



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Public Administration and Communications

PA: 3/8/2 Vol. II

August 25, 2017

Ms. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel

Clerk of the House,
Parliament
Levels G-8, Tower D
International Waterfront Centre
1A Wrightson Road
Port of Spain



Dear Ms. Sampson-Meiguel,

**The Ninth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Examination of the
Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of the Republic of Trinidad
and Tobago for the Financial Years 2014 and 2015 with specific reference to the
Ministry of Health**

Please find enclosed the response further to the request dated July 03, 2017 concerning the Report at caption which was presented in the House of Representatives on June 30, 2017 and in the Senate on June 29, 2017.

In compliance with the Standing Orders 100(6) and 110(6) of the Senate and House of Representatives respectively, we provide the response on behalf of the Minister with the responsibility for the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications, which was reported on by the Joint Select Committee. We wish to present to each House, the enclosed written submissions to the recommendations/ comments contained in the Report.

Kindly note that an electronic copy is simultaneously submitted via email to coth@ttparliament.org.

Sincerely,


Joan Mendez (Mrs.)
Permanent Secretary

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

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PUBLIC MANAGEMENT CONSULTING DIVISION

Response to the Recommendations submitted in the Ninth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Examination of the Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the Financial Years 2014 and 2015 with specific reference to the Ministry of Health.

RECOMMENDATION

The Public Management Consulting Division, Public Service Commission and Personnel Department should be contacted and communicated the need for the establishment of official posts, the filling of the posts with competent staff and the development of attractive compensation packages.

On May 22, 2017 the Finance and General Purposes Committee deferred a Note for Cabinet submitted by the Ministry of Health on subject **The Establishment of a Support Structure for the Office of the Chief Medical Officer in the Ministry of Health** for the Comments of the Minister of Public Administration and Communications, for the Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD) to review the matter. PMCD received this request via email on July 07, 2017.

This Draft Note sought the creation of the following three (3) permanent offices on the staff establishment of the Ministry of Health with effect from the dates indicated until such time as their replacement positions are re-designated, classified or re-classified by the Chief Personnel Officer (CPO) and filled by the Public Service Commission (PSC) following the current positions becoming vacant:

- One (1) Principal Medical Officer (PMO) Epidemiology
- One (1) Principal Medical Officer (PMO) Institutions
- One (1) Principal Medical Officer (PMO) Environmental Health

PMCD reviewed the Draft Note and its appendices and met with the Ministry on several occasions to discuss the matter, as well as to assist the Ministry with the revision of supporting documents (Process Maps). PMCD noted that the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) faced many challenges due to a lack of support staff and was therefore in critical need of a support structure.

Cabinet, by Minute No. 603 of March 18, 1999 agreed that the positions of Principal Medical Officer (PMO) (Epidemiology, Institutions and Environmental Health) should be abolished when vacant, to facilitate the permanent filling of the undermentioned offices:

- One (1) Adviser, Institutions Medicine
- One (1) Adviser, Primary Health Care
- One (1) Adviser, Environmental Health

PMCD noted that the three (3) offices of PMO were abolished, however the three (3) offices of Adviser were never classified by the CPO. The Ministry also indicated that they had no record on

file showing that a request for the classification of the three (3) offices of Adviser was ever submitted to the Office of the CPO for consideration. PMCD was of the view that the Office of the CMO had an immediate need for technical support. The CMO himself also indicated that the offices of PMO would adequately support the work of the Office of the CMO.

In order to immediately alleviate the challenges currently faced by the Office of the CMO due to the lack of support staff, PMCD recommended the rescission of Cabinet's decision, stated hereunder, and as recorded by **Cabinet Minute No. 603 of March 18, 1999** to:

- (i) abolish the three (3) offices of Principal Medical Officer (PMO) (Epidemiology, Institutions and Environmental Health) when vacant
- (ii) create three (3) offices of Adviser (Institutional Medicine, Primary Health Care and Environmental Health)

PMCD's Comments were approved by the Minister of Public Administration and Communications on August 02, 2017, and the Approved Comments were forwarded to Cabinet Secretariat, Office of the Prime Minister on August 04, 2017.