



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Public Administration

Responses to the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee's Examination of the Ministry of Public Administration's (MPA's) Expenditure and Internal Controls

Written Submission

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Responses to PAAC's examination of MPA's expenditure and internal controls:

Based on an examination of the expenditure and internal controls of the Ministry of Public Administration, the following responses are provided:

	Question/Recommendation	Ministry of Public Administration's Response
1	The Ministry should provide a status update to the Committee on the results of the testing of the openMAINT software inclusive of any recommended or intended action by the Ministry by April 06, 2018.	<u>Status Update</u> The Asset Management System (an Open Source solution called openMAINT) was installed as a pilot project at the National Archives (NATT) in 2016 for in-house assessment of its suitability. The initial assessment criteria were limited to its capability to address management of consumable assets only and it did satisfy the criteria. As a result of the pilot, 260 assets types have been entered into the system, including, stationery, food items, equipment, printers, construction materials and flash drives. At the close of the project in November 2016 an assessment of its effectiveness and relevance was conducted. Feedback regarding the openMAINT solution has been positive from the users within IT and NATT. The solution was easy to use and provided significant benefits over the previous paper-based system. The users were also enthusiastic about the prospect of using the system to manage permanent assets as well as some specialised inventory (travelling collections) within the NATT. Issues were identified such as the drab user interface and the need to configure the system to produce specialised reports. In spite of these issues, the users have indicated that they were pleased with the system and would recommend it to other Ministries for use in asset management. In April 2017, the Comptroller of Accounts was invited to view a demo of the system. A site visit was made to Parliament to assess whether the solution that was being used (VimBiz Asset Management Solution) was comparable to OpenMaint. It was

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		discovered that both systems, openMAINT and VimBiz offer similar functionalities. However, openMAINT is free whereas VimBiz cost approximately TTD\$400,000. In August 2017, building on the success and lessons learnt from the NATT pilot, the openMAINT software was used to develop the Property Management Information System with the following modules; Lease/Rentals (L/R), Estate Management (EM), Sale and Acquisition (S&A), and Property Development (PD). To date, 255 lease/rent matters have been uploaded onto the system. This project is expected to be completed in April 2019. In fiscal 2018, work began at MPA's Head Office with respect to the implementation of the OpenMaint for all Current Assets (Consumables) and Fixed Assets (ICT hardware and software, furniture, fixtures, Buildings, vehicles, etc.). To date, all audited assets have been entered into the system. The next phase is the development of user guides and training of users. The IT ServiceDesk Solution will continue to be used while an "interface" will be developed to move data from the IT ServiceDesk data set to the openMAINT data set so that the asset custodians will use one system for Asset Management. Once the Asset Management requirements are satisfied, openMAINT will be assessed to determine its suitability to replace the IT ServiceDesk solution (it must satisfy ITIL – ISO:20000 – requirements).
2	The Ministry should provide a Report to Parliament on the number of officials trained by the PSA in the current financial year in Cabinet Note Writing by April 30, 2018	For the requested period, thirty three (33) persons were trained in Cabinet Note Writing.

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3	The Ministry should indicate to the Committee whether there was any improvements in Cabinet Notes received by the PMCD by April 30, 2018.	An assessment of the Draft Notes for Cabinet submitted to the Division by Ministries/Departments/Agencies (MDAs) revealed: • Approximately 90% of the Draft Notes for Cabinet contain accurate costing data. • Approximately 60% of the Draft Notes for Cabinet are incomplete and do not meet the Division's requirements. • More than 50% of all Draft Notes for Cabinet received, contain significant errors such as incorrect Cabinet Minute Nos., dates of Cabinet Minutes, and incorrect quantities of positions on organisation structures. • In most instances, Draft Notes for Cabinet do not contain adequate justification to support the request of MDAs. PMCD continues to offer support and provide assistance to MDAs, when requested, in the preparation of process maps and functional charts as well as pre-consultation before the submission of Draft Notes.
4	The Ministry should provide a status update to the Parliament on the number of officials trained in the current financial year in Inventory Management by April 06, 2018.	The PSA has trained forty (40) persons in Inventory Control and Management as at April 30 th , 2018.

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5	The Ministry should submit to the Parliament, the schedule of activities with respect to the aforementioned courses for fiscal 2017/2018 by March 31, 2018. • Audit Report Writing; • Assessing Risk: Ensuring Internal Audit's Value • Risk-based Auditing: A Value Add Proposition; • Fundamentals of IT Auditing; • Auditor-in-charge Tools and Techniques; • Beginning Auditor Tools and Techniques; • Performance-based Auditing in the Public Sector; • Operational Auditing: Evaluating Procurement and Sourcing; and • Operational Auditing: Evaluating the Supply Chain.	The PSA scheduled the following courses to take place before March 31st, 2018:- • Fundamentals of the Internal Audit Function – October 30th – November 2nd, 2017 • Audit Report Writing – November 14th – 16th, 2017 • Working Paper Analysis – January 24th – 26th, 2018 • Procurement Audit – February 26th – 28th, 2018 However, a lack of funding hindered the PSA's ability to offer these courses during the specified period. Further, the Division was also constrained by the unavailability of facilitators from the Internal Audit Institute of Trinidad and Tobago (IATT). Accordingly, the following courses were rescheduled:- • Auditing Tools and Techniques for Audit Managers – July, 2018 • Audit Report Writing – September, 2018 The PSA continues to liaise with the IATT for the scheduling of future courses pending the availability of funds.

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6	The Ministry should submit to the Parliament, a status on the number of officials trained in the aforementioned courses in the current financial year by April 30, 2018. • Audit Report Writing; • Assessing Risk: Ensuring Internal Audit's Value • Risk-based Auditing: A Value Add Proposition; • Fundamentals of IT Auditing; • Auditor-in-charge Tools and Techniques; • Beginning Auditor Tools and Techniques; • Performance-based Auditing in the Public Sector; • Operational Auditing: Evaluating Procurement and Sourcing; and • Operational Auditing: Evaluating the Supply Chain.	As a result of financial constraints, no officials were trained in the aforementioned courses as at April 30th, 2018. However, in July, 2018, it is expected that a total of twenty-four (24) officials were trained in "Auditing Tools and Techniques for Audit Managers". The PSA will continue to liaise with the IATT for scheduling future sessions of the aforementioned courses, pending the availability of funds.