



Public Hearing Summary
Wednesday January 16, 2019

Inquiry Subject:

The examination of the audited financial statements of the Exports Centres Company Limited (ECCL) for the period 2008 to 2011.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the meeting:

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

Witnesses who appeared:

Exports Centres Company Limited (ECCL)

• Ms. Volneitha John	-	Chairman
• Ms. Anna Thompson	-	Deputy Chairman
• Ms. Susan Narine	-	Chief Executive Officer (Interim)
• Mr. Mark Ragbir	-	Facilities Manager
• Ms. Marla Makhan	-	Board Secretary
• Ms. Sharsa David	-	Assistant Accountant

Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts

• Ms. Susan Shurland	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
• Mrs. Beverly Reid-Samuel	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.) / Director, Human Resource
• Ms. Desiree Modeste-Bascombe	-	Research Officer I

Ministry of Finance – Investments Division

• Ms. Yvette Babb	-	Director Social and Economic
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Exports Centres Company Limited (ECCL)

		Transformation (Ag.)
• Ms. Mala Mohammed	-	Senior Business Analyst (Ag.)
• Ms. Salie Ramesar	-	Business Analyst
• Ms. Margarett Edwards	-	Senior Audit Analyst

Key Topics Discussed:

1. The oversight role of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts.
2. The monitoring and oversight role of the Ministry of Finance –Investments Division.
3. The delay and status of the outstanding financial statements for the years 2012 to 2017.
4. The reduction of the subvention received by the ECCL.
5. The recent changes in the ECCL’s annual budget.
6. The mandate and relevance of the ECCL.
7. The collaboration between the ECCL and the National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO).
8. The challenges experienced by the ECCL.
9. The role of the ECCL in securing support for artisans from the NEDCO.
10. The financial constraints of the ECCL.
11. The importance of recruiting a financial accountant.
12. The high turnover of persons in executive management positions.
13. The lack of an approved updated organizational structure.
14. The number of ECCL Centres.
15. The number of business opportunities and jobs created as a result of the ECCL’s training programmes.
16. The planned expansion of ECCL activity in Tobago.
17. The potential for partnerships with other training institutions.
18. The other craft-related entities with which the ECCL has a relationship.
19. The Incubator Programme for development of artisans’ export readiness.
20. The rationale for the establishment and the closure of the ‘*Hand Made Creations TT store*’ formerly located at Gulf City Mall.
21. The establishment of a permanent craft market and the most suitable location for it.
22. The Artisans’ challenges in accessing raw materials.
23. The size and potential for the expansion of the craft market.
24. The emergence of a new kind of craft producer with entrepreneurial drive.
25. The conditions and motivating factors necessary to create successful artisans.
26. The shift in the market from purely decorative to utilitarian, purposeful craft.
27. The need to ensure artisans practice competitive pricing strategies.
28. The ECCL’s collaboration with the tourism industry stakeholders, both public and private.
29. The diversification of the types of craft being produced.
30. The important role of the ECCL’s Research Department in innovation.
31. The status of the ECCL’s Strategic Plan.
32. The status of the ECCL’s marketing strategies.
33. The ECCL’s target group.
34. The results of the ECCL’s 2008 – 2009 Tracer Study.

Exports Centres Company Limited (ECCL)

35. The need for the ECCL to expand its activities beyond training.
36. The potential need for rebranding of the Company.
37. The ECCL's planned presence at the upcoming Carifesta 2019, which is being held in Trinidad and Tobago.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube page via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4yO5CAOIqqQ>

PA(E)C Secretariat

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