: If it is not on page 206 and I need to come back, would you allow me to refer to that Item.

Madam Chairman: Well—

Mr. Karim: Because I am looking at—I do not want to go so far.

Madam Chairman: Well, we are only really at General Administration, 001—

Mr. Karim: And I would have thought that this would be in the entire Ministry. Is this not the entire Ministry? Through you, Madam Chairman. Is this not the entire Ministry?
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair. The hon. Member, I assume is seeking obtain information regarding the On the Job Training Programme and provision is made for the On the Job Training Programme within the recurrent expenditure.

Mr. Karim: What I am asking is, for the last time, will this figure represent all the persons employed in the Ministry of Labour and Small and Enterprise Development?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, we are under General Administration, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance, and the information is there.

Madam Chairman: All right. So, we are under General Administration. I think, Member, you asked if it includes provision for On the Job Training Programme and the answer was no.

Mr. Karim: Okay, so the answer is no.


Mr. Karim: Okay. Thank you, Madam Speaker. So, I will now pose the question again. How many persons this represents, the staff complement? The question is as follows: one, how many persons are employed in the OJT Programme? And how many vacancies, I see you have an explanation there, includes a provision for vacant posts? So how many vacancies do you have to fill? And will those be filled during this fiscal year?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We do have—there are 30 positions allocated for public officers. And 42 contract positions. So the total on the establishment is 72.

The vacant contract positions, right now, one Director, a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and that position was recently advertised and interviews will be
conducted shortly for that position. One Clerk I, and we are awaiting on Service Commission Department for filling that position. One Auditing Assistant, five Clerk IIs.

The HR Unit recently received persons from the Service Commission but those persons were unwilling to go to Chaguanas, and therefore we are still waiting; the Ministry further awaits the filling of the Clerk Is. One HRO I, the recommendation was made for a person to act and we are awaiting the outcome of that recommendation.

Mr. Karim: So, how many monitoring and evaluation officers?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Only one, one position of monitoring and evaluation.

Mr. Karim: One for the entire programme?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes.

Mr. Karim: For how many thousands of trainees?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Currently we have a total of 4,919.

Mr. Karim: And do you consider that adequate? At this point in time, yes. Because that position will be buttressed by the officers at the level of the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development. At the end of the fiscal, once the person comes on board and we will measure the performance and determine whether or not we should request an additional position.

These positions, let me just explain—the structure of the OJT is a structure that was analyzed and developed by the PMCD. So that if following the filling of that position, an analysis of the performance, if we are of the view that the programme requires an additional M&E officer, we will do so by going back to PMCD for a second round of assessment.

Mr. Karim: And for these 4,119 trainees you have on the job, how many persons,
the placement officers, do you have visiting these trainees?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We have 19 Placement and Marketing Officers.

Mr. Karim: Nineteen for 4,109—

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes.

Mr. Karim: Do you consider that an appropriate ratio?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I have not been advised of any different position, or any further requirements at this point in time.

Mr. Karim: No, the question that I was really asking is do you find that that ratio of 19 to 4,119 is an adequate figure to supervise and to interface with these trainees on the field?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, we have 19 PMO Is, and 5 PMO IIs. I do not operate, I do not micro-manage and operate the programme myself. I am guided by the recommendations of those who are responsible for the programme and at this point in time, I am not in possession of any recommendation for variance in the levels of PMO Is and IIs who manage the programme.

Mr. Karim: So it is basically, one marketing and placement officer for every 200 trainees.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, Madam Chair, one has to recognize that these officers work eight hours a day, five days a week.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, just for a little clarity and in terms of—you alluded too, Minister, that there is one performance and evaluation officer.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: No, I never said that.

Mr. Indarsingh: In terms of, at the head structure?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I never said that. Would you like me to help you?

Mr. Indarsingh: Clarify, for us. The purpose of this meeting—[Crosstalk]
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I will help you, I did indicate that there is one position—

Madam Chairman: Excuse me, excuse me. Member for Couva South. One person at a time will speak. You asked about a particular officer the Minister has said, she did not say that. She was going to clarify what she said. So, you do not want the clarification? You do not want the clarification? Okay, so ask your question.

Mr. Indarsingh: I am merely asking, well, the person or the title. You said that there was one title, or person in charge?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, I did not say that—

Mr. Indarsingh: Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, the hon. Member is asking me questions, but not allowing me to assist him.

Mr. Indarsingh: Go ahead.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: What I did say earlier is that there is one position of monitoring and evaluation officer.

Mr. Indarsingh: And that position is being occupied by someone at moment?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: No, what I indicated earlier is that position was recently advertised, and we will be conducting interviews before the end of this month to fill that position.

Madam Chairman: Member, I will allow you a new question.

Mr. Indarsingh: So, whenever that person is recruited. Minister, God forbid that if that person falls ill or there is some emergency and so on, who would continue to take charge of the programme?

Madam Chairman: If the person falls ill, but there is no person in the—

Mr. Indarsingh: No, I said when, when.
Dr. Moonilal: Madam Chairman, when the person who is appointed, who will act.

Mr. Indarsingh: Act.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, that is operational. I fail to see—I do not understand what the Member is trying—I am willing to assist him, but I do not understand his line of thought.

Mr. Indarsingh: The line of thought, Minister, is just to have continuity; that is all. I am saying that if the person goes on leave—God forbid, the person falls ill and so on in the performance of his or her duty,—what is the contingency plan from your end? That is all I am seeking clarification on.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, at this point in time, the programme came under the Ministry last year June and we did not fill the position and the programme has not collapsed.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, Item 001, General Administration, pages 203 and 204.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Hon. Minister, could you give us some details with respect to line Item 16?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chairman, through you. Are you referring to—

Mr. Karim: Contract Employment, line 16.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: How can I help you on that one?

Mr. Karim: I was asking if you can give us some details as to what is involved in the—that expenditure and increase of 6.4 million. Contract Employment.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Cabinet approved 84 positions on the Ministry’s establishment and we intend to fill those positions.

Mr. Karim: You want to give us a sense as to what are some of those positions?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We have begun to fill those positions. Many of those
positions, the incumbent in those positions, the positions were advertised and in almost in all cases the incumbents were replaced in those positions, but the process is continuing.

Mr. Karim: Do you intend to have any new positions created on contract employment. And if so, how many?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: No. Not at this time.

Mr. Karim: Just for renewal?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes.

Mr. Karim: 84 positions?

Dr. Moonilal: And thank you Minister for being so helpful to us. I am on page 203, I am on Item 65. Minister, you would notice that line Item 65, the actual for 2017 was 9,000—$10,000 more or less.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Just a minute, line Item 65?

Dr. Moonilal: 65, page 203. I hope I am on the right thing myself. Are you with me, Ma’am?

Madam Chair: Expenses of Cabinet Appointed Bodies?

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, Madam Chair.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Okay.

Dr. Moonilal: You will notice 2017 actual $10,000 or a little less, you had 20,000 estimate ’18, you are now here at ’19 with an estimate 108,000. You care to tell us the nature of that increase and why was it—are there some specially appointed bodies that you are now providing for?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Actually, it has to do with the same three committees I was sharing with the hon. Member for Couva North.

Madam Chairman: Couva South.
Mr. Indarsingh: You live in the constituency.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Just checking to see if you remembered.

Dr. Moonilal: We know we do not see you often, but we know where you live.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: The Labour Market, Standing Council, the Child Labour Committee. The three additional committees we intend to bring, to re-constitute for this fiscal: labour, migration, child labour and standing national labour market council.

Dr. Moonilal: And ma’am, in relation to that, not necessarily now, but could you furnish us with the list of the members of those committees?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Oh yes, certainly, not now.

Dr. Moonilal: If you have it now it is fine, but it is something that you can provide to us.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We may have it. If we have it, we will certainly make it available.

Dr. Moonilal: I am also taking you to page 204, Item 66.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes.

Dr. Moonilal: Again, coming from a revised estimate of $40,000 in 2018, you have now $400,000. You can help us there as well. Would there be some special conference, seminars, or something in the next fiscal that your Ministry is hosting that could account for that, and what would that be?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Certainly. It is the intention of the Ministry to host various activities geared towards raising awareness and the historical importance of Labour Day and the birth and history of the labour movement in Trinidad and Tobago, staff assemblies, outreach activities and administrative professional days.

Dr. Moonilal: And that would include maybe the history of the oil workers as
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, I do not think that the history of the labour movement in Trinidad and Tobago can be written without the history of—

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, because it is a good juncture to focus on their history and demise.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, I have no doubt that it will prove very interesting to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Moonilal: Could I also direct the Minister to the next question I want to ask on Extraordinary Expenditure. This sub-heading Extraordinary Expenditure, page 203, 36; we have noticed over the years you have no provision there.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: What—Madam Chair?

Madam Chairman: Item 36, page 203.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes.

Dr. Moonilal: We have noticed from 2017 to 2019 estimates, nothing is provided there. Is it that 36, Extraordinary Expenditure, that is no longer operational, being used for any purpose that it was being used for before? So that you can take it away as a Sub-Item?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, rather sadly for us at the Ministry this extraordinary expenditure was utilized upon the death of our former Permanent Secretary. Since I have been at the Ministry there has been no other instance of extraordinary expenditure.

Dr. Moonilal: Okay. Could I also, I am on the same area, at 96, Fuel and Lubricants, page 204. I have noticed, Minister, a decrease over a period of ’17 to ’19. It is now at $9,000—would the Ministry have factored in the increase in the cost of fuel?
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, at the time the budgetary estimates were submitted, one would appreciate it was before the reading of the national 2018/2019 budget.

Dr. Moonilal: So, you would not have factored in the increase in the cost of gasoline? Fine. Thank you Ma’am.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 22, Short-term Employment. You exceeded the allocation, you got an additional amount of approximately 1.2 million, could you tell us what is responsible for it?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: What is responsible for?

Mr. Karim: The increase and the short-term employment? How many persons would that have catered for?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We have 37 persons on short-term employment at the moment and that would have been catered for by the 4.5 in 2018?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: No. What we have noted is that the allocation received is less than the expenditure for 2017/2018. In 2017/2018 the number of contracts were expiring, hence an increase in expenditure in the vote for the fiscal year. Currently, a decision was taken to reduce short-term employment at the Ministry.

Mr. Karim: By how many?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, we are filling those 84 positions. The situation is one where contracts would have expired so that persons would have been kept on under short-term.

Mr. Karim: You currently have 37 on short-term, and by the ending of this month that number would be reduced further.

Mr. Karim: So more unemployment?
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, no. These are officers who were on contract and their contracts came to an end, so we extended it through short-term and we are satisfied with their performance. So, we have no doubt they will continue to do well in the interviews that are being conducted and would be replaced on three-year contracts.

Mr. Karim: Okay. I am okay.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Co-operatives. Item 003, Friendly Societies. Item 004 Occupational Safety and Health Authority.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. To the Minister, are you aware of a situation at the Occupational Safety and Health Authority where persons who have been utilizing their vehicles in relation to the performance of their duties as inspectors are not being paid the appropriate vehicle maintenance allowances.

Madam Chairman: So, we are on 13? Are you on Item 13?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We are not unaware of such a situation.

Mr. Indarsingh: Could I ask to look into it and become aware?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, what I have been advised is that that is not part and parcel of their terms and conditions.

Mr. Indarsingh: Minister, again, people come to me from time to time and I have a responsibility in people’s interest and the national interest to bring something to your attention under the appropriate line Item.

Madam Chairman: It has been raised and answered.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chairman, if I must say, the information lacks specificity.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, On the Job Training Programme.
Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line 66, Hosting of Conferences, Seminars and other Functions. I am seeing an increase, 100,000 in 2018 estimates and now 235,000 for the revised estimates 2019. Can you account for it or justify that increase?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: It is for hosting a career fair.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair. Is it one career fair for the 235,000 allocation? I would like to run that.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I am further informed that besides the career fair, it is training for providers also as well as trainees.

Mr. Karim: Training for providers? Who are these providers? How is a provider identified?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: We term them “providers”—those employers who register with the programme. They are referred to, not as employers, but as providers.

Mr. Karim: So you train them?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well there is sensitization. Perhaps “training” is not the word—sensitization.

Mr. Karim: Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 17, Training. You have an increase of 19.3. Is this line Item with respect to the payment of the stipends and so on and the running of the programme? Could you tell us what this line Item will constitute?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: That pertains to the training of the trainees. Each training programme caters for between 350 and 400.

Mr. Karim: The training of the trainees?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: The trainees, they go through a four-day induction
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programme.

**Mr. Karim:** So wait a minute. How many persons are you going to be training to amount to $194.3 million in fiscal 2019? I think you are misunderstanding this line. Where is the amount of money which you will pay as stipends identified, in which line Item? You can provide it in writing, Madam Chairman, rather than I detain the—

**Madam Chairman:** So, Madam Minister.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Yes. Madam Chair, hon. Member, I am sorry about that, this Item here relates to the payment of stipends to the trainees.

**Mr. Karim:** It had to be. And that is why I was going in the direction, Madam Chairman, if I may. The question is really—you identified that up to now for this fiscal, you would have had 4,119 persons on the programme?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** No, 4,919.

**Mr. Karim:** Oh, it change now.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** No, that is what I said, “early o’clock”.

**Mr. Karim:** Four thousand, nine hundred and nineteen.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Yes.

**Mr. Karim:** Could you tell us what was the intake of these trainees was in 2016 and 2017?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** We can provide that information at a subsequent date.

**Mr. Karim:** Hon. Minister, could you tell us, since—well, I do not know if you can answer this question— but since 2015, if you have a history of the programme—but certainly, you took it over since June—is it June you said?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Well, what I said earlier was that the programme was brought under the ambit of the Ministry from June 2017.
Mr. Karim: Do you have an idea as to how many of these offices would have closed down under your remit. Were any of the OJT offices where persons could register? We had a number of them.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: But, you see while we would have done that, the Ministry has regional offices throughout Trinidad and Tobago. So that there is the operation of the OJT from all the Ministry’s offices. So, no young citizen would be disadvantaged.

Mr. Karim: Okay, could you tell us how many offices, therefore, you have as such?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, we have—

Mr. Karim: You want to put that in writing for us too?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Certainly.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. In relation to 16, Contract Employment. Could the Minister inform this meeting, how many persons have been employed under this particular line Item under the programme?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chairman, I did give that information. But I shall facilitate the hon. Member by repeating the information: 30 positions are public officers’ positions, pensionable on the establishment; 42 contract positions, bringing it to a total of 72 positions.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Just a quick question hon. Minister. Do you currently owe any employers for reimbursements?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I am so happy to say, not at this time.

Mr. Karim: Not even one employer, very good. Remember, you are in the Parliament, eh, so we are recording.

Madam Chairman: Member, Member.
Mr. Karim: Sorry, sorry.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well we owe three providers a total of a little over $6,000.

Mr. Karim: Okay, right.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: So, it has been reduced considerably.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, Item 001, General Administration. Item 002, Co-operatives. Item 003, Friendly Societies. Item 004, Occupational Safety and Health Authority.

4.05 p.m.

Dr. Moonilal: 004, Ma’am on page 208?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Dr. Moonilal: Current Transfers and Subsidies. Minister, I am looking at 08, Funding for the Liaison Office in Canada.

Madam Chairman: Excuse me? We are at page 208, 004, which is Occupational Safety and Health Authority. We have not reached there as yet. Okay?

Dr. Moonilal: I am—

Madam Chairman:—way ahead. Item 005, On the Job Training Programme, Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 004, International Bodies. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Ma’am. Minister, I am seeing here the funding for the Liaison Office in Canada. Could you give us—and I am aware that you have just changed the line-Item and moved it somewhat, so there is a provision that we will see later, but my question really is, you had a revised estimate of $1.6 million in 2018. Could you just give us an update on the working of this office in Canada, and whether that was the office that was identified to assist the Ministry
with your initiative of the truck drivers in Canada—the recruitment of Trinidad and Tobago citizens to be truck drivers in Canada? Was that the office assisting with that recruitment programme and to what extent have they delivered on that really ambitious commitment?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair, I shall focus on the responsibility of the Liaison Office in Canada. The cost that is reflected there is as a result of new Canadian legislation which restricted the deduction from workers’ salaries. Madam Chairman, 5 per cent of these deductions were utilized to fund the operations of the Liaison Labour Office in Canada. As a consequence of that piece of legislation, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago agreed to accept the responsibility to fund the operations in Canada. As such, this Vote has been created to facilitate those operations.

**Dr. Moonilal:** But Ma’am, it has nothing to do with the truck driver recruitment programme. It was not used for that purpose.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair, there is no such programme within the operations of the Ministry.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Okay. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva South, do you have a question?

**Mr. Indarsingh:** No, no.

**Madam Chairman:** All right. So we would go on to Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions. Items 007, Households. Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you. To the Minister, under 04, Settlement of Claims—Former URP Workers. I see an allocation of $21,944,303. Minister could you—

**Madam Speaker:** Member, could you read that properly? For what fiscal year are we speaking of?

**UNREvised**
Mr. Indarsingh: 2018, and I see that there is a decrease. There is a line-Item and I just wanted to make an enquiry.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, what is the enquiry the hon. Member is asking?

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Minister, are you willing to make the terms of settlement in relation to this particular line Item available to this meeting?

Madam Chairman: Member, there is no terms of settlement.

Mr. Indarsingh: Settlement of Claims.

Madam Chairman: There is nothing under the 2019 estimates for this. So that, I mean, I do not understand the question that you would like me to ask the hon. Member to answer.

Mr. Indarsingh: I am simply asking, Madam Chair, in relation to this particular line Item, for the Minister to furnish this said meeting with the information that resulted in this settlement of payment.

Madam Chairman: Member, I am not going to allow that question. We are on fiscal 2019. Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Ma’am, the question I would have is at the same 04, on page 209, Settlement of Claims and a revised expenditure for 2018 of 21 million. Could the Minister just simply supply to the House a list of the names of persons and the payments made to the persons?

Madam Chairman: For 2018?

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, to satisfy this 21 million—21.9 million.

Madam Chairman: But are we not really looking at 2019?

Dr. Moonilal: Ma’am, we can engage the Minister on everything before us. This is before us in the book.
Madam Chairman: I think my understanding is a little different. You may wish to ask something about 2019 in relation to something that occurred in 2018, but I do not think we are really engaged in an examination of 2018.

Dr. Moonilal: But, Ma’am, I was under the impression that we can ask questions about this and seek clarification about expenditure, not just projected expenditure.

Madam Chairman: No, no, no. As I said, I think I made myself clear, okay?

Dr. Moonilal: But, Ma’am, may I say before—

Madam Chairman: You have another question to ask?

Dr. Moonilal: The question is: How is it in other Ministries we were able to ask on expenditure before and get the answers and get—so maybe we were doing something wrong, Ma’am, for a long time.

Madam Chairman: Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. This $6,368,740 which represents a decrease in terms of expenditure, the National Entrepreneurship Development Company. Madam Minister, could you account for this decrease?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, NEDCO is currently re-engineering its operation towards a higher level of self-sufficiency, and will be implementing the appropriate strategy to reduce operating costs by consolidation of branches and other operational efficiencies.

Mr. Indarsingh: So, in terms of this engineering—

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Re-engineering.

Mr. Indarsingh: Re-engineering, whatever term, probably the 21st Century term for dismissing people. Could you inform this meeting, how many workers would have lost their jobs at NEDCO as a result of this re-engineering?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, NEDCO engaged in a restructuring.
exercise and offered its staff a voluntary separation of employment and a voluntary early retirement plan of which 46 staff members opted for VSEP and six staff members opted for VERP, which is the Voluntary Early Retirement Plan, bringing it to a total of 52 members of staff, and who have all been paid their separation benefits and who are accessing services that they require from NEDCO.

Mr. Indarsingh: Minister, did NEDCO engage any consultant as it relates to this re-engineering exercise or this job loss exercise?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, I am not aware that NEDCO employed a consultant for the separation of staff.

Mr. Indarsingh: I am asking Madam Minister, did NEDCO Board of Directors engage any consultant as it relates to its re-engineering exercise you have spoken about?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, the board of NEDCO did employ a consultant to assess the entire operations of NEDCO.

Mr. Indarsingh: And, Madam Minister, could you inform the national community how much did it cost to engage the services of this consultant?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I am not—I do not have that information at hand, Madam Chair.

Mr. Indarsingh: But if you do not know how much it costs the taxpayers of this country, are you aware of the name of the consultant or the entity that conducted this exercise?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, that information can be supplied at a subsequent time.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you.

Dr. Tewarie: A simple question Minister. 009; 01, National Entrepreneurship
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Head 30 Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development

Development Company. I just wanted to know: How many new enterprises were funded in the 2018 year?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: That is information we can supply at a subsequent time, certainly.

Madam Chairman: Item 010, Other Transfers Abroad; Sub-Head 06, Current Transfers to Statutory Boards & Similar Bodies, and we go for the details in the relevant book which is at page 183. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Drafts Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly. 17, Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, Item 001, General Administration, page 183. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you. Madam Chair, to the Minister. As it relates to Salaries and Cost of Living, Madam Minister, I see there is an increase of $100,000. At this said institution, could you inform this meeting if there are any outstanding negotiations for any collective bargaining period?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, are we talking about Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes, there are periods outstanding.

Mr. Indarsingh: And could you inform this meeting for what period?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: The academic staff, 2008—

Mr. Indarsingh: It cannot be for 2008, Minister. A collective bargaining period is for more than one year.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well that is the beginning, 2008—

Mr. Indarsingh: To?
Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I am awaiting the information from the Director of the college—2008 to 2010.

Mr. Indarsingh: And?


Mr. Indarsingh: That is for the?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Academic staff.

Mr. Indarsingh: And the non-academic staff?


Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, Item 007, Households; Item 009, Other Transfers.

Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund—we are at page 72; Item 003, Economic Infrastructure. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: We are at Business Services, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Could you give me the line-Item number?

Mr. Indarsingh: The Termination and Impact of the Minimum Wage Level on the Economy.

Madam Chairman: 009?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes. Madam Minister, I see that you have moved the allocation from $600 in 2018 to 200,000 in 2019. Could you advise when this particular initiative will begin and is there a projected completion date?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Madam Chair, the Minimum Wages Board, which has oversight of this project, they took a while to finalize the terms of reference with
regard to hiring a consultant to undertake the study and, in light of this, the implementation will commence shortly with the tendering process, so hence the 200,000.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay. So there is no timeline in terms of—

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Nine months.

Mr. Indarsingh: Nine months. From when the engagement of the consultant is completed?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Yes, the gestation period.

Dr. Tewarie: Could I ask a follow-up question? The Determination of the Impact of the Minimum Wage Level on the Economy, the thrust of that is to understand what?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: Well, I think what—the Minimum Wages Board, this was part and parcel of its plan for the last couple years. They were not able to conduct the study that would enable the board to determine accurately with the correct data, setting the true minimum wage in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay. Now, the reason I asked Minister is because there are studies that have been done that linked the minimum wages as a ratio of GDP and ranked countries on that basis and we are pretty low down on that, so that is why I asked.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I am quite sure the Minimum Wages Board, whomever, they would take on board take into consideration hon. Member.

Madam Chairman: Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Under 011, Minister could you advise or tell us when the upgrade of the ICT at the college will be completed?

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: The college will acquire and install layer two, layer three
switches, firewalls and access points which together with internal cabling upgrade undertaken in the last fiscal would permit the college to significantly improve its IT services, including the ability to allow distant education thereby opening up a completely new market segment in Trinidad and Tobago, and I think the director and other members of staff are quite excited about this new horizon.

**Madam Chairman:** Infrastructure Development Fund, page 193; Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 30 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you, Madam Minister, thank you Madam PS and your other—

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** I thank you, Madam Chair and hon. Members. Do have a productive evening.

**Madam Chairman:** We are now going on to Head 11, Registration, Recognition and Certification Board. And for the guidance of Members, we are at page 50 of the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*.

*Head 11:* Registration, Recognition and Certification Board, $4,300,000.

**Madam Chairman:** I shall now invite the Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you kindly, Madam Chair. Hon. Members, the Registration, Recognition and Certification Board hereinafter referred to as the board, is really a tripartite body created via the Industrial Relations Act, Chap. 88:01. The board consists of a chairman and eight other members who are appointed by the Minister of Labour and Small Enterprise Development.
The chairman is, however, selected by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago after consultation with such organizations as, in her opinion, most representative of workers and employers. With respect to the other members of the board, three members are persons nominated by such organizations as, in the opinion of the Minister, are the most representative of workers; three members being persons nominated by such organizations, as in the opinion of the Minister, are the most representative of the employers and two members being persons jointly nominated by the organizations most representative of workers and employers. The Minister appoints the chairman and the other eight members of the board and shall, in a like manner, appoint an alternate member.

The board has a secretariat which is headed by a secretary, who is the accounting officer. The secretariat is comprised of 26 public officers who carry out the day-to-day functions of the board. The duties of the board are outlined in section 23(1)(f) of the Industrial Relations Act, Chap. 88:01. The board generally meets once per month. In turn, there are many committee meetings which seek to resolve disputes between the parties. Sometimes the disputes are substantive and other times there are technicalities.

Under this board, matters have been reaching the court more expeditiously. It is noteworthy that the President of the Industrial Court in her address at the opening of the court’s term 2017/2018, expressed her appreciation for the board’s increased expeditiousness. I thank you, Madam Chair, and I avail myself to hon. Members’ queries.

Question proposed: That Head 11 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $4,300,000 for Head 11, Registration, Recognition and Certification Board, is comprised of moneys
proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*. So we are at page 50. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, Item 001. Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just very quickly, Remuneration to Board Members, there is an increase of $235,000. Madam Minister, this increase in allocation is as a result of?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** Once the new board is in place there is a programme—a plan—to be implemented which requires additional hearings and that will engender additional cost. The board members would have to be paid for additional sittings.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Okay. And when will this board be constituted?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** I am hoping—through you, Madam Chair, I am hoping that the board would be constituted in a short while. Her Excellency has the responsibility of appointing the Chair.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Okay.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** And we are awaiting her Excellency.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** I am just looking for information as it relates to when you said “additional sittings”.

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** There are a number of outstanding matters which have been classified as technical matters—technical legal matters—and as soon as the board is appointed, they would require open hearings.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Okay. So seeing that you have gone in that direction, Minister could you tell this meeting or probably at some point in time, how many matters are before the board to be determined, inclusive of the technical matters that you have alluded to?

**Hon. Baptiste-Primus:** We would have to produce that information, Madam
Chair, to the hon. Member at a subsequent time.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, Item 001, General Administration; Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, Item 001, General Administration.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 11 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

Madam Chairman: Thank you Minister.

Hon. Baptiste-Primus: I thank you, Madam Chairman and hon. Members.

Madam Chairman: All right. Members, I believe we can start the Ministry of Education and maybe we can take the break around 5.00 p.m; at least, we will make some dent into the Ministry of Education. Is that, of course, agreeable to Members?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairman: Head 26: Ministry of Education. Hon. Members, in the interest of efficiency, we are starting at page 166 of the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure.*

*Head 26: Ministry of Education, $5,636,086,000.*

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Ministry of Education to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

Hon. Garcia: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, on behalf of the Ministry of Education, I thank you for this opportunity to speak to the allocation for fiscal 2019. The mandate of the Ministry is to build the human resource capacity of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago in pursuit of sustainable national development and its stated goals, namely:
1. Effective governance and administration of the education system;
2. Access to educational opportunities by all learners; and
3. Quality education provided at all levels.

In order to ensure that the education system functions at an optimal level, the Ministry has, over the past year, sought to institute measures that increase efficiency and effectiveness with concurrent reductions in spending. Adequate funding is, however, a prerequisite for advances in the system.

Madam Chair, with respect to the recurrent allocation for fiscal 2019, a total of 5.33 billion was allocated. The Infrastructure Development Fund is utilized mainly for the construction and upgrade of our nation’s schools. Madam Chair, I am pleased to note that the Ministry has been allocated $25 million to effect repairs to 25 schools which sustained damage in the recent earthquake that measured 6.9 on the Richter scale. Madam Chair, with your leave, I will provide responses on those areas of concern to my parliamentary colleagues. Thank you very much.

4.35 p.m.

Question proposed: That Head 26 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $5,636,086,000 for Head 26, Ministry of Education, is comprised on moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure, the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly, and the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, Item 001: General Administration. Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. On the assumption that this
involves the expenditure for the entire Ministry, could the hon. Minister tell us whether any sums have been identified or allocated for the University of the West Indies, South Campus, and also for the UWI’s participation in the children’s—Couva Children’s Hospital?

Madam Chairman: Which Item you are under, 01?


Madam Chairman: All right.

Hon. Garcia: The answer is simply no. I have had occasion to make statements in this Parliament already with respect to the Government’s position concerning the Penal/Debe Campus. Secondly, with respect to the Children’s Hospital or the Couva Hospital, that is a matter that is under discussion between the Government and The University of the West Indies.

Mr. Karim: So, just for the records, no allocation is for either of those two entities?

Hon. Garcia: No allocation, no.

Mr. Karim: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 14: Remuneration to members of Cabinet-Appointed Committees. Minister, I am seeing $500,000 estimated for 2019 which shows a $450,000 increase. Can you identify these Cabinet-Appointed Committees, please?

Hon. Garcia: The Cabinet-Appointed Committees are stated here, for example, the GATE Standing Committee, the GATE Credit Committee, the Learning Materials Evaluation Committee, the National Advisory Committee on Education.
Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 005: Secondary Education. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 32: Remuneration to Substitute Teachers. In 2018 there was a small sum allocated—well, revised estimates, 440,000, and the estimates for 2019 is 1.25. How many substitute teachers you estimate that this will be used for paying in this 1.25 million?

Hon. Garcia: We have an allocation but at the moment in the secondary system we have a number of teachers who are qualified, whose qualifications have been assessed and they have not yet been able to be absorbed in the system simply because we have an overabundance of qualified teachers.

Dr. Gopeesingh: This is substitute teachers?

Hon. Garcia: Yes. What I am saying is that because we have plethora of qualified persons in the system already, at this point there is not much need for substitute teachers.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Line Item 01: Secondary Education. Hon. Minister, could you tell us how many vacant posts there are in the secondary school system versus how many are provisioned for? How many vacant posts do you have—

Hon. Garcia: I will give you that information in a little while.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Item 006: Primary Education. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I want to pose the same question to the hon. Minister for the primary school education. How many are on the complement?
Hon. Garcia: In the interest of time, I will supply that information to you. Okay, I have it here now. Let us start with the primary school; I hope you do not mind. There are 371 vacant positions, and in the secondary school there are 911 vacant positions.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, can I follow up a question on those?

Madam Chairman: But the question to follow up would be on Primary Education. That is where we have reached.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, for both; 01 and 05 and 06. Those are the follow-up questions on those line headings.

Madam Chairman: Member, what I am saying is we have reached Primary Education, 006.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, how many of those—the vacancies—are from the denominational boards, if you have that?

Hon. Garcia: We do not have that and we can supply it to you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Same for secondary.

Hon. Garcia: Yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Because I saw the denominational boards having some difficulties.


Mr. Karim: Thank you very much. Hon. Minister, through you, Madam Chair, might you be able to give us some details as to this Technical/Vocational Education? These salaries and COLA for 2.1 million, who does that entail?

Hon. Garcia: Could you pose your question again please, Sir?
Mr. Karim: I was just asking you to give us some elucidation on 012: Technical/Vocational Education for 2.1 million.

Hon. Garcia: Yes. What is the question, Sir?

Mr. Karim: The same thing I asked, which is what does this really represent, the salaries and COLA for TVET? How many persons are employed in this? Who is receiving this 2.1 million allocation?

Hon. Garcia: I will get that information to you subsequently.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair, and if the Minister could also indicate the centres as well for the same line Item.

Madam Chairman: Excuse me?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: The tech/vocs, the hon. Minister, if he can also indicate in his response to the Member for Chaguanas East the centres as well.

Madam Chairman: But this is under Personnel Expenditure?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yeah. The question is: How many persons that the salaries are, and so—

Dr. Francis: You mean where they are located?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: —and where they are located, yeah.


Mr. Karim: Hon. Minister, could you tell us how many persons are employed in this unit, and I suspect it continues to be located within the Ministry?

Hon. Garcia: We have 28 persons employed. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Karim: And they are really responsible for setting the exam—well, they will
contract people to set the NEC exams. So you have 28—how many you said, 28 persons?

Hon. Garcia: Twenty-eight, yes.

Mr. Karim: Twenty-eight persons. And do you have an idea, if you can give us, as to how many centres they are responsible for?

Hon. Garcia: Well there are tech/voc centres in most of the former senior comprehensive schools, and in some of the traditional secondary schools there are also offerings of technical and vocational subject areas.

Madam Chairman: Are we on National Examinations Council?

Mr. Karim: Yeah. I am finished with it now, Madam Chair.

Hon. Garcia: You are finished?

Mr. Karim: Yeah.

Hon. Garcia: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Item 016: Scholarships and Advanced Training Division; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration; Item 005, Secondary Education; Item 006, Primary Education.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What page are you on, Madam Chair?

Madam Chairman: Page 173. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, Line Item 12. Does this, Material and Supplies, does it by chance includes cleaning items?

Hon. Garcia: I am having a little difficulty in hearing you. Could you repeat it, please?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Line Item 12.

Hon. Garcia: Under Materials and Supplies? Yes, of course it will include that.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, I see that you have an increase of 100,000.
I know that a number of schools have been complaining that they are not getting any cleaning supplies. Do you think that this would be adequate enough to supply the schools, especially the primary schools?

**Hon. Garcia:** There are two ways I can answer your question. First of all I am sure and I am confident that the schools—that the money allocated will be sufficient. The second aspect of your question is: Will the allocation be made on time? And it is only if the allocations are made on time then we can have the schools cleaned efficiently, and we will do everything to ensure that those allocations to the schools will be made on time.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Chair, can I?

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Caroni East.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Can I ask the Minister, under Goods and Services, 02, line Item 37 and 43—

**Madam Chairman:** Wait, wait, we are at 006, Primary Education, page 173.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** You fly through there.

**Madam Chairman:** I will allow you any question from 01 under 006 to 21.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right. I want to ask about line Item 15—

**Madam Chairman:** Repairs and Maintenance for Equipment, yes.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yeah. You have almost a negligible Vote there, and also for Repairs and Maintenance—Buildings, number 21. When there are so many Ministry of Education buildings that are going under and are needing repairs, why is there just a small subvention of 1.2 million for buildings and 200,000 for equipment when you know, as well as many of us know, that equipment need more help and buildings need help? What is your comment on that?

**Hon. Garcia:** This allocation is for our head office.
Dr. Gopeesingh: And so you have all the equipment in the head office now?

Hon. Garcia: No, the allocation is for our head office.

Dr. Gopeesingh: That is the new one on Richmond Street?

Hon. Garcia: St. Vincent Street.

Dr. Gopeesingh: St. Vincent Street. Okay, fine.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, District Services, and Member for Caroni East, so that I would not be accused of flying on, page 173.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, no, no, I will not accuse you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Item 008: Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, no, the District Services is 15, and the same question I want to ask the Minister, 15 and 21. The Repairs and Maintenance for Equipment and building which falls under District Services Division—and I think both Ministers know that the districts sign need of help for repairs to their buildings—what happen? Why is there such a small Vote when you need the help?

Hon. Garcia: There are seven districts—

Dr. Gopeesingh: I am with you, you know; I am with you on it. I will try—go ahead.

Hon. Garcia: There are seven district offices and we have made a claim through IDF to have sufficient funds allocated.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Good. Thank you for the answer.

Madam Chairman: Can I fly on, Sir?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yeah. “Doh” fly on but let us go.

Madam Chairman: Item 008, Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Repairs and Maintenance for the Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre; and the maintenance—people in the—workers in the Ministry of
Education have found difficulty with the infrastructure at Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre, which needs an upgrade. Is there any determination to upgrade that RCLRC building this year coming or in the future?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, Sir. Are you finished?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yeah. I am just asking you.

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, we have an allocation under the Development Programme of $4 million that will be applied to the RCLRC.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Good. We had started a wing. We have started the issue of putting up a wing, almost 2015, has that been left—

**Madam Chairman:** Member, is that under Repairs and Maintenance, or having regard to the question—the response?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** I will come to it when he says the IDF.

**Madam Chairman:** All right. So you will ask it under IDF. Okay. Thank you very much. Item 009, Early Childhood Care and Education Unit, pages 174—175.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Madam Chairman. Under 22, Short-term Employment on 174, there is an allocation of $3.5 million. Minister, in recent times we have been seeing reports in the public domain where contracts for employment in the Early Childhood Education fraternity was not renewed, and so on. Does this 3.5 million take into consideration that, in relation to having all your staffing for the Early Childhood Education Centres throughout Trinidad and Tobago?

**Hon. Garcia:** The ECC centres have been staffed by teachers and assistant teachers, and recently we were able to renew the contracts for three years of persons involved in this sector.
Dr. Gopeesingh: How many employees are under the ECC sector?
Hon. Garcia: One hundred and seventy-four teachers so far.
Dr. Gopeesingh: How many vacancies would be there then if you employ 174?
Hon. Garcia: Just one minute. In the interest of time we will give you that in writing.
Dr. Gopeesingh: Yeah, I will appreciate that. Janitorial Services, line Item—sorry, Rudy, go ahead.
Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, if you would grant me permission?
Madam Chairman: Yes, Member for Couva South.
Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you. Mr. Minister, in relation to this employment, are there any plans for the opening of additional early childhood centres in this fiscal year which will lead in the direction of the need for additional staff?
Hon. Garcia: There are a number of centres that had been left in abeyance, and we are doing everything possible to have those schools whose construction has not be completed to be completed in the shortest possible time. Perhaps you will get some good news very shortly.
Mr. Indarsingh: In terms of the Couva South constituency?
Hon. Garcia: In terms of those schools that had been left in abeyance—
Hon. Member: Important ones.
Hon. Garcia: And the important ones, yes.
Hon. Member: There are unimportant ones.
Hon. Garcia: All forty-something.
Mr. Indarsingh: Mr. Minister, I would have—based on your experience I would conclude that all schools are importance.
Hon. Garcia: And I said so. I just said that.

UNREVISED
Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Minister, in respect of 009, and it is a follow-up to a question from my colleague, and I see in the PSIP that the Ben Lomond is 98, Early Childhood Centre—

Madam Chairman: PSIP, are we not on recurrent?

Mr. Charles: No, this is related to this Early Childhood, 009.

Madam Chairman: Yeah, but recurrent expenditure.

Mr. Charles: Yeah, I know, I understand. But two schools are 98 per cent complete, the Ben Lomond and the Reform. So the question is, this recurrent expenditure—this increase will take in these two schools because they are 98 per cent—

Madam Chairman: Which increase? One minute, please, Members; a little patience. What Item, and maybe if we identity—

Mr. Charles: 009, there is an increase of 1.2 million, and I am asking if that 1 million will take into consideration these two schools.

Madam Chairman: But, Member, before we go there, the 1.2 million or 3 million you are talking about—[Interruption]

Mr. Charles: 1.239 million increase.

Madam Chairman: Right. Is that not an aggregate of all the various Items, telephones, water, so on, that are line Items there? [Crosstalk] Please. So, Member, I think having regard to what you read, when we come to some other book we will deal with it. Okay? Thank you very much. Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: I just wanted to, through you, Madam Chair, to indicate, like my colleague, that the Enterprise ECC centre will be on the important list.
Hon. Garcia: Fair enough.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, the Janitorial Services. If it is only 100,000—

Hon. Garcia: Which line Item we are going to?

Madam Chairman: Item 37.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yeah, line Item 37. If we have a large number of Early Childhood Education Centres under control by the State, who is doing the janitorial service for it if only $100,000 is allocated to that area, and where is the Vote for that?

Hon. Garcia: There are cleaners in the schools. There are 22 cleaners who are attached to the schools and those cleaners are on contract.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. And how many schools are they taking care of, how many ECC centres?

Hon. Garcia: One hundred and twenty-nine centres.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So 22 cleaners taking care of 129 ECC centres, Minister? Something is wrong.

Hon. Garcia: Just let me explain. There are 29 cleaners and then there are also cleaners on short-term contract. “Short-term contract” means contract on a month to month basis, and those cleaners are there so that they can supplement the required need for cleaning all those schools.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So where is that Vote, hon. Minister? Where is that Vote for these contract cleaners on month to month?

Hon. Garcia: Short-term—we have a Vote for a Short-Term Employment, and that would be taken care of in Short-Term Employment.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So the short-term employment includes both teachers and
cleaners, or whom?

**Hon. Garcia:** There is one Vote for short-term employments and all persons in the Ministry of Education who fall under this category, that Vote will take care of them.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Minister, just on the figures—

**Madam Chairman:** One minute, please. Are you finished, Caroni East?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yeah, the Minister has given me an answer but I am not satisfied, but I will move on.

**Madam Chairman:** All right. So, Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Madam Chair, just again based on the statistics, and I am not so clear but I am trying to follow the Minister. Minister, based on the numbers and the allocation, and so on, of cleaners on the permanent and short-term establishment, to use your words, I would hope that persons who have been engaged by the Ministry are not being paid under the minimum wage.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, just coming back to that line Item, if you can probably provide how many persons are on short-term contract, please.

**Hon. Garcia:** Okay, we will provide that for you.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 010, General Administration (TEST), pages 175 and 176; Item 011, Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry. Member for Oropouche West.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, I am
looking at 01, Travelling and Subsistence. How many lecturers does this reflect payment for with respect to travelling and subsistence in light of the fact that several of the core courses have been disbanded at ECIAF and several lecturers are not there? So this Travelling and Subsistence—in other words, how many lecturers are at present at ECIAF?

**Madam Chairman:** You mean how many lectures are enjoying travelling and subsistence?

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Yeah, at ECIAF.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay.

**Hon. Garcia:** We will provide that answer because quite a large number of those persons have been absorbed under UTT. So when we have that information we will give it to you.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you.

**Hon. Garcia:** I have just gotten it, 40.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Forty lecturers?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** But 300,000, Hon. Minister, to pay 40 lecturers?

**Dr. Francis:** It is travelling.

**Hon. Garcia:** That is travelling.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right. Okay. Right. Good.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 014, National Examinations Council; Item 015, Spanish Secretariat. Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Madam Chairman. Line Item 16, if there are no contract staff in 2018, well, who spent the money in promotion, publicity, printing, hosting, and so on? Hon. Minister, if you have no contract staff, who spent those sums
underneath? You have nobody in the department, in the Unit?

**Hon. Garcia:** We have one employee.

**Mr. Karim:** One?

**Hon. Garcia:** One employee, yes, in that department, but under short-term.

**Mr. Karim:** All right. Do you have any plans to—sorry, Madam Chair—do you have any plans to increase the complement in that unit?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, we are working on that.

**Mr. Karim:** Given the amount of persons we have now who speak Spanish in our country?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 016, Scholarships and Advance Training Division. Member for Caroni East.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Line Item 16, hon. Minister, Contract Employment. Can you kindly give us an appreciation of the complement of staff in this contract employment for $20 million? What type of personnel there are under contract employment and how many?

**Hon. Garcia:** Well, as I know, in the civil service, in the public service we have permanent and contract employees. Under this heading there are a number of persons who are on contract that belong to the section and this allocation would take care of their salaries.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** About how many would there be?

**Hon. Garcia:** I will give you that information in a while.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right. If you can we will appreciate it. And that scholarship department now, under the line Item 016, takes care of the national open scholarships and additional scholarships—
Madam Chairman: Which Item is that?

Dr. Gopeesingh: The same Item, Scholarships and Advanced Training Division.

Madam Chairman: Which line Item?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Item 16, Contract Employment. Would that division of workers, would they be taking care of—could you tell us what scholarships would they be taking care of in terms of management, and so on?

Hon. Garcia: We have a number of scholarships that are available to students.

Dr. Gopeesingh: That is why I am asking you that.

Madam Chairman: This is not Personnel Expenditure. Is this not Goods and Services?

Hon. Garcia: This is Goods and Services, yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes.

Madam Chairman: So is that a question—

Dr. Gopeesingh: So, Madam Chair, if they are employed, they have to be doing certain jobs, so I am just asking them their line responsibility for X number of workers under the division. What is their line responsibility for these contracts of officers? [Crosstalk]

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, Colm. Let the Minister answer, you are not Minister of—

Hon. Garcia: Yes, I agree with my Minister of Finance—

Dr. Gopeesingh: What you agree to, Minister?

Hon. Garcia: Good and Services. So you are asking what services those persons perform.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right, go ahead. [Crosstalk] Nothing is wrong, but you do not want to answer so I am leaving it.

Mr. Imbert: Answer what? That is the wrong question. [Crosstalk]
Madam Chairman: Well, I see Member for Couva South is giving me a certain kind of signal, I do not know if he would like to also confer with his colleague from Caroni East in terms of that particular statement.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, where I came from I like to adhere to terms and conditions.

Madam Chairman: All right. So, hon. Members, I now consider Item 016, Scholarships and Advanced Training Division complete. I think now is a convenient time for us to take the suspension for tea. We shall resume at Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases at page 178, and we will resume at 5.30.

5.05 p.m.: Committee suspended.

5.30 p.m.: Committee resumed.

[MR. FORDE in the Chair]

Mr. Chairman: Okay Members, we will resume Standing Finance Committee. We are at Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, and we will continue with the Ministry of Education. Page 178 of Draft Estimates, details of Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure, financial year 2019, page 178. Item 001, General Administration, page 178; Item 006, Primary Education, page 178; Item 007, District Services Division, page 178; Item 008, Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre, page 179; Item 009, Early Childhood Care and Education Unit, page 179; Item 010, General Administration TEST, page 179; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 179; Item 001, Regional Bodies.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Line Item 01, the significant reduction by 10.4 for CXC. Hon. Minister, might you be able to give us a little explanation?

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Hon. Garcia: It is the view of both the Ministry of Education and the Budget Division that this allocation is adequate.

Mr. Karim: Adequate?

Hon. Garcia: Is adequate.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What examinations would that entail? Does that entail the SEA and CSEC and CAPE? From my understanding that was close to about 50 million in the past, and I am only seeing about 11 million now, so Minister, that is a little bit confusing.

Hon. Garcia: The annual contribution for two years, that contribution was made to the CXC budget. The allocation should be sufficient for the 2019 allocation, which I just stated, and it will involve all the areas that fall under the jurisdiction of the Caribbean Examinations Council.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So are you saying then that you would have paid a lot more up front, and this is what is just needed for this year to cover—

Hon. Garcia: Yes, this was the case.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Just one more question on that. Have you all resolved the issue with TTUTA on this issue about whether the Caribbean Examinations Council would undertake those SBAs or the teachers—yes, that is important. You need to—

Hon. Garcia: Well, we relied on the opinion of the CPO. The CPO gave us her opinion in writing, and I understand that the union has taken out a pre-action protocol letter addressed to the CPO. As you would know, a pre-action protocol letter is really an initial submission.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay, no need to go further. I understand what is going on.

Mr. Chairman: Item 002, Commonwealth Bodies, page 180.
Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, could you tell us who now sits on behalf of Trinidad and Tobago on the COL?

Hon. Garcia: The Commonwealth of Learning?

Hon. Karim: On the board. I know we used to have somebody on the board, representing the country.

Hon. Garcia: I am not sure whether we have a representative, but I will find out. I will interrogate that. I will get that to you.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East, you have a question?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Just on 31.


Dr. Gopeesingh: It was good to see a little increase in it, but Minister, do you have a board for UNESCO now operating?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, we have a chairman.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What about the entire board?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, we have a board.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East, your mike is on, you have a question?

Mr. Karim: Oh, sorry.

Mr. Chairman: Item 004, International Bodies, page 180.

Dr. Gopeesingh: One question. OECD, Minister, there was some allocation for the previous years, but nothing for 2018 and 2019. Have we moved out of the membership on the OECD, from the education perspective?

Hon. Garcia: Yes. You know, we were affiliated with the PISA, and that was completed in 2015, and this is why we have no allocation now.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But PISA continues to do the work basically every two or three
years, would you have intentions of going back?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, not only PISA, but PISA and PIRLS.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Okay, so when the time comes you will probably have some funding for it?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, of course.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 006, Educational Institutions, pages 181 and 182.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right, I will go first. The grants to assisted secondary schools, Minister, both Ministers, recently the Association of Denominational Boards, the PRO released some information that they had not received the funding for assisted secondary and primary schools, not all the funding that was needed. In fact, the Ministry of Education owed them a lot of money. What comment you have to make on that there?

**Hon. Garcia:** I have been informed by our DFA that those payments have been made. But I will just try to verify that; just give me one minute.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yes, you have your DFA right there.

**Hon. Garcia:** Okay, that is correct, all payments have been made to the denominational bodies.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** So the statement recently by the Denominational Boards’ PRO, that has been settled, the issue has been settled?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, that issue has been settled.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 27, could you give us an explanation as to why that 2.631 million decrease?

**Hon. Garcia:** Simply because we have not yet purchased any textbooks to be used in both our primary and our secondary schools. About a little over a year, we appointed the LMEC committee, Learning Materials Evaluation Committee, and
they are doing an evaluation of all text books. We are moving away from what happened before, where we had the free choice, because we found that this was shrouded in some undesirable activities. We are now relying on this new committee so that we can have the textbooks that will be used in both our primary and secondary schools up to a certain standard.

Mr. Karim: Do you have any outstanding payments to the publishers?

Hon. Garcia: Yes.

Mr. Karim: Could you tell us how many and what is the amount?

Hon. Garcia: I will have to give you that information subsequently.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East, same page?

Mr. Karim: It was on that page. I am finished.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Local school boards Minister, secondary schools—

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 22, go ahead.

Dr. Gopeesingh: How many boards do you have now and when is their term expiring?

Hon. Garcia: At present, we have been writing to the principals of all the government secondary schools asking them to ensure that local school boards are instituted and implemented in all those schools.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But it comes with a Cabinet Note.

Hon. Garcia: Yes, the Cabinet had already agreed that these local school boards representing both primary and secondary schools should be put in place.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So you do not have any for the government secondary schools at the moment?

Hon. Garcia: A number of schools have already put in place the school boards, but there are others that we have written to principals asking them to ensure that
those boards are constituted.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Well as I am on that, if you want to comment on the primary schools as well.

**Hon. Garcia:** It is the same situation with the government primary schools. Now remember these local school boards reside only in the government schools.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yes, I know that.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, I have a couple line Items. The first one is line Item 26. Could you tell me what this line Item specifically deals with?

**Mr. Chairman:** Special Education Resources Programme, that is the one?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Yeah.

**Hon. Garcia:** Again, I stated just now that we have formed the LMEC committee, Learning Materials Evaluation Committee, and it is also looking at all aspects of school supplies, including material for schools that will aid in our efforts at ensuring that our children with special needs are taken care of.

**Mr. Karim:** Just a follow-up before I ask the other question: How many members constitute the LMEC?

**Hon. Garcia:** We have a committee of about eight or nine. It is headed by Mr. Peter O’Neil, a former Chief Education Officer.

**Mr. Karim:** Yes, I know Peter. Will they be considering e-books as well?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, they will be considering that.

**Mr. Karim:** So the other question was, with respect to what Dr. Gopeesingh had asked, just a follow-up, is it true to say that Members of Parliament have been written to by the Ministry of Education asking to submit names for school boards?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes, yes.

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Mr. Karim: I have been hearing that but I have not received any communication.

Mr. Garcia: Do you have any government schools in your area?

Mr. Karim: Yes I do. I have three secondary schools and about five primary schools.

Hon. Garcia: And you have not received any correspondence?

Mr. Karim: No. I do not know if any of my—

Members: None of us.

Hon. Garcia: Okay, I will make sure that that situation is rectified.

Mr. Chairman: All right. So, can we move on now?

Dr. Gopeesingh: I want to ask a question, hon. Chair. The grants to government secondary schools, Minister—

Hon. Garcia: Which line Item are you on?

Mr. Chairman: Grants to Government Secondary Schools?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, 24 and 29 together. In 2018 the estimate was 80 million for secondary schools, but you only utilized 31.5. What prevented you from giving the full amount so that you could have helped the schools a little more? Something happened, but you put back the 80 million.

Hon. Garcia: First of all, let me say that in fiscal 2018 the expenditure was $50.2 million. That was the actual expenditure in 2018, and as a result of this we have allocated $48.5 million in fiscal 2019.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Now, you go back to your original amount that you had estimated in 2018, so you are perhaps wanting to indicate to us that the reason why you only paid $31,500,000 was because of your budgetary curtailment?

Hon. Garcia: No, I am saying that the revised estimate for 2018 was $31.5 million, but we actually spent 50.2 million.
Dr. Gopeesingh: No, but it is only $31,500,000 showing here.

Hon. Garcia: That was the estimate, but the actual expenditure was 50.2 million.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But still falling short of the 80 million?

Hon. Garcia: Of the?

Dr. Gopeesingh: 80 million that was—

Hon. Garcia: But if we spent only 50.2 million in the previous year, it is reasonable to assume that we can cut on our expenditure.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, you spent 73 million in 2017.

Hon. Garcia: Yes, but remember we have to ensure that our financial resources are employed in such a way that everybody would benefit. So where we cut a little bit here other areas will improve.

Dr. Gopeesingh: You explained it because of the shortage of funding. And the same thing for the primary schools as well?

Hon. Garcia: Which line Item are you on?

Mr. Chairman: 29, Grants to Students.

Hon. Garcia: We, again, are of the view that the allocation of 11.2 million is sufficient.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay, we hope that they get it.

Mr. Chairman: Oropouche East, still have a question?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Mr. Chair, just to advise that I have questions on 181 and on page 182 because it is the same line Item.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I want to just ask some on the same page.

Mr. Chairman: No, one second, one second, hold on. I think Cumuto/Manzanilla is on the floor right now, so I will come back to you. After going to Chaguanas East, then I will come back to you Caroni East. So
Cumuto/Manzanilla, unless you want to give way?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Sure, go ahead and I will come back after him.

**Mr. Chairman:** Well you go ahead then; you proceed.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Line Item 29, Grants for students enrolled at private special schools. Are these the special learning needs children—for special learning needs, hon. Minister?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes there are 12, 13, 14 special schools that we give assistance to. Those are schools where students with special needs are enrolled.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** All right, excellent. I am going on to line Item 62 and 63, that is on page 182. I notice there are no allocations, and I wanted to ask why.

**Mr. Chairman:** School of Nursing and Student Nurses stipend.

**Hon. Garcia:** That funding was included in COSTAATT’s vote.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, with the frequency of earthquakes we are experiencing in Trinidad and also with our other Caricom colleagues, do you think that this $3 million allocation to the Seismic Research Centre is sufficient?

**Mr. Chairman:** Which line Item is that?

**Mr. Karim:** I am on line Item 36.

**Mr. Chairman:** It says Graphic Research—line Item 36.

**Mr. Karim:** It is called seismic research.

**Hon. Garcia:** There is no change in the allocation. This research centre is funded by all governments of the region. It is funded by all governments of the region, and it is the official source of information for earthquakes and volcanoes in the English-speaking Caribbean, and therefore it is not only funding from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago that is relied on, but all English-speaking
countries in the Caribbean. Therefore, this allocation of 3 million is considered adequate, the contribution of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Karim: Minister, as you know, when you attend these campus committee meetings, the various ones, many of the Caricom countries do not pay up their contribution. So I was just raising that in the context of whether you thought this was sufficient. Well, you did say it was sufficient. With respect to line Item 38, the Council for Legal Education, are you making any provisions in here for their presence at the UWI Penal/Debe campus?

Hon. Garcia: We spoke about this over and over. The Penal/Debe campus is the sole responsibility of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Karim: So Minister, although the Penal/Debe campus is the responsibility for the operational part of it by UWI, as Ministry of Education you have responsibility for the UWI. I want you to answer the question, and I am asking it very politely.

Hon. Garcia: What is the question? Pose the question again.

Mr. Karim: I am posing the question. You said earlier on, and I just want to ask you whether as Minister with responsibility for UWI, will you be utilizing the Penal/Debe campus before or within this fiscal year ending on the 30th September, 2019?

Hon. Garcia: That is a totally different question that you are asking now. The first question you asked was whether we would make allocation for students who are study law at that campus. Now you are asking something totally different.

Mr. Karim: I am asking two because when we built it, it was a law faculty campus.

Hon. Garcia: For me to answer you correctly, I must know the question that you are asking.
Mr. Chairman: Which question, Member?

Mr. Karim: First of all, have you made any allocations in this 20 million that you have here for the Council for Legal Education, will this incorporate the extension of the Council to be utilized in the Penal/Debe campus for this fiscal year?

Hon. Garcia: Well, first of all the University of the West Indies itself has not determined what they are going to use the Penal/Debe campus for.

Mr. Karim: The next question is, as Minister with responsibility for UWI, will you be utilizing, through discussion with UWI, the Penal/Debe before the end of September 2019?

Hon. Garcia: I cannot answer that question now. That has to be on the basis of discussions, at the level of the principal and the staff of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Karim: Well, Minister, let me help you.

Mr. Chairman: No, no, one second. You are asking another question, so proceed.

Mr. Karim: Let me just contextualize the question. It is within the context of direct services, University of the West Indies. You indicated that that is for the University of the West Indies. You are the Minister. In fact, you have two Ministers, and you are the Minister with responsibility for UWI. I have in my possession an advertisement, so I will ask the question again, are you aware that the School of Education, the Faculty of Humanities and Education, will be utilizing the Penal/Debe campus from January 2019, Sir?

Hon. Garcia: I am not aware of that.

Mr. Karim: Well I am aware of it, and I am asking the question again.

Hon. Garcia: And I am answering you, I am not aware of that.
Mr. Chairman: So he has answered the question. You have another question?
Mr. Karim: Yes, I have another question.
Hon. Garcia: A third question on the same issue?
Mr. Karim: Yes, because you see, the question I want to ask is, are you aware that the Penal/Debe campus will be used for the post-graduate Diploma in Education in 2019?
Hon. Garcia: Diploma in Education, you are asking?
Mr. Karim: Yes, yes.
Hon. Garcia: No, I am not aware of that either.
Mr. Karim: “Yuh know me and you did Dip Ed?”
Dr. Moonilal: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of short questions. Following on the last question, Mr. Minister, you may not be aware but that Debe campus falls into the constituency of Oropouche East, so I have quite an interest there. At the signing and establishment of the campus there was a memorandum of understanding between the Government and the University of the West Indies as to what role it would play, what faculty, specifically the faculty of law. Has that changed, to your knowledge, and if so, what has it changed to?
Mr. Chairman: That question basically has been asked already. It is just that you are using a different subject format, but basically the Minister has already answered along those lines. Do you have an additional question?
Dr. Moonilal: Yes. Mr. Minister, when would this campus, to your knowledge be open and operational?
Mr. Chairman: Again, that question has basically been asked already, and an answer has already been forthcoming to this Committee under my recollection.
Dr. Moonilal: I did not discern that but I will take, of course, your word. My next
question which has not been asked already, on 45 I am at the bottom of the page, Minister. Could you just elaborate on this funding as to a UWI Bachelor of Arts Degree special in music? What is that about? Is it to supplement a degree programme, is it students, is it a scholarship? What exactly is that about, please?

Hon. Garcia: It is simply a degree programme that leads to a Bachelor of Science degree in music. We had an allocation in our 2018 estimates of 60,000 and we have also included the same amount in the 2019 allocation.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, if you could, not now necessarily, but furnish in writing through the Ministry some information on the number of students who have attended over the last couple of years, how much have graduated and so on?—I will appreciate that.

Hon. Garcia: Okay, I will be happy to furnish you with that information.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, you are too kind.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla, are you still interested?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Go ahead, and then I will have Chaguanas East and then I will come to Caroni East.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, line Item 51. There is a decreased allocation for the Higher Education Loan Programme. Could you explain why there is a decrease? Is it that there is no demand for it as a result of the reduced GATE?

Hon. Garcia: As a result of? You are making a statement there which—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I am asking. I am asking. I am not making a statement.

Hon. Garcia: You made a statement with respect to GATE.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Well, if you are asking for a loan—

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Hon. Garcia: This is a minimal decrease. The Health Economics Unit works—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: No, no, no.

Hon. Garcia: Which one?

Mr. Chairman: It is line Item 51, Higher Education Loan Programme, a decrease of 37.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: HELP.

Hon. Garcia: It is a minimal decrease. Okay, what is your question? I have a note here in which I was told that it was wrongly placed here.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: It was wrongly placed?

Hon. Garcia: Placed here; this is a note I have here.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And 55, what is this research fund for?

Mr. Chairman: 54?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: 55.

Mr. Chairman: Higher Education Research Fund, line Item 55, Mr. Minister. There is a 300,000 increase.

Hon. Garcia: Yes, this unit was responsible for managing the fund, and it is now under review. This unit is under review and as a result $300,000 has been allocated.

Mr. Karim: Hon. Minister, I am trying to understand what you said just now with respect to the H-E-L-P, line 51. You said it was wrongly placed?

Hon. Garcia: I attempted to say something just now, and I was informed that the note that I have was wrongly placed.

Mr. Karim: Your note?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Karim: In that case let me read the right note, line Item 46. There has been a
33 per cent decrease in the budgetary allocation to the National Training Agency. Is it the intention of the Ministry to close this entity?

**Hon. Garcia:** Not at all. It is simply because the National Training Agency has a healthy bank balance—a very healthy bank balance.

**Mr. Karim:** Line Item 47. Much has been spoken continuously, ubiquitously as well, if I may so, about line Item 47, the Cocoa Research Unit, but it continues to hold steady in a holding pattern of 3.7. Given all that we have heard during the debate, hon. Minister, do you think this is satisfactory for an entity like this, that promotes the brand of cocoa from Trinidad and Tobago?

**Hon. Garcia:** Well, the information that is before us says that it is a satisfactory allocation. Perhaps when it is fully established and there is need for additional funding, we will apply to the Ministry of Finance for additional funding.

**Mr. Karim:** Line Item 48, UTT. Given the circumstances with the University of Trinidad and Tobago, are you of the view that this is sufficient again? I know you might give me the same answer you gave me before, you find it sufficient, but just for the records, do you find this sufficient and appropriate to run the University of Trinidad and Tobago?

**Hon. Garcia:** Well, as we all know, UTT is undergoing some changes. Structural changes, changes in its administration, changes in its offerings, and as a result of that we have decided that the allocation of 200 million would be adequate for the present purposes.

**Mr. Karim:** I suppose I will get that answer regularly, but anyway I will ask the question. Line Item 56, Tobago Technology Centre. Much has been spoken of with respect to Tobago and the expansion of the airport and the presence of Sandals and the tourism product. What is responsible for this decrease of 1.5
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million in your state-of-the-art technology centre in Tobago?

Hon. Garcia: Because there were very few activities under this project in previous years. There was very little activity under this project in previous years, and as a result we had a budgetary cut.

Mr. Karim: Activity meaning? Could you define what “activity” means, Sir? Is it student enrollment, is it classes, is it programmes?

6.00 p.m.

Hon. Garcia: Student enrolments.

Mr. Karim: Student enrolments.

Hon. Garcia: And in terms of offerings, courses offerings, the courses were undersubscribed.

Mr. Karim: Okay. So, I am asking the question, again, in the new context. Given the context and the details in the budget and the PSIP and the IDF and so on, do you consider this—will you be recommending that this continue? Are you saying, again, that you find this sufficient? Personally, if you ask me, I do not find it so, but what is your view on this?

Hon. Garcia: Yes. It is sufficient.

Mr. Karim: To cater for the workforce needs and the improvement in the workforce to take the jobs?

Hon. Garcia: We have many activities that are going on in Tobago under tertiary education, especially in the area of technical/vocational education, and we strongly believe that this allocation is sufficient.

Mr. Karim: I will come back.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 31, the UWI Family Development Centre for Early
Childhood Care and Development.

**Hon. Garcia:** Sorry. Say that again?

**Mr. Chairman:** Line Item 31.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** 31. UWI Family Development Centre.

**Hon. Garcia:** All right. Just one minute, please.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Take your time.

**Hon. Garcia:** Okay.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** You got it?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Right. Well, previously we gave a grant of $1 million because they did a lot of research in early childhood education which benefited the entire country. What is the reason for you stopping the grant and allocation for them as evident in the—

**Hon. Garcia:** The project has been completed.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** No, Minister, it is ongoing research programme that they have—

**Hon. Garcia:** The information that we have at the Ministry of Education is that project has been completed, in other words, it has come to an end.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Can I ask you to look into it, again, because they do help with the improvement in early childhood education because of the tremendous research that they do there. And a grant of 1 million will help the entire country because of the significant work that they do in their research which can be applied to the continued development of ECC; so that is number one.

The Grants for the Expansion of Universal ECCE, 34. In 2017, you had allocated 20 million and the Estimate for 2018 was 18 million, but nothing was spent based on the Revised Estimates. Could you explain what is happening to that
programme?—because we boasted at one time that we have universal early childhood education and we were the first country in the world to have achieved that. What is the reason for stopping or ceasing the continued expansion of universal ECC?—which I am sure you want in your own heart as well.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.
Hon. Garcia: Yeah. I will answer it. Cabinet’s approval for this programme has expired, and the programme is being rationalized by the Ministry of Education, and we will work with the allocation that is now made while we present another Note to Cabinet for the continuation of this project.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Well, let me just ask you directly: Is it the intention of the Ministry of Education to continue with the private sector to collaborate and work together, so that all our 36,000 children, aged three and four, will have their education whether private or public?

Hon. Garcia: That is one area that is receiving the active attention of the Ministry of Education. There were some problems and we are trying to iron out those problems.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Right. And I want to say that we look forward to your completion of that determination, and for the implementation of the policy to bring everyone under that umbrella. The Direct University Services, of 630 million—

Mr. Chairman: Line Item?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 35. The hon. Prime Minister, when he spoke about partnering with the University of the West Indies for the Couva hospital, said that we were owing the University of the West Indies 200 million, and therefore was using the Couva hospital with a 51 per cent partnership from UWI, to offset that 200 million. Where in this—why could that not have been part of this, the line.
Item? Give them their 200 million and make sure that the Couva hospital for which is worth $2 billion—

Mr. Chairman: Could we get the question please, hon. Member?

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right.

Hon. Garcia: What is the question?

Mr. Chairman: Hold on, Mr. Minister.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Why is—you have a direct thing of 630 to UWI, why did you not incorporate the money that you owed of 200 million into that and have an allocation of 830 million?

Hon. Garcia: Okay. Let me answer the question. First of all, the arrangements with respect to the Couva hospital, those arrangements are separate and apart from this allocation that covers nationals of Trinidad and Tobago who are enrolled either at St. Augustine, Mona or Cave Hill. So they are absolutely two different areas here, and we did not want to commingle them, we did not want to join them together.

The Couva hospital, yes, under the jurisdiction of this Government and the University of the West Indies, discussions are still ongoing with respect to how we are going to utilize those resources.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, can I just ask you then: The statement by the Government of owing UWI 200 million, what do they owe them for? What are they owed for?—if it is not in—

Hon. Garcia: The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, as other Caribbean Governments, they are always in arrears, but I am not sure whether the quantum is as much as 200 million.

Dr. Gopeesingh: That is what your Prime Minister—

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Hon. Garcia: The total is 50 million not 200 million.

Dr. Gopeesingh: How much?

Hon. Garcia: Five zero.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But your Prime Minister said in Parliament here, 200 million.

Hon. Garcia: I am saying, that our technical officers at the Ministry of Education have informed me that the money that is owing is $50 million.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you. Line Item 61. Is the mandate of that centre still to certify unskilled workers?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Garcia: Just say that, again, please Sir?

Mr. Lee: That Line Item 61.

Hon. Garcia: What is the question?

Mr. Lee: Is the mandate of that centre still to certify unskilled workers, unskilled trades people?

Hon. Garcia: MIC runs on a—

Mr. Lee: Workforce Assessment Centre.

Hon. Garcia: MIC runs a number of programmes that they are doing their assessment in conjunction with the NTA, National Training Agency.

Dr. Francis: Member, Chair, through you to the Member. You need to be careful how you are stating that, how you are asking that question. The issue is not “unskilled workers”, it is workers who possess skills, but are not certified. So it is to certify workers who are able to perform the tasks, but may not have had certification to—

Mr. Lee: So it is being done at that centre. Correct?
Dr. Francis: Yeah.

Mr. Lee: So the question I would like to ask—

Mr. Chairman: One second. Minister of Finance, please. Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: So the question I would like to ask, a follow-up in line Item 61: Could you tell us how many individuals—skilled—and were certified during that centre for the last fiscal year?

Mr. Chairman: You have that information, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Garcia: We will supply that information to you. Okay?

Mr. Lee: And I have some other questions.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Go ahead. Line Items 62 and 63, Minister. In 2018, you would have the School of Nursing, 62, 4.8 million would have been budgeted, nothing was spent and nothing for 2019. And also line Item 63, Student Nurses Stipend, 3.870 million, not utilized and nothing budgeted, those two line Items, what became of those two line Items?

Hon. Garcia: That allocation has been included in COSTAATT’s allocation. So it has been removed from the Ministry of Education and it is now with COSTAATT.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Hon. Garcia: —No, those allocations, both.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East, you still have a question?

Mr. Karim: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: And then I will come to Caroni East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much. Hon. Minister, line Item 57, the Chaguanas Technology Centre. You have an allocation of 3 million, an increase of 1.5. Could you tell us what is happening, what is this money going to be expended on?
Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Garcia: It is an effort to have the institution fund itself. So in other words, this money is used for the operation expenses so that the institution should be able to fund its operational cost.

Mr. Karim: But what is the Chaguanas Technology Centre? What is it?

Hon. Garcia: It is one of those centres similar to the technology centre in Laventille.

Mr. Karim: And where is it?

Hon. Garcia: It is in Woodford Lodge in Chaguanas.

Mr. Karim: I just want to ask if this sum that we have identified here, is for the construction of the MIC Institute of Technology in Chaguanas in the same compound as the NESC and YTEPP?

Hon. Garcia: No. No.

Mr. Karim: So where is this going to be?

Hon. Garcia: It is in Woodford Lodge, as I just said.

Mr. Karim: It is located there?

Hon. Garcia: Yes.

Mr. Karim: Could you point me as to how to find it? Because there is no such thing as—this is called the Chaguanas Technology Centre. What we did is we had an allocation for the entire facility, and the one that is missing, that will be called the Chaguanas Technology Centre, was the MIC Institute of Technology. YTEPP has three buildings there, NESC has one building, and the only one missing is the—so, I am asking, is this in your view—

Hon. Garcia: I will supply detailed information on that shortly.

Mr. Karim: Very good. Okay. Thank you very much.
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Mr. Chairman: Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Number 41 and 44, line Items. 41, is the EWMSC, 27 million. And could you just give us an indication what we are paying EWMSC for, with that 27 million?

Hon. Garcia: Just say that again?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 41.

Hon. Garcia: Yes. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: One second. The Members on the Government Bench, the front row of the Government Bench, please. Again, you all are free to discuss it also on the outside if possible. Right? I am trying to hear the Member down at that end. Caroni East, proceed.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 41, EWMSC, 27 million allocation. Could you just give us an understanding what that allocation is for?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 41, Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, 27 million.

Hon. Garcia: It is an allocation for Trinidad and Tobago nationals who are enrolled at the Faculty of Medical Sciences at UWI, St. Augustine. It represents 50 per cent of tuition fees.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. But you give a grant to the University of the West Indies, of 630 million as well.

Hon. Garcia: That is correct. Yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So this is separate just for the medicine.

Hon. Garcia: Yes, and there is a special arrangement for Trinidad and Tobago students—scholars.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And the last one there, the subsidies to the students, what is that
subsidy about?—line Item 44, 18 million.

Hon. Garcia: And this is for non-scholars pursuing studies in the School of Medicine, in the schools of veterinary science, dentistry and pharmacy.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you. Hon. Minister, with respect to the school of dentistry, would you be able say when it is due to be opened?

Hon. Garcia: Which line Item are you referring to, Sir?

Mr. Karim: The same one that my colleague referred to.

Hon. Garcia: Which line Item you are referring to, Sir?

Mr. Karim: 35.

Hon. Garcia: Pardon?

Dr. Gopeesingh: 44.

Mr. Karim: Sorry, 44.

Dr. Gopeesingh: 44, the 18 million for the dentistry—

Mr. Karim: For dentistry and medical students.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Dentistry, vet and pharmacy. When is the vet school—


Mr. Chairman: I am recognizing Chaguanas East. And your question is based on line Item 44.

Mr. Karim: When is the school of dentistry going to be opened?

Mr. Chairman: School of dentistry. And you are saying that from the information, dentistry will be covered in that line Item.

Mr. Karim: That is what the Minister said.

Mr. Chairman: Minister, could you clarify?
Hon. Garcia: This refers to money that will be paid to scholars as an incentive, both scholars and non-scholars. It has nothing to do with the opening of the school of dentistry.

Mr. Karim: Chairman, I will come back to that. It will be in the DP. So that I will come back in the DP and ask that same question.

Mr. Chairman: So, Item 007, Households, page 183; Item 009, Other Transfers, page 184. 007, 183, proceed.

Mr. Karim: Thank you. Hon. Minister, line Item 19. Given the fact that we have so many persons who need to be retooled, reskilled, who have lost their jobs, who will be applying for new jobs, is this in your view, a sufficient—what is responsible for the decrease that I asked first, of more than half a million dollars?

Hon. Garcia: It is simply a question of funding. And because we had to balance the budget there are some areas where we had to have a decrease.

Mr. Karim: And if I may just continue. And in that regard, $30 million allocated to two, if I may describe it as non-core, but important programmes, the HYPE and the MuST.

Hon. Garcia: Which line Item are you referring to?

Mr. Karim: Those will be line Items 20 and 22. So it is 19, 20, 22.

Hon. Garcia: Oh, you are asking those three. Yes. Okay. What is your question now?—that non-core—

Mr. Karim: No. I am saying that for the organization itself these additional programmes—and I am aware when these were established. And given the circumstances—because we will have an opportunity through these discussions for possibly the Minister of Finance to review when he, you know, at some point in time, but given the circumstances of displaced workers in this country, I am
asking—and you told me it is because of budgetary allocations. I want to humbly suggest that, if I may ask, that you have a reconsideration of this amount.

**Hon. Garcia:** Well, that is exactly the point that I was going to make, in that in our mid-term review, depending on how things go, we will make representations for an increase in the allocation.

**Mr. Karim:** Just line Item 27, the MYPART programme. Do you have an idea Minister, as to how many persons are now enrolled in that programme? And where is the centre for this programme?

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Garcia:** Currently there are 28 students enrolled in this programme. We are expecting to have an additional 25 enrolled in January 2019, and it is located in Couva.

**Mr. Karim:** Can you say what has happened to the relationship with MYPART and the Persto Praesto Youth Camp and the Chatham Youth Camp?

**Hon. Garcia:** Well, only recently we had a discussion at our level at the Ministry of Education with respect to these former youth camps, and we are looking at it. So at this point, I reserve any further comment on it until we have come up with a resolution.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay. Do you plan, Minister, given that from my information there are about 400 persons who are awaiting to be engaged or hope to join the MYPART programme? Do you have any alternative accommodation that you can have these—

**Hon. Garcia:** Well, as I said, we are discussing this at the level of the Ministry of Education and we will come up with something as soon as possible. It is under discussion.
Mr. Karim: Okay. Line Item 28, Bursaries/Financial Assistance. Is this the programme that was the FASP?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister. Line Item 28.

Mr. Karim: Line Item 28.

Mr. Chairman: And the what? The “F” what?

Mr. Karim: The Financial Assistance Studies Programme. FASP?

Mr. Chairman: FASP. Okay.

Hon. Garcia: Chaguanas East—

Mr. Karim: Yes, Sir?

Hon. Garcia: I will get clarification on that for you.

Mr. Karim: All right, and if you could also supply us with the details of, you know, the number of persons that would have benefited from—

Hon. Garcia: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 09, Ministers, the allocation of 20 million to ECCE. Is that for payments of salaries or for what?

Hon. Garcia: Just one minute, please.

Mr. Chairman: 09.

Dr. Gopeesingh: 09.

Mr. Chairman: Early Childhood Care and Education.

Dr. Gopeesingh: 20 million.

Mr. Chairman: The 20 million allocated there; the purpose.

Hon. Garcia: It is for salaries, for administrative salaries for 210 teaching staff and operational expenses, 59 Early Childhood Centres. It also includes parent outreach programme and traveling and vehicle maintenance.
Dr. Gopeesingh: Thank you. And the other one on 25, the Servol allocation which the Servol does great work, 20 million.

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 25, Servol.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Is that for ECC as well?

Mr. Chairman: 20 million allocation.

Hon. Garcia: Line Item what?

Mr. Chairman: 25.

Dr. Gopeesingh: 25.

Mr. Chairman: 20 million allocation; the purpose.

Hon. Garcia: Okay. What is your question, Sir?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Now, what is it being used for?—because—

Hon. Garcia: It is to help Servol in its programmes. Servol offers a number of programmes, training programmes, programmes that will deal with the attitudes, in developing positive attitudes of students apart from skill training, and it is used for these areas.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Where does the help that Servol gives for early childhood education—because they have a number of centres as well—where is that put in? Is that part of this as well? It might be, but just for clarification.

Hon. Garcia: No, that is not part of it. I understand it is in 09. If you look at 09, you will see that there is also an allocation of $20 million.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So Servol gets some salary from there too?

Hon. Garcia: Yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. Thank you, Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 18.
Compared to 2017 Actual, I see it is really a decrease in allocation. Could you advise why it is you would have such a low—a reduction, in light of the fact that the Government’s thrust is to boost the tourism industry?

**Hon. Garcia:** The Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute is now a private organization, and that is the reason. There was some restructuring done and it is now a private institution.

**Mr. Chairman:** Chaguanas East, you are fine? Okay. And, Caroni East, you are fine?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yes. We are good. It is just the next page we are waiting, just for one question there, 180.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 009, Other Transfers, page 184. And I recognize Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Just a quick question, hon. Minister—thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is this unit earmarked to be—and I want to use the proper words that you have been using, is it earmarked to be reviewed and as such closed down? Another word for “review”?—the Distance Learning Secretariat. I noticed there is a very—first of all, it was in 2018, 400, nothing used, and now you have a measly 100,000. Any reason why that is so?

**Hon. Garcia:** All right. It is our attempt at rationalizing this programme and because of that, we just wanted to give a small allocation of $100,000 and we will be coming with something that is more substantial.

**Mr. Karim:** How many persons are employed in—

**Hon. Garcia:** I understand, only one person.

**Mr. Karim:** One?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes.
Mr. Chairman: Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I do not know if you reached 011, Transfers to State Enterprises—

Mr. Chairman: No, I am going to that now.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. So can we just—

Mr. Chairman: Item—no, let me identify it first, Item 011, Transfers to State Enterprises, same page, 184. Proceed, Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 02, Ministers, NSDSL, the school feeding services. You were allocated 156 million in 2018, and you have spent that, but there were a lot of complaints by caterers and so on that they were not paid, and they were owing for months. I know you tried your best to see—do you think this 200 million will be enough, based on what has happened last year? To my experience and knowledge, that used to cost about 236 million.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Garcia: This is what we were given by the Ministry of Finance, and we will try our best to make do with this amount. What has been happening is that, at the level of the Ministry of Education, we had appointed a committee to look into this whole programme, and that committee comprised all our stakeholders, all our major stakeholders. As a result of its recommendation we were able to cut back on the wastage that occurred.

In fact, the committee reported that approximately 6,000 meals in excess, were served every day, not served, but were wasted, and we are trying our best to ensure that the programme runs effectively, the programme caters for those who are in need, and that we are going to cut out wastage. And if we succeed in that, perhaps this might be sufficient.
Dr. Gopeesingh: I wish you success in that, Minister.

Hon. Garcia: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, will this increase of $43.3 million be used to bring the outstanding debts up to date, that have been owed for quite a while to the caterers?

Mr. Imbert: Member—

Hon. Garcia: The Minister of Finance will deal with that.

Mr. Imbert: There has been a carry-over of arrears from the UNC time. This $43 million is intended to break the back of that. That is why we have added 43 million to the allocation for this year.

Mr. Karim: But I am sure, Mr. Chairman, that will be good news for the caterers that they will be paid up to date.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Karim: I just want to ask another question.

Mr. Imbert: They will be happy.

Mr. Karim: They will be happy.

Mr. Imbert: Like the pensioners.

Mr. Karim: They will be happy. Can you say by when they might get the payment?

Mr. Imbert: Soon.

Mr. Karim: Soon. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I am glad the Minister of Finance has now brought glad tidings to the caterers.

Mr. Chairman: Question?

Mr. Karim: No. Line Item number 08.
Mr. Chairman: Naparima. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Karim: Minister of Education, can you indicate what is responsible for this significant drop in the allocation to YTEPP?

Hon. Garcia: Budgetary constraints.

Mr. Karim: And I suppose the answer would be ditto for line Items 07 and 09 too?

Mr. Chairman: Yes or no, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, it is the same. Yes.

Mr. Karim: “So is a ‘ditto’ going down de road?”

Hon. Garcia: Ditto.

Mr. Karim: Ditto.


Mr. Karim: Yeah. Hon, Minister—thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, could you indicate, while you say that there were budgetary constraints, how come we had an unspent amount of about 7 million, line Item 56, COSTAATT?

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Garcia: We did not have the releases. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Karim: Okay. Just one Item, if I could. I know that COSTAATT has an allocation of 153.7. Could you just confirm—I seem to forget what the figure is. What is the rental for the Port of Spain campus?

Hon. Garcia: On Melville Lane?

Mr. Karim: How much is it a month?

Hon. Garcia: I can get that information for you.

Mr. Karim: Does it sound like 1.3 million a month?
Hon. Garcia: I will get that information for you.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Hon. Garcia: I will get that accurate information for you.

Mr. Karim: Okay. Thank you very much.

Hon. Garcia: The city campus.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head—I am proceeding, Members. Sub-Head—[Crosstalk] Members, please. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly. 01, National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology); Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 153 of our new book. Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies of the Tobago House of Assembly, and we are on page 153. Item 001, General Administration, page 153. Chaguanas East, do you want me to—[Crosstalk]

6.30 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Chief Whip, I am moving on. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 153; Item 001, General Administration, pages 153 and 154; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 154, Item 007, Households, page 154. 12, Board of Industrial Training; Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 159; Item 001, General Administration, page 159; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 159; Item 001, General Administration, page 159; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 159; Item 009, Other Transfers, page 159. 30, Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 164; Item 001, General Administration, page 164; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 164; Item 001, General Administration, page 164; Sub-Head 03,
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Minor Equipment Purchases, page 164; Item 001, General Administration, page 164.  56, College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago, Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 169; Item 001, General Administration, page 169; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 169; Item 001, General Administration, page 169; Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 170; Item 001, General Administration, page 170; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 170; Item 006—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I have a question on 04. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Right. On Item 006, Educational Institutions?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Page 170. I recognize Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Minister on line Item 006, I have no choice but to bring it here, I see nothing for schools being rebuilt, particularly in my area where I have—

Hon. Garcia: For schools?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. Primary schools, yeah.

Mr. Chairman: You are on 006, Educational Institutions?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Educational Institutions.

Mr. Chairman: And you want to be specific to your area?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: My area in particular. I am asking.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla? Mr. Minister, any information for the Member?

Hon. Garcia: We have dealt with this in a separate—separately.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: No.

Hon. Garcia: We are dealing with Sub-Head— it is under COSTATT, number
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yeah, I know.

Hon. Garcia:—and thus, therefore it does not relate to the building of primary schools. You would not find it here.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I have not found it anywhere, that is why I am asking. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Chairman: Thanks Members.

Hon. Garcia: You would not find it here.

Hon. Member: Amazing.

Mr. Chairman: Item 007, Households, page 170. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme, and it is a different book. Development Programme.

Dr. Gopeseingh: What page?

Mr. Chairman: And we are on page 61. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund, page 61; Item 003, Economic Infrastructure, pages 61 and 62. Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, might you be able to give us some information with respect to 001, Support of Non-University Tertiary Education. What is this?

Hon. Garcia: Say that again, 001?

Mr. Karim: Yeah, on page 61.

Mr. Chairman: Support to Non-University Tertiary Education?

Mr. Karim: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: All right, and you would like a breakdown of?

Mr. Karim: If he could give us an idea as to what that involves.

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Mr. Chairman: What it entails.

Mr. Karim: Can I ask the question again?

Hon. Garcia: No, “is all right”. I heard you well.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Hon. Garcia: These funds will be utilized to implement research projects.

Mr. Karim: Does it have anything to do with the EDF?

Hon. Garcia: The EDF? Yes.

Mr. Karim: And then could you tell us, hon. Minister, what were the projects—if you do not have the information you could list it for us—that would have accumulated this amount of 6 million, and what projects do you have in mind for the 2019?

Hon. Garcia: Okay, I will provide you with the list in writing.

Mr. Karim: Could you tell us, just for the information for me, how many persons do you have in this unit?

Hon. Garcia: We have two persons in this unit.

Mr. Karim: Okay, thank you. I will go on to the next page. All right.

Mr. Chairman: Item 004, Social Infrastructure, pages 62 and 65, Item 005, Multi—

Mr. Karim: Wait, wait.

Mr. Chairman: No man, Members.

Mr. Karim: Chair, I see you called 62 and 65.

Mr. Chairman: I raised up, I looked and I head back to read. So, we are on—

Mr. Karim: 62, 004.

Mr. Chairman: 61 and 62, 004, Social Infrastructure.

Mr. Karim: Right.
Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Karim: Hon. Minister, could you just give us some information with respect to vocational and technical for that 2 million? You have the Diego Martin centre and you have—

Hon. Garcia: You are looking at 004?

Mr. Karim: Yes.

Hon. Garcia: 004?

Mr. Karim: Yes. I just want to go to line Item 002. Why has there been no allocation under this Item—

Mr. Chairman: Sangre Grande?

Mr. Karim:—for Sangre Grande. Yes.

Hon. Garcia: The reason why there is no allocation is that, simply, this has been deferred to next fiscal year.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Again Chaguanas East, supplemental?

Mr. Karim: No, that is okay. I would go on to page 64 when you allow me to.

Mr. Chairman: Item—

Mr. Charles: Are we on 035 on page 64? And the question—

Hon. Member: Page 62.

Mr. Chairman: No, no, no, one second. One second, let me call it first. Item 004, Social Infrastructure, pages 62 to 65. Naparima, is there you have a question?

Mr. Charles: Yes, 035, La Brea Technology Centre. It is 1 million and nothing spent.

Mr. Chairman: Give me the number for the Item?

Mr. Charles: The number—
Hon. Garcia: Is 35.

Mr. Charles: 035. In the context of all proposed developments for La Brea, it would require technologically skilled residents of the area. Why is no money being spent for the La Brea Technology Centre?

Hon. Garcia: The reason for this is that no funds were requested by MIC/IT for this fiscal year.

Mr. Karim: MIC is not down there, Sir. Is NESC.

Hon. Garcia: All right. No funds have been requested. [Interruption] In fact, I answered this question in both Houses already, you know.

Mr. Karim: No, you did not talk the last time.

Hon. Garcia: It involves the small number of persons who have applied. In terms of La Brea in particular, they only had one person who had applied, and because of this it was decided that it will close down that centre and allow persons who are interested in this form of education, technical/vocational education, to move on to another campus; and that is the reason.

Mr. Karim: But, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, based on what you are saying, it does not sound concurrent with 046, line Item.

Hon. Garcia: 046?

Mr. Chairman: Upgrade of NESC technology centre, La Brea.

Hon. Garcia: The problem is, as I have stated before, in La Brea the enrolment was very, very, very small, and that is the reality.

Mr. Karim: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a comment on this, if you would?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, go ahead.
Mr. Karim: One of the highlights of the presentation by the Minister of Finance in the 2019 budget that has been spoken of so often is the maritime facility, the dry dock down at La Brea. I mean, you have to be able to utilize all the infrastructure you have there.

Mr. Chairman: Okay.

Mr. Karim: But, let me just ask the other question with your permission. Hon. Minister, can I go to line Item 025? You have an estimate there for 2019 of 15 million for the aviation institute of UTT. Can you say when this facility will be opened fully for the students who are now housed at the UTT Point Lisas campus?

Hon. Garcia: Okay, this institute is almost fully completed. It is about 98 per cent completed. The ACTT visited the site only last Friday, and UTT is awaiting a response from the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago, with respect to giving accreditation to this campus. So, as soon as that has been done we will endeavour to have this institute functioning as soon as possible.

Mr. Karim: Very good. Thank you.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, line 012, St. Madeline Technology Centre, 2018 estimate 1 million—

Hon. Garcia: Just one moment. What page you on, again?

Mr. Chairman: Oropouche West, what page you on?

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Page 63. You are there on page 63?

Mr. Chairman: Page 63?

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Yes, 012?

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: St. Madeline.
Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Yes, St. Madeline Technology Centre. I am seeing 2018 estimate was 1 million. I need to know what is the status of this centre, and perhaps you could take it collectively with 020, Construction of Hall of Residence for Trainees, I am seeing 1 million and nothing, no allocation again; 021 Mayaro Skills and Technology Centre. All three.

Hon. Garcia: Okay, let me take one at a time.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: So 012, St. Madeline.

Hon. Garcia: St. Madeline: funds were not requested by NESC. It falls under the same category that I tried to explain just now, that enrolment has been very poor.

Mr. Chairman: Also, Mr. Minister, for 020, Construction of Hall of Residence for Trainees. Line 020.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Yes.

Hon. Garcia: That project has been completed.

Mr. Chairman: And now line Item 021, Mayaro Skills and Technology Centre. 021.

Hon. Garcia: Again, we do not have any budgetary allocation for that. There is the question of no funding, but last year the $1 million that was allocated, those funds were transferred to another area.

Mr. Chairman: Naparima, same—

Mr. Charles: Yes. The issue about La Brea and only two students, and therefore they had to close down the centre. I am reading in the budget speech where the Minister of Finance said substantial business—

Mr. Chairman: Again, Member, we need to be—the question—[Interruption] No, no. In terms of the procedure.

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Mr. Charles: If we do not have the technology skills, how are we going to assist the people of La Brea, when we are told that about 10,000 jobs will be created in the year, given that they complain that people from outside get the jobs? And that has been an ongoing problem in La Brea.

Mr. Chairman: And the question is?

Mr. Charles: So, would the Minister reconsider—I am just asking—the provision of technical/vocational education in the La Brea area?

Mr. Chairman: You care to take it up and answer, Mr. Ministe?

Dr. Francis: I am sure the Member is aware that education needs not be just specifically housed in any single community. People do travel from place to place to learn, and I am sure that they can access the education that they need. There are a number of skills training areas not too far: at Point Fortin, at Penal. So, we can reconsider, but there is not the case that there is no education to be provided anywhere close.

Mr. Charles: Right. But an effort will be made to ensure that they access the opportunity?

Hon. Garcia: Just let me add on that. The NESC is rationalizing its operations, and because of this, a number of centres, a few centres had to be closed down because of low enrolment. However, it does not mean that they are not going to continue in the area of technical/vocational offerings.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, this is connected with an earlier question I asked. So it is line Item 032. Can you tell us what that 5 million estimate for 2019 is about?

Hon. Garcia: The establishment of a training facility in Chaguanas?
Mr. Karim: Yes.

Hon. Garcia: This refers to the establishment of the aviation campus.

Mr. Karim: No. No, Sir. We finish that. That is 025. We are at 032.

Dr. Francis: 032.

Mr. Chairman: We are at 032, Establishment of a Training Facility- Chaguanas.

Mr. Karim: That is really the MIC. That is the MIC.

Hon. Garcia: Oh yes. Okay. All right.

Mr. Karim: Is it the MIC, Sir, so I could ask?

Hon. Garcia: It would be utilized to construct the MIC Technology Centre, or upgrade the works to NESC centres.

Mr. Karim: Okay, just one more. Line Item 024.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed Member.

Mr. Karim: I am trying to understand this. Goldsborough Tobago, no allocation at all for ’17, ’18; ’18 revised, $1.5 million for Goldsborough. What is that money for? And has that had Cabinet approval?

Hon. Garcia: This is intended for infrastructural work at Goldsborough in Tobago.

Mr. Karim: Is it a Cabinet approved proposal?

Hon. Garcia: Of course. Yes.

Mr. Karim: And what do you plan—sorry.

Hon. Garcia: Go ahead.

Mr. Karim: What do you plan to do in NESC in the East as opposed to the YTEPP MIC in the West?

Hon. Garcia: In Tobago East you are referring to?

Mr. Karim: Yes. This is in Tobago East.
Hon. Garcia: All right, state your question again?

Mr. Karim: I am saying, the works that you are going to be doing at the NESC Goldsborough, what is it towards? Enhancement, but yes, towards what? Is it going to be complementary to what is—

Hon. Garcia: When we visited that campus earlier this year we were shown a facility that catered for mechanical engineering, and the work that has been done was of a real high standard—

Mr. Karim: Very good.

Hon. Garcia:—and we are going to pursue that, and give as much information. Not as much support to that campus, as much as possible.

Mr. Karim: Because it might help the shipping line in our local—when it breaks down it can help you there.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Page 63, hon. Ministers, line Item 008. I see you have a line Item, Establishment of UTT?

Hon. Garcia: Mmhmm.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But UTT has been established a long time.

Hon. Garcia: Well, that is the line Item that has been there all the time.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yeah, but you put an estimate for it for 4 million. But that is not for establishment. Establishment is finished already. It is established. So, something is wrong there.

Hon. Garcia: This is for the establishment of the Aviation Centre that falls—

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, no, no. You have another Vote for it.

Hon. Garcia: That is the note I have here.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes.

Mr. Karim: We dealt with that today.
Dr. Gopeesingh: The aviation centre is on the next page. [Crosstalk] That is 15 million for that. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Hold on, hold on, hold on. Where we at now?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Page—we are asking, Mr. Chair, page 63, 008, Establishment of UTT, an allocation of 4 million. There was an allocation of 15 million last year. And under the revised estimate it shows nothing. But what I am asking: How you are establishing UTT when it has already been accomplished already and you have an allocation for it?

Mr. Chairman: Hold on. Hold on.

Hon. Garcia: All right, I would get the information for you, hon. Member.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Something is wrong somewhere.

Mr. Chairman: Item 005—[Interruption] Okay, Mr. Minister, go ahead.

Hon. Garcia: For the performing arts, it is a legacy Vote. It is a legacy note.

Dr. Francis: “Legacy Vote”.

Hon. Garcia: A legacy Vote.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. Okay. Chair, I crave your indulgence just for 039 on page 64?

Hon. Garcia: 039.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, on page 64. El Dorado Academy of Nursing and Allied Health. There was an allocation in 2018, 5 million, nothing on the revised estimate, but you brought back on 3 million. So, what had happened to it last year? Was there no training? No support for it? That is the nursing school we speak about all the time.

Hon. Garcia: That nursing facility in El Dorado is one of the flagship achievements of COSTAATT.

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Dr. Gopeesingh: Of a PPP. [Laughter] [Desk thumping]

Hon. Garcia: And this allocation would be used to upgrade the facility.

Mr. Chairman: Item 005. [Interruption] Let us move on colleagues. Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services, pages 65 and 66. Chaguanas East, your hand is up?

Mr. Karim: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Karim: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, could you give us a little update with respect to line Item 037, after $39 million? If you check it you would see 9 was allocated, then 30, then 10 spent, and you have allocation at 20? What is the status of the school improvement project in Laventille community?

Hon. Garcia: When you say what is the status?

Mr. Karim: Well, I want to know how it has been performing. How it has been doing?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Which we support.

Mr. Karim: Because we care; we support. It is a commendable project.

Hon. Garcia: It is one of the major achievements of this Ministry. It is a project of which we are very proud. It is intended to assist students, and teachers, and parents in the five areas. It focuses on four major planks. If you want me to repeat it?

Mr. Karim: No, no, no.

Hon. Garcia: It will be repeated over and over again. The programme is progressing very well.

Mr. Karim: The reason why I asked too, and the question is— I hope there would
be consideration for the Enterprise Improvement Project.

Hon. Garcia: All right.

Mr. Karim: The question really is this, line Item 023, School of Dentistry, and I am asking it here because it was not been able to ask it in the previous time. What is the status of it? Is it fully completed? Is it completed and outfitted? And when will it be opened? I could tell you the cost of it.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Garcia: The project is on the verge of being completed, and as a result we did not need any further funding.

Mr. Karim: Okay. So, you expect in this fiscal the programme will be fully completed.

Hon. Garcia: The project will be completed, yes.

Mr. Karim: Okay. Just Item 024, Upgrade of the Campus Sewer Collection System. This could be a serious problem if it is not attended to. I am just asking the question because 11.6 million was allocated. None was spent in 2018, and we are allocating 13.6. What plans do you have to engage in this—the line Item is 024.

Hon. Garcia: The first bit of information that I would like to share with you is that Cabinet has approved the sum of $13.6 million for this project.

Mr. Chairman: So, therefore the upgrade will take effect?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, of course.

Mr. Chairman: Oropouche East, you have a question?

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, Sir, thank you. Mr. Minister, thank you for the information so far, and I am very distressed that I did not hear you speak in the budget debate. But let me say, I am on page 65. I am on page 65, 016. That is where I am.
Dr. Gopeesingh: Imbert did not want you to speak.

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Minister, I see here an estimate in 2018 of 10 million, but you had revised that to 800,000, but 800,000, of course, is not your actual expenditure. It is the revised for the year so that may change when all the accounts are in. But Minister given that you revised from 10 million to 800,000, could you not have used that money there to complete the Ramai Trace Hindu School in Debe? That is my question. I saw the money not being used.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Minister you think you could shed light there?

Hon. Garcia: Yes. We will have some information for you subsequently.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East, you have your hand up.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Line Item 027, the building of the International Fine Cocoa Innovation Centre. Could you indicate where this centre is going to be housed, located?

Hon. Garcia: Well, we are still having discussions with the University of the West Indies where this is concerned. But we made sure to have an allocation of 6.8 million for this.

Mr. Karim: Okay. And the other Item I wanted to ask; 019. Could you say what are some of these developmental works that the UWI may have asked for; for 6.8? Is it 6.8? Sorry, for 8 million. My apologies.


Mr. Karim: Upgrading chemical engineering?

Hon. Garcia: Yes upgrade. [Inaudible]

Mr. Karim: No, no, I know you used to be—you are a professor.

Mr. Chairman: Infrastructure Development Fund, page 185; Item 004, Social
Infrastrucure, pages 185 to 188; Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services, page 188.

Hon. Member: Wait! Wait! Wait!

Dr. Moonilal: “Mash breaks.”

Mr. Chairman: No, Members, man. I called. I paused.

Mr. Lee: You called 188, pages, but you said nothing. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: No, but it is just one page to turn Mr. Chief Whip.

Mr. Lee: 185—[Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Hold on. Hold on. So, Chief Whip, who has a question?

Mr. Paray: I have.

Mr. Chairman: Mayaro.

Mr. Paray: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is page 185 under 001. I just want to find out from the Minister the status of the Waterloo ECC School, if you have an idea of when it would be opened? I understand it is completed?

Hon. Garcia: We have a number of our ECC centres that have not yet been completed, and we are working on them.

Mr. Karim: Can I ask Minister when you think the 1 per cent completion will take—

Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Karim: No, no, no. You said it was 1 per cent to complete. The ECC Centre and Oasis Egypt Primary School in Enterprise.

Hon. Garcia: What was the question?

Mr. Karim: When will it be completed?

Mr. Chairman: Again, Member, again.

Mr. Karim: No, well I was asking the ECC. The line Item there is 001. 001 line
Mr. Chairman: Right. Okay.

Mr. Karim: When can I tell the constituents that the centre would be completed and opened?

Hon. Garcia: You would get that information soon. I would be able to make a statement soon on that.

Mr. Karim: Excellent. Thank you. And the other Item, can I go to page 187?

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Karim: 041, 90.7 million to UTT. Hon. Minister, do you consider that sufficient given the fact that you want to open this signature Tamana campus?

Hon. Garcia: What is the question you are asking?

Mr. Karim: The line Item 041.

Hon. Garcia: Mmhmm.

Mr. Karim: The allocation in 2019, because you have a reduction of almost $30 million there from the 2018, and the question I was asking is: Is this enough to complete your signature campus at Wallerfield?

Hon. Garcia: The information that is in our possession is that that quantum of funding will be used carefully to ensure that that flagship project would be completed soon.

Mr. Karim: Do you have a date by which you expect it would be completed?

Hon. Garcia: Shortly.

Mr. Karim: In this fiscal year?

Hon. Garcia: We are hoping, yes. We are hoping in this fiscal.

Mr. Karim: In this fiscal year?

Hon. Garcia: We hope so.
Dr. Gopeesingh: There are two questions. I will crave the indulgence of both Ministers if they can help us with these. Line Item 001, Earlier Childhood Care and Education, allocation of $25 million. Ministers, as far as I am aware there are 44 Early Childhood Education Centres at varying levels of completion and a certain percentage to be completed. And these schools are under grass, vermin, things being stolen from them.

Mr. Chairman: Question, please.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I just want to ask you, Cypress Union was 80 per cent completed; Egypt Village, which Mr. Paray spoke about, 98 per cent; La Horquetta North, 44 per cent; Maracas, 30 per cent; a number of these are 30, 40 per cent. How can 25 million work to complete 44 ECC centres?

Hon. Garcia: Well, I was hoping that you would come to the question. It took a long time to come to the question. The allocation is for the completion of five priority ECC centres. That allocation does not involve those schools that you have spoken about.

Dr. Gopeesingh: That does not involve these schools? So, where is your allocation for completion of these 44 ECC centres?

Hon. Garcia: That will be done in time. But this allocation here, this line Item here, is with respect to five priority ECC centres.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Could you name them if it is possible?

Hon. Garcia: I will give you that subsequently.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. Okay, well—

Hon. Garcia: Okay, just now, I have it. Yes, it is in the book.
7.00 p.m.

**Hon. Garcia:** Bellevue ECCE Centre, Egypt Oasis ECCE Centre, La Horquetta North, Spring Vale, SDMS and Wallerfield ECCE Centre.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And what happen to the other 39—

**Hon. Garcia:** Those are the five we are catering for under this line Item.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yeah, but—just now, just now, Mr. Chair, I am not finished, I want to ask. What happens to the other 39 that—

**Hon. Garcia:** We will take care of them.

**Mr. Chairman:** He answered that already.

**Hon. Garcia:** I have been saying that over and over.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** But I am not getting a clear answer.

**Hon. Garcia:** But I have given that answer. We will take care of them—

**Mr. Chairman:** Hold on. [Crosstalk] Mr. Minister, could you be as clear as possible please as to when the others will be opened?

**Hon. Garcia:** As soon as possible, those centres will be opened. As soon as possible.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** You are saying that Minister; since for two years now you are saying that.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, page 187, under Special Education, under line Item 501, Development of a School for Special Education at Pointe-a-Pierre.

A million dollars was allocated in 2018, $100,000 was spent, $24,000 allocated for 2019. Could you shed some light what this is about please, because I know we had earmarked a special school in the Macaulay, Pointe-a-Pierre, area? Could you
shed some—what this line Item is about?

**Hon. Garcia:** Yes. This line Item is to allow for funds to be used for payment of outstanding invoices and for planned maintenance—

**Mr. Lee:** Of what?

**Hon. Garcia:** Of the school. This special school.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Oropouche East, you still have a question?

**Dr. Moonilal:** Yes. Mr. Minister, 434, page 186.

**Hon. Garcia:** Line Item 434.

**Dr. Moonilal:** 434, 186. I am seeing a figure of $11 million to complete the Ramai Trace School. Could you indicate whether that is to complete construction or to pay outstanding bills to the contractor?

**Hon. Garcia:** Ramai Trace Hindu is one of the schools that we are looking at, and again, very shortly, we will be able to give you some information where that is concerned.

**Dr. Moonilal:** I am holding my breath.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Couva South.

**Dr. Francis:** Please do.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Minister, hold on.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. 001, Early Childhood Care and Education. Mr. Minister, your plan of five priority schools does not take into consideration the completed Early Childhood Education Centre at Sonny Ladoo Trace Development which has been—

**Mr. Chairman:** Question?

**Mr. Indarsingh:**—vandalized as we speak.
Hon. Garcia: What is the question?

Mr. Chairman: He has already answered that particular question, so we will go now to the Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: The development of the Special Education, line Item 501, Development of a School for Special Education at Pointe-a-Pierre. This seems to have started already?

Hon. Garcia: That is a school that is in existence. It is not a new school.

Mr. Karim: So this allocation is sufficient for it to continue?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, yes.

Mr. Karim: And the line Item 041, just a quick question.

Mr. Garcia: 041?

Mr. Karim: Yeah, with UTT. Does this figure include—

Hon. Garcia: Just hold on, hold on.

Mr. Karim: Sorry.

Mr. Garcia: 041—

Mr. Chairman: Page 187. UTT Main Campus.

Mr. Karim: Yeah.

Mr. Chairman: What you want to find out about it?

Mr. Karim: I just to find out, the Minister of Finance spoke about rationalizing programmes and facilities. This $90.7 million, does this rationalization mean that other offices may be closed and moved to Tamana? Does it mean that programmes will be closed down and go to Tamana? And is there going to be a construction; does this include construction for dormitory?

Hon. Garcia: I do not want to be premature in my answer to you. At this point, we have allocated $90.7 million and we are hoping that those funds will be utilized
for ongoing construction works with the hope that this flagship campus will be opened as soon as possible.

**Mr. Karim:** Can I ask a question in follow-up?

**Hon. Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Karim:** What will happen when this is open, what will happen to your O’Meara Campus and your Valsayn Campus?

**Hon. Garcia:** We will cross that bridge when we reach it.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 001, just on behalf of the Member of Parliament for Couva North, when will the Waterloo East ECCE Centre be opened? It is already completed—

**Hon. Garcia:** I have answered this question a million times. [Crosstalk]

**Mr. Chairman:** Ministers, please, please. Again, five were identified that will be specifically opened and the others, information will be forthcoming as to the opening. So I think that the one you are identifying will be included in those.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Line Item 373.

**Mr. Chairman:** 373?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Chairman:** Page.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Same 185, line Item, it is under primary. That school has already been constructed and I just wanted to know if there will be any improvement or refurbishment as in line Item—

**Hon. Garcia:** You are dropping your voice. I am having difficulty in hearing you.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** 120, I am linking line Item 120 and 373, the Construction
of the Manzanilla Government School is completed, but there still needs to have some refurbishment to it. I am asking if this is included and, of course, I have not seen any line Item for the construction of the Sangre Chiquito Presbyterian School.

Hon. Garcia: The funds, $1 million here are to be used to pay final accounts for the Manzanilla Government Primary School.

Dr. Francis: The payments do not fall under this regime. [Crosstalk] She is mentioning school repairs. It does not fall under IDF.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: But it falls on line 120. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, you still have a question? [Crosstalk] All right. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Imbert: Wrong line Item.

Mr. Chairman: Hold on. Members, Minister of Finance, please.

Mr. Padarath: Thank Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister line Item 315, the New Grant Government School has been completed. However, could you give us an indication despite repeated promises for the Princes Town Presbyterian No. 1 School, I am not seeing it listed as a school to be constructed yet again. Can you give us an update with respect to that?

Hon. Garcia: It is not here. Princes Town Presbyterian is not here. Line Item 3 and 5 refers to New Grant Government School. And that is what we are talking about, not Princes Town Presbyterian.

Mr. Padarath: That is what I am saying. I am seeing line Item 315 in the constituency of Princes Town.

Hon. Garcia: It is not there, that is not under consideration now.

Dr. Moonilal: Was it a typo?

Mr. Padarath: Minister, I just wanted to confirm that the school will not be built
once again in this financial year.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Padarath: That is what I am trying to get at.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, okay, one second. Member for Princes Town, again, that school is not identified on the list here. So we cannot entertain a question on that particular school.

Mr. Charles: Mr. Chairman, if it is not on the list, can we not as representatives for our area ask why our schools were not on the list.

Mr. Imbert: No, you cannot.

Mr. Chairman: According to the Schedule it has to be itemized as a line Item or unless you pick it up on some other line Item accordingly. In terms of specific, there are some specific schools mentioned here. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Mr. Chairman, with respect to line Item 339, the construction of Lakshmi Girls’ Hindu College—

Hon. Garcia: 339?

Mr. Padarath: Yes. There was an Estimate of 439,000, there is nothing in the Revised Estimates and nothing for 2019. Can you give us an update on that and also an explanation—why is it appearing here, Lakshmi Girls’ Hindu College, 439 in the 2018 Estimates, nothing in the Revised Estimates and nothing in the Estimate for 2019. And also, would the Parvati Girls’ and Shiva Boys College in the constituency of Siparia, Penal, be completed in this fiscal year?

Mr. Chairman: Again, Member, 339 we can go with the construction of Lakshmi Girls’.

Hon. Garcia: Lakshmi Girls’ is a school that has been in operation for some time now. [Crosstalk] And because we could not facilitate all the schools we have to
prioritize for this fiscal year.

Mr. Padarath: I am asking, why is it appearing here hon. Minister?

Hon. Garcia: It is appearing there but there is no allocation for it.

Mr. Padarath: Well that is why I am asking, why is it on the books?

Hon. Garcia: And I am giving you—

Mr. Padarath: Because schools that should have been on the books are not there, like Parvati Girls’ and Shiva Boys, Ramai Trace, Reform Hindu.

Mr. Chairman: Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Princes Town Presbyterian No. 1.

Mr. Chairman: Princes Town.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Chair, to the Minister. In 2018, that is the line Item to the bottom carried forward, 520,000,000 was allocated for school construction, repairs and so on.

Hon. Garcia: What line Item are you referring too?

Dr. Gopeesingh: That is at the bottom of page 187 and if you even want to go to 188. The total, 521 million was allocated and only 311 million was spent.

Hon. Garcia: You still have not told me what is the line Item.

Mr. Chairman: You are identifying the total?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, identifying total. Page 188, total. So what my colleagues are asking, why were these schools not constructed when you had the funding available for it? You have not spent $210 million.

Hon. Garcia: I do not know whether it is accurate for you to say that we had the funding. The question is on releases.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Imbert did not give you the funding?
Hon. Garcia: In budgeting you know there is a big difference between what is budgeted and what is actually released.

Mr. Imbert: But, Mr. Chairman, there should not be general questions here. Questions should be related to line Items.

Mr. Chairman: Again, Mr. Minister, I was giving the Member the opportunity based on identifying the total to see what road he was going down. So again, hon. Member, I will move on to the Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: On page 186, 333 Replacement/Construction of Blocks Within Secondary Schools and I am just asking the question whether Barrackpore East and West Secondary Schools the blocks that have been damaged by the earthquake are included in this 25 million allocation.

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Garcia: I stated earlier on that a separate allocation of $25 million has been made to deal with schools that have been afflicted by the earthquake.

Mr. Charles: And is Barrackpore East and West included in that as far as you are aware?

Hon. Garcia: Yes, yes.

Mr. Charles: Thank you very much. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services, page 188.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 26 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Ministers and also to the Permanent Secretary and all the senior executives at the Ministry of Education. Thanks for coming.

Head 68: Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, $293,800,000.

Mr. Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs to make
a brief statement for a maximum of five minutes.

Hon. Cudjoe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs is mandated to facilitate the development of sport and physical recreation and to act as an enabling organization for youth development in Trinidad and Tobago. This mandate is primarily driven by the Division of Physical Education and Sport and the Division of Youth Affairs. The other units lending support to the Ministry’s operation are General Administration, Accounts, Human Resource Management, Information Technology, Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Management, Research and Planning, Audit, Legal and the Procurement Unit.

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry is also assisted in executing its mandate by the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago which serves as the implementation arm and fulfils three key roles: One, the promotion of the concept of sport for all; two, construction of high-quality sport and recreational facilities for both communities and high-performance sport; and three, provision of oversight for the management of national governing bodies for major sporting disciplines.

The Ministry’s Division of Youth Affairs is charged with the holistic development of youth across Trinidad and Tobago. In this respect, the division spearheads the implementation of programmes for the development of youth in several endeavours, including leadership, education and sport. The mandate of the division also speaks, among other things, to fostering increased youth engagement, involvement and participation in changing the dialogue in respect of those espousing negative perspectives on youth in today’s society, as well as, forging partnership and collaborations with other agencies of the State to address rehabilitation and reintegration of youth offenders and development of early
prevention programmes.

The Ministry’s asset base comprises 22 sport and youth facilities under the purview of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and 10 sport facilities under the purview of the Sports Company. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, I would like to welcome the Permanent Secretary and also the senior executives of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs. Welcome.

*Question proposed:* That Head 68 stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $293,800,000 for Head 68, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure* and the *Draft Estimates of Development Programme*. We now proceed to consider the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 349. I recognize the Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, line Item 14, Remuneration to Members of Cabinet-Appointed Committees. Can you give us an idea of what Cabinet-Appointed Committees there are under the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, please?

Hon. Cudjoe: Over the past fiscal year we have had the appointment of the Sport Commission—they brought the Committee to deal with the Sport Commission and we have a new Cabinet-Approved Committee called the Youth Advisory Committee. So we now have two.

Mr. Padarath: So there are two?

Hon. Cudjoe: “Um-hmm.”

Mr. Padarath: Hon. Minister could you, if you do not have it before you if you would share with us who are those persons currently sitting on these
Hon. Cudjoe: Sure, I can provide that to you subsequently.


Mr. Paray: Thank you. Madam Minister, I noticed on line Item 34 with respect to the issue of the graduate recruit programme and the Finance Minister said that the issue concerning the selection was sorted out. I noticed you have no provision for the programme in your Ministry. Do you have something alternative to that going on in your Ministry?

Hon. Cudjoe: Under the implementation of the National Youth Policy, allows for partnership with stakeholders to provide training, entrepreneurship and employability. So we are now working with the Prince’s Trust out of the United Kingdom to assist us and other Commonwealth bodies to assist us in that regard.

Mr. Paray: So not necessarily for this graduate programme?

Hon. Cudjoe: “Um-hmm.”

Mr. Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam just to follow up on the question that Mayaro raised and I understand the explanation you have provided. The definition provided by the Minister of Finance, Member for Diego Martin North/East, in terms of graduates graduating at the top of their class, can you indicate to us through this alternative programme what will be the selection process as well and whether or not the Ministry has set out criteria in conjunction with these international bodies that you have indicated?
Hon. Cudjoe: The talks are currently ongoing with the Prince’s Trust. As a matter of fact they make a return to Trinidad and Tobago in early December to further our talks and we will further develop that accordingly. But it is not just about graduates. It is also about young people who are looking into entrepreneurship also.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam. Just a further supplemental. With respect to the specific programme of the Prince’s Trust, are there any other bodies that the Ministry has engaged in or is currently in talks with to expand this particular programme outside the Commonwealth.

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes, the Global Campaign for Youth Employment which is coming out of the UK. Also, that comprises of NGOs, like “Teach A Man To Fish” and a number of others. That was done through Peace Child International also and we are currently in consultation with them.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Thank you. Hon. Minister, line 66, Hosting of Conferences, Seminars and other Functions. I am looking at 2018 Revised Estimates, 90,000; and 2019 Estimates, 400,000. Can you justify that increase from 90 to 400—310,000 increase.

Hon. Cudjoe: Our focus is especially on youth development and now that we have a larger number of youth programmes we are going to be conducting youth capacity building and skills development training and so on, throughout the six facilities that we have, because we do not have any programmes running before. So that is now going to come on board in this new fiscal year.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Princes Town.
Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Madam, line Item 27, Official Overseas Travel, an increase of 700,000. I know on the last occasion 400,000 was appropriated and only 100,000 spent. But can you give us an idea, or what you envisage such an increase would account for in terms of the next financial year with respect to Official Overseas Travel.

Hon. Cudjoe: Okay. That would be to participate in international conferences for technocrats as it relates to sport. For instance, the meeting of Ministers and high level technical officers as it relates to sport. You have, for instance, the Pan Am Games coming up in early 2019. So there is training also for the technocrats that deal with sport. Then you have the Commonwealth Youth Conference taking place for the third time next year, so that would cover that. In addition, sometime in January the United Nations usually has, like a Youth Assembly so that will cover that also.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Madam, also with respect to line 16, Contract Employment an increase 1.2 million. In this coming fiscal year, can you share with us what areas of contract employment the Ministry would particularly be engaged in with respect to an increase of 1.2 million?

Hon. Cudjoe: Okay, we have a number of positions that need to be filled as it relates to contract employment, spanning all the way from IT to the legal department in the Ministry under the Items I listed earlier under General Administration. So that would be covered there.

Mr. Padarath: Line Item 37, if you would look at Janitorial Services. I think I raised this last year during the Standing Finance Committee of the amount being a significant amount. This year I am seeing a decrease of 2.8 million in this particular regard. Can you share with us what would have accounted for the
decrease even though it was raised as a red flag last year of being very high, what would have accounted for this in terms of whether or not there are in-house services being provided?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** Well, I would not call it a decrease actually because the 3.5 million that was spent under Revised Estimate in 2018 that is to cover previous bills owed to MTS. So that was covered during this fiscal year.

**Mr. Padarath:** And MTS is still the current service provider?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** We take care of roughly 20-something facilities I would have stated earlier so we have different service providers throughout all facilities.

**Mr. Padarath:** Would you be able to provide us, hon. Minister—

**Hon. Cudjoe:** But for General Administration which this Vote speaks specifically to, it is MTS.

**Mr. Padarath:** Well maybe when I come to the other areas then I will raise that.

**Hon. Cudjoe:** Sure.

**Mr. Padarath:** With respect to line Item 62, Promotions, Publicity and Printing, an increase of 120,000. Could the hon. Minister indicate whether or not there are any specific plans with respect to under General Administration? I know you spoke about the youth policy and so on, whether these would directly impact such programmes and which particular programmes?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** To be quite frank this one speaks about General Administration. So when you are advertising your HR positions for the contract positions and so on, this would speak to that. I think it is also—for when you are advertising, when you have tendering and so on going on; I actually think it is a very slim budget for that kind of thing, but that is what we have to work with, so we have to make it work.
Mr. Padarath: Madam, if you would allow me to go back to line Item 16 just to have an idea of what is the current complement of Contract Employment right now in the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs under General Administration. And also possibly if you can give us the proportion of contract employees to those who are actually on the establishment.

Hon. Cudjoe: That I can provide for you at a later date. We have now 165 offices or posts under our Contract Employment, 68 filled and 98 not filled.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister just going back to line Item 34. You indicated that the Prince’s Trust would be replacing more or less this programme. Is there a cost attached to this programme that must be borne by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago? And if it is, what?

Hon. Cudjoe: At this point in time the Prince’s Trust is not replacing the programme. They are providing technical assistance for us in our programmes that treat with employability and entrepreneurship and the talks are still ongoing. Costs have not been raised up to this point.

Mr. Paray: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Minister, line Item 43, Security Services. I noticed there was close to half-a-million-dollar jump in terms of the allocation for Security Services. Was there a change in terms of the security provider or additional proprieties that fall under that now that would encourage that half- a-million-dollar jump?

Hon. Cudjoe: Member for Mayaro, through you Madam Chairman, we had to pay outstanding bills.
Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, with respect to line Item 08, Rent/Lease—Office Accommodation and Storage, could you tell us whether or not the facility on Abercromby Street, which then housed the Head Office of the Ministry, whether that is still being occupied by the Ministry in any way?

Hon. Cudjoe: No, it is not being occupied by the Ministry in any way.

Mr. Padarath: Just for clarification, that was a rental facility as well?

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes.

Madam Chairman: So Item, 002, Physical Education and Sport Division; Item 003, Dwight Yorke Stadium. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, I know when we come to the Development Fund I will deal more in substance in terms of the questions I have for the refurbishment works and so on. But I just wanted to raise with particular interest under line Item 21. I know that it is—under line Item 21 that it is a very small sum that would have been spent over the last financial year or two. Could you give us an idea though what was the scope of these works seeing that such massive expansive work would have been needed? What would have been done at least in this year with such a paltry figure?

Hon. Cudjoe: Well, for the most part you would know that the Dwight Yorke Stadium is pretty much now a construction site. We had a small office there where we had a couple of workers, so we had to maintain the facility for the occupation and accommodation of those workers. However, those workers are not on site right now because it is now—the construction is going on right now and that was due to maintaining OSHA repairs and so on.
Mr. Padarath: Certainly. Can you indicate to us where those workers are currently functioning out of at this time?

Hon. Cudjoe: We have now requested that the Tobago House of Assembly Division of Sport assist us with accommodating them and they are providing assistance on that end through that unit.

7.30 p.m.

Item 004, Youth Centres. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam. Madam, line Item 16, to the hon. Minister. Contract Employment in these youth centres, an increase of about 448,000. Again, if the hon. Minister could indicate the areas of work for contract employment and what is the proportion of contract employees to those who may be establishment from the Ministry assigned to these youth employment centres; if those arrangements are in place at all, or if it is totally just contract employment at these youth centres?

Hon. Cudjoe: At those centres you would have managers of the facilities and those managers would be supported by BOAs. Previously, a large number of those workers were on short-term contracts and they were then upgraded to be on regular contracts, hence you see that increase there.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. Line Item 37, hon. Minister, Janitorial Services. An increase of 420,000. Is this for outstanding payments?

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes.

Mr. Padarath: And similarly, with respect to line Item 43, Security Services?

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. So these are to clear outstanding payments.

Mr. Padarath: Umhm.

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Madam Chairman: Item 005, Youth Affairs; Item 006, National Youth Development and Apprenticeship. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Madam, Line Item 17, under Training, to the hon. Minister, an increase with respect to 620,000 under the National Youth Development and Apprenticeship Programme. If the hon. Minister can expand on the areas of training that this money will be used to assist.

Hon. Cudjoe: That is utilized to train the students at the facility and those students receive training in computer repairs, electrical, welding, plumbing and auto-mechanics. This also covers the training material for the students at the camp also.

Mr. Padarath: Hon. Minister, with respect to this same line Item. Just for my information really: Does the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs produce, at the end of the financial year, or the end of the calendar year, the amount of persons who would have benefitted from these programmes, and the different disciplines, and so on? So you have a measure of success?

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes. And there is a graduation ceremony that has been taking place since these camps have been developed since in 1960s.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. And the Ministry will pretty much have that in terms of an actual report?

Hon. Cudjoe: That information, yes.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Hon. Minister, on the same Item 17, might you be able to indicate to us what are the names and locations of your YDACs? And how many students, for example, do you have in them?

Hon. Cudjoe: Right now we have two YDACs. One is at Persto Praesto and one is at Chatham. As you are well aware, over the previous years work is being done

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by Chatham. So we would have moved the students from Chatham to Persto Praesto. So they are all merged at one campus right now, which is Persto Praesto.

**Mr. Karim:** How many students are there in that merged—?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** Right now we have 30-something enrolled, but you know the students that we are dealing with. They go in and out. You have to constantly be behind them, trying to get them to stay in school because of the nature of students that you are dealing with there also.

**Mr. Karim:** Out of those, how many are from Chatham that travel or stay in? I know they have the dorms.

**Hon. Cudjoe:** Well, remember, as I said before, the gentlemen from Chatham are now at Persto Praesto also, so they are both—both groups are being housed at Persto Praesto.

**Mr. Karim:** I was just asking for the complement from Chatham and Persto Praesto.

**Hon. Cudjoe:** I could provide to you the number from Chatham later.

**Madam Chairman:** Sub-Head 03: Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001: General Administration. Item 002: Physical Education and Sport Division; Item 003, Dwight Yorke Stadium; Item 004, Youth Centres; Item 005, Youth Centres. Item 006: National Youth Development and Apprenticeship; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 002, Commonwealth Bodies; Item 005, Non-profit Institutions; Item 007, Households. Member for Princes Town.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Madam. To the hon. Minister, line Item 03, under Households, Hosting of Vacation Camps. Could the hon. Minister indicate where these vacation camps were hosted, one, and two, whether or not these vacation camps are totally dependent on Government assistance, or whether or not there are
corporate entities that assist in terms of offsetting the cost of these vacation camps?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** Okay. This year the vacation camps were held at five of the youth facilities throughout Trinidad. We were able to attract 216 young people. So this covered meals, paying the facilitators, the different training materials, and so on, for them. We were able to get assistance for facilitation from some Government entities, and for the topic areas that we were not able to get facilitators from within the State system, we were able to get assistance from groups like AFETT where we had to pay a small cost; groups like TTHTI to provide training in dining etiquette, and so on. So our first order of business was to source the assistance from within the State system in order to keep the cost down, and when we were unable to find facilitators there, we reached out to other stakeholders that have a reputation in delivering that type of service and training.

**Mr. Karim:** Hon. Minister, on that same Item, could you indicate what was the centre for the camp in the central area, like Chaguanas, Couva?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** We used CRISA to do it.

**Mr. Karim:** Used what?

**Hon. Cudjoe:** The Chaguanas Regional Indoor Sport Arena.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Princes Town.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Madam Chair. To the hon. Minister, line Item 04, the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago. Can the hon. Minister tell us whether or not the Sports Company currently has a substantive CEO? And, secondly, whether or not the legal action brought by the former CEO and others from the board have been settled with the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago, outside of the courts, or whether it is still before the courts?
Hon. Cudjoe: Right now we have an acting CEO and for the remaining of your question, I will provide that to you in writing subsequently.

Mr. Padarath: Could you tell us, who is the acting CEO right now?

Hon. Cudjoe: The acting CEO is one Jason Williams.

Mr. Padarath: Okay, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 011, Transfers to State Enterprises. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme Consolidated Fund, page 148; Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Madam Chair, to the hon. Minister. 096, Upgrading of Swimming Pools. If the hon. Minister could provide us with which swimming pools are these?

Hon. Cudjoe: These swimming pools are: the Diego Martin community swimming pool; the Cocoyea community swimming pool, the La Horquetta community swimming pool, the Couva community swimming pool; and the Siparia community swimming pool.

Mr. Padarath: Okay, thank you. Madam, line Item 121, the Hasely Crawford Stadium, Upgrade of Facilities. Can you tell us if that is completed? Because I am not seeing anything for 2019.

Hon. Cudjoe: That has not been started, and that has been moved to a different Vote under the IDF. You will see it later when we go to IDF.

Mr. Paray: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Minister, I know you—on line Item 117. You would have visited the Mayaro Indoor Sporting Facilities with me a couple months ago and a few items were raised, and I was hoping that under that Head we could see some action in this fiscal year in some of the areas that were
raised in terms of the surrounding of the building, lighting, and so on. I am not sure if any progress would have been made on that.

Hon. Cudjoe: Okay. Works for the Mayaro Sporting Facilities are being taken care of under Vote 117, and the works that are proposed for Mayaro are under Plumbing, and we are going to be installing a standby generator.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, Multi-sectoral and other Services; Infrastructure Development Fund, page 231; Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam. Madam, I really wanted to ask the Minister with respect to line Item 152, Upgrade of the Dwight Yorke Stadium, I just wanted the Minister to confirm that UDeCOTT is the body with responsibility for the upgrade.

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes, it is.

Mr. Padarath: Secondly, can the Minister confirm, based on public utterances of the chairman of UDeCOTT, that it will take $80 million to finish all the works at the Dwight Yorke Stadium?

Hon. Cudjoe: Right now in this phase we have $15 million for this fiscal year, and that is the work that is going to be done in this fiscal year.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. So, Minister, you—

Hon. Cudjoe: For this phase.

Mr. Padarath: Sure, I understand.

Hon. Cudjoe: And, of course, works relating to any phase after that—because there are a number of items that have been reserved for a later phase. That would be dependent on the works done in this second phase, so I would not want to jump the gun to get to level three when we have not even completed level one and two.
Mr. Padarath: Okay. Therefore, Madam, just to confirm, the entire upgrade of the facility will not be completed in this financial year?

Hon. Cudjoe: As you are well aware, just like all the other stadia that we have in Trinidad and Tobago, the upgrades have been done in phases. Right now before us we have phases one and two, and that is what we are dealing with now. When we get to the bridge of phase three, we will cross that, but we are now at phases one and two.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 149, Construction of Diego Martin Sporting Complex. I was under the impression that that sporting complex is nearly to open, or built in Diego Martin. Is this the same one down in Patna Village area?

Hon. Cudjoe: Mmhmm.

Mr. Lee: So why now an allocation of $25 million is being estimated in this line Item?

Hon. Cudjoe: That project consists of two phases. The first phase we expect to be completed by the end of this quarter, and then we go into the second phase of that project. Just—it is done in phases like all the other regional complexes.

Mr. Lee: Right. So the previous construction was done where? Under what line Item?

Hon. Cudjoe: The previous construction was done under ANSA Financing.

Mr. Lee: ANSA Financing.

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes.

Mr. Lee: So you now have a second phase under the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs?

Hon. Cudjoe: Yes.
Mr. Lee: And line Item 150, Construction of the Swimming Pool in Laventille. What stage of construction this pool is at, at this point in time?

Hon. Cudjoe: I visited that site about two weeks ago and we are at about 45 per cent completed. We expect the first phase to be completed within this first quarter.

Mr. Lee: This is the same swimming pool that was announced—

Hon. Cudjoe: Sogren Trace.

Mr. Lee:—in the first budget in 2015 when you all came into power?

Hon. Cudjoe: The sod was turned earlier this year in February and the first phase is expected to be completed by the end of this quarter.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 68 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Madam Minister. Thank you, Madam PS and your staff. Head 23: Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs. And Members we will be going to page 152 of the Revised Estimates, Recurrent.


I will now invite the Minister of Finance to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

Hon. Imbert: Thank you, Madam Chairman. The Attorney General’s office is responsible for a number of areas of very important responsibility, including the conduct of litigation for, and on behalf of the State; the Registrar General’s Office; the Land Registry; the Companies Registry and, generally, giving legal advice to the Government and State Corporations.

Question proposed: That Head 23 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $317,834,960 for Head 23, Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, is comprised of moneys
proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure and the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure.

Head 01: Personal Expenditure. Item 001, General Administration, page 152; Item 002, Law Commission; Item 003, Equal Opportunity Commission; Item 005, Law Revision Commission; Item 007, Intellectual Property Office; Item 009, Criminal Law Department. Member for St. Augustine.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** I would be grateful if the Attorney General will define for us, really, what the Criminal Law Department of the Attorney General’s office is.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** The Criminal Law Department is in reference to the DPP’s office.

**Mr. Ramadhar:** I see.

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** So it is pursuant to section 76 of the Constitution with responsibility—[Interruption]

**Mr. Ramadhar:** We appreciate it, just that the naming was a bit, you know—

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** No, it has been like that since eons.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 010, Sentencing Commission; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services. Item 001, General Administration. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a question to the Attorney General, line Item 61, Insurance. It has gone up to 3 million in 2019 and it has been always a small figure of 15,000 in 2015, 17,000 in 2018. So you have this massive increase of $3 million for insurances. What is that for? And what company is getting that insurance?

**Hon. Al-Rawi:** Richmond Street Campus, the AGLA Towers; that is the insurance over those premises. Contrary to very wrong allegations in the public
domain that we do not have insurance on our buildings, this is what is represented there and it is—which insurance company you are asking about? It is done through UDeCOTT, so I do not have the information. That will fall under the Ministry of Planning and Development’s Head.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 002, Law Reform Commission; Item 003, Equal Opportunity Commission; Item 005, Law Revision Commission; Item 007, Intellectual Property Office; Item 008, National Centre for Dispute Resolution; Item 009, Criminal Law Department; Item 010, Sentencing Commission.

Sub-Head 03: Minor Equipment Purchases. We are now at page 161. Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Law Reform Commission; Item 003, Equal Opportunity Commission; Item 005, Law Revision Commission; Item 007, Intellectual Property Office; Item 009, Criminal Law Department; Item 012, Sentencing Commission.

Sub-Head 04: Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 163. Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions; Item 009, Other Transfers; Item 010, Other Transfers Abroad.

Hon. Members, we shall now move on to the Draft Estimates of Development Programme—new book. Sub-Head 09: Development Programme Consolidated Fund; Item 004, Social Infrastructure; Item 005, Multi-sectoral and Other Services.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 23 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

**Madam Chairman:** Hon. Members, do we go on to day three? [Crosstalk] Hon. Members, the Standing Finance Committee is suspended to Friday, 12th of October, 2018 at 10—[Interruption]

**Mr. Deyalsingh:** No, no, no. Colm, what time for tomorrow?
Mr. Imbert: One-thirty.

Mr. Lee: No, no, no. Madam Chair, we had Tobago House of Assembly here for 10 o’clock in the morning. We had agreed on that.

Mr. Imbert: One-thirty.

Mr. Lee: No, no. We cannot change the time.

Mr. Imbert: “How much time you want me to say one-thirty?”

Mr. Lee: No, no, no, no. We had agreed on that.

Mr. Imbert: One-thirty.

Mr. Lee: Come on, man, Chair. They cannot change the time on us just like that. They keep doing that. It is unfair. We had agreed with the Leader of Government Business. It was 10 to 8, 10 hours a day.

Mr. Imbert: I have been advised to advise you, Madam Chairman, that the Government will be ready at 1.30 tomorrow.

Mr. Lee: No, no, no.

Madam Chairman: So, all right. Let us see how we move forward with this. Whip, if it is that the agencies are not here to be examined, then how do we examine them?

Mr. Lee: It is not about the agencies not being here. We had agreed that the Tobago House of Assembly would be here on the third day at 10 o’clock.

Madam Chairman: And nobody says they would not be.

Mr. Lee: No, no, at 10 o’clock. So we are starting our day at 10 o’clock. If the Government wants to come here at 1.30, let them come, but the Tobago House comes at 10 o’clock.

Mr. Imbert: Oh, really?

Mr. Lee: We had agreed on that.
Mr. Imbert: Who is the Minister that will handle that?

Mr. Lee: I do not care who is the Minister of Finance.

Madam Chairman: Wait. Let us just be reasonable. If the agency comes but the
Minister of Finance, through whom all this is conducted is not here, then—
[Interruption]

Mr. Lee: Then the Attorney General fills in or any one of them could fill in.

Mr. Imbert: We were scheduled to have a Cabinet meeting today at 10 o’clock.
In deference to the other side, we fore—[Crosstalk] Look, behave and stop being
so rude!

Hon. Members: Ohhh goood!

Mr. Lee: No, you stop being so rude. Stop it! You cannot do that all the time!

Mr. Imbert: Madam Chairman—

Madam Chairman: This Standing Finance Committee is suspended. I will be
back in half an hour. Work it out.

7.47 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee Suspended.

8.26 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee resumed.

Madam Chairman: This meeting of the Standing Finance Committee is now
resumed. Minister of Finance, do you care to report?

Mr. Imbert: As far I am aware, agreement has been reached to resume at 1.30
p.m. tomorrow with some re-ordering of the entities or departments to be
examined, and the Government has agreed to the re-ordering proposed by the
Opposition.

Mr. Lee: Madam Chair, I still want to voice my concern of the change in time,
but for a compromise and for the betterment of Parliament, we had agreed to
convene at 1.30 p.m. tomorrow and change the restructuring of the Heads so that it
might be a better fit for all my Opposition Members to be able to ask pertinent questions given the time that we would go into if we continue 10 hours from 1.30 tomorrow, there will be somewhere 11 o’clock in the night. So we have decided to rearrange the order.

**Mr. Imbert:** And it is my understanding the re-ordered list has been given to the Procedural Clerk—

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Imbert:**—for onward transmission to you—

**Madam Chairman:** To the various—

**Mr. Imbert:**—and everybody else and the various departments.

**Madam Chairman:** All right. So thank you very much. This Standing Finance Committee is suspended to Friday 12th, October, 2018 at 1.30 p.m. I wish everyone a safe journey home.

**Mr. Imbert:** Madam Chairman, before you wrap up, I just want to make sure that the departments are notified. We will not start until 1.30 p.m. so there is time, but they need to be told. Thank you very much.

**Madam Chairman:** Yes. Okay. Thank you very much.

8.27 p.m.: *Standing Finance Committee suspended.*