



TWENTY-SECOND REPORT OF
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

(E N T E R P R I S E S) C O M M I T T E E

FOURTH SESSION OF THE 11TH PARLIAMENT

Examination of the Audited Accounts, Balance Sheets and other Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT) for the financial years 2014 and 2015



Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee

The Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee (P.A.(E).C) established under Section 119(5) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is mandated to consider and report to the House of Representatives accordingly on:

“(a) the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all enterprises that are owned or controlled by or on behalf of the state; and

(b) the Auditor General’s Report on any such accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements.”

Current membership

Mr. Wade Mark	Chairman
Dr. Tim Gopeesingh	Vice - Chairman
Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus	Member
Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds	Member
Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn	Member
Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly	Member
Ms. Amrita Deonarine	Member

Committee Staff

The current staff members serving the Committee are:

Ms. Keiba Jacob	Secretary
Ms. Hema Bhagaloo	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Vanna Jankiepersad	Procedural Officer Intern
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Publication

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Table of Contents

<i>Members of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee</i>	4
<i>Executive Summary</i>	5
<i>Introduction</i>	9
<i>Establishment</i>	9
<i>Mandate</i>	9
<i>Ministerial Response</i>	9
<i>State Enterprises Performance Standards</i>	9
<i>Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman</i>	10
<i>Establishment of Quorum</i>	10
<i>Change in Membership</i>	10
<i>Methodology</i>	11
<i>Determination of the Committee’s Work Programme</i>	11
<i>Fourth Session Work Programme</i>	12
<i>The Inquiry Process</i>	13
<i>Trinidad & Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited’s Background</i>	14
<i>Issues, Observations and Recommendations</i>	15
<i>Concluding Remarks</i>	27
<i>APPENDIX I</i>	29
<i>Present were:</i>	29
<i>Excused were:</i>	29
<i>APPENDIX II</i>	39
<i>Verbatim Notes of Meetings</i>	39

Members of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee



Mr. Wade Mark
Chairman



Dr. Tim Gopeesingh
Vice Chairman



Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly
Member



Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus
Member



Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds
Member



Ms. Amrita Deonarine
Member



Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn
Member

Executive Summary

The Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee (PA(E)C) is the Parliamentary Financial Oversight Committee tasked with the responsibility of examining the audited accounts of all State Enterprises that are owned or controlled by the state. The Committee examined the **Audited Accounts, Balance Sheets and other Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT) for the financial years 2014 and 2015** and produced this report to highlight its findings and recommendations.

This report details the issues, endorsements and recommendations made by the Committee to improve CreativeTT's performance. The issues identified in this report were found during the period under examination (2014 and 2015).

During this inquiry, the following topics were discussed:

- *The status of the submission of CreativeTT's consolidated financial statements to Parliament for the financial years ended 2016, 2017 and 2018;*
- *CreativeTT's compliance to the reporting mechanisms set out in the State Enterprise Performance Monitoring Manual*
- *The accomplishments and constraints in the operationalization of the strategic rubric established to oversee the subsidiaries CreativeTT;*
- *The reduced size of the governance structure of Creative TT – by virtue of its Board of Directors comprising three (3) Directors as opposed to six (6);*
- *The main factors which determined and justified the need to rationalize the CreativeTT and its three (3) subsidiaries Film TT, Fashion TT and Music TT into one (1) company;*
- *The status of the Rationalisation Paper submitted to the MTI in 2015 for approval;*
- *CreativeTT's ability to improve capacity, competency, income sustainability and economic independence of the creatives who have graduated from its development programs;*
- *The initiatives implemented by FilmTT to market and brand Trinidad and Tobago as a filming destination to international film producers and companies;*
- *MusicTT's process of subsidising the performances of musicians and artistes based on specific tiers (for instance, solos, duets, trios, bands etc.);*

- *The prospect of collaborating with the Ministry of Tourism to create a live music district and other events to attract the patronage of the tourists arriving on cruise ships;*
- *The number of individuals who participated in the Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme;*
- *The differing fees attached to the local and international participations of the Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme;*
- *The need for CreativeTT to promote the use of local music, fashion and film personnel to the international film producers who chose Trinidad and Tobago as their film location;*
- *The efforts made to recruit an Internal Auditor; and*
- *The discontinuance of the practice in hiring an external body to record of Board Minutes.*

In light of the Committee's findings, the following recommendations were made:

- *In effectively carrying out its oversight role, the MTI should take urgent steps to review the rationalization paper and submit a status report on the work it has undertaken to approve the rationalization and amalgamation of the three subsidiaries under CreativeTT into one single entity since the submission of the rationalization paper by CreativeTT's Board to the Ministry in May 2017. This status report should be submitted to Parliament by November 30, 2019;*
- *The Board should increase its monitoring capacity over the internal controls of the Company and should be well informed of the provision outlined in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual so that each regulation is followed to ensure it functions efficiently and effectively;*
- *In areas where the Internal Audit function is absent, mechanisms should be implemented so that the existing staff can be trained to carry out its function;*
- *CreativeTT should submit a status report on the initiatives taken to fill the post of Internal Auditor at the organization to Parliament by November 30, 2019;*
- *According to the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual 2011, Appendix C 'Use of Cellular Phones and Laptop Computers issued by the State', CreativeTT should make it a stipulated practice that any items issued to Directors for their use in the execution of their duties as a Director should be relinquished at the last board meeting of that Director's tenure;*

- *In the event that assets have been still remained unreturned by the Directors who possess them, the company should formally write to the possessors requesting return within a specific period where failure to return the assets will be considered theft;*
- *If assets have still been unreturned at the point, the company should notify the delinquent Directors indicating its intention to initiate prosecution on the grounds larceny and theft if the items assigned to them aren't immediately forfeited. Failure to immediately acknowledge and comply should cause the company begin prosecution proceedings;*
- *Given the financial challenges which have stymied CreativeTT's ability to execute planned projects, the CreativeTT:*
 - *should conduct extensive research into how to efficiently and effectively execute plan projects and programs giving the limited available resources;*
 - *should prioritize their allocation of funding to ensure that their projects are managed effectively;*
 - *develop a clear strategy for funding the various programmes across the subsidiaries and even where activities occur simultaneously;*
 - *ensure that available funding encourages wider creative participation when executing of projects and programmes;*
 - *report to Parliament on the plans to execute of the above recommendations no later than November 30, 2019;*
- *CreativeTT in collaboration with the Port of Spain City Corporation and in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism should establish Live Music Districts in and around areas in Port of Spain where cruise ship passengers are known to frequent and report to the Parliament on the merits of this collaborative initiative by November 30, 2019;*
- *While it is commendable that MusicTT subsidises artiste performances, the company should maintain a register of artistes/bands booked for performances. A documentation of the number of times artistes are booked, would indicate to the MusicTT which artistes are becoming more mainstream. Those who have booked several performances under the Live Music District Banner and have showcased the ability to make it out of their own should be notified that MusicTT will no longer host them on the Artiste Roster. This would also give lesser known artistes/bands an opportunity to be booked by venues;*
- *The Committee noted the reasoning behind the subsidiaries using foreign consultants to develop their strategic plans, however, as a possible cost saving initiative, the*

companies should hold consultations with the most reputable consultancy firms in the country. These consultations should allow MusicTT, FashionTT and FilmTT to clearly articulate their needs, wants and expectations for the growth of each creative industry. If no local consultancy firm meets the criteria required, it is then that the tendering for strategic plans be opened to international consultancy firms;

- *The CreativeTT/FashionTT should add to their website, clear information on the Savile Row Academy and the Certificate Programme in Bespoke Tailoring, Pattern Drafting, Cutting and Fitting and the participants of these world renowned fashion institutes and academies to educate and advice consumers of all the skills, training and improvement programmes and to raise the awareness of the tailoring sector opportunities and possibilities;*
- *The CreativeTT should take urgent steps to develop and implement marketing strategies to enhance the tailoring sector whereby creating employment and investment and adding to the country's Gross Domestic Product; and*
- *The CreativeTT should provide a status update on the revenue generated from the current initiatives and new initiatives taken to expand the tailoring sector revenue generating stream to Parliament no later than November 30, 2019.*

Introduction

Establishment

The PA(E)C of the Eleventh Republican Parliament was established by resolution of the House of Representatives and the Senate at the sittings held on Friday November 13, 2015 and Tuesday November 17, 2015 respectively.

Mandate

The Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago mandates that the Committee shall consider and report to the House on the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all enterprises that are owned or controlled by, or on behalf of the State.

In addition to the Committee's powers entrenched in the Constitution, the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives and Senate also empower the Committee (but not limited) to:

- a. send for persons, papers and records;
- b. have meetings whether or not the House is sitting;
- c. meet in various locations;
- d. report from time to time; and
- e. communicate with any other Committee on matters of common interest.

Ministerial Response

The Standing Orders¹ provide for the Minister responsible for the Ministry or Body under review to submit within sixty (60) days a paper to the House responding to any recommendations or comments contained in the Report which are addressed to it.

State Enterprises Performance Standards

The PAEC used the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual as a benchmark to examine the performance of State Enterprises. The manual outlines the framework for compliance with official policy and the monitoring mechanisms to be used in assessing such compliance. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago monitors the performance of State Enterprises to ensure that these enterprises

¹ Standing Order 110 (6) in the House of Representatives and 100(6) of the Senate.

successfully execute their mandates and maximize value for money for the national stakeholders and shareholders²

Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman

In accordance with section 119(6) of the Constitution, the Chairman must be a member of the Opposition in the Senate. At the first meeting held on Wednesday December 2, 2015, Mr. Wade Mark was elected Chairman and Dr Tim Gopeesingh was elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

Establishment of Quorum

The Committee is required by the Standing Orders to have a quorum so that decisions can be made. A quorum of four (4) Members, inclusive of the Chair or Vice-Chairman), with representatives from both Houses was agreed to by the Committee at its First Meeting.

Change in Membership

On November 27, 2018 a decision was made at a sitting of the Senate to replace Mr. David Small as a Member of the Committee with Ms. Amrita Deonarine.

On July 21, 2019 Mr. Foster Cummings appointment as a Senator was revoked.

² <http://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/State-Enterprise-Performance-Monitoring-Manual-2011.pdf>

Methodology

Determination of the Committee's Work Programme

At its second meeting on Wednesday January 13, 2016, the Committee agreed to prioritize thirty-four

(34) State Enterprises as follows:

- Caribbean Airlines Limited (CAL)
- Caribbean New Media Group (CNMG)
- Caroni Green Limited
- Community Environmental & Protection Enhancement Programme Company Limited (CEPEP)
- Education Facilities Company Limited (EFCL)
- Estate Management and Business Development Company Ltd. (EMBDC)
- Evolving Tecknologies and Enterprise Development Co. Ltd (eTECK)
- National Commission for Self Help Limited
- National Entrepreneurship Development Company Ltd. (NEDCO)
- National Enterprises Limited (NEL)
- National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC)
- National Infrastructure Development Company Ltd. (NIDCO)
- National Insurance Property Development Company Ltd. (NIPDEC)
- National Quarries Company Limited (NQCL)
- National Schools Dietary Services (NSDSL)
- Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Ltd (PSAEL)
- Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago (PETROTRIN)
- Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Ltd. (PLIPDECO)
- Port of Spain Waterfront Development Ltd.
- Rincon Development Ltd.
- Rural Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd.
- Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago (SporTT)
- Telecommunication Services of Trinidad, Tobago (TSTT)
- Trinidad and Tobago Fashion Company Ltd.
- Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited (TTMF)

- Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Limited (NP)
- Tourism Development Corporation (TDC)
- Union Estate Electricity Generation Company Limited
- Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDECOTT)
- Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL)
- Vehicle Management Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (VMCOTT)
- National Flour Mills Limited
- Community Improvement Services Limited
- Government Human Resource Services Company Limited (GHRS)

Fourth Session Work Programme

At a meeting held on December 5, 2018, the Committee identified the following entities for examination in the Fourth Session of the 11th Parliament:

- National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP);
- Caroni (1975) Limited;
- Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited;
- Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited (PSAEL);
- Trinidad & Tobago Free Zones Company Limited;
- Trinidad & Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited;
- Export Import Bank of Trinidad and Tobago (EXIMBANK);
- InvesTT;
- Trinidad & Tobago International Financial Centre Management Company Limited;
- Rural Development Company of Trinidad & Tobago Limited (RDC);
- Taurus Services Limited; and
- Portfolio Credit Management Limited.

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process outlines steps taken by the Committee to conduct the inquiry into the operations of PSAEL. The following steps outline the Inquiry Process agreed to by the PA(E)C:

- I. Identification of issues in the Audited Accounts, Balance Sheets and other Financial Statements of CreativeTT for the financial years 2014 and 2015;
- II. Preparation of Inquiry Proposal for CreativeTT. The Inquiry Proposal outlines:
 - a. Background;
 - b. Objective of Inquiry; and
 - c. Proposed Questions.
- III. Questions were forwarded to CreativeTT on March 8, 2019. Written responses were received from CreativeTT on March 21, 2019;
- IV. Determination of the need for a Public Hearing based on the analysis of written submissions. In this instance, a public hearing was held on April 3, 2019.
- V. After the public hearing a written request for additional information was sent to the CreativeTT on April 9, 2019. The responses were subsequently received on April 25, 2019.
- VI. Report the Committee's findings and recommendations to Parliament upon conclusion of the inquiry.

Trinidad & Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited's Background

The Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT) is a wholly owned State enterprise established by The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago through the Ministry of Trade and Industry. CreativeTT's mandate is to stimulate and facilitate the business development and export activities of the Creative Industries in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth and, as such, the company is responsible for the strategic and business development of the three (3) niche areas and subsectors under its purview- Music, Film, and Fashion.³

The Trinidad and Tobago Music Company Limited (MusicTT) was established in 2014 with the mandate to stimulate and facilitate the business development and export activity of the music industry in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth. As a subsidiary of Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT), MusicTT provides industry-wide strategic direction and action plans toward the development of the music industry as well as guidance and access to music education and capacity development, especially in the business and monetization of local music and protection of the same.⁴

The Trinidad and Tobago Film Company Limited (FilmTT) is the state agency established in 2006 to facilitate the growth and development of the film and audio-visual sector in Trinidad & Tobago. As a subsidiary of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited, FilmTT works on all aspects of film sector development, promotes Trinidad & Tobago as a film production location, and provides Film Commission services to local and incoming productions. FilmTT's mission is to maximise the economic and creative potential of Trinidad and Tobago's screen industries for the benefit of the country and its people.⁵

The Trinidad and Tobago Fashion Company Limited (FashionTT) was established in 2013 with the mandate to stimulate and facilitate the business development and export activity of the fashion industry in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth. As a subsidiary of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT), FashionTT provides service for local fashion industry stakeholders primarily fashion designers in the areas of fashion apparel, functional apparel and accessories.⁶

³ CreativeTT's website <http://www.creativett.co.tt/> web accessed May 28, 2019

⁴ MusicTT's website <http://www.musictt.co.tt/music-tt> web accessed May 28, 2019

⁵ FilmTT's website <http://www.filmtt.co.tt/film-tt> web accessed May 28, 2019

⁶ FashionTT's website <http://www.fashiontt.co.tt/fashion-tt> web accessed May 28, 2019

Issues, Observations and Recommendations

In the Committee's examination of CreativeTT, the following issues were identified and the corresponding observations and recommendations proposed:

1. Outstanding Financial Statements

According to Parliamentary records, the last audited financial statements submitted to Parliament for the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries was for fiscal year 2015. Section 3.2.5 of the State Enterprise Performance Monitoring Manual 2011 states that "State Enterprises are required to submit the Audited Financial Statements to the Minister of Finance within four (4) months of their financial year end. These reports are to be laid in Parliament and subsequently submitted to the Public Accounts and Enterprises Committee for consideration."⁷ CreativeTT representatives indicated that the audited financial statements for 2016 were submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Trade on February 25th 2019 while the management accounts for the audited financial statements for 2017 and 2018 were at the review stage. It was indicated that the company hoped that the entire audit and approval process for the financial statements for 2017 and 2018 would be closed off by June of 2019 and subsequently submitted to Parliament.

Recommendation:

- *To ensure the timely submission of audit financial statements to Parliament, CreativeTT should abide by the guidelines set out in the State Enterprise Performance Monitoring Manual whereby Audited Financial Statements are supposed to be submitted to the Minister of Finance within four (4) months of their financial year end;*
- *The CreativeTT should include the timely submission of financial statements for auditing as a performance standard for the officers responsible for the preparation of financial statements;*
- *The CreativeTT should also submit a report to the Parliament outlining the details of the improvements that need to be made to its accounting policies and procedures by November 30, 2019; and*
- *The CreativeTT should also submit a status report on the submission of the financial statements for 2016, 2017 and 2018 to Parliament by November 30, 2019.*

State-Enterprise-Performance-Monitoring-Manual-2011.pdf <http://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/State-Enterprise-Performance-Monitoring-Manual-2011.pdf>

2. Rationalization of CreativeTT and its three subsidiaries

Creative TT is the parent company of three subsidiaries - FilmTT, MusicTT and FashionTT. While noting that the genesis of the current organization structure may have been well conceived in a time of greater economic vibrancy, currently, CreativeTT representatives indicated that there was now a need to innovate their affairs with greater integrated and operational leanness in mind given the company's production and labour costs challenges. As such, a rationalisation paper regarding the amalgamation of the parent company and the three (3) subsidiaries was submitted to the MTI for approval in 2017. As at the time of the public hearing, the rationalization of the four (4) companies into one (1) was still pending. It was further stated that given the country's current economic recession and the company's need for greater organizational agility, it was hoped that there would be improved organizational governance, operational efficiency and efficacy. The key objectives of this initiative as identified by the CreativeTT included:

- a. Reducing the costs of the governance structure from four companies to one;
- b. Improving process efficiencies through centralization of selected manpower resources;
- c. Eliminating Levels of bureaucracy by having four boards;
- d. Promoting increased productivity;
- e. Leveraging and integrating the creative clusters of Film, Music and Fashion;
- f. Streamlining the affairs of the creative industries through one legal entity;
- g. Reducing the current organization structure from 69 to 33 employees; and
- h. Realigning positions and compensation with current economic reality.

The CreativeTT also provided some realizable benefits from the rationalization which included:

- a. Improved governance efficiency - savings of \$536,000 per annum in Directors' fees;
- b. Cost containment of Audit Fees - elimination of \$151,875 per annum;
- c. Scaling down governance structures - From four boards to one board, associated savings per annum of \$264,000 - catering and independent corporate secretariat services;
- d. Process improvement - less red tape by independent sub boards and directors;
- e. Centralisation of resources – centralization of common services, flexibility to deploy staff across one company;
- f. Simplification of work processes - Develop common standard operating procedure where possible;
- g. Leveraging of Consultant Subject Matter Expertise – we can better employ integrated consultancy efforts across all creative lines;

- h. Promotes creative team work and synergy between creative industries – integrated marketing and corporate communication efforts;
- i. Regulatory/ Statutory benefits e.g. Green Fund Levy, compliance filing and returns for one company not four; and
- j. Ability to prominently brand CreativeTT as a single entity – One Brand Marketing.

In submissions received by the MTI, the Ministry indicated that it was vigorously analysing the proposal submitted by CreativeTT for the legal amalgamation of the company and its three subsidiaries. Despite the rationalization paper proposed reducing the organizational structure of CreativeTT and its subsidiaries from sixty-nine (69) positions to thirty-three (33) positions, the Ministry noted that the performance of CreativeTT had been satisfactory to this point with a staff complement of twenty (20) persons currently. However, the Ministry indicated that it was still conscious of the fact that risk mitigation strategies needed to be employed. These would ensure that the amalgamation does not hinder CreativeTT from attaining optimal performance in the execution of its mandate. The Ministry was able to identify some of the potential concerns that need to be considered and thoroughly evaluated in its analysis of the rationalization paper. These include:

- The perception that the companies are winding up;
- Business continuity in terms of honouring all existing contractual obligations;
- Uncertainty in the minds of stakeholders as to the ability of the companies to realize their mandates; and
- Lack of clarity with respect to FilmTT's role as the Film Commission for Trinidad and Tobago may perplex prospective incoming international producers.

Recommendation:

- *In effectively carrying out its oversight role, the MTI should take urgent steps to review the rationalization paper and submit a status report on the work it has undertaken to approve the rationalization and amalgamation of the three subsidiaries under CreativeTT into one single entity since the submission of the rationalization paper by CreativeTT's Board to the Ministry in May 2017. This status report should be submitted to Parliament by November 30, 2019.*

3. Recruitment of an Internal Auditor

The role of Internal Audit is to provide independent assurance that an organisation's risk management, governance and internal control processes were operating effectively. The State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual states that *“Every State Enterprise is required to appoint an Audit Committee.*

It shall be composed of a minimum of two (2) non-executive directors and other independent Company professionals. The Minister of Finance may appoint other independent professionals to the Committee.

Presently, CreativeTT does not have an Internal Audit Unit nor employs anyone who is qualified to conduct and audit of the entire company. This is despite having one audit position existing on the company's approved organizational structure. The reasons for the vacancy in the position as identified by CreativeTT came down to funding restraints which stymied the company's ability to even facilitate the advertisement and the interview for the position which consequently meant no one could be recruited. In written submissions received, it was indicated that CreativeTT publicly advertised the position of Internal Auditor on April 16, 2019 with the deadline for submission of applications being April 23, 2019. The shortlisting of suitable applicants would have been completed by April 26, 2019 and the interview process subsequently conducted on May 6, 2019.

Recommendations:

- *The Board should increase its monitoring capacity over the internal controls of the Company and should be well informed of the provision outlined in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual so that each regulation is followed to ensure it functions efficiently and effectively;*
- *In areas where the Internal Audit function is absent, mechanisms should be implemented so that the existing staff can be trained to carry out its function; and*
- *CreativeTT should submit a status report on the initiatives taken to fill the post of Internal Auditor at the organization to Parliament by November 30, 2019.*

4. The write off on unreturned assets by Directors

The audited financial statements for the year 2015 stated an expenditure under 'Administrative Expenses' for laptops and phones in the sum of \$38,548. Officials from the CreativeTT indicated that the laptops and phones had not being returned by Directors who demitted office in 2015. The CreativeTT's policy on the return of assets given to Directors to be used in their capacity as Directors explicitly states that "Laptop computers and cellular phones are to be returned to the relevant Ministry/Department/Statutory Authority in any of the following circumstances:

- a) Where the user, proceeds on extended periods of leave of absence without pay is seconded/reassigned to another Ministry/Department/ Organisation; resigns, retires, dies or in any way, demits office;
- b) upon expiration or termination of the employment, on contract, of the user;
- c) where the item was issued for temporary use and the period of such use has expired."

The details of the \$38,548 worth of laptops and phones not returned by Directors in 2015 as provided by the CreativeTT is as follows:

Details	\$
Mac Book Air 13.3” Laptop	9,572.63
Apple Mac Book Pro 15” Retina Laptop	11,589.23
Apple iPad Air	3,802.50
Sony Vaio 14” Touch Black Laptop	4,287.18
HTC One M8 Mobile Phone	3,494.00
Digicel Phone	1,753.57
Digicel Phone	2,072.30
Digicel Phone	1,976.78
Total	38,548.19

In an attempt to recover the unreturned assets, on June 08, 2015, CreativeTT directed an email to the five former directors requesting items issued to be returned as a matter of urgency. By September 30 2015, when not one of the above items was returned, the Board of Directors at the time took the decision to write off the unreturned assets.

Recommendations:

- *According to the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual 2011, Appendix C ‘ Use of Cellular Phones and Laptop Computers issued by the State’ , CreativeTT should make it a stipulated practice that any items issued to Directors for their use in the execution of their duties as a Director should be relinquished at the last board meeting of that Director’s tenure.*
- *In the event that assets have been still remained unreturned by the Directors who possess them, the company should formally write to the possessors requesting return within a specific period where failure to return the assets will be considered theft; and*
- *If assets have still been unreturned at the point, the company should notify the delinquent Directors indicating its intention to initiate prosecution on the grounds larceny and theft if the items assigned to them aren’t immediately forfeited. Failure to immediately acknowledge and comply should cause the company begin prosecution proceedings.*

5. Challenges faced by CreativeTT and its subsidiaries

CreativeTT indicated that most of its challenges and weaknesses are attributed to an insufficient budgetary allocation and late releases. In an attempt to alleviate the company’s funding woes, formal letters requesting funding for Recurrent and PSIP were submitted quarterly to the MTI and at the

company's quarterly PSIP meetings with the MTT's Project Management Unit. However, despite the company's quarterly formal letter requesting funding, government bureaucracy prolong the release of the requested funds. As a result, insufficient funding has affected MusicTT's ability to gain traction in the international music industry and FashionTT and FilmTT's ability to execute planned programmes in sustainable creative development.

Another issue identified across the company was the limited human resources capacity within the marketing department. This has caused the company to outsource assistance for projects despite having an already limited budget. Limited funding has also hindered the company's ability to hire Project Officers and as a result the company has two individuals in those positions. It was indicated that their workload gets quite taxing when the Live Music Districts are in session and consequentially, this causes the work progress and output of all other projects being executed across the three subsidiaries to be stop/slow down until the Live Music District is over.

Recommendation:

- *Given the financial challenges which have stymied CreativeTT's ability to execute planned projects, the CreativeTT:*
 - *should conduct extensive research into how to efficiently and effectively execute plan projects and programs giving the limited available resources;*
 - *should prioritize its allocation of funding to ensure that its projects are managed effectively;*
 - *develop a clear strategy for funding the various programmes across the subsidiaries and even where activities occur simultaneously;*
 - *ensure that available funding encourages wider creative participation when executing of projects and programmes; and*
 - *report to Parliament on the plans to execute the above recommendations no later than November 30, 2019.*

6. Establishment of Live Music Districts for cruise ship passengers

In March 2018 the Live Music District was launched and has since provided local artistes with the opportunities to showcase their talent at various events and locations throughout the chosen phase one district. The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts also collaborated with the Live Music District by bring music to the public via the introduction of a Live Music District banner. This banner included the Live at Lunch series in Woodford Square and Live on the Avenue. The Port of Spain City Corporation also incorporated the Live Music District into its City Month

celebrations via events such as Live at the Promenade, Live at the Gardens and Live at the Square. For fiscal 2019, the second phase of the Live Music Districts began with its first major event, Live at Fiesta Plaza, on Sunday 28th October 2018.⁸ As a means of capitalizing on the growing number of cruise ship arrivals which were recorded in 2018 and into 2019, it was expressed by members of the Committee that the Ministry of Tourism and MusicTT should have communicated with each other so that Live Music Districts could have been established in strategic locations such as the International Waterfront and the Brian Lara Promenade. It was envisioned that this would afford local artistes the ability to perform local music genres for those who disembarked the cruise ships in an attempt of gaining international exposure.

Recommendation:

- *CreativeTT in collaboration with the Port of Spain City Corporation and in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism should establish Live Music Districts in and around areas in Port of Spain where cruise ship passengers are known to frequent and report to the Parliament on the merits of this collaborative initiative by November 30, 2019.*

7. Subsidising the fees attached to an Artiste’s Performance

All musicians who are citizens of Trinidad and Tobago as part of MusicTT’s Live Music District Initiative are allowed to register on the Live Music District Artiste Roster. When venues reach out to artistes on the Live Music District Roster via MusicTT’s booking platform and a performance is delivered, MusicTT will issue one of its predetermined payment rates to the artiste, based on the first twenty (20) minutes of their performance. If the artiste is booked to perform for longer than a 20-minute set, MusicTT will pay directly to the artiste the fee due for the first twenty (20) minutes and the venue, which hired the artiste, will pay the additional performance time fee. It was noted that any additional fees/payments beyond the first twenty (20) minutes set time will have to be negotiated directly by the artiste with the venue. If a Venue wants to rehire the same Live Music District artiste for future performances during another event outside of the Live Music District, the venue will have to negotiate directly with the artiste and pay in full the performance fee due. However, it was brought to the Committees attention that venues can reserve the right to only book first twenty (20) minutes performances. The table below shows the base performance fees attached to the first twenty (20) minutes of an artiste’s performances at Live Music Districts:

SOLOISTS	DUETS	TRIOS	SMALL BAND	LARGE BAND
TTD 500	TTD 600	TTD 900	TTD 1,500	TTD 2,000

⁸ <http://www.musictt.co.tt/music-tt/live-music-district> web accessed May 28, 2019

Recommendation:

- ***While it is commendable that MusicTT subsidises artiste performances, the company should maintain a register of artistes/bands booked for performances. A documentation of the number of times artistes are booked, would indicate to the MusicTT which artistes are becoming more mainstream. Those who have booked several performances under the Live Music District Banner and have showcased the ability to make it out of their own should be notified that MusicTT will no longer host them on the Artiste Roster. This would also give lesser known artistes/bands an opportunity to be booked by venues.***

8. Hiring persons to record Board Minutes

In the year 2014, CreativeTT made the decision to outsource their corporate secretary functions to the Board, to a consultant - Ms. Shelly Mohammed for a one-year period (January 2014 to November 2014). Part of the corporate secretary's duties at the time was to record the Board's minutes. In July 2014, Aegis Business Solution Ltd was engaged by the company to record the monthly Board minutes of the subsidiary companies until 9 June 2015. The total payment paid to Aegis Business Solution Ltd for the recording of Board minutes to \$251,000. Officials from the CreativeTT brought it to the Committee's attention that the practice of outsourcing the recording of Board minutes ceased in 2015 when the MTI picked up on that irregularity and directed that the in-house corporate legal counsel provide the corporate secretarial services for the parent company and the subsidiaries.

9. Using international consultants to generate the Subsidiary Strategic Plans

It was brought to the Committee's attention that exorbitant fees were attached to the development of strategic plans for FashionTT, MusicTT and FilmTT. It was disclosed in the CreativeTT's written submissions to the Committee that, the cost to develop a strategic plan for the following was:

- \$846,759 for FashionTT;
- \$804,775 for MusicTT, and
- \$892,305 for FilmTT.

Additionally, it was noted that all the consultants used international guidelines as a based to develop the strategic plans. CreativeTT indicated to the Committee that the tendering processes for each strategic plan was open to both local and international applicants.

However, when evaluating all the proposals, based on the well-rounded goals the companies envisioned to achieve, expertise on the incorporation of international trends and tastes was required.

It was pointed out that no local tender was able to achieve the selection criteria. As such, based on selection criteria only, the international consultants were better positioned to develop the strategic plans for FashionTT, MusicTT and FilmTT needed.

Recommendation/Endorsement:

- *The Committee noted the reasoning behind the subsidiaries using foreign consultants to develop their strategic plans, however, as a possible cost saving initiative, the companies should hold consultations with the most reputable consultancy firms in the country. These consultations should allow MusicTT, FashionTT and FilmTT to clearly articulate their needs, wants and expectations for the growth of each creative industry. If no local consultancy firm meets the criteria required, it is then that the tendering for strategic plans be opened to international consultancy firms.*

10. Achievements since incorporation

Since the incorporation of CreativeTT and its three subsidiaries in 2014 there have been numerous achievements which have improved the creative industries landscape in some manner. These included but not limited to:

a. MusicTT:

- Visibility and awareness of government commitment to the Creative sector.
- Increased capacity through training and exposure to world-class standards and measures.
- Capacity building, benchmarking with international bodies.
- Motivated stakeholders within the sector and across sectors – respect, collaboration.
- Incremental changes of mindsets for corporate and non-government stakeholders in working together.
- Industry practitioners are able to see the possibilities of economic profits towards the end of the work they propose to do because they better understand how the “Business” of the industry works and can now re-program their work output to suit.

b. FashionTT:

- Through the implementation of programmes outlined in the strategic plan for the fashion industry. These programmes provide business capacity building via local and international expertise which has translated to an increase in revenue generation and exports for participants. There has also been a noticeable improvement in the business acumen, retail distribution and sales performance of stakeholders.

- c. FilmTT: Although FilmTT was incorporated into CreativeTT in May 2015, the company had been functioning since 2006 to develop the local film industry and to attract productions to Trinidad and Tobago. Key achievements over the last 4 years:
- 2014-2015: invested approximately \$TT 600,000.00 each into three (3) T&T feature films that have gone on to play in film festivals all over the world, win awards, and attract sales agents who are working on distribution: Play the Devil (2016); The Cutlass (2016); Moving Parts (2018).
 - 2014-2015: Hosted legacy programme Secondary Schools Short Film Festival as a platform to interest teenagers in film production.
 - 2017: Through the public Call for Marketing and Development Grants, FilmTT invested \$9,000 in 9 projects each, intended to move projects in development forward.
 - 2015-2018: FilmTT provided facilitation services to more than 82 film crews who came to T&T to shoot mainly one-off episodes of series, music videos, commercials, short films, such as National Geographic, BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, HBO/Sesame Street etc. These productions hired hundreds of local production crew, cast and spent millions in T&T on services.
 - 2015-2018: Administered the Production Expenditure Incentive Rebate programme, which overall has generated over TT\$70 million in production activity since inception in 2007.
 - 2017-2018: Developed and gained Ministry approval for Strategic Plan for the Development of the Film Industry of Trinidad and Tobago. To date, this plan has not been approved by Cabinet. All FilmTT plans and projects aligned to strategic plan.
 - 2018-2019: Developed and launched new and modern brand identity to appeal to stakeholders and to better position Trinidad and Tobago to compete in international film locations business.
 - 2018-2019: Developed and launched a number of production tools to improve producer access to key information, and to improve FilmTT's operating efficiency: Production Directory, Locations Database, Production Guide, and Movie Site operating platform (first and only in the English-speaking Caribbean).
 - 2018-2019: Established working relationships with 22 key agencies to date to improve "film friendliness" of production in T&T

11. Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme

CreativeTT, through its subsidiary FashionTT partnered with the MTI, MIC Institute of Technology and Savile Row Academy, to host a one (1)-year Certificate Programme in Bespoke Tailoring, Pattern Drafting, Cutting and Fitting beginning in March 2018.

The main objective of this programme was to provide specialist skills through an intensive training programme. These skills would enable designers to progress into employment on the highest levels of tailoring and within the fashion related industries on an individual level. On a macro level, the programme was supposed to enable the tailoring sector in Trinidad and Tobago to flourish as it was now associated with a well-respected brand as Savile Row Academy. It was envisioned that this association would push Trinidad and Tobago's tailoring sector towards acceptance into global markets which would in turn spur growth within the fashion industry and increase its contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product.

CreativeTT representatives indicated that there were twenty-seven (27) persons who were enrolled at the programme from various countries and both genders. For Trinidad and Tobago participants the cost was TT \$10,000 while for non-local participants their enrolment fees were US \$10,000.⁹

Recommendations:

- ***The CreativeTT/FashionTT should add to their website, clear information on the Savile Row Academy and the Certificate Programme in Bespoke Tailoring, Pattern Drafting, Cutting and Fitting and the participants of these world renowned fashion institutes and academies to educate and advice consumers of all the skills, training and improvement programmes and to raise the awareness of the tailoring sector opportunities and possibilities.***
- ***The CreativeTT should take urgent steps to develop and implement marketing strategies to enhance the tailoring sector whereby creating employment and investment and adding to the country's Gross Domestic Product.***
- ***The CreativeTT should provide a status update on the revenue generated from the current initiatives and new initiatives taken to expand the tailoring sector revenue generating stream to Parliament no later than November 30, 2019.***

⁹ <http://www.fashiontt.co.tt/fashion-tt/projects> web accessed May 28, 2019

12. The Production Expenditure Rebate Programme¹⁰

As the country's Film Commission, FilmTT promotes Trinidad & Tobago as a location to attract all types of productions, and provides services to local and international producers. FilmTT attracts international film productions by using production incentives, primarily its Production Expenditure Rebate Programme, which offers international producers up to 35% cash back on qualifying services, and 20% cash back for hiring local labour. Local producers also benefit from the programme by receiving a flat 35% back on qualifying services and 20% cash back for hiring local labour as well. Through the Production Expenditure Rebate Programme FilmTT acts as an intermediary that connects international film producers to local production companies and fixers to manage production logistics on the ground. FilmTT has also made it a habit of promoting the use of local music, fashion and film creatives in the film productions. Because of the rebate programme offered by FilmTT, some of the movies produced and shot in Trinidad and Tobago were now available for on demand viewing on streaming sites like Amazon and many more. Through the production rebate, films productions coming into Trinidad and Tobago over the period from its inception, have contributed over TT \$15 million towards the generation of their films. While this revenue isn't earned by FilmTT, it was explained that the revenue was generated through businesses working behind the scenes in the areas of transportation, security, catering, hotel accommodation, et cetera.

¹⁰ <http://www.filmtt.co.tt/film-tt/services> web accessed May 28, 2019

Concluding Remarks

During the course of the inquiry, the Committee discovered that CreativeTT was behind in the obligation to submit their audited financial statements Parliament. At the commencement of the inquiry the last submitted financial statements for the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries were for fiscal year 2015. While assuring the Committee that it would submit its outstanding financial statements for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018, the issue of accountability to Parliament for the utilization of public funds has been weakened by the failure of CreativeTT to submit its audited financial statements in a timely manner for scrutiny. The Committee strongly encourage CreativeTT to adhere to obligation to submit their Audited Financial Statements to the Minister of Finance within four (4) months of their financial year end as stipulated in the State Enterprise Performance Monitoring Manual.

As identified by the CreativeTT the intended purpose of the proposed rationalization of the four companies was to promote greater operational cost efficiency because it was stated that none of the companies are not yet revenue generating entities, are still in the growth stage of industries and rely solely on the financial subventions of Government to conduct their affairs and effectiveness. Each company in keeping with company law requires a Board of Directors. Additionally there was a high legal compliance/audit and publishing cost framework associated with operating four such independent companies. To this extent, the Committees agrees with the contents of the rationalization paper the company submitted to its line Ministry in 2017, because if there was an improved process efficiencies through centralization of selected manpower resources and realignment with the country's current economic reality, the initiative is beneficial to the country as a whole.

While it was noted that the companies followed their tendering processes for the selection of the international consultants to develop the strategic plans for the three subsidiary companies, the costs attached to develop the plans were quite excessive. Taken into consideration the state of the economy and the present inability of the three subsidiaries to be self-sustainable, the Committee is of the view that the exorbitant fees could have been negotiated to a much lower amount.

Internal Audit was a crucial area within the various Ministries and Departments and for numerous years has been identified as a pervasive issue throughout the Public Service. CreativeTT is solely dependent on government subventions, and do not having a single person in the organisation who is qualified as a professional auditor. If there is no one capable at the company to ensure that it has the proper internal controls, monitor governance and risk management processes in place, process and control deficiencies which could have been identified earlier maybe become difficult to manage and hinder the overall operations of the company.

The Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the Parliament.

Sgd.
Mr. Wade Mark
Chairman

Sgd.
Dr. Tim Gopeesingh
Vice-Chairman

Sgd.
Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds
Member

Sgd.
Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn
Member

Sgd.
Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus
Member

Sgd.
Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly
Member

Sgd.
Ms. Amrita Deonarine
Member

**THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ENTERPRISES COMMITTEE –
FOURTH SESSION, ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT
MINUTES OF THE THIRTY- EIGHTH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY,
April 03, 2019 AT 9:56 A.M.
IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS (EAST) MEETING ROOM, LEVEL 6 AND IN
THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER
D, THE PORT OF SPAIN INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE, 1A
WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT-OF-SPAIN.**

Present were:

Mr. Wade Mark	-	Chairman
Dr. Tim Gopeesingh	-	Vice Chairman
Ms. Amrita Deonarine	-	Member
Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds	-	Member

Excused were:

Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly	-	Member
Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus	-	Member
Mr. Foster Cummings	-	Member
Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn	-	Member

Ms. Keiba Jacob	-	Secretary
Ms. Hema Bhagaloo	-	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Vanna Jankiepersad	-	Procedural Officer Intern
Mr. Darien Buckmire	-	Graduate Research Assistant
Mr. Justin Jarrette	-	Parliamentary Intern

COMMENCEMENT

- 1.1 At 9:56 a.m. the Chairman called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. Mr. Foster Cummings, Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus, Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn and Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly were excused from the meeting.

THE EXAMINATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING

- 2.1 The Committee examined the Minutes of the Thirty- Seventh (37th) Meeting held on Wednesday March 20, 2019.
- 2.2 There being no omissions or corrections, the Minutes were confirmed on a motion moved by Dr. Tim Gopeesingh and seconded by Ms. Amrita Deonarine.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING

- 3.1 With reference to item 3.5, the Chairman informed the Members that the Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited (PSAEL) requested an extension to April 16, 2019 to submit their responses to the additional questions. The deadline for the submission of the responses was April 2, 2019.
- 3.2 With reference to items 4.1 and 5.1, the Chairman reminded the Members that the Committee agreed to review the Committee's Quorum and Work Programme.
- 3.3 With reference to item 7.5, the Chairman informed the Members that questions for additional information were sent to the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited and the Ministry of Trade and Industry on March 21, 2019. The deadline for the submission of the responses is April 5, 2019.

REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S QUORUM

- 4.1 The Chairman proposed that the quorum for Committee's meeting be reduced to three (3) Members inclusive of the Chair or Vice-Chairman, with representation from each House. A discussion ensued. The Committee agreed to defer the review of the Committee's quorum at the end of the Public Hearing. No decision was made on this matter.

REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE FOURTH SESSION

- 5.1 The Chairman invited the Members to consider the updated list of Entities falling within the remit of the Committee prepared by the Secretariat.
- 5.2 The Committee agreed to add the following Entities to the approved Work Programme for the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament:
1. Caribbean Airlines Limited (CAL) – Follow-up;
 2. Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) –Follow-up;
 3. National Insurance Property Development Company Limited (NIPDEC);
 4. Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad & Tobago Limited (UDECOIT); and
 5. ExportIT.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT REPORT

- 6.1 The Chairman informed the Members that the Draft Eighteenth Report of the Committee on the Examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the Caroni (1975) Limited for the years ended June 30, 2010 to 2018 was circulated for the Committee's consideration on March 25, 2019 and invited the Members to review/make any comments and/or suggestions.
- 6.2 The Committee agreed to the following:
- The Draft Report be circulated to the Members to provide final feedback by Friday April 5, 2019;
 - Thereafter, the Report be finalised and presented at the next Sitting of the House of Representatives and Senate; and

- Dr. Tim Gopeesingh and Mr. Wade Mark will present the Reports in the House of Representative and Senate, respectively.

PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION RE: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CREATIVE INDUSTRIES COMPANY LIMITED (CREATIVETT)

- 7.1 The Chairman reminded the Members that the purpose of the meeting was to examine the Audited Financial Statements of the CreativeTT for the years 2014 and 2015 and to improve the CreativeTT’s delivery of services in an efficient, effective and economic manner.
- 7.2 The Members discussed the issues of concern and the general approach for the public hearing.
- 7.3 There being no further business for discussion *in camera*, the Chairman suspended the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CREATIVE INDUSTRIES COMPANY LIMITED (CREATIVETT)

- 8.1 The Chairman called the public meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.
- 8.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

Creative Industries Company Limited (Creative TT)

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| • Mr. Calvin Bijou | - | Chairman |
| • Mr. Rajkavir Singh | - | Director |
| • Ms. Dionne Mc Nicol Stephenson | - | Director |
| • Mr. Antonio Maharaj | - | Finance Manager (Ag.) |
| • Ms. Gina Ottley | - | Corporate Secretary |
| • Ms. Dianne O’Neil | - | Human Resource Manager |
| • Ms. Lisa Daniel | - | General Manager, Fashion TT |
| • Ms. Melissa Jimenez | - | General Manager, Music TT |

Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| • Ms. Frances Seignoret | - | Permanent Secretary (Ag.) |
| • Mr. Randall Karim | - | Director, Policy and Strategy |
| • Mrs. Susan Singh-Seerattan | - | Senior Economist |
| • Mr. Mario Romany | - | Industry Specialist |
| • Mrs. Hema Sharma | - | Project Officer |
| • Mr. Dennis Scott | - | Senior Business Analyst |

Ministry of Finance – Investments Division (MOF-ID)

- Ms. Jennifer Lutchman - Deputy Permanent Secretary
- Ms. Chintamani Sookoo - Director (Ag.)
- Ms. Kimberlene Pascall - Business Analyst (Ag.)
- Ms. Nisa Churaman - Senior Audit Analyst

8.3 Key Topics Discussed:

1. A breakdown of the subventions granted to the CreativeTT during the fiscal year 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019;
2. The status of the submission of the CreativeTT's consolidated financial statements to Parliament for the financial years ended 2016, 2017 and 2018;
3. The CreativeTT's compliance to the reporting mechanisms set out in the State Enterprise Performance Monitoring Manual;
4. The accomplishments and constraints in the operationalization of the strategic rubric established to oversee the subsidiaries the CreativeTT;
5. The reduced size of the governance structure of the Creative TT – by virtue of its Board of Directors comprising three (3) Directors as opposed to six (6);
6. The rationale for three (3) specific projects which were undertaken by the CreativeTT , that is, Decibel 2014, Value Chain Investment Programme and FashionTT Capacity Building Workshop, having an actual cost which exceeded its estimated cost;
7. The collaborative efforts made with the MII, ExporTT and InvesTT to achieve greater efficiency at the CreativeTT;
8. The foreign exchange earning capacity of the CreativeTT;
9. The CreativeTT's goal of a two percent (2%) diversification of the national Gross Domestic Product;
10. The challenge faced by the CreativeTT in its data collection integrity;
11. The absence of a Strategic Plan for the CreativeTT;
12. The timeframe for completion and implementation of a Strategic Plan for the CreativeTT;
13. The status of the Rationalisation Paper submitted to the MII in 2015 for approval;
14. The main factors which determined and justified the need to rationalize the CreativeTT and its three (3) subsidiaries Film TT, Fashion TT and Music TT into one (1) company;
15. The CreativeTT's ability to improve capacity, competency, income sustainability and economic independence of the creatives who have graduated from its development programs;
16. The CreativeTT's contribution to job creation over the last three (3) years by industry;
17. The number of fashion designers who have the capacity and competencies to meet the standards of the international fashion industry;
18. The attempts made by MusicTT to promote Soca as a distinct category of music on international music download applications;
19. The initiatives implemented by FilmTT to market and brand Trinidad and Tobago as a filming destination to international film producers and companies;

20. The efforts made to ensure that the CreativeTT's program accreditations met international industry standards;
21. The collaborative efforts made by the Creative TT, Music TT, Film TT and Fashion TT with the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) to develop new creative programs to attract and retain prospective creatives;
22. The number of students enrolled at UWI and UTT pursuing programmes relating to film, fashion and music;
23. The proposed establishment of three (3) strategically located schools across Trinidad and Tobago that will mandated to primarily aid the development and training of students in the Fashion, Film and Music fields;
24. The initiative taken by Film TT in the creation and implementation of a filming permit system which aims at generating revenue for filming done within the jurisdiction of Trinidad and Tobago;
25. MusicTT's process of subsidising the performances of musicians and artistes based on specific tiers (for instance, solos, duets, trios, bands etc.);
26. The prospect of collaborating with the Ministry of Tourism to create a live music district and other events to attract the patronage of the tourists arriving on cruise ships;
27. The number of individuals who participated in the Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme;
28. The need for the issuance of certification to the participants of the Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme;
29. The differing fees attached to the local and international participations of the Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme;
30. The creation of a Lookbook to showcase the twenty-seven (27) persons who received training under the Savile Row Bespoke Tailoring Programme;
31. The need for the CreativeTT to promote the use of local music, fashion and film personnel to the international film producers who chose Trinidad and Tobago as their film location;
32. The mechanisms in place to ensure that the designers whose work meets international standards don't lose the local aesthetic appeal of their apparel designs;
33. The interim strategies used by FashionTT to promote its work in the absence of the full operationalization of its website;
34. The efforts made to recruit an Internal Auditor;
35. The need of the CreativeTT to establish a fraud policy; and
36. The discontinuance of the practice of hiring an external body to record of Board Minutes.

Please see Verbatim Notes for the detailed oral submission by the witnesses.

- 8.4 The Chairman thanked the representatives from the Ministry of Finance – Investments Division, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the CreativeTT, members of the media and the public for their attendance.
- 8.5 The Committee agreed that additional questions for written submission should be sent to the CreativeTT and the Ministry of Trade and Industry.
[Please see Appendix 1]

ADJOURNMENT

9.1 There being no other business, the Chairman thanked the Members for their attendance and the meeting was adjourned.

9.2 The adjournment was taken at 12:33 p.m.

We certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

April 03, 2019

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED

Additional Questions arising from Meeting of the Public Accounts [Enterprises] Committee

CREATIVETT

General Questions:

1. The reasons for the estimated cost being greater than actual cost for some of the projects listed in the written submission submitted to the Committee;
2. The reasons for the actual cost being greater than estimated cost for some of the projects listed in the written submission submitted to the Committee;
3. The number of workshops and programmes initiated by the CreativeTT to harness and refine Trinidad and Tobago's upcoming musical talent to international export readiness;
4. Provide a breakdown of the twenty-seven (27) individuals who were certified for completing the Savile row Bespoke Tailoring Programme in terms of gender, nationality and cost to participate in the programme;
5. The mechanisms in place to ensure transparency in the payment of subsidies to musicians;
6. The selection process for the musicians whose performance the CreativeTT subsidized;
7. The category of musicians CreativeTT subsidises;
8. How the, growth and expansion of the Trinidad and Tobago's Music Industry would be facilitated by the development of a Live Music District?
9. Provide a status update on the recruitment of an Internal Auditor at the CreativeTT;
10. Provide a status update on the establishment and operationalization of an Fraud Policy at the CreativeTT;
11. The reasons for the use of international consultants to develop the Strategic Plans of FilmTT, FashionTT and MusicTT;
12. What was the selection process used for the international consultants;
13. The estimated timeframe for the development and implementation of an overarching Strategic Plan for CreativeTT;
14. The reasons for the termination of CreativeTT's Chief Executive Officer in 2015; and
15. Brief state the genesis, terms of engagement and person recruited by the CreativeTT to record its Board Minutes.
16. Provide a copy of the audit reports conducted by the CreativeTT for all matters that were discontinued by the Board of Directors. (For example, the payment of director recording fees, IT consulting service fees, sub-contracting fees for the position of Chief Executive Officer, finance manager etc.)
17. Provide the following information with regards to the projects listed below:
 - i. the reasons for actual cost of projects amounting to significantly less than original estimate?
 - ii. Was 100% original planned outputs and objectives achieved?

- iii. If the reason for lower actual cost is as a result of budget allocation and disbursements, how does CreativeTT determine the most efficient allocation of funds to projects?
 - 2015
 - a. Writing and Production workshop
 - b.SXSW Trade Show
 - c. T&T Fashion Week
 - 2016
 - d. Writing and Production Workshop
 - e. Local Production Facility
 - f. Value Chain Investment Program
 - g. Production Assistance and Script Develop
 - h. Film TT Strategic Plan
 - 2017
 - i. Local Production Facility
 - j. Value Chain Investment Program
 - 2018
 - k. Music Export Academy
 - l. Marketing and Distribution
18. With reference to Pg. 21 of the written submission, Q3 - answer to how creative TT ensures value for money in the PSIP projects, it was note that the team conducts a post mortem upon project completion to evaluate benefits and determine congruence of strategic objectives, state:
- how soon upon project completion is the post mortem conducted?
 - are lessons learnt documented and applied to other projects? If yes, provide examples.
 - during project execution, what was the nature of monitoring and oversight mechanisms in place?
19. In striving to achieve a target of 2% of GDP in foreign exchange in approximately 5 years, state the 10 main outputs that the CreativeTT plans to achieve to fulfill this target.

Issue: Strategic Plan

1. In the absence of a Strategic Plan:
 - What guidelines or strategic initiatives are being used by the CreativeTT to manage the operations of the Company in an efficient and effective manner?
 - How does the CreativeTT measure the performance of its Subsidiaries?
2. What are the short term objectives of the CreativeTT?
3. What were the reasons for the differentials in development costs of the Strategic Plan for FashionTT, MusicTT, and FilmTT?
4. Since their incorporation, how has the CreativeTT and its three subsidiaries each improved the creative industries landscape (Film, Music & Fashion)?
5. How have the weaknesses identified by the CreativeTT affected the company's operations?
6. How long has each weakness listed negatively affected the CreativeTT?
7. Since the identification of these weaknesses, what have been done to overcome these challenges to limit their impact on CreativeTT operations?
8. What strategies are in place to exploit the treats and opportunities of the company given the strengths and weaknesses of the company?
9. Has the CreativeTT seek advice from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) or Ministry of Finance (MOF) with regards to its funding issues and delays in receiving releases?

10. Does the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries outsource its marketing and public relations initiatives or are the marketing and public relations activities conducted in-house?

Issue: Core Functions

1. While the CreativeTT awaits approval of the Rationalisation Paper, what mechanisms were implemented to foster greater operational cost efficiency and effectiveness between the four (4) companies?
2. What mechanisms are in place to allow the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries to reposition themselves to capitalise on the changing and growing market opportunities in the creative industries?
3. When was the decision to measure the contribution of revenue and business generated from each subsidiary taken? Why wasn't this done when each subsidiary was incorporated?
4. What local and international expertise was sourced to develop the capacity building programmes?
5. What are the challenges faced by industry practitioners? What level of support was given by the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries to address the challenges experienced by the industry practitioners?
6. How many persons are earning a sustained level of income from the creative industries?
7. What is the time frame for a practitioner to profit from their work and make a sustainable living in each industry?
8. How often do the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries rebrand themselves to appeal to its stakeholders?
9. How often does each subsidiary hold stakeholder meetings? What were the consensus or issues discerned by stakeholders at the last meeting held by each subsidiary?

Issue: Core Functions – Fashion TT, Music and FilmTT

1. How much revenue was generated from these subsidiaries over the period 2014 to 2018?

Issue: Risk Management

1. In the absence of a Risk Management Plan, what information is used to assess the risk, frame strategies to minimise risk and invest in safe business opportunities?

Issue: Internal Audit

1. In the absence of an Internal Audit Unit, how are the internal controls of the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries evaluated?
2. Given that only one audit position exists on the CreativeTT's organizational structure, how adequate is this seeing that there are effectively four companies to audit?

Issue: Operating Efficiency

1. How will the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries build a creative infrastructure that will boost capacity building and competencies amongst their stakeholders?
2. How does the CreativeTT and its subsidiaries plan to gain private sector investment to further develop the creative industries?
3. How will the CreativeTT determine which PSIP investments offer greater "bang for the buck" and economies of scale?

4. What will more aggressive marketing entail if the company plans to improve its financial viability?
5. How does the CreativeTT plan to improve the retention rate of the stakeholders involved in the programmes they offer?

Issue: Administrative Expenses

1. What is the CreativeTT policy on the return of laptops and phones used by Directors to the company?
2. What accounted for \$38,548 worth of laptops and phones not being returned by Directors in 2015?
3. What methods of recovery were used by the CreativeTT to retrieve the laptops and phones from the Directors?
4. What were the reasons for the use of 'Legal fees' between the years 2014 and 2015?
5. What was the reason for sub-contracted consultant services for the following positions:

Sub-Contracted Consultant	Year 2014	Year 2015
Chief Executive Officer	\$210,000.00	\$150,000.00
Finance Manager	\$205,492	\$85,000.00
Corporate Secretary	\$309,316	\$6,650.00
Administrative Staff	\$32,445	-
Business Development Manager	-	\$45,000

6. Based on the approved organisational structure for the CreativeTT (Appendix C) - there is no position for Business Development Manager, what was the reason for the creation of this position? Was approval sought for the creation of this position from the line Ministry?

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MTI)

1. Provide a status update on the recruitment of an Internal Auditor at the CreativeTT;
2. Provide a status update on the establishment and operationalization of an Internal Fraud Policy at the CreativeTT;
3. A status update on the Rationalisation Paper submitted by the CreativeTT to the MTI in 2017?
4. What are the Ministry of Trade and Industry's concerns with the Rationalisation Paper?
5. Who authorized the CreativeTT to utilize its own funds to meet the commitments of the Rebate program?
6. Given that the MTI was written in December 2015 requesting a reimbursement of the \$499,278 expended from funds intentionally earmarked for project use, what were the reasons for the non-reimbursement of the monies to the CreativeTT?

Verbatim Notes of Meetings

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE HELD IN THE J HAMILTON MAURICE MEETING ROOM, MEZZANINE FLOOR, (IN PUBLIC), OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE PORT OF SPAIN INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE, #1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN, ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 03, 2019, AT 10.31 A.M.

PRESENT

Mr. Wade Mark	Chairman
Dr. Tim Gopeesingh	Vice-Chairman
Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds	Member
Ms. Amrita Deonarine	Member
Ms. Keiba Jacob	Secretary
Ms. Hema Bhagaloo	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Vanna Jankipersad	Procedural Officer Intern

ABSENT

Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus	Member
Mr. Foster Cummings	Member
Mrs. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn	Member
Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly	Member

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CREATIVE INDUSTRIES LIMITED (CREATIVETT)

Mr. Calvin Bijou	Chairman
Ms. Dionne Mc Nicol Stephenson	Director
Mr. Rajkavir Singh	Director
Mr. Antonio Maharaj	Finance Manager (Ag.)
Ms. Gina Ottley	Corporate Secretary
Ms. Dianne O' Neil	HR Manager
Ms. Lisa Daniel	General Manager FashionTT
Ms. Melissa Jimenez	General Manager MusicTT

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Ms. Frances Seignoret	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Mr. Randall Karim	Director of Policy and Strategy
Mrs. Susan Singh-Seerattan	Senior Economist
Mr. Dennis Scot	Senior Business Analyst
Mr. Mario Romany	Industry Specialist
Mrs. Hema Sharma	Project Officer

MINISTRY OF FINANCE - INVESTMENTS

Ms. Jennifer Lutchman	Deputy Permanent Secretary
Ms. Chintamani Sookoo	Director, Agro-based Manufacturing and Services Sector (Ag.)
Ms. Kimberlene Pascall	Business Analyst (Ag.)

Mr. Chairman: Good morning and welcome to the officials from the Ministry of Finance, Investments Division, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT) as well as members of the media and the public.

The Committee on Public Accounts, or I should repeat, the Committee that deals with public accounts and enterprises has a mandate to consider and report to the House on the following.

- (1) The audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all enterprises that are owned or controlled by or on behalf of the State;
- (2) The Auditor General's Report on any such accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements; and finally
- (3) Whether policy is carried out efficiently, effectively and economically, and whether expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it.

The purpose of this meeting of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee is to examine the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited for the years 2014 and 2015.

The Committee is desirous of hearing about the various challenges being faced by the key stakeholders at the CreativeTT in an attempt to determine some of the possible solutions to these challenges. The role of our Committee is to help the CreativeTT improve its delivery of services in an efficient, effective and economic manner.

May I advise that this meeting is being held in public and is being broadcast live on the Parliament's Channel 11 and radio 105.5 FM and the Parliament's YouTube Channel, *ParlView*. Viewers and listeners can send their comments related to today's topic through email, that is our email, parl101@ttparliament.org; [facebook.com/ttparliament](https://www.facebook.com/ttparliament); Twitter @ttparliament.

May I at this time introduce or have the members of the following committee introduce themselves. First of all, I would like to invite officials from the Investments Division to introduce themselves to be followed by officials of the Ministry of Trade and Industry to be followed by CreativeTT in that order. So can I invite the Ministry of Finance, Investments Division?

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much. At this time I would like to invite our members to introduce themselves. I may start with myself, my name is Wade Mark, Chairman. I will now ask my colleague on my far right to—

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Yes, thank you all. We have with us this morning our two able secretaries, Ms. Keiba Jacob, Ms. Hema Bhagaloo and also Ms. Vanna Jankipersad with us this morning.

At this time may I invite the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry to make a brief opening remark, a statement?

Ms. Seignoret: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I wish to thank you on behalf of the Ministry of Trade and Industry for affording us the opportunity to be part of today's deliberations of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee, specifically in terms of examining the accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited for the financial years 2014 to 2015.

The mandate of the Ministry of Trade and Industry includes expansion of non-energy exports to facilitate and attract investment, as well as to support the development of globally competitive businesses to contribute to sustainable growth and diversification of the economy. In respect of the Ministry's strategic plan for the period 2016 to 2020, this is guided by the official policy framework of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the national development strategy 2016 to 2030, more commonly referred to as Vision 2030.

And the theme for Vision 2030, "Building Globally Competitive Businesses". The creative industries sector has been identified as one providing numerous opportunities for expansion and achieving global competitiveness and consequently has been prioritized for support to ensure that firms produce high value products and services that can compete in export markets.

While the Committee is looking at the period 2014/2015, we reflected that in a December 2015 report, UNESCO, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization,

remarked that the cultural and creative industries are major drivers of the economies of developing countries and are among the most rapidly growing sectors worldwide influencing job creation, income generation and export earnings.

The creative economy outlook 2018 by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development reported that the size of the global market for the cultural and creative goods is more than doubled over recent years, having increased from US \$208 billion dollars in 2002 to \$509 billion in 2015, with developing countries performing positively in the global market.

As such, the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited is mandated to stimulate and facilitate the strategic business development and export activities of these specific sectors and we are looking forward to the recommendations coming out of this Committee that would serve to improve the operations of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited, a wholly owned state enterprise under the purview of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, charged with overseeing the operations of music, film and fashion, through its subsidiary companies; MusicTT, FashionTT and FilmTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, thank you very much. And may I now invite the Chairman of CreativeTT to make a few opening remarks?

Mr. Bijou: Thank you very much, for the— Good morning, again and thank you for the opportunity. I am Calvin Bijou, Chairman of CreativeTT, which as you may know is a wholly owned state enterprise and the parent company of three subsidiaries: Music, Film and FashionTT, which fall under the line Ministry of Ministry of Trade and Industry. Our mandate, as espoused by our PS, is to simulate and facilitate the business development and export activities of the creative industries in Trinidad and Tobago.

Just by way of sharing, as Chairman for this board, we assumed the governance mandate in November of 2016 and part of our first mandate, of course, was to ensure that we brought the audited financials which are before us, 2014 and 2015, to this august Committee. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much. You may just switch off that mike for me, thank you. May I ask the chairman if you can provide this Committee with the allocation or subvention by the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago to CreativeTT for the period 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively?

Mr. Bijou: Mr. Chair, with your permission would it be okay for me to deflect that to the Finance Manager?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, no problem.

Mr. Maharaj: Good morning, all. For the period 2016 to 2018, approximately around 60 million would have been broken down into 7 million recurrent per year, and 4 million PSIP for two years,

and 8million PSIP for one year.

Mr. Chairman: Now, what I have asked on behalf of the Committee, what was your total allocation for the year 2016, recurrent PSIP, total figure, 2016? Same for 2017, same for 2018 and for this financial fiscal year.

Mr. Maharaj: Sixteen million in 2016, around 14 million in 2017, an allocation for 2018 around 17 million, and, allocation for 2019, 14 million.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Can I direct this question to the Chairman? Can you explain to this Committee—I know that you came, as you said, in November of 2016 and we are very happy to know that we have in our possession the annual audited financial statements for 2014 and '15 respectively. Can you share and inform this Committee when will the Parliament be provided with the annual financial audited statements for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019? Well, I should not say 2019, because we are still in 2019. So 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Mr. Bijou: Well, we are very happy to report that 2016 has already gone before the auditors, and we intend to have that AGM in May for 2016. And for the fiscal periods 2017 and 2018, again we are happy to report that we have submitted management accounts, and we are hoping to close that exercise by June latest of 2019. So we intend to have up to 2018 in terms of our fiscal period, those audited financials, well in hand.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Can you indicate to this Committee what is the relationship between your company CreativeTT and the Investments Division of the Ministry of Finance in terms of your responsibilities in providing that Division with a number of important documents on a regular basis, so that they would be aware of activities surrounding CreativeTT?

Mr. Bijou: Certainly. Part of the governance process starts from a monthly set of reports which, of course, would be given in terms of the details regarding the PSIP, cash, bank reconciliations, et cetera. So there is a slew of financial reports, which in terms of the monthly rigour is in fact given to the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Chairman: Yes. What about your Minutes, your—

Mr. Bijou: Oh, and the Minutes, of course, just in total in terms of the governance structure that is submitted on a monthly basis. I think it is submitted not later than 25 days later than the period from which—of the next board meet. So that too is part of the governance structure pertaining to the reports.

Mr. Chairman: Can I ask, Mrs. Jennifer Lutchman, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance to inform this Committee whether this company, CreativeTT, has been compliant in providing all the necessary documentation as mandated under the *State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual*?

Ms. Lutchman: Mr. Chairman, I would like to confirm that CreativeTT has been providing the requisite reports to us on a regular basis. They have been providing their Board Minutes which we have been reviewing and we have been in communication with the company, and any correspondence we send to them they respond forthwith.

Mr. Chairman: Very happy to hear this. This is very good. Mr. Chairman, may I ask if you can share with this Committee, some of your accomplishments and constraints of CreativeTT in a nutshell? And then, you may commit to pen and paper and submit a more comprehensive response. But could you give us a brief summary of some of CreativeTT accomplishments as well as share with us some of your constraints?

Mr. Bijou: Certainly, Mr. Chairman. A high level summary of our accomplishments, and just to keep in focus that, of course, CreativeTT is the parent company of its three subsidiaries, music, film and fashion. Very early in our tenure we ensured that there were three very robust strategic plans for the subsidiaries, because we are in fact guided by a very strong strategic organizational framework in the execution of our initiatives.

So all three companies in fact have very robust strategic plans. Just to elaborate, FashionTT is perhaps more considerably advanced. Those strategic plans were done by a company called Sintegra. MusicTT, actually we would have had Sound Diplomacy, which is a consultant out of London, who helped us in professional collaboration of those plans. And FilmTT, a company again out of London, PS Allsburg, who helped us in the development of the FilmTT's strategy. So at the high level, ensuring that we had a very strong strategic rubric within which to operationalize our initiatives would in fact have been I think one of key accomplishments.

In addition to that, very early in our governance tenure, we embarked in April on what I consider to be a rationalization and amelioration paper which is before the line Ministry, because early recognition in terms of the economic reality of us as a country, we recognized that there were certain practices or procedures which, of course, were not very cost effective, or cost efficient. Inherent in that would have been even the very profile of having a parent company and three subsidiaries, and if I am not mistaken, I think that that early organization structure called for 69 people. We have been operating with 21 persons—I will get to some of the deficiencies after. But even very early in the game we recognized that there was an opportunity, given the downsizing in terms of our revenue as a country, to garner greater operational efficiency in having a more lean type of enterprise.

So the strategies, plans and rationalization and amelioration paper would have been put forward. We also incorporated greater rigour in terms of our governance structure among the boards. We simultaneously reduced the size of the boards of the subsidiary companies, because if

memory serves me right, I think prior to our assumption of our mandate some of those subsidiary boards had as many as seven directors—*[Interruption]*—six. Thank you, Corporate Secretary. We reduced that to three, in an effort for reasons which are obvious, to reduce board and directors fees. And we were lucky by a process of attrition, I would say, to have our own board a few months early in its tenure be reduced from 10 to seven. So we have embarked on strategic operations, we have embarked on cost reductions and lean mean operational efficiency.

Those are some of the challenges I would say to date from a governance perspective. Independently within the subsidiaries, FashionTT continues in my mind to have tremendous strategic alignment to the value that it is adding to our country, moreso because we have partnered with Fashion Institute of Technology out of New York, and more specifically in association with Prof. Vincent Quan, and we have created a value chain investment programme which we are happy to say has matriculated a lot of our designers from being green hornets in design right up now to being able to be ready in terms of what we call the global value chain investment programme.

And that simply means that we have matriculated those designers whom we have benchmarked from among other things, not being operationally efficient, not necessarily achieving their revenue targets, and we are happy to say that two and a half years/three years later, six of those designers are proudly able now to be super achieve on their targets, see greater operational efficiency. We have crafted a very unique value proposition around the type of design products that they have, which stands the test now of international scrutiny. And some of them, as a matter of fact, are now proudly boasting of being able to go into the Caricom markets and even some of the extra-regional markets.

So those are some of—music and fashion—music is probably the latest “kid on the block”. So our accomplishments there to date have not been as robust as we would like, but that is a work in progress whereas with regard to film, I think it is safe for us to say that we are now in a position, and have attracted, even over the last six months, 10 production crews which have given us—and we are very strong on metrics, and making sure that we seek to capture the return on the investment. Ten film productions who to date have yielded in the vicinity of about \$10 million in terms of spend, and this ranges from hotel nights, local crews that they have been able to attract, et cetera. So we see rich potential in terms of what we are about.

Mr. Chairman: All right. I have a number of questions I want to raise.

Mr. Bijou: Certainly.

Mr. Chairman: I will ask, Amrita Deonarine, would you like to raise a few questions? I will ask you to do that at this time.

Ms. Deonarine: Thank you, Chairman. Good morning, Mr. Chair, I am looking at pages 22 and

23, also 24 of your submission where you gave us a little bit of description of the projects that CreativeTT would have undergone over 2015 to 2018.

Mr. Bijou: All right.

Ms. Deonarine: Now, these are a lot of projects.

Mr. Bijou: They are.

Ms. Deonarine: Now, I see that there are three projects that ended up costing more than originally estimated. Could you give some details?

Mr. Bijou: Could you specifically identify which projects those are please?

Ms. Deonarine: Yes. So in 2014 we have Decibel 2014. In 2016 we have FashionTT capacity building workshop. And then in 2018 we have value chain investment programme.

Mr. Bijou: And you are seeking to get an appreciation as to the variance from actual to spend?

Ms. Deonarine: Yes.

Mr. Bijou: All right. So with regard to 2014 which, of course, preceded our tenure, I am going to ask my finance person to give a little bit of elaboration there, if that is okay?

Mr. Maharaj: Hello, good morning, yes. All right, for the FashionTT capacity building workshop, what happened in that particular line item, the money was allocated from one project to another following proper approval from the board and the Ministry of Trade and Industry in the amount of 47,472. And the same goes with Value Chain Investment Programme in the amount of 100,544. The Decibel—

Ms. Deonarine: Okay. Now a lot of these projects here, almost eight to 10 projects, their actual cost ended up being sometimes less than 50 per cent of what they we originally estimated to be. Is this an indicator of operational efficiency or is it an indicator that the initial objectives of the projects were not met or all the deliverables outlined initially were not achieved?

Mr. Bijou: I would ask if you could probably point, because part of it is the time lag in terms of not knowing what happened before. I assumed Chairmanship role in November 2016 so if perhaps you can speak to which ones in particular you are seeing the wider variances please?

Ms. Deonarine: Sure. So we have writing and production workshop in 2015. It was originally estimated to be 416,000 and then it ended up being 225,000.

Mr. Bijou: All right. Again, I am going to ask the finance because these initiatives preceded when I assumed office. So I am going to ask the finance person to give an account for that, please.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay. In the event of saving time I could submit this in writing.

Mr. Bijou: Certainly.

Ms. Deonarine: And I will ask you all to submit it to us in writing because it is almost 10 projects.

Mr. Bijou: But, I am unable to speak to it with any authority because as I said it was before I

assumed the office.

11.00 a.m.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay, certainly. I am going on to page 43 of your submissions, and under question 3 you indicated that one of the challenges experienced was—no, not one of the challenges, sorry. You indicated that you all work in tandem with sister companies exportTT and investTT. Can you explain how you all collaborate with these two entities?

Mr. Bijou: To be very specific, this is something that started happening tail end of last year and, perhaps, I should explain the philosophy. I believe that if we are to promote the CreativeTT, then part of what we should be doing is in tandem with regard to, say, Ministry of Tourism and some of the other agencies, fall under one coherent brand. So that if it is we are promoting our musicians, our designers, et cetera, that we have greater collaboration and greater efficiency of spend in terms of when we are seeking to promote and market TT. So it has begun but, primarily, I am not aware of any specific initiative. It is just a dialogue in a way to make sure that when we present Trinidad and Tobago, a brand TT, then our musicians, our creatives, our film people, are actually coming under the umbrella of brand TT. So that is where the inter-agency collaboration is intended to benefit us.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay. Thank you. Now, are you in a position to indicate the foreign exchange earning potential of the company?

Mr. Bijou: No. I cannot with empiricism speak to it. I can say, however, that what we have started to do, certainly over the last two years, would be to ensure that we have greater metrics when it is that we are doing any time of investments so that we get greater rigour around measuring the return on investments. We do have a goal and it may be, some may say a noble goal, in terms of our diversification, to ensure that we can at least start to contribute at least 2 per cent, and incrementals may be a further 2 per cent over a period of time, towards diversification of the national GDP but as yet—we are challenged as well with some of the data that we get to ensure that the fruits of what we are investing in, we are able to determine, more precisely, what the return is.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay. So during the period 2014 to 2018, no foreign exchange was earned?

Mr. Bijou: We would have earned foreign exchange, and this is not subject to empiricism because I cannot validate it but, for example, over the last six months, the 10 film crews that came in, for example—and, therefore, I am saying this based more on anecdotal than I can, empiricism—would have expended for hotel stay, transportation, meals, et cetera, hiring, but we are not fully in a position to be able to say if that was a million US dollars or two million US because gathering types of those receipts is not something that we could get from our Central Statistical Office at this point

in time.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Thank you very much, Chair. Welcome. A special welcome to all of you in this important aspect of Trinidad's economy.

Mr. Bijou: Thank you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The Permanent Secretary indicated that part of the overall focus of CreativeTT has been and will continue to be to attract investment, increase the economy, and you just mentioned the need for increasing your part or improving your part towards increasing the GDP by this industry. The first issue is you mentioned strategic goals, a strategic plan in part of the submission, I believe. Do you have a strategic plan at the moment and from what year to what year?

Mr. Bijou: We do not have a strategic plan for the parent company, Sir, but we do have three strategic plans for the subsidiary companies: music, film and fashion. Fashion runs from 2016 to 2020; film was approved last year, so that runs from 2017 to 2022; and for music, similar period, 2017 to 2022. So those are the periods for the three subsidiaries.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Appreciated. You mentioned earlier on in your preliminary statements that there is a quest for bringing all three under one umbrella. How purposeful are you in moving forward with that thought process and why you want to have—give us the justification for your thinking in bringing all these three together under one umbrella? But is it not under the umbrella of CreativeTT already? Just give us some thought on these issues.

Mr. Bijou: Yes, Sir. Certainly, Mr. Vice-Chair. When I look at the org structure or the org profile of a parent company and three subsidiaries, a key example is when we have to have audited financials done. The cost of having audited financials are per company and that is in the vicinity of about \$200,000. The parent company really is an enabler of the three subsidiaries. So, for me, a greater operational efficiency can be determined if we rationalize our amalgamated into one, because then we will be saving almost a \$1 million per annum in terms of audit fees, not to mention some of the fees that I believe would need to come out of publication of the financials once they are done, which I believe—I am not very intimate with it—I believe it is part of what may be the gazetted that you have to publish these financials. So just the cost and the audit cost of doing this exercise could very well save us in the vicinity of about \$1.2 million to \$1.5 million.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But in terms of a strategic focus to enable the development of the creative industries in Trinidad for export and for improving the economy—adding to the economy—as they are in separate silos, if you bring it under one, would that be disturbing the thrust forward?

Mr. Bijou: No. No, Sir. As a matter of fact, I dare say I think it would make it far more efficient

and, perhaps, effective. As it is technically, right now, it is really Chinese walls in terms of how the companies are incorporated that really divides us but, in practical terms, we are working as one company.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Are you going to make any recommendation to the authorities based on your thinking and your—?

Mr. Bijou: As was mentioned, a rationalization and amalgamation paper is currently before the line Ministry awaiting their consideration.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Just a few more. Your subventions of \$16 million in 2016 and up to about \$14 million in 2019—2017 was \$14 million—what percentage of that goes to salaries and how much goes to development processes?

Mr. Bijou: Okay. My understanding is, of course, there are two elements of it; one is the Public Sector Investment Programme, the PSIP, which gets a different line of Vote, if that is the correct use of language. The recurrent expenditure is in the vicinity of about \$535,000 and that is the lion's share in terms of between the salaries for the staff, utilities, rent and, of course, the board fees. So pretty much that is the arithmetic around it.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Five hundred and thirty nine?

Mr. Bijou: \$535,000, in that vicinity, per month.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Oh, per month.

Mr. Bijou: Per month.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So that is about \$6.3 million per year?

Mr. Bijou: That is about \$6.3 million and that is across all four companies.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And the rest is utilized on what areas?

Mr. Bijou: Well, the rest is inside of the PSIP for execution of the particular strategic initiatives. Those fund the strategic initiatives.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So that is a separate Vote that you have?

Mr. Bijou: That is a separate Vote.

Dr. Gopeesingh: How many jobs have you been able to create from your analysis, because part of it is to create jobs and train people for the relevant expertise development? First of all, just how many jobs basically have you created over the period let us say for the last three years or so?

Mr. Bijou: I am unable to quantify how many jobs we have been able to create. What I can add, however, is that based on the type of building capacity in our creatives, for example, again, in the FashionT'T aspect, we have seen where some of our designers have become far more independent autonomously, and are doing a lot better, notwithstanding the challenges in the economy in terms of surpassing. So we may not have been great thus far in adding new jobs, but we certainly have

created greater sustainability and economic independence amongst those creatives who have adhered to the capacity building that we are doing.

Dr. Gopeesingh: If I may, you have tremendous work going on but the issue is: How many would you say that you have developed within the various areas of the expertise that you think can withstand the test of international scrutiny as an international fashion designer, a music person with international capabilities and so on and the film industry?

Mr. Bijou: Okay. So I am going to answer specifically to fashion and then speak to the others. For example, we through our stakeholder engagement, we now have 200 interested people who are actually willing to come on board the Value Chain Investment Programme. That is just to explain. Really, if you think of it as a pyramid, there are people who say they are designers, but when we stress-test them against the international panels we bring in, they may be able to do a design, but they do not know operational efficiency. They do not know marketing, they do not know how many widgets they have sold, et cetera. The programme that we are doing here, actually, has been able to help matriculate more people now into that, and at the top of the pyramid this is where we see the best of them now being able to hold their own in terms of some of the international orders that they are receiving. Film, I cannot speak—

Dr. Gopeesingh: You think you could give a quantification as to how many personnel or organizations that have benefited from you all?

Mr. Bijou: We now have six key designers who are at the top of the pyramid, coming out of the 230-odd who would have responded at the base of the pyramid, who have matriculated based on the standards for Fashion Institute of Technology, which is of course international, from New York, in terms of being able to now be exportable. So we can now boast that the aesthetics, the type of product, the understanding of these six core designers who are at the top—many of the names probably would be known—are now truly able to hold their own on the international stage with regard to exporting based on US standards.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What about the music and film?

Mr. Bijou: Music, in all fairness, Sir, is not one at this point in time that I can speak with that type of metrics around. Film—

Dr. Gopeesingh: Can I devil with you on that issue?

Mr. Bijou: Certainly.

Dr. Gopeesingh: With the surfeit of talent that we have available in Trinidad in the music industry, how is it that your organization—I am getting the feeling—has been unable to capture and export that talent that is raw and innate in our culture in Trinidad in all its aspects of the cultural activities; why is it presenting a difficulty for you to bring that talent so that they can get

the accreditation the same way that the fashion is getting it?

Mr. Bijou: That is an excellent question. Music, perhaps, finds itself in a far more complex space and the reason for that is, a lot of the big companies—your Apple, iTunes, Spotify, et cetera—our music is still coming under world brand music. It does not have its own clear categorization as yet. It is something that we have been engaging in early dialogue with Apple so that soca, for example, can have its own category. But, right now, if you are seeking to buy music online, you would not see soca as a defined category.

Global tastes and patterns to a large extent, they would not go for something that they do not know as yet. So, first, we have to make sure we have defined that product so people understand what soca music is separate from reggae or some other genre of music in an effort to be able to really boast of the export capability that we have. It is the way that people are buying music now. So they would not buy it if they do not know it outside of Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So is there an issue also of international accreditation of our musical personalities as well before we can export these individuals or teams of musicians internationally?

Mr. Bijou: There are elements of it, but not quite in the same way as if one were to buy a robe or something. Music is driven by taste patterns to a large extent, but if I am going to buy a shirt or a dress or shoes or a handbag, I am probably going to have a different type of discernment in terms of what I am looking for. A lot of our musicians are export ready, but being able to help to make that breakthrough in the international market really means being able to lift brand TT and what soca means. And this is where to the earlier question where we could work perhaps with some of the other agencies to promote brand TT—its culture, its music, its food, et cetera—is what we are seeking to do.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Are you trying to reach out to them or do they come to you and ask you how you can help, or are you making an effort from your organization to reach them and how is that being done with the wide variety of musicians that we have? What is CreativeTT doing to harness the talent and carry them forward?

Mr. Bijou: Okay. I am going to ask my colleague if that is okay to answer that question.

Ms. Stephenson: Good morning, everyone. Thanks. I would like to just weigh in on that issue. I think one of the challenges with our music industry and corralling it in the way that we have been able to manage the fashion so far is that our music industry is actually the longest running industry in our creative industries with over 100 years history, and they have been basically doing it on their own. And so, as MusicTT, they would have developed some strategies and tactics to help those who are already on their way and to help develop those who would like to be in that path line. So, there is the Artiste Portfolio Development Programme that is run by MusicTT that seeks to lift

the standard of the artistes that are going on the export route and also the Live Music District is also to showcase those persons who are at that level.

The development programmes under MusicTT also, through the workshops, which have been collaborations with international practitioners as well, have also helped to raise the standard of those that are engaging in and interested in engaging in export and trade, because also a distinction that has to be made, I think, is those that are engaged in the music industry for cultural purposes and those that are engaged in it for trade purposes, there is a distinction.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. Would you be able to give a quantifiable estimation in your workshops and in your programmes for continued development? How many have you been able to bring forward in those areas for your workshops and your development programmes?

Ms. Stephenson: I would at this point like to invite the General Manager of MusicTT to give some more specifics on those numbers, if I may.

Ms. Jimenez: Good morning, Vice-Chair. I, myself, have only been in this position for six months. So, at this time, I would defer to submit that in writing after I have gone through the previous years' statistics.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. Thank you. Can I ask some similar questions on the film? Over a period of time, we note that there are a number of international filmmakers who have come to Trinidad and we have been very successful in one or two, a few movies. How many movies have we been successful in? In the use of Trinidad's talents, how many films have we been able to produce over the period of let us say the last five years or so?

Ms. Stephenson: Well, over the last five years there have been several productions, but FilmTT and CreativeTT have been involved in direct equity investment in three films, that is, *Play the Devil*, *Cutlass* and *Moving Parts*. We have also been able to give some marketing support to other films such as *Green Days by the River*. Many of these films are still in their commercial distribution phase. So, for instance, *Play the Devil*, *Cutlass* and *Moving Parts* are all now in the hands of international distributors and sales agents which are seeking to get them screenings in commercial theatres, et cetera, internationally.

Some of the movies are actually also available for on demand viewing on Amazon, et cetera, and we would have, through the production rebate, films coming into Trinidad and Tobago over the period from its inception, we would have contributed over TT \$15 million of revenue that would have been generated only from film production. So only because these films were on the ground being produced was that generated. These are not, of course, revenues that come into FilmTT but revenue that is generated through business through, let us say, transport and security, catering services, hotel accommodation, you know, catering, et cetera.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What positive forward-thinking initiative is being used by CreativeTT to attract international filmmakers to come to Trinidad to produce movies and films? And how do you link with the international organizations which have these film festivals and where do you position Trinidad and Tobago in these international film festivals? Two questions.

Mr. Bijou: Certainly. That is an excellent question, Mr. Vice-Chair. We have just refined, what I consider to be our unique selling proposition and this is why earlier I said that it is not confined only to us in CreativeTT, but it really should be a collaboration between Ministry of Tourism, et cetera, because when we put brand TT out there, it means, think of us—and I hate to say it and I do not mean it in a derogatory way—think of brand Jamaica. Brand Jamaica is considered to be a holistic brand. All right. So when one thinks of the destination you can think of the music, you could think of the culinary, et cetera. For example, if you happen to be in New York or even in Amsterdam, it is not uncommon to see a bus from Barbados with Barbados blazing across it. So, therefore, destination point is first what we need to make sure that we market.

To the specific question that you are asking, we have just refined our film rebate offer, and it is second only in this region to Colombia. So therefore, essentially, part of it is film is big business, but people are looking to see. There are many competing destinations so, therefore, the film rebate offers film producers the opportunity to get back elements in terms of what they invested and there is a sort of correlative measure that the more you put in, obviously, up to 35 per cent, is what you would get back which includes like using our labourers, using our gofers, using our script directors, et cetera. So we have refined the rebate offer, and how we are seeking to market it now is under a new theme called “Unseen and Unexpected”. We have just created the data sites, the location sites, et cetera, where you can shoot in Trinidad and Tobago, and we are specifically placing them in three of the top destination points in the world: Cannes, Toronto and in LA because typically for us that is where it is happening.

Last year, we collaborated, which was a zero cost to us, with South America in terms of being able to get that. Because of our proximity to South America, it is very easy for us in terms of our topography to dub either as a South American country, but because we are English speaking. So in crafting the value proposition with the rebate in making sure now that we are out in the key festivals where to a large extent there is the traffic and where there is the awareness, and we have been able to attract some of the auxiliary folks who are coming to do reality TV shows.

In January we had the Amazing Race filmed here, as a matter of fact, between Trinidad and Tobago. So, therefore, we are getting the brand out there through our product offerings, through the rebate and, more specifically, in terms of targeting the types of festivals which we believe will be able to attract the type of investment that we are looking for.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Last two or three questions from my perspective. In terms of your workshops and your training in all these three areas, how do you ensure your level of accreditation that can stand its scrutiny of international acceptability? And I am referring to, is there any tandem between your CreativeTT and let us say UTT or UWI in terms of what you are offering for development and training? Is there an accreditation process that the University of Trinidad and Tobago or UWI, you can work with them so that these entrepreneurs who become specialized in their own area on accreditation can find employment and find opportunities internationally on their own? What accreditation are you—

Mr. Bijou: I am going to ask our HR Manager, Dianne, because, as a matter of fact, we actually have some very current information with regard to utilizing the students from the University of the West Indies, et cetera, with regard to some of the programmes that they are doing which we are co-facilitating. Dianne?

Ms. O’Neil: Sure. So currently we are embarking on an initiative with UWI to have in collaboration the cultural programme and creative sector programme that they have right now, five students, as part of their term to pursue 50 to 58 hours within CreativeTT, so they can see the business of CreativeTT, the business of FashionTT, FilmTT and MusicTT. They get a hands-on experience as to what it means to be export ready, how do you fashion these persons. Once this initiative is successful—because it is a pilot project we are currently embarking upon—we will then look at the metrics of it to determine moving forward, whether we can handle more students for less and ensure that this is part of their learning, moving forward. We are also looking at this initiative with our Marketing Manager, once this is successful, to engage UTT, MIC and other institutions that offer these areas of education to our citizens.

Dr. Gopeesingh: You would be able to give a little appreciation of how many students are in training at UTT and UWI in these three areas: music, film and fashion? UTT is particularly focused on that I understand. How many students would we have coming from them to you and how many can you accommodate? I heard you mentioned something.

Ms. O’Neil: Certainly. Seeing that it is a pilot project, I cannot speak to how many students from UTT, but for UWI, we are looking at five students coming on board. Five is a solid number that we can safely accommodate within our confines of our building and based on the subsidiaries and parent company that we have.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Does your strategic plan have anything for expansion of that? Because what we are looking at is a minuscule or a miniature aspect of what is supposed to be a macro picture and we are still at the micro stage. Does the strategic plan empower or is it empowering you to move to the larger level for mass production of individuals and teams in these three areas?

Ms. Stephenson: I would like to attempt to respond to that question, Deputy Chair. I know, for instance, the film strategic plan, there is a tactic that involves partnering with, rather to reintroduce the secondary schools film programme. It was very successful over the last five years or so in introducing secondary students to the film industry to various career paths that exist. Because of funding restraints, we were not able to activate that within this last fiscal year but, certainly, it is one of the tactics that we hope to operationalize perhaps in phase three of the current strategic plan where the film industry is concerned. And I do believe that there would be similar tactics in the music strategic plan as well as the fashion strategic plan to ensure that they are aligned to a career path identified to ensure that we can keep bringing people into the industry and have them trained in that way.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Let us say the administration decides to construct three new schools or centres in Trinidad and Tobago—north, central and south—with the specific purpose of development of the talent in these three areas and have trainers and workshop facilities and ability, what would be your thinking on it?—because we are here to help you to make recommendations for carrying your process forward. Give us some thoughts on that.

11.30 a.m.

Ms. Stephenson: So, well, certainly, thank you for that, and also another agency, Government agency, state agency that we have been working closely with is the National Training Agency who have been developing vocational qualifications because many of the lines of opportunity or employment in our industries do not fall necessarily within a professional field or academic. There are many vocational opportunities, and so—

Dr. Gopeesingh: Like TVET and CVQs?

Ms. Stephenson: That is right. So the CVQs have been—we have been, even from the predecessor, which would have been the Trinidad and Tobago Entertainment Company, and CreativeTT have continued, together with the subsidiaries, have continued working with NTA to continue the development of those CVQs and in tandem with or looking at comparing them to international standards, so, for instance, film schools, whether it is script writing, development, et cetera. And so that process is ongoing, and we would say that we are welcoming any support in that area where that can continue.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Thank you all very much for answering the questions.

Ms. Stephenson: You are welcome.

Mr. Chairman: Ms. Deonarine, one final question, I understand you would like to raise, and then the hon. Hinds.

Ms. Deonarine: Thank you again, Mr.Chairman. Now, Mr.Chairman, you did indicate that in

terms of the foreign exchange earning potential of CreativeTT, you all aim to have at least 2 per cent of GDP, do you have a timeline by when you all would want to attain that 2 per cent of GDP?

Mr. Bijou: I would have liked it, and I am not being cheeky here, it should have been yesterday. Realistically, however, I am saying at least within the next five years, because there are a couple of things which we need to do; first, we need to baseline where we are in terms of how much is really being captured; secondly, to make sure that we have the type of reporting mechanisms to be able to determine where statistically we can capture that. So, we are stymied in our efforts in terms of where we would like to—what we are doing in terms of some of these strategic initiatives, but I must admit that the data collection integrity, to some extent, is where we are challenged. And, sadly speaking, it is outside of our purview to be able to, just from a resourcing point of view, handle that, but that is our strategic objective to get metrics around what the CreativeTT’s mandate should be in terms of a quantifiable contribution to the national economy.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay, thank you. I asked that because in five years, 2 per cent of GDP would mean that you would expect CreativeTT to be earning approximately US \$42 million in five years and at present you still have to do a baseline study and then begin your—well, re-enhance or enhance your data collection mechanisms. Do you have a timeline as to when the baseline targets would be set?

Mr. Bijou: Well, at this point in time we are seeking to determine, in concert with CSO, how it is that they actually go about being able to get this. But just to come back to your US \$42 million, this is the reason why the film portion of this strategy makes so much sense, and this is the reason why the rebate programme, the rebate initiative is so important. If we are successful in making sure that we position Trinidad and Tobago as a film destination where people can come and do production—yes, we have been very successful in attracting 10 and one-offs, but this is the reason why we have crafted the rebate, because if we were to get five major productions here over the next five years, chances are we could probably get in excess of US \$50 million in terms of spend, based on the average spend that those productions would do once there are films. And that is part of the strategic objective that we have. This is the reason why we are targeting the “Cannes”, the “Toronto’s”, the “LA’s”, and this is the reason why we have crafted the unique value proposition in the rebate, and this is why we are about to market under unseen and unexpected what we can represent to the rest of would. So it sounds pie in the sky, but it is not, when you look at the larger ticket items in terms of the film productions.

Ms. Deonarine: Now, my final question, you said earlier on that there were 12 film crews that came in recently—?

Mr. Bijou: Yes.

Ms. Deonarine: What exactly is the—in terms of the process on arrival, how they go about registering, and so on?

Ms. Stephenson: Thanks for that question. That falls within the ambit of the Film Commission, work of the Film Company. So the Film Commission work, basically, is that facilitation of incoming or on-the-ground productions. What we would do is we help them to go through the processes that they need to go through, so whether that is helping them clear equipment that is coming in that would be returning, whether that is getting in celebrities through the airport with particular security, whether that is getting escorts to particular locations for filming, et cetera. And coming online shortly we will be working on a permit system which would require every film that is shooting on location, whether international or local, to obtain particular permits for shooting. This is one way that we can generate some revenue, as well as capture data that is critical. And to do this we have begun working with what we have termed our “film-friendly network”, which is about 22 different agencies across Trinidad and Tobago to help us to not only develop that permit system but also to enforce, so, for instance, police, fire, coast guard.

We have already begun working closely with the coast guard in particular for a film production that would have been taking place on the peninsula down at Chaguaramas. The Port Authority recently for a VH1 production, which spent approximately US \$1 million on the ground during the Carnival season, we have been working closely with them as well. We are also keeping close connection also with the tourism authorities and the tourism Ministries, because we do believe that it takes—well, film is one of those creatures that there are many moving parts, and if you have ever looked at a credit in a film and you see how long that is, it is because it takes a lot of people to make a film happen and it is one of the reasons why it is, as the Chair referred to it, a big-ticket item. One film production at US \$10 million can do us very well.

Ms. Deonarine: Okay. Chair, one more question. Now, these film crews that are coming into Trinidad, is there a manual with guidelines as to what they can and cannot do?

Ms. Stephenson: Yes. We have a production guide and we have recently redeveloped it, refreshed it, and it is also now available online at our website, together with a locations database. So persons seeking to use Trinidad and Tobago can actually scout over 50 locations from where they are anywhere in the world, as well as an online production directory. So, if you are looking for a film crew to help your production get off the ground while you are in Timbuktu, it is possible.

Ms. Deonarine: Thank you very much.

Ms. Stephenson: You are welcome.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, please, Mr. Hinds.

Mr. Hinds: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just to get the perspective right, for the benefit of

those who might be looking on us today in the national community, your role is that of a facilitator and your critical mandate and aspect of it is really to facilitate the development of the creative sector so that it can generate more economic activity and represent a larger part of the national economy and its growth, particularly in the context of the very necessary business of diversification. Am I correct?

Mr. Bijou: Yes.

Ms. Stephenson: Correct.

Mr. Hinds: This requires constantly, big thinking, very unusually big thinking, an unusual thinking because it is normal for us human beings to run the beaten track. You obviously will be faced with many, many serious challenges, some internal to your entity, as indeed you have, in my view, wisely recognized that your four-pronged attack, CreativeTT and then three entities are not going to generate the kind of efficiency and cost saving that is necessary. It is a bad example in the context of the efficiency and the growth we are talking about. So you are dealing with that internal challenge. Obviously, there are other external challenges, how do you identify them, your three major issues? One I overheard a while ago, you said statistics, because you have no way of really measuring how you are growing, and you need support from other entities in the national community to do that. I would like you to identify for us, let us say, four of your major challenges in the context of your pursuit from CreativeTT.

Mr. Bijou: Thank you very much, member of the Committee. Certainly data integrity is the first, so data collection and data integrity. I will probably cite an example here, which again is not intended to be cheeky, we are embarking on the Live Music District, and for those of us who may not be familiar with it, the Live Music District is really a best practice in terms of music districts in a lot of the, you know, First World places. So we have concluded phase one and we are actually in phase two with regard to that, and primarily what we have been doing in phase one is that we have been subsidizing the performers when they go to the Hyatt, Smokey and Bunty's live on the Ariapita Avenue, et cetera, but we are viewed now with certain suspicion where even though in our observations, whenever we have those artistes performing in some of those private sector types, they are able to attract more patrons.

When we go now to say, "All right, we would like to wean ourselves off of paying the subsidies such that the private sector would be able to pay for them", the first question they would ask is, to some extent, "Well, we doh have the funds", and we could say, for example, "Well, we did say, during periods of when we are having them, that more patrons appear to be there", but we are viewed, to some extent, with a certain suspicion regarding revenues around that. You wanted to—

Mr. Hinds: Yeah. Just to make a short intervention here, subsidizing artistes to perform?

Mr. Bijou: Yeah.

Mr. Hinds: How does that really work, I mean, just for my own general understanding.

Mr. Bijou: Okay. I would ask my GM MusicTT, to just give an example.

Ms. Jimenez: Sen. Hinds, we have—

Mr. Hinds: In the real world how does that work?

Ms. Jimenez: Well, for us we have a subsidized system in terms of whether you are a soloist, we pay X amount of dollars; if you are a duet, a trio, so we have a tiered system in terms of what we offer. It is the artiste's responsibility now to say, "Okay, I going to Smokey and Bunty", and MusicTT is giving you this amount subsidized, it is up to them now to negotiate the rest of their time and the rest of their wages with the venues. Most of the soloists do not, some of them do, but that is up to them in terms of what they consider their value for money.

Mr. Hinds: So a company is hosting an event, and the company approaches CreativeTT to say, "We would like an artiste here, and we would like you to subsidize that artiste's presence at my function"; I am asking, is that how it works?

Mr. Bijou: No. They are all public venues, member, and what happens is that we have gathered an interest in terms of all these venues who would like to be part of the Live Music District universe.

Mr. Hinds: Oh, you are talking specifically about live music.

Mr. Bijou: Yes, for the Live Music District.

Mr. Hinds: That is right, continue. I am sorry.

Mr. Bijou: Yeah. That is what I am saying. So we give the seed capital so that the performing artist has some sort of moneys to make sure they get to and from the venue. So if they performed for, say 10 minutes, in different tiers, as my GM MusicTT just said, you are given pretty much, a little bit of a stipend but beyond that, if the audience wants you to perform because you are so good in terms of it—which is the way it works internationally, all right? But we are trying to get people weaned away from the subsidies and have, therefore, the private sector collaboration in terms of you now paying the artiste because you could go live and check, I want an R&B artist, I want a soul, I want a soca artiste for half an hour for the night, but we are not prepared and neither are we funded to pay for the entire cost of when it is they are performing. So it is intended to be a private sector/public sector collaborative effort. That is where the subsidies come in.

So data integrity, as you said, to a large extent, I think there is the opportunity for us at the inter-agency level to work far more closely, because I say this perhaps coming out of a strategic background that, you know, we do need to have greater strategic alignment, and I say this because,

to a large extent, I see the role for tourism, I see the role certainly for export, investment, et cetera, to help us in the creative sector in formulating what would be our value proposition. So that we are not operating from siloes in terms of where it is at, not to mention that is inefficient spend, as far as I am concerned. So if we could have greater strategic coherence in terms of the proposition that we are putting forward which speaks to destination, culture, tourism, industry, I think, all round, that is one of the things that we are seeking to get greater effectiveness around.

Mr. Hinds: Operating around here, and even on my way to this room this morning, I noticed, as you might have, hundreds of persons flowing out of the belly of some ship, cruise ship, and making their way into the city. Quite frankly, I worried for them, because they are going to be going there, they will find nothing. They will spend an hour or two and they will walk back to the vessel with empty hands. There is nothing to buy. There is nothing there, and this collaboration with tourism and other places, to my mind, is very critical for you in these circumstances, and there is some space around here that was established years ago, I wonder whether you would be in that kind of collaboration. Whenever these vessels are—because these people, I have noticed them since I operate around here, they leave here empty-handed, they spend nothing there, because they just walk around and watch. Is that not an opportunity for—

Mr. Bijou: That is certainly an opportunity, Sir—

Mr. Hinds:—to present something while you achieve your own agenda in terms of—

Mr. Bijou: Yes. Outside of the live music districts, I think it is important that when we—to create, to craft the tourism experience, particularly where we are fortunate to have these ships docking, this is something again at an inter-agency level that there could be greater collaboration such that the very artist, whom it is that we have triaged right up there, can in fact be performing, and however it is—

Mr. Hinds: So why is that not being done and it takes a layman like me to mention it this morning to hear that it is not yet being done? I mean, it is just very basic to me.

Mr. Bijou: Yeah. Well, you know, there is an opportunity to certainly—I could say that I would look forward to getting a little more funding and therefore we would be able to do it, because to stage these events do warrant getting them there and everything else. So incremental spend would help, but, again, recognition of the country's wider national economic situation. But, again, this is why I think inter-agency collaboration can redound to our benefit with regard to having the type of inefficiencies that we may be now experiencing.

Mr. Hinds: So we got the data integrity piece, closer collaboration, inter-agency, what else do you identify as your major—

Mr. Bijou: I would say actually those are the two neon issues, you know, the data integrity and

greater inter-agency collaboration.

Mr. Hinds: One of your programmes, I notice here, and when I learnt of it I was very, very—I was very happy about it, it was the bespoke tailoring piece. What has become of that? I recall it got started some months or so ago. Could you tell the Committee what that was about and what is the portents for that in terms of achieving your objective?

Mr. Bijou: Certainly. For those of us who may not be familiar, the Bespoke Tailoring Programme, the bespoke tailoring initiative is one that would have been undertaken and administered under FashionTT. It is intended to be the parallel to the very programme that we have with the Value Chain Investment Programme, which is done in collaboration with Fashion Institute of Technology out of New York, except in this instance here we were, in my opinion, very fortunate to have the talent of Prof. Ramroop, whose international brand on Savile Row is one where he was here to indoctrinate this programme, and it was a year, we did this in collaboration with MIC. The line Ministry was, of course, MTI and ourselves. And I am going to turn over to my GM FashionTT just to give some insights in terms of the number of students and certainly the quality of work that this programme in fact was able to achieve. So, Lisa.

Ms. Daniel: Hi everyone, again. Basically, 27 students would have been enrolled in this programme and would have completed the programme on February 28, 2019. It would have started in March 2018, so it was for a period of a year. This was a very intensive programme whereby students had to work full-time and even in the evening time to actually get through and actually learn in terms of what the key elements of ultra bespoke tailoring are. It is not normal basic tailoring here that everyone else learns in Trinidad and Tobago. What Prof. Ramroop actually brought via his Savile Row connection is a completely different level of technical expertise. So, essentially, what I would say is that now that the students have that technical expertise that will carry them, not only on a local level, regional level and international level in terms of being able to export a premium product, what FashionTT will do is that we will enrol those 27 students into our Value Chain Investment Programme. Because as the Chairman had mentioned earlier, that programme is an intensive programme as well in terms of teaching people who are in the creative industry what the core aspects of, in terms of running a business, from business plans, from dealing with your customers, from costing and pricing.

So after getting this technical skill, we are going to enrol them in this one-year programme so they are better able to run their entrepreneurship properly. And, you know, I am also pleased to say as well, a key partnership that we have within the programme is one with NEDCO. So, NEDCO provides the business mentoring, one on one, depending on your developmental stage. But what they do is that once you fulfil an assessment you will also be applicable for financing. So

I would say there is a very positive future for these students, given that they had quality technical skill, and what we will do is we will continue to work with them in terms of pushing them further.

Mr. Hinds: Okay, thank you very kindly, for the time being. Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. Thank you very much. May I follow-up on my colleague's contribution. Can you inform this Committee what was the cost of the programme that you just outlined in terms of Prof. Ramroop, and they have graduated, as you said, 27 students? What was the cost of that programme, both in terms of the actual training and the actual fees that the professor would have extracted or enjoyed?

Mr. Bijou: Thank you. First, I will speak to the aggregate amount, the aggregate spend over two fiscal periods amounted to \$4.4 million. This would have had three elements with regard to it. One of course would have been the fees, the second would have been outfitting, what we would call the tailoring laboratory to international standards, and the third, I think, would have related to some of the lease arrangements around certain of the resources that would have been used. I am going to ask Finance to give more specifics in terms of how that \$4.4 million was disaggregated.

Mr. Maharaj: \$3 million went to the Savile Row bespoke tailoring facilitator, Dr. Ramroop; \$775,000 went to rental of MIC tailoring studio, and that makes up the amount for—the actual amount is \$3.7 million, not \$4.1. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: All right. Can you share with us—I think the lady who just spoke indicated that these students, because of the skills that they were able to at least realize, internalize, will now be able to take them internationally, regionally and even nationally. Can you tell this Committee whether these students' certificates—or should I put it in another way? The programme, Mr. Chairman, that was executed, was that programme accredited in any way, or was it, for instance, a programme in which you just went through one year of rigorous training, you obtain a certificate, and that was it, or was it accredited so I can take my certificate regionally, internationally? Can you share with us?

Mr. Bijou: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As it stands right now the programme has not been accredited. Okay? I know that conversations continue to happen with our line Ministry and of course NTA, so I will deflect to our PS, probably to give an update with regard to where that situation is.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, PS, can you share with this Committee what is the state of affairs?

Ms. Seignoret: Yes. Thank you much, Mr. Chairman. As we have recently received a report from the Ministry of Education that the processes towards the final certification for all the students, that is a process that is under way. As we understand it, the last few students had work that was to be submitted for assessment and currently that exercise is currently under way, and we have been told that they are hoping to finish this process at the earliest opportunity. So we are

hopeful that this will in fact be the case.

Mr. Chairman: But Trinidad and Tobago would have spent \$3.7 million. Did a graduation exercise take place for this exercise, this programme? Did we have an exercise involving, like a closure, because this programme has ended? Were certificates issued?

Ms. Signoret: No. Certificates have not been issued because that process is in the final stages.

Mr. Chairman: But the programme has ended?

Ms. Signoret: The programme has come to an end.

Mr. Chairman: So how can these students, and so on, as was being advised a short while ago, take their skills locally, regionally and internationally? Are they going to get a letter from the Ministry of Trade and Industry or from CreativeTT, or a combination of both indicating, testifying that they have gone through this rigorous programme of training? How would I, as a graduand of this exercise, be able to market my skills and attract the kind of income I would like to attract?

Ms. Signoret: Mr. Chairman, very significant observation. We, however, are convinced that the Ministry of Education's agencies are working assiduously so that those certificates, of which you spoke, will be in the hands of the participants in as short a time as possible.

Mr. Chairman: But can you tell us, either Mr. Chairman or the Permanent Secretary, is it a normal practice for taxpayers' money to be invested in programmes that do not carry at the end of the exercise, any kind of, let us say, certification that can be used right within Trinidad and Tobago, outside of Trinidad and Tobago, whether regionally or internationally? Is that a normal practice or is this just an exceptional circumstance and we are awaiting sometime in the future, as you said, in the not-too-distant future, we will get some kind of finalization of what we have gone through, that is, the 27 participants?

Mr. Bijou: Mr. Chair, truthfully speaking, it is unfortunate that the certification process was not in place at the time of what we call the showcasing ceremony. So we were very careful not to have it called a graduation ceremony because it was without accreditation. But it does not invalidate, of course, the type of skills transfer, and, again, this may be anecdotal, but if one were to say the quality of the work that would have been showcased, it is not uncustomary sometimes in programmes to give a participatory certificate, certificate of participation until accreditation actually is formalized. So, we did not extend an accreditation certificate, that, as the PS quite rightly said, is a work in process, and we are hoping that that would be completed shortly, but a participation certificate, and it is not my understanding, it is the norm to your original question. So it is unfortunate that formal accreditation was not there.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. I think Mr. Hinds wants to raise a question and I have a couple more.

Mr. Hinds: Yeah. I am just thinking this thing through as we discuss this very important matter.

You know, a lot of citizens in this country would not understand what we mean by Savile Row, but Savile Row is regarded as the best in the world, over 100 years; how, I do not know, but I understand, I spent some time in that part of the world and I never even went to Savile Row because I understand you can get suits at phenomenal costs, custom made and all of these wonderful things. They are reputed as some of the best in the world and we are very fortunate to have had the best in the world tutor 27 of ours. What I think is missing here for me is that Trinidad and Tobago needs to become alive to the fact that we now have 27 persons who are now able to perform their skill at international standards, and, of course, the accreditation piece is critical, but the skill transfer is already consummated.

12.00 noon

In addition to this, I mean, just to think of the potential. Because we consume a lot of suits in Trinidad and Tobago, both male and female. I mean, it is obvious before my very eyes here today. [*Laughter*] For me, as a person who has been wearing suits since 1981 daily, it really has moved from the place where I could have gone to find a tailor in Barataria, Mr. Samaroo, as he used to sew for me in the 1980s, and you cannot find a tailor. So you resort to buying off the nail, and I do not look as well as you do in your Savile Row, but the point is I think we should generate some advertisement within Trinidad and Tobago, and then there is another point.

Now that I am considering what you do, and understanding better what you do at CreativeTT, I heard this morning on a radio programme—and I felt good hearing it—that two bits of music produced by a Trinidadian have been used in different films. This producer, I do not know who he is, some bit of his music was used in one film and now the same music was used in another film. So there is some great potential here.

Do we when the film crews come at your behest and with—how you termed it a while ago?—the generous concessionary arrangement. How did you name it a while ago?

Mr. Bijou: The rebate programme?

Mr. Hinds: The very attractive rebate programme, that is it. Might I thank you. Do we encourage them to look at those who we have trained before, whether it is in music or in fashion, so that in the film world they can make use of these skills that you would have created in the past?

Mr. Bijou: That is an excellent question, and this is the reason why now we are seeking to make sure that music, film and fashion are marketed from an integrated platform. So we are seeking to get in front of the respective market, to say, listen, you may be coming here for film, but how about listening to our unique genres of music so that we are able to use it? And while you are here, of course, we are seeking to outfit people from the various designers. Because the creative industry is really intended where it is working optimally, to have a really integrated and seamless

type of contribution in terms of the broader rubric of culture which could encompass our food, which could encompass as I said before, design, music, film, archives, chronology, history of our work, et cetera. So yes, that is in fact what it is we are seeking to promote before the film crews, et cetera.

Mr. Hinds: And I might express in my own limited way a small fear before I pass over to the Chairman again. He has signalled to me that we might finish around 12.15 p.m., so let me get one in. When you spoke about brand Jamaica, nobody asked what that is, somehow or the other you kind of just feel you understand it. The Bob Marleys, and I understand they have a big picture close to the airport with Bob Marley smoking something, and everybody is moving towards decriminalizing and so on, and then you think of the reggae music and that sort of thing.

My fear is, as you mentioned previously, that you take some of your designers—seven of them I think, they are now up to international standard. The visitor here does not want KFC in Port of Spain. You want something Trinbagonian. What are you doing to ensure that they do not get lost in the international pool, those seven people, trying to compete with what is out there, but were able to identify or to create things uniquely Trinbagonian or Caribbean?

Mr. Bijou: I think that is an excellent concern. One of the things that I certainly grew from when I sat in with Lisa Marie last year when we were seeking to get the cohort for the fashion value global chain, we sat in with an international panel—international panel—and this was as though they were auditioning for Project Runway. When I reached to CreativeTT they had to have on their racks five designs that they did, and when you came into the panel, the panel was absolutely clinical. They started asking questions like: What is your design aesthetic? Why do you believe that your garment compared to a garment out of China or somewhere else would be able to stand international scrutiny?

So to the question that you are asking in terms of those seven top designers, they have had to stay very true to their aesthetic in terms of what it is, so that they do not end up looking like a “me too”, because it is very easy to go to a “me too” given our relatively small size, and being able to be lost. But all of that is part of why the Value Chain Investment Programme is so much of a significant investment, because it maintains the designer integrity, it maintains a certain amount of cultural DNA which is how, if it is that we have to promote brand TT, it is not that we are looking like everybody else. That is what the programme is seeking to ensure it maintains.

Mr. Hinds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much. May I ask what mechanisms are being established to allow Trinidad and Tobago to know and to get to know the 27 persons who have graduated? What promotional programmes are being done so that people will know you have 27 persons who have

these skills, and therefore citizens of T&T who are desirous of accessing them can do so? How do we access these people?

Mr. Bijou: That is an excellent question, Mr. Chair. We are creating a Look Book. A Look Book, for want of a better word, is a digital production which allows for someone to go in on our website, and this is how we actually plan to promote the use of technology and not necessarily do it in terms of like, print anymore. You would be able, once we have completed this Look Book—and I will let Lisa Marie speak to it a little bit more—that would actually seek to identify and to promote these 27 tailors. I should add that not all of them actually are from Trinidad and Tobago.

The success of the programme, we were actually able to get people from as far as India who having had applied to London were referred to Trinidad because of the nature of Savile Row's reputation. So to me it is dual. Not only were we able to have these 27 tailors or “tailoresses”—I do not know because I see women now, I do not know if women are tailors—graduate. My thinking is that if we are equally able, not just to put out that type of skill, but probably to promote Trinidad and Tobago as a design capital by making sure that we have a pillion strategy with these international types of affiliation, then people are coming here to be trained.

When they come here they have to take probably Caribbean Airlines to come in. They have to stay in places, et cetera. They have to eat, et cetera. So the 27 tailors are actually going to be featured in this Look Book that we are putting on digitally through the website.

Mr. Chairman: Now, your website is not well-known.

Mr. Bijou: No, it is not, not yet.

Mr. Chairman: So the question here is: What other means, what other techniques would you want to suggest in the interim while you get your website properly known to the nation? What are you going to do in the interim?

Mr. Bijou: I am going to defer this to our GM Fashion, who can answer that question.

Mr. Chairman: In doing so, if you can probably put that in writing, just a brief—and then put it in writing for us.

Ms. Daniel: Within this interim period, apart from the generation of the Look Book, what we intend to do is basically, put a placement in three of the newspapers via an advertorial, which would be a nice spread. We will choose a strategic day, perhaps on a Thursday within one of the business papers, or on a Sunday, and we have a nice spread with portraits of each of the models showcasing the tailors. What we will do as well is that we will also have a small brief in terms of who the tailor is and how you would be able to contact the tailor. But I would like to say though that the Look Book is near completion, and we should basically have it done within the next two weeks. Given that our website is not properly known, our social media channels have a lot of

reach, and we will share it as well with our Ministries and our networks, the business community, the banks and magazines that we also work with. So I want to reassure you we are going to have an aggressive drive on this.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, if I and Mr. Hinds wanted to participate in that tailoring programme that was hosted, would we have had to pay or was it a free arrangement?

Mr. Bijou: There was a fee attached, Mr. Chair—I stand to be corrected. Certainly for the locals, they paid TT \$10,000. For those who came extra-regionally, they paid US \$10,000.

Mr. Chairman: Just repeat that for me.

Mr. Bijou: For the locals, they paid TT \$10,000 to participate in the year-long programme, and if you were extra-regional you paid in international currency, US \$10,000 to take part in it, so it was not for free.

Mr. Hinds: The more I hear, the more pleased I become. You know, this is so refreshing. So our local guys paid \$10,000. I mean, it is a small sum all things considered, but the fact of contributing \$10,000 to me is extremely significant. It tells me that they valued, they had an understanding and valued what was coming to them. Just as an aside, I heard you mention India a while ago. Well, Mr. Chairman, India has some of the best tailors that the world knows, and Bangladesh, and they produce a lot of fine material, cloth and so on, too. I am very happy to know that we have this bridge and I think we would do well to keep that bridge with India and Bangladesh in the context of this. I am really happy to hear that.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much, Minister Hinds. Mr. Chairman, if you can also give us a breakdown of the composition, like how many females—we do not want their names—how many males, and which countries they came from. You said some came from India. We do not know where the rest came from, so you can put it in writing for us.

Mr. Hinds: Mr. Chairman, is it that you are considering participating in bespoke tailoring?

Mr. Chairman: Well, I want to talk to you before I do it. [*Laughter*] Mr. Chairman, I want to just ask you—because we will put it in writing because we do not want to go too long again. We would like to ask you the following questions and you will put it in writing for you: What mechanisms, for example, are in place to ensure transparency in the payment of the subsidies to artistes that you mentioned? What mechanisms? How are persons identified to receive subsidies? Again, you will put that in writing. And what categories of artistes are being subsidized? Again, if you could put that in writing and submit it to us.

Mr. Bijou: Certainly.

Mr. Chairman: Now, I would like to ask the Permanent Secretary, we have been advised that a

paper on the rationalization and amalgamation of the three subsidiaries under CreativeTT would have been dispatched to the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Could you tell us, for instance and first of all, how long this paper has been in the hands of your Ministry and, secondly, how soon will it be effected or approved for that particular organization called CreativeTT? In other words, it may not be approved, it may be rejected but at least, when would a final position be communicated so that CreativeTT would know where they are going in terms of their future? Could you share with us?

Ms. Signoret: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The submission made by CreativeTT was in fact requested by the Ministry. I think it came to us in 2017.

Mr. Bijou: April 2017.

Ms. Signoret: We have looked at it; it is still under review. Primarily, one of the issues that we were concerned about at the time was—of course, you are looking to change a structure, you want to ensure that the number of staff members would not escalate to 69 or something, I think is what is catered for under the current structure. As it turns out we are really looking at a functional entity with just 21, and we take on board that there have been some challenges, resource-wise. Some of the key areas are being addressed, have continued to be addressed. Notwithstanding that the Ministry has not signed off one way or another officially on the rationalization plan, we are appreciative of the efforts and the perspectives communicated in that plan, and we are hopeful before the end of the next fiscal that that would be the outcome of the review, would be communicated.

Mr. Chairman: Before the end of this fiscal?

Ms. Signoret: We are hopeful, before the end of this fiscal.

Mr. Chairman: May I ask also the following: Madam Permanent Secretary, I am sure you are aware by now that an organization according to my count utilizing between 2016 and up to this year, at the end of this fiscal year, would have utilized just over \$16 million in terms of its allocation, does not have an internal audit, does not have a unit. Now, we know it is a very small organization in the context of the numbers. I think Chairman said at this time they probably have about 21 workers in all. But the mere fact that moneys are being spent, there is need for accountability, and there is need for an individual or an office holder with a certain degree of independence, so that they can monitor and report to you, and through you to the external auditors, and we will get proper reports coming before us.

I am not saying we are not getting proper reports. What I am saying is that in the absence of an internal auditor, all kinds of activities can occur that might be unwarranted and unnecessary. So I am asking you, as the Permanent Secretary, what steps are being taken to really address this

serious deficiency at CreativeTT?

Ms. Seignoret: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I would first have to say that the last time that our team was here at the PA(E)C this issue resonated. In respect of CreativeTT specifically, our understanding is that they are seeking to recruit someone in the position of internal auditor. We are pleased. In fact, just the most recent minutes we received this week, I see that that decision was also recorded there. So we are comforted that this is going to be done with alacrity.

We also take on board that there other tiers of oversight that have proven to be satisfactory to date, but that this specific element is going to be addressed. Based on the observations of the previous session, we have engaged our colleagues at the Ministry of Finance, and we are also looking internally with our different divisions to see how best we can address this issue. There were several elements that cropped up for consideration so we are purposely pursuing that towards resolution.

Mr. Hinds: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I am particularly pleased that you made that point because we know from our experience here that one of the biggest contributors to malpractices—and you know, sometimes not malpractices but mistakes and oversights that have the same effect—is that of weak systems, and a sure-fire sign of a weak system is the absence of an internal auditor. So I am very glad that the Chairman raised that, and I was about to raise before he raised that, I have noticed that in respect of your activity between 2014 and 2018, all but two of your projects went over budget. All but two went over budget.

I am pleased about what I heard here today. I have no funny feelings in my Caribbean belly about what I have heard here this morning. If that has to continue, and you have to continue to make the contribution that you are intending to make in this country, you know you have to run a very, very, very tight ship, even if only for the sake of being a good example to the sector that you are trying to develop. So, we are going to keep an eye on that and ensure that we budget properly and carry out the projects effectively so that we would not have this kind of record, because this is the only thing that troubles me here this morning.

In respect of your notes that the Chairman requested on our behalf in terms of the arrangements with the Live Music District, I would like to add in that note, I would like to see some kind of assurance that the Live Music District events do not result in simply a good lime, a good afternoon. I would like to see in your notes on that matter, how it is designed for and how it will achieve the growth and the expansion that you pursue as a critical part of your mandate. I am looking forward to seeing that in the notes because it could easily in Trinidad and Tobago, degenerate to an evening of fun, simpliciter. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Hinds. Mr. Chairman of CreativeTT and Madam

Permanent Secretary, on behalf of this Committee, I would like to strongly advise that you take immediate steps to have an internal auditor on board within the next four weeks at this very important body and organization, and we shall be writing you to that effect and we shall be monitoring that.

The second thing I would like to ask the CreativeTT to deal with, supervised by the Permanent Secretary, is to establish within one month a fraud policy. There is no fraud policy within the organization. You need to have that established and operationalized. That is the second thing I would like to raise.

The third thing I would like to bring to your attention is what I consider to be the exorbitant fees involved in the establishment of strategic plans for FashionTT, MusicTT and FilmTT. Now, I saw here in your submission where it cost us to establish a plan for FashionTT, some \$846,759; for MusicTT, \$804,775; and for FilmTT, \$892,305. I find those figures to be very exorbitant. Now, I know that you have brought all of your consultants from abroad, and I am wondering to what extent we could not attract local or regional talent, and this is an area that we would like your organization to consider. Because, you know, we are in difficult times and these sums are very, you know, they may not be large for many people, but they are very large for T&T at this time.

And the last thing I would like to raise on this matter has to do with the absence of a strategic plan for CreativeTT. I have seen where you have been crying out for support and you have only gotten—in 2017, you requested the sum of \$100,000, you got \$30,000. The question here is: Can you share with this Committee what time frame, along with the Permanent Secretary, would you require to ensure that CreativeTT has its strategic plan in place? Because right now you do not have, as the parent body, to look after these subsidiaries, this overarching strategic plan. Is there any time frame that you have in mind, both for you and the Permanent Secretary? Because I think your problem is that you do not have the funds to effect it. So I ask the Permanent Secretary to also come in at this time on this matter.

Ms. Signoret: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is something that is actively being addressed by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and we are hopeful within another week or so that we are able to secure the approval for some of the funds to go towards CreativeTT. That is a work in progress, but we see that time frame being within the next week.

We must note that CreativeTT last year did their due diligence, they had a tender process and they have actually come up, as I think their submission indicates, with the preferred vendor. So we are hoping that they can in fact, move forward. We are working towards that and, of course, at this point it is not possible to say definitively but it is actively being addressed, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: And could you put in writing for us what were the reasons for the termination of the Chief Executive Officer? I think that was in—was that in 2014, Sir? Or 2015? When was the Chief Executive Officer terminated? We have from your submission a Chief Executive Officer—

Ms. Stephenson: That would be 2015, Chair.

Mr. Chairman: That was in '15?

Ms. Stephenson: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Can you put in writing for us the rationale or reason for it? And I also would like to know whether the board that has now been reduced, according to what we have been advised by the Chairman, is the monthly board of directors meeting, minutes of those meetings, are they still being recorded for a fee? I was shocked to see, I think this is 2015, if I am not wrong—yes, 2015, I am seeing where a fee of \$251,000 was paid for the recording of minutes. I want to know where this came from and whether this is continuing at this organization.

Mr. Bijou: So, Mr. Chair, I can assure you that that practice has long since been discontinued; that again preceded this board. And the role of minute-keeping is that of the corporate secretary who spans the three entities. Well, four entities—well, three subsidiaries and CreativeTT as the parent company. But that practice was certainly discontinued upon our assumption to the board.

Mr. Hinds: You mean, Mr. Chairman, when you say recording, audio recording or somebody being paid to take notes? What was it?

Mr. Karim: A corp secretary.

Mr. Hinds: Say again?

Mr. Karim: Members, in 2015 and before, the company had hired a corporate secretary. So they had outsourced their corporate secretary functions to the board, to a consultant. At that time, of course the Ministry of Trade and Industry picked up on that irregularity, and as the Chairman indicated that process ceased and now the in-house corporate legal counsel is providing corporate secretarial services for the parent company subsidiaries.

12.30 p.m.

Mr. Hinds: Yes. So this \$250,000, that was totality of the payment?

Mr. Karim: Yes. Well, it would have been a monthly payment over a series of months.

Mr. Hinds: Let us get this very clear for the benefit of the public who are listening to us. You mean a monthly payment of \$250,000?

Mr. Karim: No. No. No. A monthly payment totalling.

Mr. Hinds: Totalling.

Mr. Karim: Yes.

Mr. Hinds: I would like, Mr. Chairman, at your behest, to request a bit of a report on that particular aspect of things, I would like to see that, the genesis of it.

Mr. Bijou: And just so you know, this practice preceded this board—

Mr. Hinds: I appreciate that.

Mr. Bijou:—and this chairman.

Mr. Hinds: Yes. So in that little reportage on the matter for the benefit of this Committee—

Mr. Bijou: Certainly.

Mr. Hinds:—I would like to see its genesis and I would like to see the terms, and I would like to see who and so on. I would like a comprehensive note on that.

Mr. Bijou: Certainly. It will make for very interesting reading.

Mr. Hinds: Yes. Thank you very warmly.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Hinds. Well, this item of “Information Technology Expenses” also piqued my attention and interest. Is that a practice that is still going on, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Bijou: Mr. Chair, could you be more specific? I would just like to know the time and the amount.

Mr. Chairman: Go to page 46 of your submission, and, in looking under “Information Technology Expenses” and look at item number 1.

Mr. Bijou: The Internet provider?

Mr. Chairman: The \$13,392 and—

Mr. Bijou: All those things have been discontinued. Again, that preceded this board, and some of those practices we were able, in terms of a very early audit, to ensure that we discontinued.

Mr. Chairman: So that monthly fee of \$56,000 is no—

Mr. Bijou: No longer part of what we do. All of those things were discontinued.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Mr. Chairman, there are many other questions that I would like to raise but it is 12.31 p.m. and I would not want to detain you any further.

Mr. Bijou: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Whatever questions we could not have put to you today, we shall communicate to you in writing—

Mr. Bijou: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman:—and also to the Ministry. I would like to give you the opportunity at this time, first the Permanent Secretary, to make brief closing remarks if that is an option you would like to pursue, as well as your good self, Mr. Chairman. So, Madam Permanent Secretary.

Ms. Seignoret: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the Ministry of Trade and

Industry again wishes to express its appreciation for the views, the comments, the recommendation that have emanated from the deliberations today, and, as in the past, we do take them on board and look towards resolving any issues that have been raised. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Bijou: Mr. Chair, and by extension the Committee, we just want to say thank you very much, this process has been very enriching and we certainly look forward to the type of support, pledge, in the furtherance of our mandate. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much. And I would like on behalf of our Committee to extend our thanks and appreciation to the officials of the Ministry of Finance, Investments Division, officials led by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry and, of course, your good self, Mr. Chairman in the capacity as Chairman of CreativeTT, and your officials accompanying you.

We also take this opportunity to thank the viewing public, the listening public, and generally members of the media for following these proceedings this morning into this afternoon. At this point in time if there are no further interventions, I would like to adjourn this meeting and to thank everyone for being present. This meeting is now adjourned. Thank you.

12.33 p.m.: *Meeting adjourned.*