Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

November 21, 2017

Ms. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel
Clerk of the House
Public Administration and Appropriations Committee
Levels G 7, Tower D
International Waterfront Centre
1A Wrightson Road
PORT OF SPAIN

Dear Ms. Sampson-Meiguel

Fourth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on Examination of the System of Internal Audit within the Public Service

Your letter of reference Parl.: 5/7/32 dated October 4, 2017 on the subject at caption, refers.

Please see the attached response from the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services.

Sincerely

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Ms Jacinta Bailey-Sobers
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

Response of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services to the Fourth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on Examination of the System of Internal Audit within the Public Service:

General comments relating to the recommendations outlined in the Report are as follows:

The Fourth Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on Examination of the System of Internal Audit within the Public Service was comprehensive, relevant and timely. The section which addressed the issues, observations and recommendations across Ministries, included a number of important suggestions for the improvement of the Internal Audit function in the Public Service, which should be given urgent attention. There were several other factors however, which affected most Ministries which could be included for general attention as follows:

- An overall assessment by the Service Commissions Department and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications of the Internal Audit needs of all Ministries
- The introduction of desk manuals for all Internal Audit Units
- Upgrading of the qualifications required for the various Internal Audit positions
- A greater focus to be placed by Internal Audit Units across Ministries on risk assessment
- The development of a comprehensive training plan for Internal Audit Staff across Ministries by the Public Service Academy, to include specialized areas such as IT audits, HR, operational, value for money and risk-based audits.

The implementation of the above measures will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Internal Audit function in the public service.

Additionally, some specific comments were recorded as follows:

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services was requested to develop a training programme for Internal audit staff to ensure that Information Technology Audits are effectively undertaken and submit to the Committee a Report on the progress made by November 30, 2017.

The Human Resource Management Division started discussions with Internal Audit, the Auditor General's Department and the Public Service Academy, Ministry of Public Administration and Communications, regarding the specifics of the Information Technology training that the unit requires in order to better execute their function.

This is being done with a view to approach prospective providers to facilitate the training and a provider should be selected by November 30, 2017.