



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Public Administration and Communications

PA: 3/8/2 Vol. II

October 17, 2017

Ms. Keiba Jacob

Secretary,
Public Administration and Appropriation Committee
Levels G-7, Tower D
The Port of Spain International Waterfront Centre
1A Wrightson Road
Port of Spain

Dear Ms. Jacob,

The Second Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee

Please find enclosed five (5) copies of the response to the recommendations/ comments contained in your request dated September 26, 2017 concerning the Report at caption which was presented in the Senate on May 02, 2017 and in the House of Representatives on May 05, 2017.

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

Sincerely,

Joan Mendez (Mrs.)
Permanent Secretary

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

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Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Public Administration and Communications

**The Second Report of the Public Administration and
Appropriations Committee, Second Session, Eleventh Parliament,
on an Examination of the Current Expenditure and Internal Controls
of the Office of the President .**

Written Submission

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

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Responses to Recommendations

The following responses are provided to the Committee's recommendations :-

RECOMMENDATION	PAGE	MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS' RESPONSES
Inventory Control - The Accounting Officer should utilise the Public Service Academy to provide training for the relevant staff in Inventory Management. - Training should be specifically targeted to relevant staff to improve the tagging process in Inventory Control. - The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications must ensure that the OTP is prioritised to receive training in Inventory Management.	12	The Public Service Academy has included courses that address issues related to Inventory Management in its Schedule of Activities for fiscal 2018. These courses include: - Inventory Management and Control and - Asset Management. The course Inventory Management and Control (previously Inventory Management) is being revised to ensure that key issues such as the tagging process be included in the course content. The OTP will be given priority with respect to training in this area as the following options can be considered: - an increase in the number of spaces be allowed to accommodate the staff of the OTP or, - based on the number of relevant staff, a dedicated session can be conducted for the staff of the OTP.
Inventory Control The Department must liaise with the Public Management Consultancy Division and the Service Commissions Department so that adequate staff can be provided to ensure effective Inventory Control.	13	On October 5, 2017, the Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD) held a meeting with the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Office of the President (OTP) to discuss the challenges experienced by the OTP in the area of Inventory Control. PMCD notes that there are presently two registers for recording inventory which are maintained by the existing office of Clerk III and the Comptroller of the Household.

RECOMMENDATION	PAGE	MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS' RESPONSES
Inventory Control The Public Management Consultancy Division and Service Commissions Department must ensure that given the severe weaknesses in Inventory Control, the resolution of staffing issues must be made by July 2017.	13	PMCD was informed that currently, the operations of the OTP is severely hindered by the same established offices handling multiple portfolios. For example, the existing office of Clerk III is currently responsible for the maintenance of the Inventory Register, preparation of Pension and Leave records and all Human Resource Management functions. PMCD was informed that additional issues arise with this internal arrangement when persons proceed on vacation leave as there is difficulty in obtaining leave relief. Currently, the OTP is in the process of implementing a card system which will alleviate the issues of improper recording of inventory. Further, the OTP has indicated that a Procurement Unit will be established to facilitate compliance and ensure adherence to the new procurement legislation. PMCD notes that Cabinet, by Minute No.1200 dated July 6, 2017 agreed, <i>inter alia</i>, to the establishment of Procurement Units under each Accounting Head in Ministries, Departments and State Agencies and to the employment, on contract, of staff detailed in the Procurement Unit of Ministries, Departments and State Agencies for a period of two (2) years as detailed in Appendix II to the Note. The OTP has indicated that it will be initiating the process for the filling of the recommended Procurement Offices. It is envisioned that this arrangement will alleviate the shortfalls in Inventory Control. PMCD was further informed that the OTP will be drafting a Note for Cabinet seeking the creation of established offices in the functional areas of Human Resource Management, Internal Audit and Accounts. As a consequence, this will ease the challenge of one position handling multiple portfolios. PMCD notes that the OTP faces many challenges due to a lack of staff and is therefore in critical need of a proper support structure and is prepared to render assistance on this matter.

RECOMMENDATION	PAGE	MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS' RESPONSES
Staffing The OTP should request the necessary training from the Public Service Academy.	15	The Public Service Academy stands ready to assist Ministries and Departments, including the OTP in matters related to training and development.