Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Health

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He: 3/16/165 Vol. IV

November 23, 2017

Ms. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Joint Select Committee on Foreign Affairs on the Public Examination
G-9 Tower D,
The Port-of-Spain International Waterfront Centre
1A Wrightson Road
Port-of-Spain

Dear Madam Speaker,

Re: 4th Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on Examination of the System of Internal Audit within the Public Service

Kindly find the enclosed written response to the findings and recommendations of the 4th Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on Examination of the System of Internal Audit within the Public Service.

Respectfully,

Richard Madray

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Health

MINISTRY OF HEALTH Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF HEALTH'S WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT

4th Report of the PAAC on Examination of the System of Internal Audit within the Public Service

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

23/11/2017

Ministry of Health's Submission to the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee of Parliament

Written Questions: Examination of the Ministry of Health's System of Internal Audit within the Public Service

1. The Ministry of Health should submit a report to Parliament on the status of initiatives being taken to fill the vacancies within the Internal Audit Unit by November 30, 2017.

(a) Status of the initiatives being undertaken to fill the vacancies:

i. **The hiring of staff on Contract** - There is a Six-Year Contract Employment Plan approved by Cabinet Minute #1280 dated 01/09/2016 for the contract positions of the Internal Audit Function of the Ministry of Health. The contract positions consist of the following:

- One (1) position of Audit Analyst;
- Two (2) positions of Assistant Audit Analyst; and
- Three (3) positions of Clerical Assistant.

The Permanent Secretary is currently engaging in the process of advertising these positions once releases have been met from the relevant vote.

ii. **The Permanent Establishment** – The Human Resource Division, Ministry of Health has reviewed the existing staffing of the Internal Audit Unit and has recognised the need to strengthen the capacity of the Internal Audit function.

iii. As a result, research is being undertaken in order to prepare job descriptions based on the Public Service Postings for the Internal Audit Function. These positions are to be submitted for review by Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD).

The proposed positions are as follows:

- One (1) post of Audit Director;
- One (1) post of Assistant Audit Director;
- Three (3) post of Audit Senior; and
- Two (2) post of Audit Supervisor.

2. **The Accounting Officer should develop a training programme for Internal Audit staff to ensure compliance with updated International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and submit to the Committee, a report on the progress made in training internal audit staff by November 30, 2017.**

i. A Training Plan for the Internal Audit function is currently being developed by both the Human Resource Management and the Internal Audit Unit Divisions. Development in areas of operational auditing using the International Standards for Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, Auditing of the Procurement function, Contract Auditing, Risk Management, Fraud Investigation and IT Auditing are critical for the operational efficiencies of the Ministry of Health.

In the absence of a Training Programme, the Ministry utilises the opportunities for training advertised by external agencies, such as the Public Service Academy (PSA) and the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA).

Training received by the Internal Audit Division is as follows:

- Working Paper Analysis - ***PSA***
- Fundamentals of the Internal Audit Function – ***PSA***
- Public Procurement, Review of Procurement Act – ***PSA***
- Fraud Awareness: Detection, Deterrence and Response- ***IIA***
- Operational Auditing – Report Writing Skills – ***IIA***
- Internal Audit in the Public Service - ***IIA***
- Auditing your HR function – ***IIA***