



**Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**

Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
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July 4, 2017

Ms. Keiba Jacob
Secretary
Public Administration and Appropriations Committee
Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Levels G-9, Tower D,
1A Wrightson Road,
Port of Spain

Dear Ms. Jacob,

The Third Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee, Second Session, Eleventh Parliament, on an Examination of the System of Inventory Control within the Public Service

Reference is made to a request from the Speaker of the House to Senator the Honourable, Mr. Dennis Moses dated June 5, 2017, on the subject at caption.

The Ministry wishes to submit the attached responses to the recommendations outlined in the Third Report of the Committee on Public Administration and Appropriations on the Examination of the System of Inventory Control within the Public Service.

Additionally, the Committee is advised that with respect to the recommendation under the section entitled "*Head 65- Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs*", the Ministry will provide a status update to the Committee by July 31, 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs



Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

RESPONSES TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINED IN THE
THIRD REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND
APPROPRIATIONS

Examination of the System of Inventory
Control within the Public Service



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1. 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.

Response by the Ministry

The Ministry supports the recommendation of the Committee.

2. Inventory Control Management

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.

Response by the Ministry

The Ministry welcomes the initiative to have a government wide electronic inventory system. In the interim however, the ICT Unit of the Ministry has maintained an Inventory System using Microsoft Excel and is in the process of migrating to a Microsoft SharePoint based inventory system.

3. 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.

Response by the Ministry

The Ministry supports the recommendations of the Committee but is of the view that the proposed timeframe may be challenging. The Ministry proposes that the feasibility of drafting specific regulations to guide the operations of Overseas Missions be explored.

4. Public Service Vacancies/Establishment of Positions and Offices

Recommendations:

- The Ministry of Public Administration and Communication 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.

Response by the Ministry

The Ministry supports the recommendations of the Committee outlined above.

5. Training of Public Service Officials

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.

Response by the Ministry

The Ministry supports the recommendations of the Committee outlined above.

Head 65- Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs

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 vacancies throughout the Divisions and 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.

Response by the Ministry

The Ministry commenced an exercise to review the structure and staffing of its Headquarters and Overseas Missions in March 2017. The current staffing structure is inadequate to effectively service the Ministry's nineteen (19) Overseas Missions as well as its local operations. It is envisaged that the Note to Cabinet, treating with the revised organizational structure of the Ministry will be submitted to the Public

Management Consulting Division (PMCD), Ministry of Public Administration and Communications, by July 31st, 2017 and thereafter, to the Cabinet for approval. A General Administration Division, incorporating Office Management, Procurement, Registry and Records Management Sections and to be headed by an appropriate senior officer is being recommended with the appropriate staffing complement. In the interim, the staffing of the Office Management Unit has been augmented by the assignment of a Foreign Service Executive Officer I. This Officer will plan, direct and control the work activities of the Unit. The previously assigned Clerk III will oversee the inventory control function.

As regards the training of staff in Inventory Management, the Ministry has already sourced relevant training for three Officers at the level of Clerk III and Clerk II respectively, from the Public Service Academy, Ministry of Public Administration and Communications. This training is offered every quarter and the Ministry will continue to nominate officers to access same. It is noteworthy that the current Office Manager, has already participated in training in Procurement Management facilitated by the Public Service Academy.