



Summary of Proceedings

Public Hearing

Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs

Held on **Friday April 27, 2018**

Subject matter: An Inquiry into certain aspects of the National Insurance System of Trinidad and Tobago.

Venue: A public hearing was held on Friday April 27, 2018 from 10:25 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. at the J. Hamilton Maurice Meeting Room, Mezzanine Floor, Office of the Parliament, Tower D, The Port of Spain International Waterfront Centre, 1A Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain.

Committee Members

The following Committee Members were present:

- Ms. Sophia Chote SC (Chairman)
- Mr. Clarence Rambharat (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr. Vidya Gayadeen-Gopeesingh, MP
- Dr. Lovell Francis, MP
- Mr. Taharqa Obika
- Dr. Lester Henry

Witnesses who appeared

The following officials of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government appeared:

- Ms. Stara Ramlogan Deputy Permanent Secretary Ag.
- Ms. Julia Ramirez-Modeste Planning Officer I

The following officials of the Ministry of Health appeared:

- Dr. Vishwanath Partapsingh Chief Medical Officer

- Mr. Brian Armour County Medical Officer of Health
- Mr. Mark Mahadeo-Dookeran Public Health Inspector IV
- Mr. Beesham Seetaram Programme Administrator, External Patient Programme

The following officials of the Port of Spain City Corporation appeared:

- Mrs. Annette Stapleton Seaforth Chief Executive Officer
- Miss. Lystra Parke Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. Mitra Sooklal Public Health Inspector IV
- Mr. Dale Agarrat Transport Foreman II

The following officials of the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation appeared:

- Mr. Paul Leacock Chairman
- Mrs. Betty Ramdass-Ali Chief Executive Officer
- Ms. Nadine Ribeiro Public Health Officer

The following officials of the Chaguanas Borough Corporation appeared:

- Mr. Gopaul Boodhan His Worship the Mayor
- Mr. Raymond Seepaul Chief Executive Officer
- Dr. Neevan Sampson Principal Medical Health Officer

The following officials of the San Fernando City Corporation appeared:

- Mr. Junia Regrello His Worship the Mayor
- Mr. Indarjit Singh Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. Gerard Ramarack Sanitation Foreman III

Key Issues Discussed

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government**:

- i. The role of the Ministry in facilitating waste management and the collection of waste;
- ii. The Ministry facilitated the collection of waste by overseeing contracts between the Regional Corporations and scavenging companies;
- iii. The Ministry evaluated the contracts between the Regional Corporations and scavenging companies by analysing all feedback received from the public and Regional Corporations;
- iv. Each Regional Corporation was responsible for the procurement of their garbage collection vehicles;

- v. The preparations being made for Local Government Reform and the increased role of the Regional Corporations in solid waste management;
- vi. Reasons for the month-to-month contractual arrangement between the Corporation and scavenging companies;
- vii. The various challenges encountered with the contractual arrangements between the Regional Corporations and scavenging companies; and
- viii. The Ministry has considered giving Regional Corporations the authority to manage contracts between themselves and scavenging companies.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Ministry of Health**:

- i. The status of the Board of Survey; and
- ii. The means through which expired medicine are disposed (incineration¹).

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Port of Spain City Corporation**:

- i. The role of Regional Corporations in public health and the indiscriminate dumping of waste;
- ii. Under the Litter Act and the Public Health Ordinance, Regional Corporations have the authority to enforce the removal of waste from public, private and institutional premises;
- iii. The reasons for the non-issuance of Litter Notices over the last three years;
- iv. The Corporation was in the process of consulting with Coconut Venders by Queen's Park Savannah on the issue of waste generated by the vendors;
- v. The Corporation accesses contractors and make recommendations for non-payment based on incomplete work; and
- vi. The Corporation had little to no power to prevent drivers of waste collection vehicles from being intimidated by persons within East Port of Spain community.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation**:

- i. The Housing Development Corporation has also played a role in the collection of solid waste;
- ii. The Corporation was dissatisfied with the contractual arrangements with scavenging companies;
- iii. The TPRC has partnered with the University of the West Indies to research ways in which crumb rubber² can be used on roads in Trinidad and Tobago;
- iv. The Corporation undertook an in-house initiative to recycle and re-use tyres;

¹The destruction of something, especially waste material, by burning.

² Crumb rubber is recycled rubber produced from automotive and truck scrap tyres.

- v. The challenges faced by the TPRC in disposing of derelict vehicles;
- vi. The Corporation partnered with SWMCOL and initiated a waste recycling initiative in Trincity;
- vii. All Regional Corporations were responsible for their respective schedules for waste collection;
- viii. The collection of solid waste is an expensive service and it favours large companies who can bear the cost;
- ix. Consideration must be given to include bulk-waste in contractual arrangements between the Corporation and scavenging companies; and
- x. The Corporation partnered with various secondary schools in carrying out one of their recycling projects.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Chaguanas Borough Corporation**:

- i. The Corporation did not own any garbage collection vehicles but instead, contracted the garbage collection service to scavenging companies;
- ii. The Corporation received complaints from the public concerning the scavenging companies;
- iii. The Corporation was of the view that owning their own fleet of garbage collection vehicles would resolve the challenges faced;
- iv. The Corporation developed a policy to treat with the issue of waste generated from pluck shops; and
- v. The Corporation partnered with the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) in rolling out the iCARE project.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **San Fernando City Corporation**:

- i. There was a need for a national holistic approach to recycling where the focus could be placed on culture, education and the advantages of recycling;
- ii. There was a need for all Regional Corporations to have proper schedules for the collection of waste by scavenging companies;
- iii. There was a need for a public healthcare education programme to reduce instances of indiscriminate dumping of waste;
- iv. The 2017 National Clean-up Campaign resulted in approximately 10,000 tyres being collected and thereafter shredded by the Solid Waste Company Limited (SWMCOL);
- v. The Corporation was satisfied with the contractual arrangements with scavenging companies;
- vi. The initiatives taken by the Corporation to ensure that proper protective wear is provided to persons involved in waste collection; and

- vii. Contracts between the Corporation and scavenging companies were expired and resulted in a month-to-month arrangement.

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

<https://youtu.be/b2JqeVelTYs>

Contact the Committee's Secretary

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Committees Unit

May 01, 2018.