PAAC

PARLIAMENT
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

THIRD REPORT OF THE

THE COMMITTEE ON

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND APPROPRIATIONS

SECOND SESSION OF THE 11TH PARLIAMENT

EXAMINATION OF THE SYSTEM OF INVENTORY CONTROL WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

ORDERED TO BE PRINTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.

Public Administration and Appropriations Committee

The Public Administration and Appropriations Committee (PAAC) is established by Standing Order 102 and 92 of the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively. The Committee is mandated to consider and report to Parliament on:

(a) *the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies to ensure that expenditure is embarked upon in accordance with parliamentary approval;*

(b) *the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies as it occurs and keeps Parliament informed of how the budget allocation is being implemented; and*

(c) *the administration of Government agencies to determine hindrances to their efficiency and to make recommendations to the Government for improvement of public administration.*

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Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	Chairman
Dr. Lackram Bodoe	Vice-Chairman
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Mr. Maxie Cuffie	Member
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	Member
Mr. Clarence Rambharat	Member
Mr. Daniel Dookie	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	Member
Ms. Allyson Baksh	Member
Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir	Member

Committee Staff

The current staff members serving the Committee are:

Ms. Keiba Jacob	Secretary to the Committee
Ms. Sheranne Samuel	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Rachel Nunes	Parliamentary Intern
Mr. Brian Lucio	Parliamentary Intern

Publication

An electronic copy of this report can be found on the Parliament website using the following link:
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Members of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee

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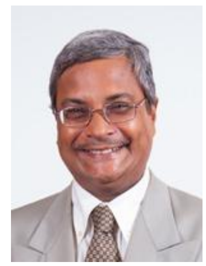
Chairman

Dr. Lackram Bodoe
Vice Chairman

Ms. Nicole Olivierre
Member



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Administration and Appropriations Committee (PAAC) is established by Standing Order (S.O.) 102 and 92 of the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively. The Committee is mandated to consider and report to Parliament on:

a) the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies to ensure that expenditure is embarked upon in accordance with parliamentary approval;

b) the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies as it occurs and keeps Parliament informed of how the budget allocation is being implemented; and

c) the administration of Government agencies to determine hindrances to their efficiency and to make recommendations to the Government for improvement of public administration.

This Report of the PAAC for the Second Session of the Eleventh Parliament contains the details of the examination of the System of Inventory Control within the Public Service and focuses on the following issues –

- Procurement and Disposal of Assets;
- Inventory Control Management;
- Policy for the Acquisition and Use of Motor Vehicles;
- Review of the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations;
- Filling Public Service Vacancies/Establishing Positions and Offices; and
- Training of Public Service Officials.

In undertaking this examination, the Committee decided to employ two (2) mechanisms: written submissions and public hearings. The Committee initially made requests for written submissions from thirty-nine (39) Ministries and Departments and consequently invited the following Ministries/Departments to a public hearing–

- Service Commissions Department (SCD);
- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries;

- Ministry of National Security;
- Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs;
- Integrity Commission; and
- Office of the Parliament.

Following the public hearing, the Committee decided that in order to address the issues related to the Inventory Control System, the views of the relevant stakeholders needed to be taken into consideration. As a result, the Committee held another public hearing incorporating the following offices and supporting officials –

- The Auditor General's Department;
- The Director of Personnel Administration, Service Commissions Department;
- The Chairman of the Public Service Commission;
- The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance;
- The Comptroller of Accounts, Ministry of Finance;
- The Director of Contracts, Central Tenders Board;
- The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration and Communications;
- The Director – Public Management Consultancy Division; and
- The Director – Public Service Academy.

In utilising this approach, the Committee was able to analyse the relationship among the various issues and hereby submits its observations and recommendations in Chapter 2.

1. INTRODUCTION

THE COMMITTEE

The PAAC of the Eleventh Republican Parliament was established by the revised Standing Orders to:

- examine current public expenditure, thereby capturing the full budget cycle by providing Parliamentary oversight of the implementation of the budget; and
- conduct a real time examination of the expenditure by Ministries and Departments.

In the 11th Parliament the Members of the Committee were appointed by resolutions of the House of Representatives and the Senate at sittings held on Friday November 13, 2015 and Tuesday November 17, 2015 respectively. However, by a subsequent Resolution of the Senate passed on December 19, 2016, Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir was appointed in lieu of Ms. Melissa Ramkissoon.

By virtue of S.O. 109(6) and 99(6) of the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively, the Chairman of the Committee is the Speaker. At its First Meeting held on January 27 2016, Dr. Lackram Bodoe was elected as the Vice-Chairman. Additionally, in order to exercise the powers granted to it by the House, the Committee was required by the Standing Orders to have a quorum. A quorum of three (3) Members, inclusive of the Chair or Vice-Chairman, with representatives from both Houses, was agreed to by the Committee at its First Meeting.

The Committee in the discharge of its Parliamentary Financial Oversight function of monitoring the implementation of the budget focused on the System of Inventory Control within Ministries and Departments across the Public Service.

METHODOLOGY

Determination of the Committee's Work Programme

At an in-camera meeting of the Committee on Wednesday November 16, 2016, it was agreed that the Committee would commence an inquiry into the System of Inventory Control within the Public Service. Based on discussions, the Committee identified two (2) possible approaches to conduct its examination:

- specific entity by entity examinations; and
- macro issues affecting Ministries and Departments.

Review of Documents

The Committee determined the examination would begin by a call for written submissions from the thirty-nine (39) Ministries and Departments to questions posed by the Committee. These Ministries and Departments were:

HEAD	MINISTRY/DEPARTMENT
01	President*
02	Auditor General
03	Judiciary*
04	Industrial Court
05	Parliament
06	Service Commissions
07	Statutory Authorities Service Commission
08	Elections and Boundaries Commission
09	Tax Appeal Board
11	Registration, Recognition and Certification Board
12	Public Service Appeal Board
13	Office of the Prime Minister
15	Tobago House of Assembly*
16	Central Administrative Services Tobago
17	Personnel Department
18	Ministry of Finance
22	Ministry of National Security
23	Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs
26	Ministry of Education*
28	Ministry of Health
30	Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development
31	Ministry of Public Administration and Communications

35	Ministry of Tourism
37	Integrity Commission
38	Environmental Commission
39	Ministry of Public Utilities
40	Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries
42	Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government
43	Ministry of Works and Transport
48	Ministry of Trade and Industry
61	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development*
62	Ministry of Community Development Culture and the Arts
64	Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS)
65	Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
67	Ministry of Planning and Development
68	Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs
75	Equal Opportunity Tribunal
77	Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries
78	Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

Questions[1] were sent on December 5, 2016 and written responses were requested to be submitted by December 20, 2017.

Implementation of the Work Programme

The Committee deliberated on the responses submitted by the thirty-nine (39) Ministries and Departments and agreed on the selection of the following entities for examination in public based on the content of the responses received:

- Service Commissions Department;
- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries;
- Ministry of National Security;
- Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs;
- Integrity Commission; and
- Office of the Parliament.

The public hearing took place on Wednesday January 25, 2017. The Committee examined each entity individually.

[1] Questions sent to the Ministries and Departments are attached at **Appendix I**.

***** The highlighted entities were excluded from the Committee's Report due to these Ministries and Departments being examined separately by the Committee. Inventory Control formed part of these inquiries.

Following the public hearing, the Committee decided that in order to address the issues related to the Inventory Control System, the views of the relevant stakeholders needed to be taken into consideration. As a result, the Committee held another public hearing on Wednesday February 8, 2017 incorporating the following offices and supporting officials –

- The Auditor General's Department;
- The Service Commissions Department;
- The Chairman of the Public Service Commission;
- The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance;
- The Comptroller of Accounts, Ministry of Finance;
- The Director of Contracts, Central Tenders Board;
- The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration and Communications;
- The Director – Public Management Consultancy Division; and
- The Director – Public Service Academy.

The Committee employed a different approach from that of the first public hearing. In the initial hearing, Ministries and Departments were examined separately. In the second hearing, the Committee examined all the stakeholders concurrently which allowed for a more cohesive and comprehensive enquiry.

<u>The Inquiry Process</u>

The Inquiry Process outlines steps taken by the Committee when conducting an inquiry into an entity or issue. The following steps outline the Inquiry process followed by the PAAC, for the examination of the System of Inventory Control within the Public Service:

I. Identification of entities to be examined;

   At a meeting held on Wednesday, November 30, 2016, the Committee agreed to examine the System of Inventory Control in the Public Service

II. The Inquiry Proposal, which outlined:

   a. Objectives of the Inquiry;
   b. Background; and
   c. Questions.

III. Questions for written responses were sent by the Committee to thirty-nine (39) Ministries and Departments on December 5, 2016.

IV. Production of an Issues Paper by the Committee based on written responses received from the thirty-nine (39) Ministries and Departments. The Issues Paper identified and summarised any matters of concern raised in the responses;

V. Determination of the need for a public hearing[2] based on the analysis of written submissions, six (6) entities were initially selected for a public hearing. The relevant witnesses were invited to attend and provide evidence.

VI. Committee decides whether the enquiry requires further investigation. In this instance, officials from nine (9) offices were invited to a subsequent public hearing to provide evidence.

VII. Report Committee's findings and recommendations to Parliament upon conclusion of the inquiry.

VIII. Present Response to any recommendations or comments addressed to a particular Ministry or Department, by the Minister with responsibility.

[2] Public hearings are information gathering mechanisms and forms part of Parliament's oversight role. Hearings are conducted to examine the operations of Ministries and Departments. At such hearings, the Committee questions witnesses (persons concerned with the agency or issue under scrutiny) in order to obtain information to make valid findings and recommendations, which addresses issues and challenges.

2. ISSUES, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT

1. Disposal of Assets

In the course of the Committee's examination, it was noted that the disposal of assets was a serious issue. In accordance with the Disposal of Unserviceable Articles Form, in order for assets to be disposed of, a request from the Ministry/Department must be sent to the Comptroller of Accounts. The Comptroller then appoints a Special Board of Survey for the respective Ministry/Department. The articles are inspected and recommendations are made to the Central Tenders Board. The Committee's analysis of this process as well as submissions from relevant stakeholders led to the conclusion that the break in procedure rested with the Comptroller of Accounts. The Central Tenders Board could not consider recommendations on unserviceable articles if a Special Board of Survey was not appointed by the Comptroller of Accounts to inspect said articles. The proclamation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act, 2015 on March 31, 2017, would revise the ways in which assets are disposed of and as a result, the Committee will continue to monitor the new system of disposal of assets.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry of Finance should, no later than six (6) months after the proclamation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act, 2015, submit a report to Parliament on the Status of the System of Disposal of Assets.***

2. Inventory Control Management

The Auditor General noted that in the course of the audit of the Public Accounts of Trinidad and Tobago, various issues related to Inventory Control were pervasive. Issues such as improper/incomplete/ lack of tagging of inventory, entries missing from the Inventory Register, Inventory Registers missing and certain articles not being found in comparison to the entries in the register were common.

Certain Ministries and Departments did not implement an electronic Inventory System due to the interpretation that they would be in breach of the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial

Regulations whereas other Ministries and Departments had both manual and electronic systems. Officials from the Auditor General's Department clarified that the Regulations require that a physical system be available for audit but that should not bar the implementation of an electronic system.

The Committee noted that there did not exist a standard policy on Inventory Control to guide Ministries and Departments. As a result, each entity would create its own policies to procure and manage its assets without having the need to adhere to a specific Inventory Control policy. The Comptroller of Accounts advised that there were initiatives to improve the Inventory Control System through the implementation of an automated inventory system under the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) which would take 3 – 5 years to implement. It was also indicated that a loan agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) had been agreed to in March 2016 to assist in the development of the IFMIS. In the interim, the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications advised that an Asset Management System was being developed by the Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and the Auditor General's Department.

Additional information submitted by the Ministry of Finance indicated that the Ministry was working towards the adoption of an International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) as part of accounting reform. The Ministry's response indicated that:

- Approval was granted in 2016 to use the IPSAS compliant format in Financial Statements. This would change the presentation of the Exchequer Account;
- In 2016, presentations were made to the Auditor General and Permanent Secretaries to inform them of the changes;
- In February 2017, training was initiated at a workshop for relevant Treasury staff in the use of the new format;
- Training for relevant Ministries and Departments was scheduled for March 2017;
- A Report on the new format was scheduled for April 2017 to be laid in the Parliament; and
- The new format was expected to be introduced for Financial Year 2017, replacing traditional format.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry of Finance should continue to ensure that the IFMIS is on track to be implemented and should submit a report to Parliament on the Status of the IFMIS by July 31, 2017;***
- ***A circular should be issued to all Ministries and Departments directing same to implement an electronic Inventory System by July 31, 2017; and***
- ***The Ministry of Public Administration and Communications should seek to ensure that the Asset Management System is ready to be implemented across the Public Service by July 31, 2017.***

3. The Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations

The Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations provides for the "*control and management of the public finances of Trinidad and Tobago; for the duties and powers of the Auditor General; for the collection, issue and payment of public moneys; for the audit of public accounts and the protection and recovery of public property; for the control of the powers of statutory bodies*"[3]. Despite being last amended in 2014, the stakeholders, including the Ministry of Finance and the Auditor General's Department agreed that the Act and accompanying Financial Regulations needed to be reviewed to complement the present-day financial climate as well as to include sanctions for public officials who are in breach of the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations.

Recommendations:

- **The Ministry of Finance should liaise with the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs to draft amendments to the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations and thereafter, introduce said amendments in Parliament by July 31, 2017. These amendments should include sanctions for public officials who are in breach of the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations in accordance with international best practice.**

[3] Exchequer and Audit Act Ch 69:01 http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/69.01.pdf

4. **<u>Public Service Vacancies/Establishment of Positions and Offices</u>**

Vacancies existed in Inventory Control positions throughout the Public Service. The Service Commissions Department has experienced significant difficulty in filling these vacant positions. According to oral evidence received, the SCD attempted to fill vacant positions but due to the constant movement of Public Service officials, positions were only filled temporarily and then reverted to being vacant. Additionally, when the SCD publish advertisements for vacant posts, the Department would be bombarded by thousands of physical applications from persons who are overqualified for the post.

The Public Management Consultancy Division of the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications advised the Committee that creating a contract position for the Public Service post was a more effective solution in filling vacancies. The Division also gave evidence that in the event that a Ministry's/Department's submission met all the requirements;

- the Renewal of Contract positions should take approximately ten (10) working days;
- the creation of new positions (simple) should take approximately twenty-three (23) working days; and
- the creation of new positions (complex) should take approximately thirty (30) working days.

According to oral evidence provided by the PMCD, delays in the process were due to Ministries and Departments not providing the requisite information needed (by PMCD) to commence the establishment of the position. Additional information provided by the PMCD indicated that in an effort to prevent Ministries and Departments from making mistakes in their requests, they have embarked upon conducting sensitisation sessions with the Board of Permanent Secretaries and the Human Resource Leaders Forum.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry of Public Administration and Communications should provide a Report to Parliament on the status of the PMCD's Sensitisation Sessions by July 31, 2017.***

- ***The Ministry of Public Administration and Communications should prepare and issue a Circular directing all Accounting Officers with pending requests at the PMCD to submit the required information to same by July 31, 2017.***

5. Training of Public Service Officials

The Public Service Academy[4] (PSA) is responsible for offering training services to Public Officers. The Committee learned that the schedule for training by the PSA would be sent to the Permanent Secretaries of all Ministries. This information is then circulated to the divisions of the Ministries and individuals are nominated for training. With respect to the System of Inventory Control, according to oral evidence given by the PSA to the Committee, the Academy provided training to public officials in the areas of Inventory Management and Accounting. Availability of training remained a pervasive issue in the Public Service and it was linked to the constant movement of Public Officials throughout the service. Officials would receive the required training for their post however they are soon after lured away by more appealing terms and conditions.

Written evidence from the Academy indicated that it could not ascertain whether the Auditor General's Department was consulted in the implementation of training programmes.

Recommendations:

The Ministry of Public Administration and Communications and the Public Service Academy should:

- ***Revise the current Inventory Management course to focus more on issues of control as identified in the Auditor General's Report by July 31, 2017;***
- ***Design additional course(s) such as Fixed Asset Management and Disposal or others as may be deemed necessary by July 31, 2017; and***
- ***Liaise with the Auditor General's Department to ensure that all Inventory Control courses are relevant and address the key issues identified in the Auditor General's Report.***

[4] Public Service Academy; Ministry of Public Administration and Communications website; accessed on February 1, 2017: http://www.mpac.gov.tt/

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

Head 02 – Auditor General

I. Proper Maintenance of Inventory Register:

- There were errors in the Inventory Register for office furniture and Information Technology equipment. The register did not specify details of the articles such as the type, brand, model, location, purchase, disposal and transfer. This shortcoming was fixed as the Register was updated to reflect the articles.

Recommendations:

- ***The Auditor General's Department should ensure that the entries in the Inventory Register reflect the physical articles at all times.***

Head 05 - Parliament

I. Based on written submission, and a public hearing at which the entity appeared, the Committee noted that:

- The Office on average spends approximately $1.5 million per year to replace equipment.

II. Proper Maintenance of Inventory Register:

- Over the period 2012 to 2013, the Auditor General reported that some air-condition units, chairs, filing cabinets, fans, photocopiers and facsimile machines located in Constituency Offices were not seen as recorded in the register. However, this was rectified and has not occurred since.

III. Tagging of the Department's inventory:

- The Office of the Parliament did not yet complete the tagging of all its inventory using the QR Code Label Printing System. The Committee was assured that tagging would be completed in approximately three (3) months.

Recommendations:

- ***The Office of the Parliament should complete the tagging of all inventory using the QR Code Label Printing System by June 30, 2017.***
- ***The Office of the Parliament should seek to reduce its expenditure for the replacement equipment.***

<u>**Head 06 - Service Commissions Department**</u>

I. Based on written submissions, and the public hearings at which the entity appeared, the Committee noted that:

- The Department was in the process of acquiring training in Stores and Inventory Management from the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications for all members of staff in the Office Management Unit.
- The Department did not have sufficient staff to adequately maintain and monitor its inventory. Additionally, Cabinet approved the transferred of a Stores Keeper from a Ministry to the SCD in 2015, however, up until the time of the examination, the Ministry refused to release the officer.
- The Department faced difficulty in filling Inventory Control vacancies due to the constant movement of Public Service officials whereby positions were filled temporarily and thereafter reverted to being vacant.

Recommendations:

- **The SCD should submit to the Committee, a Status Report on the sourcing of staff and the training of staff in the Office Management Unit by July 31, 2017.**

<u>**Head 08 - Elections and Boundaries Commission (EBC)**</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of Inventory Register:

- The officer responsible for the updating of the Inventory Register was not adequately skilled to undertake the task.

- The Department did not have sufficiently trained personnel to deal with the maintenance of the Inventory Registry.

II. Tagging of the Department's inventory:

- The Department's inventory was not adequately tagged.
- The Department utilised a system of tagging whereby the Elections and Boundaries Commission's Logo was spray painted onto the articles. The stencils used for spray painting were too large to be used on small electronic items.

Recommendations:

- ***The Department should liaise with the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications and the Public Service Academy to source the required training for the appropriate personnel.***
- ***The EBC should first research more recent and practicable tagging systems. The Department may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and work towards implementing said system.***

Head 09 - Tax Appeal Board

I. Based on the written submission, the Committee noted that:

- Given the relatively small size of the Department and the assets in their possession, the Board used a system of tagging where tape was used to tag articles.

Recommendations:

- ***Notwithstanding the relatively small size of the Department, the Board should research more recent and practicable tagging systems. The Department may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and work towards implementing said system.***

<u>Head 11 – Registration, Recognition and Certification Board</u>

I. Based on the written submission, the Committee noted that:

- The Department has sufficient personnel involved in the updating of the Inventory Register but said personnel were not adequately trained.
- The Board did not utilise any procedures to guide the process for the acquisition of motor vehicles.

II. Tagging of the Department's inventory:

- The Department's inventory was not adequately tagged.
- It could not be determined:
  - What was used to tag the items;
  - How often checks were made to ensure that all items were properly tagged;
  - How long the tagging process took; and
  - The problems encountered by the Board when tagging equipment.

Recommendations:

- ***The Department should liaise with the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications and the Public Service Academy to source the required training for the appropriate personnel.***
- ***The Board should develop and implement a Policy for the Acquisition of Motor Vehicles by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Department should provide clarification to the issues identified in II above to the Committee by July 31, 2017.***

<u>Head 12 – Public Service Appeal Board</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of Inventory Register:

- The Board did not have any personnel available to update the Inventory Register. The substantive post of Store Keeper was vacant and in an attempt to address this, the services of a contract officer were acquired. However, due to financial constraints, the contractual post was terminated.

II. Tagging of the Department's inventory:

- The Department's inventory was not adequately tagged.
- The Department utilised a system of tagging whereby self-adhesive labels were used to tagging equipment.

Recommendations:

- ***The Board should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the PMCD to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancy by June 01, 2017.***
- ***The Board should research more recent and practicable tagging systems. The Department may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and work towards implementing said system.***

<u>Head 13 - Office of the Prime Minister</u>

The Office of the Prime Minister's submission highlighted the following Divisions.

<u>Head Office</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Inventory Register was only checked when items were purchased and entries had to be made by the Administrative Officer II.
- The Office required additional staff to assist in the maintenance of the Inventory Register. As a temporary solution, the Office of the Prime Minister was seeking assistance from the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development.

II. Tagging of the Department's Inventory:

- Sixty (60) percent of the inventory were tagged.
- The Division utilised a system of tagging whereby self-adhesive labels were used to tag equipment.
- The Office did not have a system in place to monitor and make checks to ensure that items were properly tagged.

- The Department required additional personnel to assist in the tagging and monitoring of inventory.

Gender and Child Affairs

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Inventory Register used was not comprehensive and as a result, a new register was being developed.

II. Tagging of the Division's Inventory:

- Sixty (60) percent of the inventory were tagged.
- The Division utilised a system of tagging whereby self-adhesive labels were used to tag equipment.
- Quarterly checks were made to ensure that items were properly tagged.
- The Department required additional personnel to assist in the tagging of inventory.

Recommendations:

- ***Tagging of all inventory should be completed by June 30, 2017.***
- ***The Office of the Prime Minister should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the PMCD to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Divisions.***
- ***The Office of the Prime Minister needs to ensure that there is uniformity in its Divisions with respect to the monitoring and maintenance of the Inventory Registers.***
- ***The Department should research more recent and practicable tagging systems. The Department may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and work towards implementing said system. When implemented, this should be done across all the relevant Divisions.***

Head 16 – Central Administrative Services, Tobago (CAST)

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The personnel involved in the updating of the Inventory Register were not adequately trained in the area, additional staff was needed to assist in the said task as only one person was responsible for the updating of the register.
- There were no measures in place for the Inventory Register to be checked to ensure that the information was accurate and up to date. The register was only checked by external auditors.

II. Tagging of the Department's Inventory:

- The Department did not have a tagging system and thus none of the inventory was tagged.

III. Policy for the Acquisition of Motor Vehicles

- The Department had no plans to acquire motor vehicles as at the time of the inquiry. There was no policy for the Acquisition of Motor Vehicles.

Recommendations:

- ***The CAST should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Department and also to source the requisite training for staff.***
- ***An internal system to monitor and ensure that the information in the Inventory Register is accurate and up to date should be developed by June 30, 2017.***
- ***The Department should research more recent and practicable tagging systems. The Department may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and work towards implementing said system.***
- ***The Committee noted that the Department was not acquiring vehicles and as a result, did not have a policy for such. In this regard, the Committee recommends that a Policy for the Acquisition of Motor Vehicles be developed and implemented to guide the acquisition of motor vehicles in the event that the need arises.***

<u>Head 17 - Personnel Department</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Department required an Administrative Officer II and was in contact with the Service Commissions Department to assist in filling the vacancy.

II. Tagging of the Department's Inventory:

- The Department completed approximately ninety-five percent (95%) of its inventory.

Recommendations:

- ***The Personnel Department should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancy.***
- ***Tagging of all inventory should be completed by June 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 18 – Ministry of Finance</u>

I. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- There was no uniformity with respect to the method of tagging. The Department utilised paint pens and/or machine prepared seal/label makers.

II. Policy for the Acquisition of Motor Vehicles

- The Ministry of Finance did not have a policy to acquire vehicles. The Ministry was waiting on the Cabinet appointed Steering Committee, led by the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to rationalise and review policies on the acquisition, allocation, use and maintenance of Government vehicles.

III. Based on the public hearing at which the Ministry appeared, the Committee noted that:

- The Ministry of Finance had the authority to issue a Circular to all Ministries and Departments where instructions to streamline the Inventory Control System could be given. An assurance was given to the Committee that the Ministry would initiate talks on the Circular.

- Numerous Ministries and Departments faced challenges when attempting to dispose of assets. The Committee noted that the delay usually occurred at the Comptroller of Accounts. The Comptroller of Accounts and by extension, the Ministry of Finance was responsible for appointing a Special Board of Surveys which were needed in order for the Central Tenders Board to dispose of assets.

- The Ministry of Finance had the authority to call all Ministries and Departments to account for each Ministry and Department's Inventory Control System and compliance with the recommendations arising from the Auditor General's Reports.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should seek to utilise a uniform tagging system across all Divisions and supply a status update to the Committee on this initiative by June 01, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry should provide a status update to the Committee with respect to the Circular to all Ministries and Departments to streamline the Inventory Control System throughout the Public Service by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry should begin calling Ministries and Departments to have talks on their respective Inventory Control Systems and compliance with the recommendations arising from the Auditor General's Reports by June 01, 2017.***

<u>Head 22 – Ministry of National Security</u>

I. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- The Department utilised a tagging system whereby a labelling machine produced consecutive numbers which would then be stuck onto the assets.

II. Based on the public hearing at which the Ministry appeared, the Committee noted that:

- The Ministry was exploring the prospect of implementing an Electronic Inventory System but this was subject to the availability of funding. The Ministry, the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service and the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force all utilised a physical Inventory System.

III. Based on additional information provided to the Committee:

- More training needed to be done on a continuous basis in light of the high turnover of staff due to acting appointments in other Ministries and Departments, retirement and other circumstances.
- The Ministry planned to prepare desk manuals which clearly outlined the required process and procedures to be followed in carrying out the different functions for each relevant desk.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in establishing an electronic Inventory System by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry should approach the Public Service Academy to source the required training.***
- ***The Ministry should provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in creating the desk manuals by June 30, 2017***

Head 23 – Ministry of Attorney General and Legal Affairs

I. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- The Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs were previously separate Ministries. Most of the Ministry of the Attorney General's assets were tagged whereas at the Ministry of Legal Affairs, much progress was not made in tagging the assets.
- Labelling machines were used to tag inventory and as a result, problems arose when the Ministry was carrying out its checks. Information about various items could not be ascertained due to the writings on the labels erasing or becoming faded.

II. Based on the public hearing at which the Ministry appeared, the Committee noted that:

- The Ministry did not consider other tagging systems as a means to avoid the challenges faced with the system the Ministry used.
- The Ministry recommended to the Public Service Academy that staff involved in Inventory Control at the Ministry be trained in Stores Management in the Public Service. However, the Ministry advised that its staff were rarely selected to undergo training at the PSA.

III. Based on additional information provided to the Committee:

- The Ministry considered the possibility of using an updated system of tagging for inventory.

Recommendations:

- ***The Department should research more recent and practicable tagging systems. The Department may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 28 – Ministry of Health</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The persons in the Ministry were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry. Given the scope, demands and increasing expectations surrounding inventory issues, additional staff was required to further support the maintenance of the register.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- The Ministry utilised a tagging system whereby a labelling/engraving machine was used to imprint markings on inventory. Problems arose in the verification of assets when the engravings on the inventory faded and as a result, assets could not be ascertained.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Divisions and also to source the requisite training for staff.***
- ***The Ministry may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017.***

<u>Head 30 – Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register

- The persons in this department were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry.

II. Tagging of the Ministry’s Inventory:

- Not all items in the Ministry were tagged. There were instances where the physical labels were removed from the equipment or it was not properly affixed to the assets.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should approach the Public Service Academy to source the required training for staff involved in Inventory Control.***
- ***The Ministry may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017.***

<u>Head 31 – Ministry of Public Administration and Communications</u>

I. Based on the written submission, the Committee noted that:

- The Ministry did not have a formal centralised System of Inventory Control.

II. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Ministry lacked the appropriate professional/technical personnel needed for Inventory Management. As a result, Administrative Officers were carrying out the duties of a Stores Keeper.

III. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- The Ministry did not have a standard method for tagging Inventory.
- Items in the Ministry were insufficiently tagged.
- Information Technology assets were last checked in 2014.

IV. Based on the public hearing at which representatives of the Ministry appeared, the Committee noted that:

- The Ministry was undertaking a needs assessment to develop an Asset Management System. The system would be developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, Comptroller of Accounts and the Auditor General’s Department.

- The Public Service Academy under the purview of the Ministry, was bypassing numerous officials for training and failed to give reasons for this.

- Multiple Ministries and Departments experienced lengthy delays when attempting to fill vacancies and establish positions through the Public Management Consultancy Division.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on:***
    - ***the progress of the Asset Management System by June 30, 2017;***
    - ***all requests of Ministries and Departments made through the PMCD to fill vacancies and establish positions; and***
    - ***all requests for training which have been accepted and those which have been rejected and the reasons; and***
- ***All assets should be tagged by June 01, 2017.***

<u>Head 35 – Ministry of Tourism</u>

I. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:
    - The Ministry experienced delays in conducting updates due to other duties and responsibilities being undertaken by assigned personnel.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Ministry.***

<u>Head 37 – Integrity Commission</u>

I. Tagging of the Department's Inventory:
    - The Department's assets were not previously tagged. As a result, the Department undertook a project to tag all inventory commencing from January 24, 2017 to February 24, 2017.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on the progress made in the tagging of all inventory by June 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 39 – Ministry of Public Utilities</u>

I. Proper maintenance of the Inventory Register

- Owing to the relocation of the Ministry of Public Utilities in September, 2016 an inventory has not been completed for the new building located at One Alexandra Street. The inventory exercise was expected to commence mid-January, 2017 and be completed by mid-June, 2017.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- Owing to the re-alignment of the Ministry in September 2015 followed by the relocation in August — September 2016, the Ministry was in the process of updating its inventory and as such not all items were tagged. The Ministry assured that tagging of all assets would be completed by June 2017.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on:***
  - ***the progress of the inventory exercise by June 30, 2017; and***
  - ***the progress made in the tagging of all inventory by June 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 40 – Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The persons in this department were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry. Given the scope, demands and increasing expectations surrounding inventory issues, additional staff was also required to further support the maintenance of the register. However, the Ministry indicated that PMCD was reviewing its restructuring plan which would assist in sourcing the requisite staff.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- Not all items in the Ministry were tagged. There were instances where the tags fell off due to the quality of the tags.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on the progress made with respect to the restructuring plan by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017.***

Head 42 – Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The last instance in which the Register was checked for accuracy to ensure that information listed was up to date was in 2013/2014.
- The persons in this department were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry. Given the scope, demands and increasing expectations surrounding inventory issues, additional staff was also required to further support the maintenance of the register.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- Items at the Ministry were not tagged due to the computerised Asset Management System not being monitored and the contracted personnel departing the Ministry. The Ministry was working towards re-introducing the previously used system.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should introduce a schedule whereby the Inventory Register is checked monthly to ensure that information listed is up to date.***
- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Ministry and also to source the requisite training for staff and also provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017***

- ***The Ministry should provide a Status Report to the Committee on the progress made in re-introducing the computerised Asset Management System by June 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 43 – Ministry of Works and Transport</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- At the District level, persons were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry. Given the scope, demands and increasing expectations surrounding inventory issues, additional staff was also required to further support the maintenance of the register at the District Offices.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- All inventory at the Ministry's Head Office were tagged but tagging at the District level left much to be desired. The Ministry planned to begin tagging at the one hundred and six (106) District Offices in 2017.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Divisions and also to source the requisite training for staff. The Ministry should provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on the progress made in tagging all inventory at the (106) District Offices by June 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 48 – Ministry of Trade and Industry</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Inventory Management System was being upgraded to a more comprehensive Inventory System which would also include an elevation in the skills of the required personnel.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- All inventory at the Ministry were not tagged. The Ministry was in the process of completing its tagging exercise and was expected to be completed in March 2017.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on:***
  - ***the progress made in upgrading the Inventory System as well as the training of staff by June 30, 2017; and***
  - ***the progress made in the tagging of all inventory by June 30, 2017.***

Head 62 – Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts

I. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- The Ministry was in the process of conducting a review of all its assets and tagged where necessary. The Ministry utilized the Brother P-Touch machine which uses an adhesive tape for tagging. A common problem associated with this method of tagging was that the tag would constantly fall off and sometimes removed.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on their QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017.***

Head 64 – Trinidad and Tobago Police Service

I. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service was in the process of tagging appliances and furniture using either stencil spray or carving machines. The TTPS advised that the tagging system used was outdated and it was considering using its barcode system which was exclusive to Information Technology equipment, for all inventory.

Recommendations:

- ***The Department shall provide a Status Report to the Committee on the progress made in using the Barcode System as the primary means of tagging by June 30, 2017.***

<u>Head 65 – Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Ministry did not have sufficient staff to maintain the Inventory Register.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Divisions and also to source the requisite training for staff. The Ministry shall provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 31, 2017.***

<u>Head 67 – Ministry of Planning and Development</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Ministry did not have sufficient staff to maintain the Inventory Register.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- Approximately ninety percent (90%) of the Ministry's inventory were tagged.
- The adhesive label tagging system proved to be troublesome as tags fell off items or were periodically removed.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Divisions and provide a***

status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 31, 2017.

- ***The Ministry may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017.***

<u>Head 68 – Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Ministry did not have sufficient staff to maintain the Inventory Register.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- All inventory at the Ministry were not tagged. The Ministry did not identify the percentage of inventory tagged, state whether a tagging exercise was being conducted or give a completion date for tagging of inventory.

- The adhesive label tagging system proved to be troublesome as tags were easily removed.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Divisions and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry should complete the tagging of all assets by June 30, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry may wish to consult the Office of the Parliament on its QR Code Label Printing System and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 01, 2017.***

<u>Head 75 – Equal Opportunity Tribunal</u>

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The persons in this Department were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry. Given the scope, demands and increasing expectations surrounding inventory issues, additional staff was also required to further support the maintenance of the register.

Recommendations:

- ***The Department should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies and acquire training for the relevant staff in the Department and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 31, 2017.***

Head 77 – Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The Ministry did not have sufficient staff to maintain the Inventory Register.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- All inventory at the Ministry were not tagged. In the outstations, approximately eighty percent (80%) of assets were labelled and at the Head Office, approximately seventy-five percent (75%) of the assets were labelled.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should liaise with the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications to determine the most effective method to fill the vacancies throughout the Ministry inclusive of outstations and provide a status update to the Committee on the progress made in this regard by July 31, 2017.***
- ***The Ministry should complete the tagging of all assets by June 30, 2017.***

Head 78 – Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

I. Proper Maintenance of the Inventory Register:

- The persons at this Ministry were not sufficiently skilled to update the Inventory Registry.

II. Tagging of the Ministry's Inventory:

- All inventory at the Ministry were not tagged. The Ministry did not identify the percentage of inventory tagged, state whether a tagging exercise was being conducted or state a completion date for tagging of inventory.

Recommendations:

- ***The Ministry should approach the Public Service Academy to source the required training for staff involved in Inventory Control.***
- ***The Ministry should complete the tagging of all assets by June 30, 2017.***

3. CONCLUSION

During the Second Session of the Eleventh Parliament, the PAAC conducted an examination into the System of Inventory Control within the Public Service. During the course of the examination which comprised of written submissions and public hearings, the Committee discovered a number of issues with regard to Procurement and Disposal of Assets, Inventory Control Management, the lack of a Policy for the Acquisition and Use of Motor Vehicles, the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations, Public Service Vacancies/Establishing Positions and Offices and Training of Public Service officials. The Committee believes that the prevalence of these issues, hinders the efficiency, accountability and transparency of Ministries and Departments and these are matters the Committee would like to examine/investigate further.

The Committee is hopeful the adoption of its proposed recommendations will lead to greater accountability, transparency and value for money in the use of public funds and in the overall Inventory Control System within the Public Service.

This Committee respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the Parliament.

Sgd.
Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George
Chairman

Sgd.
Dr. Lackram Bodoe
Vice-Chairman

Sgd.
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy
Member

Sgd.
Ms. Nicole Olivierre
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Maxie Cuffie
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Wade Mark
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Daniel Dookie
Member

Sgd.
Ms. Allyson Baksh
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Clarence Rambharat
Member

Sgd.
Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir
Member

APPENDIX I

Questions submitted to Ministries and Departments

Concerns related to Inventory Control:

i. The Acquisition of Materials and Motor Vehicles

Questions:

1. What procedure regarding Inventory Control is currently being followed by the Department?
2. How does the Department ensure that proper procedure is always followed?
3. What measures are currently employed by the Department to ensure that value for money is always achieved during the process?

ii. Proper maintenance of the Inventory Register

Questions:

1. Who is responsible for the updating of the Inventory registry?
2. Are the persons in this department sufficiently skilled to undertake this task?
3. How often is the register checked for accuracy/to ensure information listed is up to date?
4. Are the recommendations of the Auditor General's Department taken into consideration?
5. Have errors in the register been detected by the Accounting Officer in the past? If yes, provide details on the errors detected and how they were treated with.
6. Is the register updated in time for submission to the Auditor General Department?
7. What efforts are being made by the Department to ensure that the information presented in the inventory register is always accurate?
8. Does the Department have sufficient personnel to deal with the maintenance of the inventory register? Are assigned personnel properly trained?

iii. Tagging of the Department's Inventory

Questions:

1. Are all items in the Department currently tagged?

2. What is used to tag these items?
3. How often are checks made to ensure that all items are properly tagged?
4. How long does this process take?
5. What problems are encountered by the administration department when tagging equipment, etc.?
6. Has the tagging of items helped the Department with the maintenance of the inventory register?

iv. Safeguarding Assets

Questions:

1. How does the Department ensure the security of all assets? How effective is the system used?
2. How are the State's materials and equipment stored?
3. Are sensitive materials securely stored? Provide details.
4. On average, how much is spent per year by the Department to replace equipment?

v. Omission of entries in the Register

Questions:

1. For the period 2011 - 2015, how often did the Auditor General's Department identify instances of omission at your Department?
2. What items have been omitted from the registry? What was the nature of these omissions? Why were the items omitted from the registry?
3. What steps have been taken to ensure that these mistakes do not recur?

vi. The disposal of obsolete machinery and equipment (also Motor Vehicles)

Questions:

1. In light of the proposed proclamation of the procurement legislation, what measures, if any, have been taken by your Department in preparation?
2. How often does the Department perform checks for obsolete equipment?

vii. No Policy for the Acquisition of Motor Vehicles

Questions:

1. In light of the proposed proclamation of the procurement legislation, what measures, if any, have been taken by your Department in preparation?
2. What guidelines are currently being used by the Department to guide the process for the acquisition of motor vehicles? What is the source of the authority?
3. Have these guidelines proven to be efficient and transparent thus far? Provide details/examples.
4. What problems have been experienced with the employment of these guidelines? Provide details.

APPENDIX II

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process outlines steps to be taken by the Committee when conducting an inquiry into an entity or issue. The following steps outlines the Inquiry process followed by the PAAC:

i. Identification of entities to be examined;

ii. Preparation of Inquiry Proposals for the selected entities. The Inquiry Proposal outlines:

   a. Background;

   b. Objective of Inquiry; and

   c. Proposed Questions.

iii. Consideration and approval of Inquiry Proposals by the Committee and when approved, questions are forwarded to the entity for written responses;

iv. Issue of requests for written comment from the public are made via Parliament's website, social media accounts, newspaper and advertisements;

v. Preparation of an Issues Paper by the Secretariat for the Committee's consideration, based on written responses received from the entities. The Issues Paper identifies and summarises any matters of concern in the responses provided by the entity or received from stakeholders and the general public;

vi. Review of the responses provided and the Issues Paper by the Committee;

vii. Conduct of a site visit to obtain a first-hand perspective of the implementation of a project (optional);

viii. Determination of the need for a Public Hearing based on the analysis of written submissions and the site visit (if required). If there is need for a public hearing, the relevant witnesses will be invited to attend and provide evidence. There is usually no need to examine the entity in public if:

   a. the Committee believes the issues have little public interest; or

   b. the Committee believes that the written responses provided are sufficient and no further explanation is necessary.

ix. Issue of written request to the entity for further details should the Committee require any additional information after the public hearing.

x. Report Committee's findings and recommendations to Parliament upon conclusion of the inquiry.

APPENDIX III

Minutes of Meetings

**THE PUBLIC ADMINSTRATION AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE –
SECOND SESSION, ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT**

**MINUTES OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25, 2017
AT 1:42 P.M.
IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS EAST ROOM, LEVEL 6, AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE FLOOR, TOWER D, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT,
INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE,
1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN.**

Present were:

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	-	Chairman
Dr. Lackram Bodoe	-	Vice-Chairman
Mr. Maxie Cuffie	-	Member
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	-	Member
Mr. Clarence Rambharat	-	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	-	Member
Ms. Allyson Baksh	-	Member
Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir	-	Member

Ms. Keiba Jacob	-	Secretary
Ms. Sheranne Samuel	-	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Rachel Nunes	-	Parliamentary Intern
Mr. Brian Lucio	-	Parliamentary Intern

Absent were:

Ms. Nicole Olivierre	-	Member (Excused)
Mr. Daniel Dookie	-	Member (Excused)

COMMENCEMENT

1.1 At 1:42 p.m. the Chairman called the meeting to order.

1.2 The Chairman indicated that Ms. Nicole Olivierre and Mr. Daniel Dookie asked to be excused from the meeting.

EXAMINATION OF MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING

2.1 The Committee examined the Minutes of the Sixteenth (16th) meeting held on Thursday January 12, 2017.

2.2 The following corrections were made:
- Item 6.5 (ix), page 5: the word "is" after the word "authority" was deleted;
- Item 6.5 (x), page 5: the word "for" after the word "paid" was deleted and the letter "s" in the word "state" was capitalised.

2.3 There being no further omissions or corrections, the Minutes as amended were confirmed on a motion moved by Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir and seconded by Dr. Lackram Bodoe.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING

3.1 The Chairman informed members that responses to questions on Inventory Control were received from thirty-five (35) Ministries and Departments. The responses have been uploaded to Rotunda. Submissions remained outstanding from the following Ministries and Departments, extensions were requested:
- Ministry of Health – January 26, 2017;
- Ministry of Public Utilities – January 16, 2017 (further extension requested to January 27, 2017);
- Trinidad and Tobago Police Service – January 27, 2016; and
- Judiciary – January 7, 2017 (further extension requested – January 31, 2017).

3.2 The Chairman also informed the Committee that responses to questions on Internal Audit were received from thirty-one (31) Ministries and Departments. The responses were uploaded to Rotunda. Requests for extensions were received from the following:
- Ministry of Health – February 2, 2017; and
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development – January 20, 2017; and
- Judiciary – January 31, 2017.

Submissions remained outstanding from the following Ministries and Departments, no extensions were requested:
- Ministry of Public Utilities;
- Ministry of Trade and Industry;
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs;
- Central Administrative Services (Tobago);
- Personnel Department; and
- Office of the Parliament.

3.3 The Committee agreed that all outstanding responses should be received by February 07, 2017. Ministries and Departments which still had outstanding responses after the said date would be called before the Committee at its next meeting to provide an explanation. Enquiries were to be made of the Office of the Parliament when the

Department appeared before the Committee later in the proceedings, regarding its omission.

3.4 The Chairman advised that the letter requesting written submissions from the Tobago House of Assembly was dispatched. The deadline for response was February 08, 2017.

3.5 The letter requesting written submissions from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development would be dispatched closer to the date of the inquiry.

3.6 The Judiciary Inquiry Proposal would be made available at the next meeting of the Committee.

3.7 The Chairman informed Members that responses to the First Report of the PAAC were received from twenty-one (21) of the thirty-two (32) Ministries and Departments examined by the Committee in the First session. The deadline for submission was January 16, 2017.

Requests for extensions were received from the following Ministries and Departments:

- Ministry of Health – February 09, 2017;
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development – January 26, 2017; and
- Personnel Department – (no date given)

Responses remained outstanding from the following Ministries and Departments, no extensions were requested:

- Judiciary;
- Tax Appeal Board;
- Tobago House of Assembly;
- Ministry of Attorney General and Legal Affairs;
- Ministry of Trade and Industry;
- Ministry of Planning and Development;
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs; and
- Office of the Parliament.

3.8 The Committee agreed that the response from Personnel Department should be received no later than February 03, 2017. Enquiries were to be made of the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs and the Office of the Parliament when the Ministry and Department appeared before the Committee for the public hearing. Ministries and Departments with outstanding responses by February 07, 2017 would be invited to appear before the Committee at its next meeting to provide an explanation.

3.9 The additional information requested from the Office of the President was received and would be made available to Members of the Committee.

COMMITTEE WORK SCHEDULE

4.1 The Committee made adjustments to the Work Schedule. Public hearings with the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications were scheduled for May 10, 2017 and May 24, 2017, respectively.

4.2 The examination of Internal Audit would be confined to one day – April 26, 2017.

4.3 The meeting for follow-up on Reports was rescheduled to June 14, 2017.

4.4 A suggestion was made for the establishment of a formal procedure for the adoption of the Committee's reports. The Chairman stated that feedback on the matter would be provided in early February.

PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION – EXAMINATION OF THE SYSTEM OF INVENTORY CONTROL OF THE SIX (6) MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

5.1 The Chairman asked Mr. Clarence Rambharat to recuse himself from the examination of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, given his portfolio as Minister of the said Ministry. The Member agreed.

5.2 Questions arose whether Mr. Maxie Cuffie and the Chairman should recuse themselves from the examination of the Service Commissions Department and the Office of the Parliament respectively. It was agreed that both Members may be present for the examination of the respective Departments.

5.3 The Chairman invited Members to review the Issues Paper on the system of Inventory Control based on the written submissions received from the six (6) Ministries and Departments to be examined. Leads for each Ministry and Department were identified.

5.4 There being no further business for discussion *in camera*, the Chairman suspended the meeting at 2:35 p.m., to be reconvened in public.

EXAMINATION OF THE SERVICE COMMISSIONS DEPARTMENT

6.1 The Chairman called the public meeting to order at 2:42 p.m., in the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor.

6.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

SERVICE COMMISSIONS DEPARTMENT

Ms. Anastasius Creed - Director of Personnel Administration (DPA)

Ms. Prabhawatie Maraj - Deputy Director of Personnel Administration
Ms. Allison Hughes - Director of Corporate Services
Mr. Feno Rampaul - Auditor I
Ms. Judy Seepersad - Executive Director ICT (Ag.)
Mrs. Gilliam Wilson - Office Manager
Ms. Avril Camacho - Storekeeper

6.3 The Chairman welcomed officials of the Service Commissions Department (SCD), members of the media and the public and gave an explanation for the observance of "Orange the World".

6.4 The Chairman outlined the mandate of the Committee and the purpose of the hearing. Introductions were then exchanged.

6.5 The following issues arose from the examination with officials of the Service Commissions Department:

- The steps taken to address the staff shortage in the Department;
- The initiatives to improve the Inventory Control System;
- The legislation prohibiting the implementation of proper Inventory Control measures;
- The mechanisms in place to distinguish between fraud and error;
- The training of staff and the various measures being undertaken by the SCD to increase productivity and accountability;
- The impact of upgrading the security systems of the SCD;
- The measures being taken to stem the SCD's vulnerability given scarce resources;
- The organisational structure required to establish a Procurement Unit by March 31, 2017;
- The problems faced by the DPA in filling the necessary vacancies within the SCD;
- The procedure to dispose/liquidate assets to recover state resources; and
- The recommendations to assist the SCD in performing its duties and functions as it relates to the system of Inventory Control.

6.6 The Chairman thanked officials of the Service Commissions Department and they were excused.

6.7 The meeting was suspended at 3:30 p.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES

7.1 The Chairman resumed the public meeting at 3:34 p.m.

7.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LAND AND FISHERIES

Mrs. Angela Siew	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Mr. John Lewis	-	ICT Director
Ms. Catherine Ingrid Duncan	-	Administrative Officer V
Ms. Sandra Ramoutar	-	Administrative Officer IV
Mr. Alliston Walters	-	Auditor II
Mr. Terrance Moore	-	Fleet Manager

7.3 The Chairman welcomed the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and introductions were exchanged.

7.4 The following issues arose from the examination with the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries:

- The measures being taken by the Ministry to address the problem of understaffing;
- The various units responsible for Inventory Management Control and the number of persons involved in Inventory Control;
- The mechanisms in place to protect items and assets not monitored by cameras;
- The instances of stolen items/fraudulent activities;
- The status of the Ministry's preparation in light of the impending proclamation of the Procurement Act;
- The use of informal guidelines for the acquisition of motor vehicles;
- The manner in which the Procurement Officer safeguards assets to ensure that said assets are being used for the purpose intended;
- The process for inviting selected suppliers to bid and the use of the three quote system;
- The status of the Tenders Committee;
- The role of the Accounting Officer in selecting suppliers of goods and services;
- The mechanisms in place to protect assets such as fuel;
- The Ministry's breach of Financial Regulations 55 (Stores) with respect to the non-tagging of items;
- The plans to tag items such as furniture which is not presently tagged;
- The policy to make disposed items available to persons who may require them i.e. farmers; and
- The recommendations to assist the Ministry in performing its duties and functions as it relates to the system of Inventory Control.

7.5 The Chairman thanked officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and they were excused.

7.6 The meeting was suspended at 4:18 p.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

8.1 The Chairman resumed the public meeting at 4:21 p.m.

8.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Ms. Lydia Jacobs	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.) (Accounting Officer)
Mr. Vel Lewis	-	Permanent Secretary
Ms. June Thomas	-	Director Finance and Accounts
Ms. Ann Heeraman	-	Administrative Officer
Col. Patrick Gomez	-	Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF)
Ms. Marilyn Mc Donald	-	Prison Supervisor (Ag.), Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service
Mr. Robert Williams	-	Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS) Representative
Mr. Dale Prescott	-	I.T. Manager
Ms. Shalisha Mohammed	-	Internal Auditor

8.3 The Chairman welcomed the officials of the Ministry of National Security and introductions were exchanged.

8.4 The following issues arose from the examination with the officials of the Ministry of National Security:

- The time frame for establishing an electronic tagging system;
- The Inventory Control Management of the TTDF and the TTFS;
- The policy to determine when a vehicle is obsolete by the Ministry, TTDF, TTFS and the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service;
- The disposal activity for vehicles within the Ministry, Trinidad and Tobago Prisons Service, TTFS and TTDF;
- The maintenance programmes in place to extend the life of motor vehicles;
- The average age of the Ministry’s motor vehicles;
- The mechanisms enforced to ensure that confidential documents such as passports are safeguarded;
- The loss of the 2012-2015 Inventory Register;
- The size and competency of the Office Management Unit;
- The policy to acquire motor vehicles as opposed to actual firefighting vehicles and machinery; and
- The storage and safeguarding or arms and ammunition by the TTDF.

8.5 The Chairman thanked officials of the Ministry of National Security and they were excused.

8.6 The meeting was suspended at 4:58 p.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

9.1 The Chairman resumed the public meeting at 5:01 p.m.

9.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Ingrid Seerattan	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ms. Nataki Atiba-Dilchan	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Mr. Edwin St. John	-	Auditor II (Ag.)
Ms. Helaine Boodoosingh	-	Administrative Officer V
Ms. Kamini Dookoo	-	Administrative Officer IV
Ms. Lena Bridgelal	-	Administrative Officer II (Ag.)
Mr. Neil Ramrattan	-	Administrative Officer II

9.3 The Chairman welcomed the officials of the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs and introductions were exchanged.

9.4 The following issues arose from the examination with the officials of the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs:

- The non-submission of the Ministerial Response to the PAAC's First Report;
- The factors contributing to the high staff turnover at the Ministry and measures to combat the issue;
- The measures to ensure a smooth transition to the new procurement regime;
- The steps taken to reduce expenditure on replacing equipment;
- The measures taken to reduce the yearly cost of repairs and maintenance;
- The mechanisms to determine whether missing items are as a result of fraud or error;
- The measures taken to reduce training costs; and
- The process of disseminating knowledge gained from training.

9.5 The Chairman thanked officials of the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs and they were excused.

9.6 The meeting was suspended at 5:28 p.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSION

10.1 The Chairman resumed the public meeting at 5:30 p.m.

10.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

OFFICIALS OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Ms. Jasmine Pascal	-	Registrar (Ag)
Mr. Davy Rajah	-	Director: Corporate Administration
Mrs. Melissa Sooklal-Seecharan	-	Records Specialist
Mrs. Beverly Ali-Pierre	-	Clerk III
Ms. Isha George	-	Accounting Assistant
Mrs. Natasha Elder-St. Louis	-	IT Specialist/ Webmaster
Ms. Andella Ramroop	-	Legal Officer II (Corporate Lawyer Policy Adviser)
& Ms. Taramattee Chadee	-	Auditing Assistant, President's House

10.3 The Chairman welcomed the officials of the Integrity Commission and introductions were exchanged.

10.4 The following issues arose from the examination with the officials of the Integrity Commission:

- The reasons for using the three quote system as opposed to open tender;
- The efficiency of the Inventory Control System; and
- The security of confidential documents.

10.5 The Chairman thanked officials of the Integrity Commission and they were excused.

10.6 The meeting was suspended at 5:47 p.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT

11.1 The Chairman resumed the public meeting at 5:50 p.m.

11.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

OFFICIALS OF THE OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT

Mrs. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel	-	Clerk of the House
Ms. Shelly Ann Bartholomew	-	Administrative Officer IV (Ag.)
Mr. Garreth Ferguson	-	Information and Communication Technology Director

Mr. Lester Thomas - Auditor I (Ag.)
Mr. Stephen Boodhram - Manager, Constituency Management Operations Unit

11.3 The Chairman welcomed the officials of the Office of the Parliament and introductions were exchanged.

11.4 The following issues arose from the examination with the officials of the Office of the Parliament:

- The non-submission of responses to the PAAC's First Report and request for written submission re Internal Audit;
- The management of inventory in Constituency Offices;
- The steps being taken to prepare for the proclamation of the Procurement Act;
- The expected size of the Procurement Unit;
- The mechanisms in place to determine when assets are stolen from the Parliament building and at Constituency Offices;
- Cases of theft;
- The reasons for not completing the tagging of inventory using the QR Code;
- The maintenance plan for vehicles;
- The system for safeguarding internal and external electronic assets; and
- The steps taken to reduce expenditure for replacing equipment.

11.5 The Chairman thanked officials of the Office of the Parliament and they were excused.

[Please see the verbatim notes for the detailed oral submission by the witnesses]

SUSPENSION

12.1 At 6:23 p.m., the Chairman suspended the *public* meeting to resume *in camera* for a post-hearing discussion with Members only.

RESUMPTION

13.1 At 6:25 p.m. the Chairman resumed the meeting *in camera*.

POST-HEARING DISCUSSION

14.1 The Chairman sought Members' views on the public hearing. The Committee expressed concern regarding the apparent inconsistency in the knowledge of public officers and the issue of staffing and emphasised the need for better processes, procedures and training in the system of Inventory Control.

14.2 The Committee agreed that additional questions would be sent to Ministries and Departments which appeared before the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

15.1 There being no other business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting to **Wednesday February 08, 2017 at 1:30 p.m*.* *in camera* and 2:30 p.m. *in public*** when the Committee would continue its examination of the system of Inventory Control within the Public Service.

15.2 The adjournment was taken at 6:34 p.m.

We certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

February 02, 2017

THE PUBLIC ADMINSTRATION AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE – SECOND SESSION, ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 08, 2017 AT 1:39 P.M.
IN THE LEVEL 2 MEETING ROOM, AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE FLOOR, TOWER D, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE, 1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN.

Present were:

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	-	Chairman
Dr. Lackram Bodoe	-	Vice-Chairman
Mr. Maxie Cuffie	-	Member
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	-	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	-	Member
Ms. Allyson Baksh	-	Member
Ms. Nicole Olivierre	-	Member
Mr. Daniel Dookie	-	Member

Ms. Keiba Jacob	-	Secretary
Ms. Sheranne Samuel	-	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Rachel Nunes	-	Parliamentary Intern
Mr. Brian Lucio	-	Parliamentary Intern

Absent were:

Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir	-	Member (Excused)
Mr. Clarence Rambharat	-	Member

COMMENCEMENT

1.3 At 1:39 p.m. the Chairman called the meeting to order.

1.4 The Chairman indicated that Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir asked to be excused from the meeting.

EXAMINATION OF MINUTES OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING

2.1 The Committee examined the Minutes of the Seventeenth (17th) meeting held on Wednesday January 25, 2017.

2.2 There being no omissions or corrections, the Minutes were confirmed on a motion moved by Mr. Wade Mark and seconded by Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING

3.1 The Chairman informed members that responses to questions on Inventory Control were received from thirty-seven (37) Ministries and Departments. The responses have been uploaded to Rotunda. Submissions remained outstanding from the following Ministries and Departments, extensions were requested:

- Ministry of Health – January 26, 2017 (further extension requested – February 14, 2017; and
- Judiciary – January 7, 2017 (further extension requested – January 31, 2017; additional extension requested – February 10, 2017).

3.2 The Chairman also informed the Committee that responses to questions on Internal Audit were received from thirty-four (34) Ministries and Departments. The responses were uploaded to Rotunda. Requests for extensions were received from the following:

- Ministry of Health – February 2, 2017; and
- Judiciary – January 31, 2017 (further extension requested – February 10, 2017).

Submissions remained outstanding from the following Ministries and Departments; no extensions were requested:

- Ministry of Trade and Industry;
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs; and
- Personnel Department.

3.3 The Chairman reminded Members that of the public hearing in Tobago with the THA scheduled for March 08, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. Members were asked to indicate their availability in a week's time.

3.4 The Committee agreed to consider the Inquiry Proposal on the Judiciary at its next meeting on February 15, 2017.

3.5 The Chairman informed Members that responses to the First Report of the PAAC were received from twenty-six (26) of the thirty-two (32) Ministries and Departments examined by the Committee in the First session.

Requests for extensions were received from the following Ministries and Departments:

- Ministry of Health – February 09, 2017; and
- Personnel Department

Responses remained outstanding from the following Ministries and Department; no extensions were requested:

- Judiciary;
- Tax Appeal Board;

- Tobago House of Assembly; and
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

3.6 The Chairman informed Members that a Summary of the Ministerial Responses to the First Report of the PAAC was formulated by the Secretariat and circulated to Members. The Chairman suggested that the Members who championed particular Ministries and Departments during the First Session take responsibility for reviewing these responses to the Committee's Report. Members were asked to report on their assessment of the responses by February 15, 2017. Additionally, the Committee agreed that Dr. Mahabir would be informed of the entities championed by Ms. Ramkissoon, former Member of the Committee, and be formally given responsibility for these.

3.7 The Chairman also informed Members that responses to the Committee's request for additional information related to the first inquiry into the System of Inventory Control was received from the following Ministries and Departments:

- Service Commissions Department
- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

Requests for extensions were received from the following:

- Ministry of National Security – February 07, 2017
- Integrity Commission – February 10, 2017

Responses remained outstanding from the following:

- Office of the Parliament;
- Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs.

3.8 The Secretariat was directed to dispatch letters informing Ministries and Departments with outstanding responses in relation to the following:

- Inventory Control;
- Internal Audit;
- First Report of the PAAC; and
- Request for additional information re Inventory Control;

that they would be required to appear before the Committee at its next meeting on February 15, 2017, to provide an explanation, should the responses not be submitted before then.

3.9 The Committee also agreed that going forward a note would be included in all correspondence to Ministries and Departments requesting written submissions, advising that should submissions remain outstanding after the stipulated deadline, Ministries and Departments may be required to appear before the Committee, on short notice. This is at the Committee's discretion.

3.10 On the matter of a formal procedure for the adoption of the Committee's reports, the Chairman indicated that the matter would be discussed at the next meeting of Chairmen and Presiding Officers scheduled for March.

PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION – CONTINUATION OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE SYSTEM OF INVENTORY CONTROL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

4.1 The Chairman explained the purpose and format of the second hearing regarding the system of Inventory Control in the Public Service.

4.2 The Chairman invited Members to review the Issues Paper relevant to the following stakeholders;

- Auditor General's Department;
- Service Commissions Department;
- Ministry of Finance;
- Comptroller of Accounts - Ministry of Finance;
- Chairman - Public Service Commission;
- Director of Contracts - Central Tenders Board;
- Director – Public Management Consultancy Division; and
- Director – Public Service Academy.

The Issues Paper was circulated via email on February 07, 2017.

4.3 The Committee agreed that Mr. Maxie Cuffie should recuse himself from the examination given his portfolio as Minister of Public Administration and Communications which has responsibility for the Public Service Academy and the Public Management Consultancy Division. The Member obliged.

4.4 The Committee agreed that given the format of the examination and the interconnected nature of the matters to be discussed, the flow of questioning would be flexible.

OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 The Chairman drew Members' attention to a letter received from a member of the public, Director of CFO Solutions Limited regarding the Committee's press conference on the First Report. The Secretariat was directed to respond to the letter and the Committee agreed to take a closer look at the issue of fraud which was raised in the letter.

5.2 There being no further business for discussion *in camera*, the Chairman suspended the meeting at 2:17 p.m., to be reconvened in public.

CONTINUATION OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE SYSTEM OF INVENTORY CONTROL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

6.1 The Chairman called the public meeting to order at 2:37 p.m., in the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor.

7.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

AUDITOR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Mr. Majeed Ali	-	Auditor General
Mr. Gary Peters	-	Assistant Auditor General
Ms. Lorelly Pujadas	-	Deputy Auditor General

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Mr. Vishnu Dhanpaul	-	Permanent Secretary
Ms. Michelle Durham Kissoon	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ms. Savitree Seepersad	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)

COMPTROLLER OF ACCOUNTS

Ms. Catherine Laban	-	Comptroller of Accounts
Mrs. Karen Seebaran-Timothy	-	Deputy Comptroller of Accounts

CENTRAL TENDERS BOARD

Mrs. Jenepha Khan	-	Director of Contracts
Mrs. Shamdaye Singh-Ramdial	-	Deputy Director of Contracts (Ag.)

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Joan Mendez	-	Permanent Secretary
Mr. Kurt Meyer	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT CONSULTING DIVISION

Ms. Savatri Balkaran	-	Director
Ms. Alicia Wellington	-	Public Management Consultant

PUBLIC SERVICE ACADEMY

Ms. Denise Phillip	-	Director
Ms. Ajodia Rattansingh	-	Human Resource Advisor III (Ag.)

SERVICE COMMISSIONS DEPARTMENT

Ms. Anastasius Creed	-	Director of Personnel Administration
Mr. Feno Rampaul	-	Auditor I

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Ms. Maureen Manchouck	-	Chairman

Mrs. Parvatee Anmolsingh-Mahabir - Deputy Chairman

7.3 The Chairman welcomed officials, members of the media and the public.

7.4 The Chairman outlined the mandate of the Committee and the purpose of the hearing. Introductions were then exchanged.

6.5 The following issues arose from the examination with officials:

- $1.8 Billion spent under Minor Equipment Purchases during the period 2011-2015;
- The various Inventory Control Management issues which arose in the course of the Auditor General's annual audit of Ministries and Departments;
- The need for Ministries and Departments to have a properly functioning Internal Audit Departments to address Inventory Control issues;
- The measures taken to address the pervasive issues identified by the Auditor General's Department;
- The role of the Public Service Commission and Service Commissions Department in the System of Inventory Control;
- The lack of a standard System of Inventory Control;
- The possibility of a Circular being sent to Ministries and Departments to standardise the System of Inventory Control;
- The initiatives to improve the Inventory Control System through the implementation of an automated inventory system under the Integrated Financial Management Information System;
- The time-frame for implementing interim measures pending Public Sector Financial Reform in the next 3-5 years;
- The recommendations by the Auditor General's Department to improve the Inventory Control Management;
- The legislation prohibiting the implementation of proper Inventory Control measures;
- The Asset Management System being developed by the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and the Auditor General's Department;
- The mechanisms in place to safeguard assets;
- The sanctions imposed on public officials who are in breach of the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations;
- The need for the Ministry of Finance to review the Exchequer and Audit Act and the Financial Regulations to complement modern times;
- The shortage of staff in the Ministry of Finance;
- The role of the Public Service Academy in training public officials in Accounting and Inventory Management;
- The various challenges experienced by the Public Service Academy in training officials;
- The challenges faced by the Service Commissions Department in filling vacant positions;

- The constant movement of Public Service officials and how this concern gives rise to issues of staffing and training;
- The role of the Public Management Consultancy Division (PMCD) in addressing staffing issues;
- The challenges faced by PMCD in attempting to establish positions/offices;
- The need to revise the compensation/classification packages;
- The procedure to dispose of unserviceable assets;
- The criteria to dispose of assets via sealed bid/open bid;
- The readiness of the Public Service for the pending proclamation and implementation of the Procurement Act;
- The organisational structure required to establish a Procurement Unit by March 31, 2017;
- The effect of the Procurement Act on the structure and staff of the Central Tenders Board;
- The training programmes being developed by the Public Service Academy re: the pending proclamation of the Procurement Act; and
- The need to revise other laws/rules to compliment the new procurement regime.

7.5 The Chairman thanked officials for attending and they were excused.

[Please see the verbatim notes for the detailed oral submission by the witnesses]

SUSPENSION

8.1 At 4:55 p.m., the Chairman suspended the *public* meeting to resume *in camera* for a post-hearing discussion with Members only.

RESUMPTION

9.1 At 5:00 p.m. the Chairman resumed the meeting *in camera*.

POST-HEARING DISCUSSION

10.1 The Chairman sought Members' views on the public hearing. The Committee expressed appreciation for the format of the meeting and indicated the need for follow up with the Comptroller of Accounts. The Committee agreed that training would be identified as a pervasive issue going forward.

10.2 The Committee agreed that additional questions would be sent to stakeholders who appeared before the Committee.

COMMITTEE WORK SCHEDULE

11.1 The Committee discussed reverting to two (2) days for the examination of Internal Audit within the Public Service and to adopt a similar format to the one used for Inventory Control.

11.2 The Committee agreed that the proposed date for the examination of the Judiciary would have to be revisited.

ADJOURNMENT

16.1 There being no other business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting to **Wednesday February 15, 2017 at 1:30 p.m*.* *in camera*** when the Committee would consider draft reports and the Inquiry Proposal on the Judiciary.

16.2 The adjournment was taken at 5:20 p.m.

We certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

February 13, 2017

Appendix III

Attendance

The Committee Members present at the First Public Hearing of the Committee re Inventory Control on Wednesday January 25, 2017 were:

i.	Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	-	Chairman
ii.	Dr. Lackram Bodoe	-	Vice-Chairman
iii.	Mr. Maxie Cuffie	-	Member
iv.	Mr. Clarence Rambharat	-	Member
v.	Mr. Wade Mark	-	Member
vi.	Ms. Allyson Baksh	-	Member
vii.	Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir	-	Member
viii.	Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	-	Member
ix.	Ms. Keiba Jacob	-	Secretary
x.	Ms. Sheranne Samuel	-	Assistant Secretary
xi.	Ms. Rachel Nunes	-	Parliamentary Intern
xii.	Mr. Brian Lucio	-	Parliamentary Intern

Witnesses who appeared were:

Service Commissions Department

i.	Ms. Anastasius Creed	-	Director of Personnel Administration (DPA)
ii.	Ms. Prabhawatie Maraj	-	Deputy Director of Personnel Administration
iii.	Ms. Allison Hughes	-	Director of Corporate Services
iv.	Mr. Feno Rampaul	-	Auditor I
v.	Ms. Judy Seepersad	-	Executive Director ICT (Ag.)
vi.	Mrs. Gilliam Wilson	-	Office Manager
vii.	Ms. Avril Camacho	-	Storekeeper

Ministry Of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries

i.	Mrs. Angela Siew	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)

ii.	Mr. John Lewis	-	ICT Director
iii.	Ms. Catherine Ingrid Duncan	-	Administrative Officer V
iv.	Ms. Sandra Ramoutar	-	Administrative Officer IV
v.	Mr. Alliston Walters	-	Auditor II
vi.	Mr. Terrance Moore	-	Fleet Manager

Ministry Of National Security

i.	Ms. Lydia Jacobs	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.) (Accounting Officer)
ii.	Mr. Vel Lewis	-	Permanent Secretary
iii.	Ms. June Thomas	-	Director Finance and Accounts
iv.	Ms. Ann Heeraman	-	Administrative Officer
v.	Col. Patrick Gomez	-	Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF)
vi.	Ms. Marilyn Mc Donald	-	Prison Supervisor (Ag.), Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service
vii.	Mr. Robert Williams	-	Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS) Representative
viii.	Mr. Dale Prescott	-	I.T. Manager
ix.	Ms. Shalisha Mohammed	-	Internal Auditor

Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs

i.	Ms. Ingrid Seerattan	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
ii.	Ms. Nataki Atiba-Dilchan	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
iii.	Mr. Edwin St. John	-	Auditor II (Ag.)
iv.	Ms. Helaine Boodoosingh	-	Administrative Officer V
v.	Ms. Kamini Dookoo	-	Administrative Officer IV
vi.	Ms. Lena Bridgelal	-	Administrative Officer II (Ag.)
vii.	Mr. Neil Ramrattan	-	Administrative Officer II

Integrity Commission

i.	Ms. Jasmine Pascal	-	Registrar (Ag)
ii.	Mr. Davy Rajah	-	Director: Corporate Administration
iii.	Mrs. Melissa Sooklal-Seecharan	-	Records Specialist
iv.	Mrs. Beverly Ali-Pierre	-	Clerk III
v.	Ms. Isha George	-	Accounting Assistant
vi.	Mrs. Natasha Elder-St. Louis	-	IT Specialist/ Webmaster
vii.	Ms. Andella Ramroop	-	Legal Officer II (Corporate Lawyer & Policy Adviser)
viii.	Ms. Taramattee Chadee	-	Auditing Assistant, President's House

Office of the Parliament

i.	Mrs. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel	-	Clerk of the House
ii.	Ms. Shelly Ann Bartholomew	-	Administrative Officer IV (Ag.)
iii.	Mr. Garreth Ferguson	-	Information and Communication Technology Director
iv.	Mr. Lester Thomas	-	Auditor I (Ag.)

Mr. Stephen Boodhram - Manager, Constituency Management Operations Unit

The Committee Members present at the Second Public Hearing of the Committee re Inventory Control on Wednesday February 8, 2017 were:

Auditor General's Department

i.	Mr. Majeed Ali	-	Auditor General
ii.	Mr. Gary Peters	-	Assistant Auditor General
iii.	Ms. Lorelly Pujadas	-	Deputy Auditor General

Ministry of Finance

i.	Mr. Vishnu Dhanpaul	-	Permanent Secretary
ii.	Ms. Michelle Durham Kissoon	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
iii.	Ms. Savitree Seepersad	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)

Comptroller of Accounts

i.	Ms. Catherine Laban	-	Comptroller of Accounts
ii.	Mrs. Karen Seebaran-Timothy	-	Deputy Comptroller of Accounts

Central Tenders Board

i.	Mrs. Jenepha Khan	-	Director of Contracts
ii.	Mrs. Shamdaye Singh-Ramdial	-	Deputy Director of Contracts (Ag.)

Ministry Of Public Administration and Communications

i.	Ms. Joan Mendez	-	Permanent Secretary
ii.	Mr. Kurt Meyer	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)

Public Management Consulting Division

i.	Ms. Savatri Balkaran	-	Director
ii.	Ms. Alicia Wellington	-	Public Management Consultant

Public Service Academy

i.	Ms. Denise Phillip	-	Director
ii.	Ms. Ajodia Rattansingh	-	Human Resource Advisor III (Ag.)

Service Commissions Department

i.	Ms. Anastasius Creed	-	Director of Personnel Administration
ii.	Mr. Feno Rampaul	-	Auditor I

Public Service Commission

i.	Ms. Maureen Manchouck	-	Chairman
ii.	Mrs. Parvatee Anmolsingh-Mahabir	-	Deputy Chairman