



TWENTY-THIRD REPORT OF THE

THE COMMITTEE ON

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
AND APPROPRIATIONS

FIFTH SESSION OF THE 11TH PARLIAMENT

INQUIRY

An examination into the expenditure and internal controls of the Ministry of Communications for the fiscal year 2018/2019.



Public Administration and Appropriations Committee

The Public Administration and Appropriations Committee (PAAC) is established by Standing Order 102 and 92 of the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively. The Committee is mandated to consider and report to Parliament on:

- (a) *the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies to ensure that expenditure is embarked upon in accordance with parliamentary approval;*
- (b) *the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies as it occurs and keeps Parliament informed of how the budget allocation is being implemented; and*
- (c) *the administration of Government agencies to determine hindrances to their efficiency and to make recommendations to the Government for improvement of public administration.*

Current membership

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	Chairman
Dr. Lackram Bodoë	Vice-Chairman
Ms. Nicole Olivierre	Member
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	Member
Mr. Clarence Rambharat	Member
Mr. Daniel Dookie	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	Member
Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ancil Antoine	Member
Ms. Amrita Deonarine	Member
Mr. Foster Cummings	Member

Committee Staff

The current staff members serving the Committee are:

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Publication

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Date Laid in HOR: _____ **Date Laid in Senate:** _____

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Members of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee



Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-
George
Chairman



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Mr. Wade Mark
Member



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Mrs. Ayanna
Webster-Roy
Member



Mr. Daniel Dookie
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Ms. Amrita Deonarine
Member



Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ancil Antoine
Member



Ms. Nicole Olivierre
Member



Mr. Foster Cummings
Member

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report of the PAAC for the Eleventh Parliament contains the details of the examination of the Ministry of Communications.

The objective of the Inquiry was to examine the following areas of expenditure and internal controls for the Financial Year 2019:

- Accountability and Transparency;
- Internal Audit;
- Sub - Head 02 - Goods and Services;
- Sub - Head 06 - Current Transfers of Stat. Boards and Similar Bodies;
- Sub – Head 04 – Current Transfers and Subsidies;
- Sub – Head 09 - Development Programme – Consolidated Fund; and
- Infrastructure Development Fund.

The Committee, in undertaking this examination employed two (2) mechanisms:

- Written Submissions; and
- Public Hearing.

The Committee made a call for written submissions to stakeholders and thereafter focused on a review and analysis of the written submissions submitted. Subsequently, the Committee conducted a Public Hearing with stakeholders. The approach adopted by the Committee took into account issues identified from responses received and reports in the media. The Committee made recommendations related to the issues identified. Observations and recommendations are presented in Chapter 2.

1. INTRODUCTION

THE COMMITTEE

The PAAC of the Eleventh Republican Parliament was established by the revised Standing Orders to:

- examine current public expenditure, thereby capturing the full budget cycle by providing Parliamentary oversight of the implementation of the budget; and
- conduct a real-time examination of the expenditure of Ministries and Departments.

Change in Membership

1. In the 11th Parliament the Members of the Committee were appointed by resolutions of the House of Representatives and the Senate at sittings held on Friday, November 13, 2015, and Tuesday, November 17, 2015, respectively.
2. By resolution of the Senate on November 3, 2017, Ms. Jennifer Raffoul was appointed as a Member of the Committee in lieu of Dr. Dhanayshar Mahabir.
3. By resolution of the House of Representatives on November 24, 2017, Brigadier General (Ret.) Ancil Antoine was appointed as a Member of the Committee in lieu of Mr. Maxie Cuffie.
4. By resolution of the Senate on November 28, 2017, Mr. Ronald Huggins was appointed as a Member of the Committee in lieu of Ms. Allyson Baksh.
5. By resolution of the Senate on November 27, 2018, Mr. Garvin Simonette was appointed as a Member of the Committee in lieu of Mr. Ronald Huggins.
6. By resolution of the Senate on November 27, 2018, Ms. Amrita Deonarine was appointed as a Member of the Committee in lieu of Ms. Jennifer Raffoul.
7. By resolution of the Senate on October 25, 2019, Mr. Foster Cummings was appointed as a Member of the Committee in lieu of Mr. Garvin Simonette.

Chairman & Vice-Chairman

By virtue of S.O. 109(6) and 99(6) of the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively, the Chairman of the Committee is the Speaker. At its First Meeting held on January 27, 2016, Dr. Lackram Bodoë was elected as the Vice-Chairman.

Quorum

Additionally, in order to exercise the powers granted to it by the House, the Committee was required by the Standing Orders to have a quorum. A quorum of three (3) Members, inclusive of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, with representatives from both Houses, was agreed to by the Committee at its First Meeting.

METHODOLOGY

Determination of the Committee's Work Programme

At an in-camera meeting of the Committee held on Tuesday, September 25, 2018, the Committee agreed to conduct an inquiry into the Ministry of Communications (MOC).

Review of Documents

The Committee deliberated on the following documents, namely:

- i. Budget Documents;
- ii. Auditor-General Report 2017;
- iii. Second Report of the Standing Finance Committee of the House of Representatives on the consideration of proposals for the supplementation of appropriation for the fiscal year 2019; and
- iv. Current news.

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process outlines steps to be taken by the Committee when conducting an inquiry into an entity or issue. The following steps outline the Inquiry process followed by the PAAC for its examination of the internal controls and expenditure of the MOC:

- i. Identification of entity to be examined: MOC;
- ii. Preparation of Inquiry Proposal for the MOC.
- iii. The Inquiry Proposal outlines:
 - Description
 - Objective of Inquiry; and
 - Proposed Questions.
- iv. Request for written response was sent to the MOC on April 30, 2019. Responses were received on May 14, 2019.
- v. Preparation of an Issues Paper which identified and summarised matters of concern in the responses provided by the MOC;

- vi. Based on the responses received and the issues identified, the Committee agreed to have a Public Hearing. The relevant witnesses were invited to attend and provide evidence on May 29, 2019.
- vii. Following the Public Hearing, a request for further details was sent to the MOC on June 11, 2019, and was received on July 3, 2019.

Background on the Ministry

The Ministry of Communications (MOC) has responsibility for Government Communications and Government Information. Within this context, the Ministry of Communications seeks to ensure that the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago know what the government is doing with their resources. The MOC is therefore charged with sharing information and keeping the population informed about the government and its Ministries' achievements, their current and future plans and initiatives, as well as any type of decisions that might affect them as citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Specifically, the Ministry has direct responsibility for: ¹

- Archives
- Centralised Government Communications
- Content Generation
- Data Protection
- Freedom of Information Monitoring
- Government Information
- Government Printery Services
- Issues Management/Crisis Communication
- National Library Services
- Rationalisation of Government-Owned Media

¹ Trinidad and Tobago gazette, Vol. 57, No. 77. Accessed on December 10, 2019. <http://news.gov.tt/sites/default/files/E-Gazette/Gazette%202018/Gazettes/Gazette%20No.%2077%20of%202018.pdf>

The MOC has experienced many incarnations with both changes of name and of state entities under its purview. The Ministry which was established in September 2015, was later joined to the Ministry of Public Administration in 2016, but in June 2018 was separated and is now known as the Ministry of Communications.

2. ISSUES, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ISSUES

1. The establishment of the Ministry's website

The Committee noted the absence of an official website for the Ministry of Communications. In a written submission, the MOC indicated that the website was expected to be completed by May 31, 2019. During a public hearing, the MOC was asked to provide a status update on its website. The Ministry indicated that the launch of its website was on track and still scheduled for May 31, 2019. In June 2019, the Committee upon investigation noted that the MOC website had been launched (moc.gov.tt).

Observation:

- ***The Committee noted that the Ministry's website was launched.***

2. The Ministry's approved organisational structure

Written evidence submitted indicated that the MOC did not have an approved organisational structure. It was further indicated that the Ministry's organisational structure was being reviewed by the Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD) as part of a Cabinet mandate. **(Please see Appendix I for the proposed structure as at May 2019).** Additional evidence submitted indicated that the Ministry's main activity was at the stage of Unit discourse and data compilation. It was estimated that this exercise would be completed by the end of the fiscal year 2019, at which time the approved organisational structure would be in place.

Recommendation:

- ***The MOC should submit the Ministry's final approved organisational structure to the Parliament by June 01, 2020.***

3. Challenges faced by the Ministry since its separation from the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA)

The MOC was questioned on the challenges faced since its separation from the MPA in June 2018. Written evidence submitted indicated that challenges resulted from the

setting up/outfitting of the new premises for the entire Ministry, as well as broader administrative issues. The table below outlines the challenges faced by the Ministry:

Challenges	
i. Head Office	Several senior administrative positions remain without incumbents e.g. Human Resource Officer, Administrative Officer, Accounting Executive I. Finance and Accounts faced a shortage of staff to perform duties in a timely manner. Also, the printing of cheques was still done at the MPA.
ii. Government Printery	a) Human Resource – the Ministry was still awaiting approval from the Service Commissions Department with respect to continuous acting positions for technical staff since June 2018. b) Accounts - Due to the lack of the full complement of Accounts staff at Head Office, the Accountant I (Ag.) is required to function at both the Division and the Ministry. Unfortunately, this has mainly affected the delivery of services to staff in terms of the payment of various arrears and increments.
iii. Information Division	With the separation of Ministries, the Division experienced challenges such as discontinuation of staff's acting positions until transfers were completed and administrative posts such as Receptionist were removed from the Information Division's establishment and put under the MPA.
iv. Freedom of Information Unit	The Unit experienced limited access to telephone and internet services due to infrastructural challenges. This reduced the number of clients engaging the unit for assistance regarding Freedom of Information requests. Further, access to the Ministry's email was negatively affected.
v. Location	The change in location, from NALIS Building to Morvant, resulted in a reduction in the number of clients accessing the services of the Freedom of Information Unit's services via "walk-ins".
vi. National Archives	The unavailability of the support services usually provided by the Ministry such as Accounts, HR, Legal, and Project Management made it difficult for the Division to function efficiently.

Observation:

- *The Committee noted that the MOC encountered a number of challenges since its separation from the MPA that has affected its overall operations.*

Recommendations:

- *The MOC should submit to Parliament by May 29, 2020, a status update on the filling of the several senior administrative positions that remain without incumbents at the Head Office. The Ministry should liaise with the relevant authorities to get these vacant positions filled;*
- *The MOC should liaise with the Service Commissions Department to address the issue of the number of technical staff continuously in acting positions and seek to get these persons in established positions;*
- *The MOC should urgently seek to acquire its full complement of Accounts staff at Head Office to ensure that services to staff in terms of the payment of various arrears and increments are effectively and efficiently delivered;*
- *The MOC in its review of its staff structure should determine the number of administrative staff that is needed in the Information Division's establishment and make every attempt to fill these positions;*
- *The MOC should submit to Parliament by May 29, 2020, a status update on the attempts made by the Ministry to improve its access to telephone and internet which was limited due to infrastructural challenges;*
- *The MOC should submit to Parliament the initiatives that have been undertaken to increase the number of clients accessing the services of the Freedom of Information Unit's services via "walk-ins";*
- *The MOC should submit to Parliament by May 29, 2020, the initiatives that have been undertaken to address the unavailability of the support services usually provided by the National Archives Division of the Ministry such as Accounts, HR, Legal and Project Management;*
- *Based on the challenges faced and lessons learned by the Ministry as a result of the separation from the Ministry of Public Administration, the*

Permanent Secretary of the MOC should formulate a checklist/template which can be utilized by a Ministry coming into being after it has been separated.

4. Staff shortage

As highlighted above, one of the major challenges faced by the MOC since the separation was the inadequate staff. Written evidence indicated that there were four hundred and seventy-three (473) vacant public service posts in the Ministry of which one hundred and sixteen (116) had persons acting in positions. **(Please see Appendix II for the breakdown of vacant positions in the Ministry as at March 31, 2019).** The table below illustrates the divisions/units with inadequate staff:

Division/Unit	Details
General Administration	Human Resource Officer Administrative Officer Accounting Executive I
Internal Audit	Auditor II
Freedom of Information	• Senior Freedom Administrator • Total of forty-nine (49) vacant positions • In March 2019 the Ministry advertised 30 contract vacancies in the Unit
National Archives	• was undergoing an organisation restructuring exercise • shortlisting process completed and interviews were scheduled to fill vacant positions • recruitments expected before the end of 2019.
Government Printery	• ideal staff complement of 165 as per PMCD. • The total staff as of May 2019 – 111. • Staff assigned to the areas of typesetting, printing, and binding – 32 persons

	• The need for fifty (50) additional persons in the Division.
Office of the Information Commission	• Commissioner of Information • Deputy Commissioner of Information

Observation:

- *The Committee noted that MOC has made attempts to fill vacant positions.*

Recommendation:

- *The MOC should liaise with the Service Commission Department (SCD) to fill the vacancies throughout the Ministry. Parliament should be provided with an update on the filling of these vacancies by May 29, 2020.*

5. The absence of a Procurement Unit

Oral evidence indicated that there was the absence of an established Procurement Unit within the Ministry. The Ministry has Cabinet approval for the structure of the unit and the position of Senior Procurement Officer and a Procurement Officer were established. However, upon review of the job description for the positions, the MOC noted that staff employed in the Ministry did not have the qualifications suited for the position.

Recommendation:

- *The MOC should give precedence to acquiring the suitably qualified persons for the positions of Senior Procurement Officer and a Procurement Officer.*
- *The MOC should liaise with the SCD to fill these positions; and*
- *The Ministry should provide a status update to Parliament on the progress made by May 29, 2020.*

6. Pension and leave

As of May 2019, the Ministry of Public Administration handled matters related to pension and leave and increments for the MOC. This was a result of the absence of a Human Resource Officer I and Human Resource Officer II, within the Head Office of the

Ministry. However, the MOC indicated that the Ministry does have intentions of hiring a Pension and Leave Officer.

Recommendation:

- ***The MOC to provide a status update to Parliament on its efforts to hire a Pension and Leave Officer to parliament by May 29, 2020.***

7. Internal Audit

The last Internal Audit conducted by the Ministry was in May 2019. This audit was conducted on the Fixed Assets Register (TIC Building) and the Motor Vehicle Log Books (All Divisions).

The issues identified were as follows:

- Fixed Assets Register TIC Building - There was no asset register in place at the TIC Building.
- Motor Vehicle Log Books - The section of the logbook for the particulars of the vehicle (example: chasis Number, vehicle make, year, etc) was not completed on some of the books. One driver did not enter all trips as soon as they were made but waited a few days after to enter them in batches.

Steps utilised by the Ministry to rectify were as followed:

- The Fixed Assets Register TIC Building- An Assets Register was being prepared by the Ministry.
- The Motor Vehicle Log Books- It was brought to the attention of the Checking Officer and the Driver that the details of the vehicle were not filled in on the Log Book. It was subsequently filled out by the Driver and checked. The Driver and Checking Officer were informed that all trips must be entered in the Log Book on a daily basis and not after a few days. The book was updated and a follow-up audit was to be conducted in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2019 to ensure consistent compliance.

Recommendations:

- ***The MOC should submit to Parliament a status update on the completion of the Fixed Assets Register TIC Building by May 29, 2020; and***

- *Upon completion of the follow-up audit to ensure consistent compliance with the filling out of Motor Vehicle Log Books, the MOC should submit a report on the findings to the Parliament by May 29, 2020.*

8. The reporting relationship between MOC, State Enterprises, and Statutory Boards under the Ministry's purview

The Ministry was questioned on its reporting relationship with State Enterprises and Statutory Boards under its purview. The Ministry indicated that the relevant legislation that govern NALIS, the Board of Film Censors and TTT Limited stipulates that the reporting relationship flows from the Executive Director of these State Enterprises and Statutory Boards to the relevant board and the board to the Minister. Furthermore, Minutes of meetings and financial statements are submitted to the Ministry. It was further indicated that NALIS and TTT also report to the Investments Division of the Ministry of Finance.

Observation:

- *The Committee noted that all State Enterprises and Statutory Boards under the Ministry's purview report to the Minister of the MOC.*

Recommendation:

- *The Minister of the MOC should ensure that he/she maintains a consistent reporting relationship with the Executive Director of State Enterprises and Statutory Boards under the Ministry; and*
- *The MOC should ensure that all Minutes of meetings and financial statements of State Enterprises and Statutory Boards under its purview are submitted on time.*

9. Outstanding payments for projects

The Committee sought details on the status of the completion of the construction of libraries under the Infrastructure Development Fund. The Ministry indicated that there was a delay in the construction of the Couva and Mayaro Library on account of the

Contractor postponed work pending the payment of outstanding invoices. The Committee sought further clarification on this matter and in an additional written submission the Ministry indicated that on August 30, 2018, the Contractor suspended works on the Mayaro Library pending the payment of outstanding invoice. On January 24, 2019, the Contractor issued a Notice of Termination of Contract which claimed that the Engineer failed to issue payment certificates and the employer failed to make payments of interim payment certificates. The termination of the contract by the Contractor for the Construction of Mayaro Library was effected on February 7, 2019. The closeout report for the contract upon termination was outstanding. The Ministry further indicated that a new contract was required to complete the construction of the Mayaro Library.

As of July 2019, the payment of invoices was still outstanding for the construction of the Couva Library. However, the Ministry indicated that the provision was being made to transfer \$105,321.00 from the Vote for the Construction of the Mayaro Library project to cover the additional cost for the outstanding invoices for the construction of the Mayaro Library.

Recommendations:

- ***The MOC should submit to Parliament a status update on the acquisition of the new contract for the completion of the Mayaro Library by May 29, 2020; and***
- ***The MOC should submit to Parliament a status update on the payment of the outstanding invoices and the completion of the construction of the Couva Library by May 29, 2020.***

10. Short-term contracts

The Committee noted that the Ministry was engaged in a number of short-term arrangements for the leasing of photocopiers, storage and security services. When questioned, the MOC indicated that the Ministry only started engaging in short-term contracts for the fiscal year 2018/2019. It was further indicated that on account of staff constraints the Ministry was unable to engage in open tenders for long term contracts. The MOC informed the Committee that it was in the process of rectifying the situation

and that Ministry's Legal Officer was seeking to engage in more long term contracts in the next fiscal year.

Recommendation:

- ***The MOC should submit to Parliament by May 29, 2020, a status update on the measures taken to engage in more long term contracts for leasing of photocopiers, storage and security services for the fiscal year 2019/2020.***

11. State Enterprises retaining unspent subventions

The Committee questioned the MOC on State Enterprises' ability to retain unspent subventions. The Ministry indicated that State Enterprises under the Ministry's purview such as NALIS and TTT are authorised to open accounts and retain unspent subventions from the Ministry. NALIS can retain unspent subventions according to the Exchequer and Audit Act, the NALIS Act No. 18 of 1998 and Board decision of 20.2.01 to establish the NALIS Fund.

Additionally, the Exchequer and Audit Act in sections 37 and 38 require statutory bodies, upon request of the Minister of Finance and its line Minister to pay surplus funds to the Consolidated Fund with the exception of those listed in Section 32 (2).

Section 32 (2) states:

“32. (2) Sections 37 and 38 shall not apply to the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation, established by the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation Act, or to NALIS established by the National Library and Information Systems Act.”

It was further indicated that there is no known requirement for State Enterprises to return funds to the Consolidated Fund.

Observations:

- ***The Committee noted that State Enterprises under the purview of the Ministry were authorised to retain unspent subventions; and***
- ***It was further noted by the Committee that State Enterprises were not required to return unspent subventions to the Consolidated Fund.***

Recommendation:

- *The MOC should ensure that all State Enterprises, at the end of the financial year submit financial statements of unspent subventions.*

3. CONCLUSION

During the Fourth Session of the Eleventh Parliament, the PAAC conducted an inquiry into the examination into the expenditure and internal controls of the MOC for the fiscal year 2018/2019. During the course of the examination which consisted of written submissions and a Public Hearing, the Committee followed up on several issues from the written responses received from the Ministry. Issues arising such as staff constraints, the absence of an approved organisational structure and Procurement Unit, outstanding payments for projects and internal audit were discussed. It appears that the universal factor hampering the operations of the Ministry was one of inadequate staff. The Committee noted that the Ministry was making every attempt to address the issues facing the Ministry since the separation.

The Committee is of the view that the adoption of its proposed recommendations will lead to greater accountability, transparency and value for money in the use of public funds. Moreover, the Committee intends to monitor the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations proposed in this Report.

This Committee respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the Parliament.

Sgd.
Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George
Chairman

Sgd.
Dr. Lackram Bodoë
Vice-Chairman

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Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy
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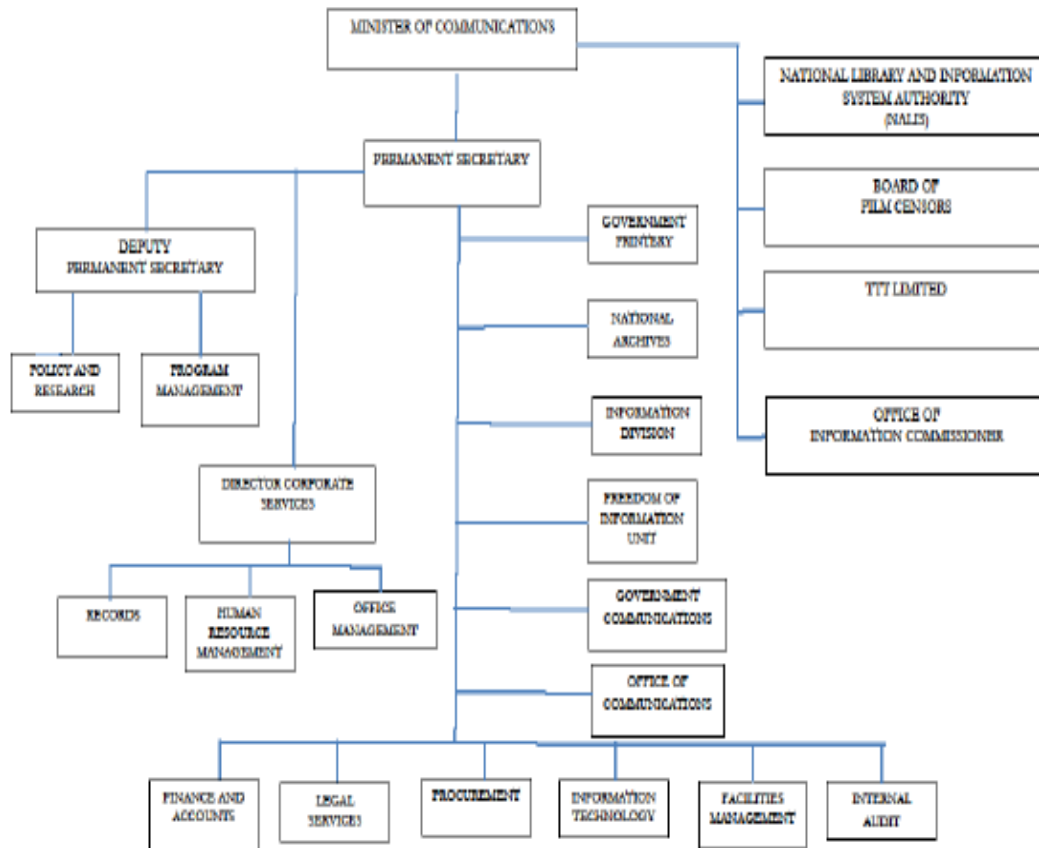
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Appendix I
The Ministry of
Communication proposed
organisational structure

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART- 2019



Appendix II
Ministry of Communication
vacant positions as at March
2019

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS							
VACANT POSITIONS AS AT March 31, 2019							
No. of positions/List of Positions (under the purview of the Public Service Commission) in Draft Estimates	No. of positions/List of Public Service Positions on your Establishment (only permanent positions to be recorded)	No. of Permanent officers	No. of Vacant Positions	No. of Vacant positions With Bodies	No. of Vacant Positions Without Bodies	No. of Vacant positions which cannot be filled (give reasons) for e.g suppression of offices, position to be abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Permanent Secretary	1 Permanent Secretary	0	1	1	0	N/A	
1 Deputy Permanent Secretary	1 Deputy Permanent Secretary	0	1	0	1	N/A	
1 Auditor II	1 Auditor II	0	1	0	1	Reinstated wef June 07, 2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/2018	
1 Auditor I	1 Auditor I	0	1	1	0	Transferred from MPAC to MOC wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
2 Auditing Assistant	2 Auditing Assistant	0	2	2		0		
1 Executive Secretary	1 Executive Secretary	0	1	0		1	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	
1 Clerk Stenographer IV	1 Clerk Stenographer IV	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk Stenographer III	1 Clerk Stenographer III	0	1	0		1		
1 Clerk Typist I	1 Clerk Typist I	0	1	0		1	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	
2 Receptionist Telephone Operators	2 Receptionist Telephone Operators	0	2	0		2	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	
1 Maid I	1 Maid I	0	1	0		1	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	
1 Records Manager II	1 Records Manager II	1	0	0		0		
1 Administrative Officer II	1 Administrative Officer II	0	1	0		1	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Systems Analyst I	1 Systems Analyst I	0	1	1	0		
1 Clerk III	1 Clerk III	0	1	1	0	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/18	
2 Clerk I	2 Clerk I	0	2	2	0	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/19	
1 Clerk IV	1 Clerk IV	0	1	1	0		
2 Clerk II	2 Clerk II	0	2	1	1	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/19	
1 Chauffeur/Messenger	1 Chauffeur/Messenger	1	0	0	0		
1 Director Corporate Services	1 Director Corporate Services	1	0	0	0		
1 Administrative Assistant	1 Administrative Assistant	0	1	0	1	Office created wef 7/6/2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/19	
Total	26	4	22	11	11		

FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS								
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Accounting Executive I	1 Accounting Executive I	0	1	0		1	Office created wef June 7, 2018 by Cabinet Minute No. 1424 dated August 22, 2018.	
1 Accountant II	1 Accountant II	0	1	0		1	Reinstated wef June 07, 2018 by CM 1424 dated 22/8/2018	
1 Accountant I	1 Accountant I	0	1	1		0		
4 Accounting Assistant	4 Accounting Assistant	1	3	3		0		
1 Clerk II	1 Clerk II	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk I	1 Clerk I	1	0	0		0		
1 Clerk Typist I	1 Clerk Typist I	0	1	0		1	Office created wef June 7, 2018 by Cabinet Minute No. 1424 dated August 22, 2018.	
1 Clerk Stenographer I/II	1 Clerk Stenographer I/II	0	1	0		1		
3 Clerk I	3 Clerk I	0	3	0		3		

Total	14	2	12	5	7		
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT							
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Senior Human Resource Officer	1 Senior Human Resource Officer	0	1	1	0		
1 Human Resource Officer II	1 Human Resource Officer II	0	1	0	1	One (1) post of Human Resource officer II created by Cabinet Minute No. 1454 dated August 22, 2018.	
1 Human Resource Officer I	1 Human Resource Officer I	0	1	0	1	One (1) post of Human Resource officer II created by Cabinet Minute No. 1454 dated August 22, 2018.	
2 Clerk Stenographer I/II	2 Clerk Stenographer I/II	0	2	0	2		
1 Clerk II	1 Clerk II	0	1	0	1	Office created wef June 7, 2018 by	

						Cabinet Minute No. 1424 dated August 22, 2018.	
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Clerk I	1 Clerk I	0	1	1	0	Office created wef June 7, 2018 by Cabinet Minute No. 1424 dated August 22, 2018.	
2 Clerk Typist I	2 Clerk Typist I	0	2	0	2	Office created wef June 7, 2018 by Cabinet Minute No. 1424 dated August 22, 2018.	
Total	9	0	9	2	7		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
INFORMATION DIVISION								
1 Director of Information	1 Director of Information	0	1	0		1		
2 Assistant Director of Information	2 Assistant Director of Information	1	1	0		1		
1 Information Attache	1 Information Attache	0	1	0		1		
2 Press Officer III	2 Press Officer III	0	2	1		1		
2 Press Officer II	2 Press Officer II	0	2	0		2		
2 Press Officer I	2 Press Officer I	0	2	0		2		
1 Photographer II	1 Photographer II	1	0	0		0		
3 Photographer I	3 Photographer I	1	2	1		1		
1 Photo-Laboratory Technician II	1 Photo-Laboratory Technician II	1	0	0		0		
2 Photo-Laboratory Technician I	2 Photo-Laboratory Technician I	1	1	0		1		
3 Public Relations Officer II	3 Public Relations Officer II	1	2	1		1	One (1) position of PRO II was transferred to the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs with effect from March 17, 2016 . Cabinet Minute No.	

						885 dated June 23, 2016.	
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With Vacant Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
2 Public Relations Officer I	2 Public Relations Officer I	1	1	0	1	One (1) position of PRO I was transferred to the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs with effect from March 17, 2016 . Cabinet Minute No. 885 dated June 23, 2016.	
1 Librarian I	1 Librarian I	0	1	0	1		
3 Library Assistant I	3 Library Assistant I	0	3	0	3		
1 Broadcasting Officer III	1 Broadcasting Officer III	0	1	1	0		
1 Broadcasting Officer II	1 Broadcasting Officer II	0	1	0	1		
6 Broadcasting Officer I	6 Broadcasting Officer I	1	5	1	4		
1 Broadcasting Equipment Technician II	1 Broadcasting Equipment Technician II	1	0	0	0		

1 Broadcasting Equipment Technician I	1 Broadcasting Equipment Technician I	1	0	0	0			
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With Bodies	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Broadcasting Equipment Operator II	1 Broadcasting Equipment Operator II	0	1	0	1			
4 Broadcasting Equipment Operator I	4 Broadcasting Equipment Operator I	3	1	0	1			
2 Director Producer II	2 Director Producer II	0	2	2	0			
6 Director Producer I	6 Director Producer I	0	6	0	6			
1 Television/Film Records Officer II	1 Television/Film Records Officer II	0	1	0	1			
1 Television/Film Records Officer I	1 Television/Film Records Officer I	0	1	0	1			
1 Television/Film Engineering Technician I	1 Television/Film Engineering Technician I	0	1	0	1			
3 Technical Production Officer II	3 Technical Production Officer II	0	3	0	3			
6 Technical Production Officer I	6 Technical Production Officer I	6	0	0	0			
1 Film Production Trainee	1 Film Production Trainee	0	1	0	1			
1 Administrative Officer II	1 Administrative Officer II							
1 Administrative Assistant	1 Administrative Assistant	0	1	1	0			

5 Clerical Establishment								
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Clerk III	1 Clerk III	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk II	1 Clerk II	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk I	1 Clerk I	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk Stenographer III	1 Clerk Stenographer III	1	0	0		0		
1 Clerk Stenographer I/II	1 Clerk Stenographer I/II	0	1	0		1		
5 Cleaner I	5 Cleaner I	0	0	0		0	Five (5) Posts abolished when vacant - CM #2829 dated Oct., 9, 2014	
1 Watchman	1 Watchman	1	0	0		0		
Temporary Staff -								
1 Watchman	1 Watchman	0	1	1		0		
Total	70	21	49	12		37		

NATIONAL ARCHIVES								
Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Government Archivist	1 Government Archivist	1	0	0		0		
1 Manager, Records Centre	1 Manager, Records Centre	0	1	0		1		
1 Human Resource Officer II	1 Human Resource Officer II	0	1	0		1		
1 Records Manager II	1 Records Manager II	0	1	0		1		
2 Archive Assistant II	2 Archive Assistant II	2	0	0		0		
3 Archive Assistant I	3 Archive Assistant I	1	2	0		2		
2 Archive Repairer II	2 Archive Repairer II	0	2	2		0		
3 Archive Repairer I	3 Archive Repairer I	3	0	0		0		
1 Photographer I	1 Photographer I	1	0	0		0		
1 Storekeeper I	1 Storekeeper I	0	1	1		0		
1 Administrative Officer II	1 Administrative Officer II	0	1	1		0		
Clerical Establishment								
1 Clerk III	1 Clerk III	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk II	1 Clerk II	0	1	1				
1 Clerk Typist II	1 Clerk Typist II	0	1	1		0		
2 Clerk Typist I	2 Clerk Typist I	2	0	0		0		
1 Motor Vehicle Driver	1 Motor Vehicle Driver	0	1	1		0		
1 Documents Cleaner	1 Documents Cleaner	1	0	0		0		
1 Vault Attendant I	1 Vault Attendant I	0	1	1		0		
1 Vault Attendant I	1 Vault Attendant I	0	1	1		0		
1 Messenger I	1 Messenger I	1	0	0		0		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
2 Handyman	2 Handyman	0	2	2	0		
1 Cleaner I	1 Cleaner I	0	1	0	1		
Temporary Staff -							
1 Administrative Assistant	1 Administrative Assistant	0	1	0	1		
Total	31	12	19	12	7		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
GOVERNMENT PRINTERY								
1 Government Printer	1 Government Printer	1	0	0		0		
1 Assistant Government Printer	1 Assistant Government Printer	0	1	1		0		
1 Human Resource Officer III	1 Human Resource Officer III	0	1	0		1		
1 Administrative Officer II	1 Administrative Officer II	0	1	1		0		
1 Printing Supervisor III	1 Printing Supervisor III	0	1	1		0		
24 Clerical Establishment	24 Clerical Establishment							
1 Clerk IV	1 Clerk IV	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk III	1 Clerk III	1	0	0		0		
4 Clerk II	4 Clerk II	2	2	2		0		
14 Clerk I	14 Clerk I	1	13	13		0		
4 Clerk Typist I	4 Clerk Typist I	2	2	2		0		
1 Accountant I	1 Accountant I	0	1	1		0		
1 Accounting Asst.	1 Accounting Asst.	1	0	0		0		
2 Part-Time Cleaner	2 Part-Time Cleaner	0	2	0		2		
Work Control	Work Control							
1 Printing Supervisor II	1 Printing Supervisor II	0	1	1		0		
2 Printing Supervisor I	2 Printing Supervisor I	2	0	0		0		
4 Printing Operator V	4 Printing Operator V	2	2	2		0		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
Composing	Composing							
1 Printing Supervisor I	1 Printing Supervisor I	0	1	1		0		
5 Printing Operator V	5 Printing Operator V	5	0	0		0		
8 Printing Operator IV	8 Printing Operator IV	1	7	0		7		
21 Printing Operator III	21 Printing Operator III	4	17	0		17		
41 Printing Operator II	41 Printing Operator II	0	41	0		41		
16 Printing Operator I	16 Printing Operator I	0	16	0		16		
1 Smelter	1 Smelter	0	1	0		1		
Proof Reading	Proof Reading							
1 Printing Supervisor I	1 Printing Supervisor I	0	1	1		0		
6 Printing Operator V	6 Printing Operator V	4	2	2		0		
6 Printing Operator I	6 Printing Operator I	0	6	0		6		
Letter Press	Letter Press							
1 Printing Supervisor I	1 Printing Supervisor I	0	1	0		1		
2 Printing Operator V	2 Printing Operator V	0	2	0		2		
1 Printing Operator IV	1 Printing Operator IV	0	1	0		1		
1 Printing Operator III	1 Printing Operator III	0	1	0		1		
17 Printing Operator II	17 Printing Operator II	2	15	0		15		
7 Printing Operator I	7 Printing Operator I	0	7	0		7		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
1 Roller Maker	1 Roller Maker	0	1	0		1		
Offset	Offset							
1 Printing Supervisor I	1 Printing Supervisor I	0	1	1		0		
2 Printing Operator V	2 Printing Operator V	0	2	2		0		
1 Printing Operator IV	1 Printing Operator IV	0	1	1		0		
1 Printing Operator III	1 Printing Operator III	1	0	0		0		
13 Printing Operator II	13 Printing Operator II	11	2	1		1		
4 Printing Operator I	4 Printing Operator I	1	3	0		3		
Binding	Binding							
2 Printing Supervisor I	2 Printing Supervisor I	0	2	2		0		
6 Printing Operator V	6 Printing Operator V	1	5	5		0		
5 Printing Operator IV	5 Printing Operator IV	1	4	4		0		
3 Printing Operator III	3 Printing Operator III	0	3	3		0		
87 Printing Operator II	87 Printing Operator II	21	66	1		65		
32 Printing Operator I	32 Printing Operator I	1	31	0		31		
Printing Engineering	Printing Engineering							
1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor II	1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor II	0	1	0		1		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
2 Printing Mechanical Supervisor I	2 Printing Mechanical Supervisor I	1	1	0		1		
6 Printing Mechanic I	6 Printing Mechanic I	1	5	0		5		
Office Machines	Office Machines							
1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor II	1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor II	0	1	0		1		
1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor I	1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor I	0	1	0		1		
1 Printing Mechanic II	1 Printing Mechanic II	0	1	0		1		
12 Printing Mechanic I	12 Printing Mechanic I	1	11	0		11		
4 Printing Mechanical Assistant	4 Printing Mechanical Assistant	0	4	0		4		
1 Printing Training Officer	1 Printing Training Officer	0	1	1		0		
Printing and Stationery Stores	Printing and Stationery Stores							
1 Storekeeper III	1 Storekeeper III	0	1	1		0		
1 Storekeeper II	1 Storekeeper II	0	1	1		0		
2 Storekeeper I	2 Storekeeper I	0	2	2		0		
2 Stores Clerk I	2 Stores Clerk I	0	2	2		0		
1 Stores Attendant/Operator	1 Stores Attendant/Operator	0	1	1		0		
2 Stores Attendant	2 Stores Attendant	2	0	0		0		
Sales	Sales							
1 Sales Officer	1 Sales Officer	0	1	1		0		
1 Cashier	1 Cashier I	0	1	1		0		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
2 Clerical Establishment								
1 Clerk II	1 Clerk II	0	1	1		0		
1 Clerk Typist I	1 Clerk Typist I	0	1	1		0		
1 Stores Attendant	1 Stores Attendant	1	0	0		0		
General	General							
1 Library Assistant II	1 Library Assistant II	0	1	0		1		
2 Timekeeper	2 Timekeeper	2	0	0		0		
3 Motor Vehicle Drivers	3 Motor Vehicle Drivers	1	2	2		0		
1 Printing Assistant II	1 Printing Assistant II	1	0	0		0		
13 Printing Assistant I	13 Printing Assistant I	0	13	10		3		
1 Messenger I	1 Messenger I	0	1	1		0		
1 Part-Time Cleaner		0	1	0		1		
30 Apprentice	30 Apprentice	0	30	0		30		
Total	428	75	353	74		279		
Temporary Staff								
3 Printing Operator 1	3 Printing Operator 1	0	0	0		0		
1 Printery Supervisor II	1 Printery Supervisor II	0	0	0		0		
5 Printing Supervisor I	5 Printing Supervisor I	0	0	0		0		
1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor I	1 Printing Mechanical Supervisor I	0	0	0		0		
8 Printing Operator V	8 Printing Operator V	0	0	0		0		
4 Printing Operator IV	4 Printing Operator IV	0	0	0		0		

9 Printing Operator III	9 Printing Operator III	0	0	0	0		
37 Printing Operator II	37 Printing Operator II	0	0	0	0		
22 Printing Operator I	22 Printing Operator I	0	0	0	0		
2 Printing Mechanic I	2 Printing Mechanic I	0	0	0	0		
1 Printing Assistant II	1 Printing Assistant II	0	0	0	0		
5 Printing Assistant I	5 Printing Assistant I	0	0	0	0		
1 Storekeeper	1 Storekeeper	0	1	0	1		
1 Store Clerk I	1 Store Clerk I	0	1	0	1		
1 Timekeeper	1 Timekeeper	0	0	0	0		
2 Motor Vehicle Driver	2 Motor Vehicle Driver	0	2	0	2		
1 Estate Constable	1 Estate Constable	0	0	0	0		
Total	4	0	4	0	4		
OFFICE OF THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER							
1 Information Commissioner	1 Information Commissioner	0	1	0	1	Office created by CM 1424 dated 22/8/2018 wef 7/6/2018	Office to be classified
2 Deputy Information Commissioners	2 Deputy Information Commissioners	0	2	0	2	Office created by CM 1424 dated 22/8/2018 wef 7/6/2018	Office to be classified
Total	3	0	3	0	3		

Estimates	Establishment	Officers	Vacant Positions	Vacant Bodies	With	Vacant Without Bodies	Suppression /abolished, etc.	Remarks
PROCUREMENT UNIT								
1 Senior Procurement Officer	1 Senior Procurement Officer	0	1	0		1	Office created by CM 1424 dated 22/8/2018 wef 7/6/2018	Office to be classified
1 Procurement Officer	1 Procurement Officer	0	1	0		1	Office created by CM 1424 dated 22/8/2018 wef 7/6/2018	Office to be classified
TOTAL	2	0	2	0		2		
Grand Total	587	114	473	116		357		

APPENDIX III

Questions to Ministry

General Questions

1. What is the role, vision, mission and purpose of the Ministry?
2. What is the total number of persons employed at the Ministry? Provide a breakdown of the category of workers.
3. What is the total number of vacant positions at the Ministry? Provide a breakdown of the category of vacant positions.
4. Are there any intentions to create a separate website for the Ministry?
 - a) If yes, is there a system in place for the creation, upgrade and maintenance of a new website?
5. What challenges have been faced by the Ministry since the separation from the Ministry of Public Administration?
6. What measures are in place to ensure and maintain the completeness and accuracy of the Ministry's record keeping since the separation?
7. With reference to the issue of paying pensions to employees, are these records accurate and up-to-date since the separation?
8. What mechanisms have been implemented by Ministry to determine whether policy is carried out efficiently, effectively and economically?
9. What systems are in place to ensure there is effective compliance with the Exchequer and Audit Act and Call Circulars from the Ministry of Finance?
10. What mechanisms are in place to ensure proper management of public funds (revenue if applicable and expenditure)?
11. Provide a copy of the Ministry's approved Organisational Structure.
12. Provide a brief status update on the Government Information Services Ltd.
 - a) What is the rationale for no funds being allocated to the Government Information Services Ltd for the fiscal year 2019?
13. Please provide copies or the status of the following current documents:
 - Strategic Plan;
 - Project Management Protocol;
 - Risk Management Policy;
 - Fraud Policy; and

- Whistle-blower Policy.

Accountability and Transparency

Questions:

1. In relation to allocations to the Ministry, how does the Accounting Officer (AO) ensure there is an appropriate framework in place to provide her with the required accountability to Parliament?
2. What is the process used by the AO to measure outcomes, evaluate performance and demonstrate value for money?
3. How does the Accounting Officer test whether projects and programmes are feasible and provide value for money at the start and throughout its life?
4. How does the AO determine whether the framework for accountability, transparency and value for money at Divisions of the Ministry are working?
5. Are there systems in place to measure whether this framework is reliable and efficient?
6. What is process for dealing with failure or underperformance in programmes and projects?
7. How does the AO provide meaningful oversight of and Divisions receiving funding from the Ministry?
8. Is there a framework governing conflict of interest? Describe the framework.
9. What measures are used to address conflicts of interest once identified?
10. Given the current economic climate, has any consideration been given to the employment measures to eliminate waste and unnecessary expenditure and to increase revenue collection at the Ministry?

Internal audit

Questions:

1. What is the total number of persons employed at the Internal Audit Unit? Provide a breakdown of the category of workers in the Unit.
2. Is the Internal Audit Unit adequately staffed to carry out its responsibilities? If no, provide the following:
 - a) The current number of vacant positions.
 - b) The title of these vacant positions.

3. Has the Ministry communicated with the Service Commission Department to fill vacant positions?
 - a) If yes, what was the result?
 - b) If no, what are the reasons?
4. How many persons in this unit are qualified to perform internal audits?
5. Has a Charter of Internal Audit work been prepared for fiscal year 2019?
6. Are the staff of the Internal Audit Unit properly trained?
 - a) What training has been offered to the staff of the Internal Audit Unit thus far for fiscal year 2019? Provide details on the training administered such as type of training, date, the agency used and cost.
 - b) Has the Ministry engaged the Public Service Academy to provide training?
 - c) Is further training scheduled for the fiscal year 2019? Provide details on the training administered such type of training, date, the agency that would be used and cost.
7. Does the Ministry have a framework for executing internal audits?
8. How frequently are audit investigations conducted by the Unit?
9. How has the internal audit activity contributed to improving value for money, governance, risk management and internal control processes of the Ministry?
10. What systems exist to address the risk of misappropriation of assets and error or fraud in monthly financial reporting as reported by the auditors?
11. In what ways has the Internal Audit Unit contributed to the improvements in the performance of the organization?
12. What challenges has the Ministry faced in conducting internal audits since the separation?

Sub Head 01: Personal Expenditure

001 General Administration

Questions:

1. Provide a list of Cabinet-Appointed Committees and members who serve on these Committees.

Sub Head 02: Goods and Services

001 General Administration

Sub-item: 01 Travelling and Subsistence

Questions:

1. Provide a detailed list of the category of workers (job title) who receive travelling allowances?
2. Is there a policy for the payment of Travelling and Subsistence? If yes, provide a copy.
3. What measures are in place to ensure that the Ministry carries out regular reviews and checks with which to assess and manage these funds?
4. What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is value for money, accountability and transparency as regards with this sub-item?

Sub-Item: 08 Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage

Questions:

1. What is the procurement policy for acquiring office accommodation? Provide details.
2. Provide a list of all the rental/leased Office Accommodation and Storage occupied by the Department to date. What are the monthly rental cost for each office and storage space?
3. Are there plans for the acquisition or ownership of rental/leased space?
4. What systems were implemented to ensure that rent/lease agreement payments are made in a timely manner and also will be recorded for transparency and accountability?
5. Has a comparison/assessment been made between renting/leasing and purchasing to determine the best option to achieve value for money spent? Provide a copy of this assessment?
6. What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is value for money, accountability and transparency as regards with this sub-item?

Sub-Item: 09 Rent/Lease – Vehicles and Equipment

Questions:

1. How many vehicles are rented/leased by the Ministry?
2. State the equipment are rented/leased by the Ministry?
3. What are rented/leased vehicles used for?
4. Which company is contracted for the rent/lease of vehicles and/or equipment? Provide details on the contract agreement.
5. Has any cost benefit analysis been conducted to determine the best option to get value for money between purchasing and renting/leasing?
6. What systems were implemented to ensure that rent/lease agreement payments are made in a timely manner and also will be recorded for transparency and accountability?

Sub-Item: 16 Contract Employment

Questions:

1. What is the total number of persons currently employed on contract at the Ministry?
 - a) Provide examples or a description of the category of workers employed on contract?
2. Are there any contract positions that are currently vacant at the Department?
 - a) How many are expected to be filled within this fiscal year?
3. Describe the recruitment and selection process, including the criteria used to hire persons on Contract Employment.
4. How does the Department ensure value for money with contract employment?
5. Are there any measurable or tangible benefits that can be identified as a result of the work of contract employment?
6. Will the public service establishment be updated to reduce the reliance on contract employment?
7. What measures are in place to avoid nepotism when recruiting employees?
8. Is there a process in place to appraise persons hired? Please provide a breakdown of this process.

Sub-Item: 17 Training

Questions:

1. Was the allocation of \$30,000 sufficient to meet the training requirements of the Ministry?
2. Provide a detail breakdown of training undertaken thus far by the Department for fiscal 2019 such as type of training, date, the agency used and cost.
3. Is there training still to be conducted for fiscal year 2019? If yes, provide a list of the different training along with dates, the name of the agency to conduct the training and cost?
4. What are the requirements for choosing a provider to conduct training? Please provide details.
5. Is the Public Service Academy utilized to conduct training?
6. How does the Ministry measure the effectiveness of training being conducted?
7. Indicate how the training benefits the Ministry how they contribute to achieving its mission?
8. Are post-training reviews conducted by the Ministry? Please give breakdown.
9. What measures are in place to ensure that there is value for money post-training?

Sub-Item: 22-Short Term Employment

Questions:

1. How many persons are currently employed on short-term? Provide the category of workers employed on short-term.
2. How are short-term employees hired?
3. What criteria is used to hire short-term employees? How does it assist the Ministry in achieving its mission statement?
4. Is an agency used to contract short term employment? What are the requirements? Provide a list.
5. What are the general roles and responsibilities of short term employees? Provide a detailed list of jobs and their job descriptions.
6. 'Short- term employment should not exceed six (6) months'. Have any of these persons been employed in excess of (6) months on a consistent basis?
7. How does the Ministry measure the performance of these persons?
8. What are the tangible benefits of this type of employment?

Sub-Item: 27-Official Overseas Travel

Questions:

1. Please provide a breakdown on overseas travel undertaken for 2019 thus far such as dates and cost?
2. Provide a list of persons and their positions for which funds have were granted to, for overseas travel? What is the purpose of these Overseas Trips and how did they add value to the Ministry?
3. Are there Official Overseas Travel still to be undertaken for this year?
 - a) If yes, please provide a breakdown on overseas travel still to be undertaken for 2019. Include the dates, cost, the purpose of these Overseas Trips and how do they add value to the Ministry?
4. How are trips selected/prioritised?
5. Provide a list of overseas travel facilities used.
6. Is there a policy regarding this sub-item? If yes, provide a list.
7. How does the Ministry plan to monitor this sub-item to ensure transparency, accountability and value for money?

Sub-item: 28 Other Contracted Services

Questions:

1. Provide a detailed breakdown of the services that were procured thus far for the fiscal year 2019.
2. What is the procurement policy for obtaining goods and services under this sub-item?
3. What is the role of the Internal Auditor in monitoring expenditure for this sub-item?
4. Are Internal Audit reports produced to ensure there is evidence of transparency and accountability under this sub-item?
5. Are there appropriate mechanisms to monitor expenditure under this sub-item Other Contracted Services? If yes, provide a copy of the mechanisms for monitoring expenditure.

Sub-item: 37 Janitorial Services

Questions:

1. Is there a recruitment and selection process for Janitorial Services? If yes, provide a breakdown of this process.
2. Has there been an analysis of the Ministry's procurement of janitorial services total expenditure to identify trends on how much was spent on which supplier to help inform the development of procurement and contract strategies?
3. Please provide a list of all contract agreements with each service provider, the period of each agreement and the total expenditure incurred by the Ministry thus far.
4. How does the Department evaluate and benchmark its service provider(s)' performance against other similar service providers in areas such as transaction cost and practices and procedures?
5. What measures have been implemented to ensure that the Department carries out regular reviews and quality checks with which to assess and manage the performance of service providers?
6. Is information discussed with the provider and used to improve standards and performance in a timely manner? If yes, please provide a sample of this evaluation.

Sub-Item: 43- Security Services

Questions:

1. How are the security service providers contracted?

2. Provide a list of the Security Companies contracted under this sub-item for fiscal year 2019?
3. Provide a list of the contract agreements and total expenditure made thus far under this sub-item?
4. How does the Ministry evaluate and benchmark its services provided by security companies?
5. What measures are in place to carry out regular appraisals of these companies?
6. What measures have been put in place to ensure that the Ministry carry out regular reviews and quality checks with which to assess and manage the performance of service providers?
7. Will this information be discussed with the supplier and used to improve standards and performance in a timely manner? Provide a sample of this evaluation.

Sub –Item: 62 Promotions, Publicity and Printing

Questions:

1. Is the allocation of \$150,000 sufficient for the Ministry to achieve its communication mandate?
2. What guidelines exist to ensure that the message from the Ministry is consistent and reaches its target audience?
3. What challenges and good practices exist, related to the financing of this sub item?
4. Have any Outreach Programmes been conducted for fiscal year 2019? What is the estimated cost per Outreach Programme?
5. To what extent does the Ministry utilise Social Media? Is the money spent on Social Media based on reach? How is effectiveness determined?
6. Was any analysis of the Ministry’s procurement of services providers’ total expenditure to identify trends on how much was spent on which service providers to help inform, review and monitor various service providers?

Sub-item: 66 Hosting of Conferences, Seminars and Other Functions

Questions:

1. Provide a detailed breakdown of the Conferences, Seminars and Functions that were and still to be hosted for fiscal year 2019 by the Ministry?
2. What is the purpose and cost for each event planned for this fiscal year?
3. What is the approval process for expenditure for these events?

4. What measures have been put in place to assess the benefits of Hosting of Conferences, Seminars and Other Functions?
5. Is a post event assessment conducted and are findings considered and applied to improving future events?

002 Government Printery

Sub-Item: 08 Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage

Questions:

1. What is the procurement policy for acquiring office accommodation? Provide details.
2. Provide a list of all the Rental/Leased Office Accommodation and Storage occupied by the Printery. What are the monthly rental cost for each office accommodation and storage space?
3. Are there plans for the acquisition or ownership of rental/leased space?
4. Has a comparison/assessment been made between renting/leasing and purchasing to determine the best option to achieve value for money spent? Please provide a copy of this assessment?
5. What systems were implemented to ensure that rent/lease agreement payments are made in a timely manner and also will be recorded for transparency and accountability?
6. Has a comparison/assessment been made between renting/leasing and purchasing to determine the best option to achieve value for money spent? Provide a copy of the assessment?
7. What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is value for money, accountability and transparency as regards with this sub-item?

003 National Archives

Sub-Item: 08 Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage

Questions:

1. What is the procurement policy for acquiring office accommodation? Provide details.
2. Provide a list of all the rental/leased Office Accommodation and Storage occupied by the Department to date. What are the monthly rental cost for each office and storage space?
3. Are there plans for the acquisition or ownership of rental/leased space?
4. Has a comparison/assessment been made between renting/leasing and purchasing to determine the best option to achieve value for money spent? Please provide a copy of this assessment?

5. What systems were implemented to ensure that rent/lease agreement payments are made in a timely manner and also will be recorded for transparency and accountability?
6. Has a comparison/assessment been made between renting/leasing and purchasing to determine the best option to achieve value for money spent? Provide a copy of the assessment?
7. What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is value for money, accountability and transparency as regards with this sub-item?

Sub-Item: 16 Contract Employment

Questions:

1. What is the total number of persons employed on contract at the Department?
 - a. Provide examples or description of the category of workers employed on contract?
2. Are there any contract positions that are currently vacant at the Department?
 - a. How many are expected to be filled within this fiscal year?
3. Describe the recruitment and selection process, including the criteria used to hire persons on Contract Employment.
4. Is an agency used to hire employees? What are the requirements? Please provide a list.
5. How does the Department ensure value for money with contract employment?
6. Are there any measurable or tangible benefits that can be identified as a result of the work of Contract employment?
7. Have any attempts been made to update the public service establishment, to reduce the reliance on contract employment?
8. What measures are in place to avoid nepotism when recruiting employees?
9. Is there a process in place to appraise persons hired? Please provide a breakdown of this process.

Sub-Item: 43- Security Services

Questions:

1. How are the security service providers contracted?
2. Can a list be provided of the different Security Companies contracted under this sub-item for fiscal year 2019?
3. Provide a list of the contract agreements and total expenditures made thus far under this sub-item?

4. How does the Department evaluate and benchmark its services provided by security companies?
5. What measures are in place to carry out regular appraisals of these companies?
6. What measures have been put in place to ensure that the Department carry out regular reviews and quality checks with which to assess and manage the performance of service providers?
7. Will this information be discussed with the supplier and used to improve standards and performance in a timely manner? Provide a sample of this evaluation.

004 Freedom of Information Unit

Sub –Item: 16 Contract Employment

Questions:

1. State the total number of contract posts. How many posts are presently vacant? List the vacant positions.
2. How many are expected to be filled within this fiscal year?
3. Describe the recruitment and selection process, including the criteria used to hire persons on Contract Employment.
4. Is an agency used to hire employees? What are the requirements? Please provide a list.
5. How does the Unit ensure value for money with contract employment?
6. Are there any measurable or tangible benefits that can be identified as a result of the work of Contract employment?
7. Have any attempts been made to update the public service establishment, to reduce the reliance on contract employment?
8. What measures are in place to avoid nepotism when recruiting employees?
9. Do you have a process in place to appraise persons hired? Please provide a breakdown of this process.

004 Office of Information Commissioner

Sub –Item: 16 Contract Employment

Questions:

1. State the total number of contract posts. How many posts are presently vacant? List the vacant positions.

2. How many are expected to be filled within this fiscal year?
3. Describe the recruitment and selection process, including the criteria used to hire persons on Contract Employment.
4. Are there any measurable or tangible benefits that can be identified as a result of the work of Contract employment?

04 Current Transfers and Subsidies

011 Transfer to State Enterprises

03 Trinidad and Tobago Television Company Limited (TTT)

Questions:

1. Provide a list of the current Board of Directors, their areas of responsibility and remuneration packages.
2. Does the Company have a Strategic Plan?
3. What is the estimated annual operating costs?
4. What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is value for money, accountability and transparency for this company?
5. How does AO ensure the company is compliant with the State Enterprise Performance Monitoring System?
6. Does the AO receive monthly expenditure statements?
 - a) When was the last monthly expenditure statements submitted to the Ministry?
7. Would the company be allowed to retain unspent balances at the end of the financial year?
8. What are the key performance indicators for the company?
9. How will the key performance indicators be measured?
10. Does the AO receive minutes from the Board?
11. What specific steps are being taken to ensure that the Annual Audited Financial statement will be completed in a timely manner?
12. How does the AO oversee or monitor the expenditure of this Company?
13. What mechanisms are in place for the AO to prevent, detect or investigate fraud at the company?

06 Current Transfers to Statutory Boards & Similar Bodies

004 Statutory Boards

53 National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS)

1. Provide a list of the current Board of Directors, their areas of responsibility and remuneration packages.
2. What systems are in place to ensure there is effective compliance and proper management of revenue and expenditure?
3. How often is internal auditing by the Ministry conducted?
4. How does the Ministry conduct internal auditing of this sub-items to assist in preventing, detecting and investigating fraud?

Issues Arising from Development Programme Allocation

Consolidated Fund

09 Development Programme

004 Social Infrastructure

04 Education

G. Education Services

001 Training of Librarians

Questions:

1. Please provide a list of the various training programmes scheduled for this fiscal year.
2. Provide a breakdown of training conducted thus far for fiscal year 2019 including the costs.
3. How does the Ministry measure the effectiveness of these training programmes?
4. Is an agency used to perform training? If yes, what is the selection process for choosing training providers? Please provide details.
5. Are post-training evaluations conducted by the Ministry on a regular basis to ensure its effectiveness? If yes, please provide evidence of this.
6. What measures are in place to ensure that there is value for money post-training?

04 Education

G. Education Services

002 Collocation of Libraries

003 Upgrade of Security Infrastructure for Corporate and Public Data

004 Enhancement of Accounting Information System

005 Upgrade of Rental Facilities

005 Multi Sectoral and Other Services

06 General Public Services

A. Administrative Services

001 Digitization of Government's Media Assets

002 Automation and Digitization of the National Archives

003 Institutional Strengthening of the National Archives

004 Strategic Redevelopment of T.T.T.

F. Public Buildings

001 Upgrade and Outfitting of National Archives Facility

Questions:

1. Provide a brief status update as at April 1, 2019 for these projects.
2. How does the Ministry oversee and account for the allocation of funds to these projects?
3. What systems are in place to ensure there are effective compliance and proper management of funds? Provide a list of these systems?
4. What oversight mechanisms are in place to ensure that there is value for money, accountability and transparency with respects to these projects description and its respective transactions with clear review dates?
5. Provide details based on the following;
 - a. The projects start date;
 - b. Total estimated cost of the project;
 - c. Total cost of the project to date;
 - d. Project estimated completion date; and
 - e. Percentage of the project that is completed to date;
6. What are the benefits of these projects to the Ministry and Trinidad and Tobago?
7. Does the Ministry conduct internal auditing of these project descriptions to assist in preventing, detecting and investigating fraud? Provide a copy of the report.

8. Has a cost benefit analysis been conducted to determine the threats and opportunities for the development of these projects now and for the future? Provide a copy.
9. Who will be the consultant(s) for these projects?
10. How would the consultant(s) be selected? Provide a copy of the assessment.

Infrastructure Development Fund

005 Multi Sectoral and Other Services

06 General Public Services

F. Public Buildings

030 Purpose Built National Archives and Records Centre

032 Construction of Couva Library

035 Construction of Mayaro Library

036 Restoration of Heritage Library

040 Construction of Diego Martin Library

Questions:

1. Provide the following details for these projects:
 - a) Project description;
 - b) Project start date;
 - c) Total cost;
 - d) Total cost to date;
 - e) Project expected completion date;
 - f) Percentage of the project that is completed to date.
2. How will the allocation received for these projects be utilised?
3. Has a cost benefit analysis been conducted to determine the threats and opportunities for the development of these projects now and for the future? Provide a copy.
4. Who are the consultant(s) for these projects?
 - a) How were consultant(s) selected? Provide a copy of the assessment.
 - b) Provide details on the Contract agreement.
5. What is the Ministry's role in preventing, detecting and investigating fraud in these projects?
6. What systems are in place to ensure there is proper usage of funds for these projects?

APPENDIX IV

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process outlines steps to be taken by the Committee when conducting an inquiry into an entity or issue. The following steps outlines the Inquiry process followed by the PAAC:

1. Identification of entity to be examined;
2. Preparation of Inquiry Proposal for the selected entity. The Inquiry Proposal outlines:
 - Description
 - Background;
 - Overview of Expenditure
 - Rationale/Objective of Inquiry; and
 - Proposed Questions.
3. Consideration and approval of Inquiry Proposals by the Committee and when approved, questions are forwarded to the entity for written responses;
4. Issue of requests for written comment from the public are made via Parliament's website, social media accounts, newspaper and advertisements;
5. Preparation of an Issues Paper by the Secretariat for the Committee's consideration, based on written responses received from the entities. The Issues Paper identifies and summarises any matters of concern in the responses provided by the entity or received from stakeholders and the general public;
6. Review of the responses provided and the Issues Paper by the Committee;
7. Conduct of a site visit to obtain a first-hand perspective of the implementation of a project (optional);
8. Determination of the need for a Public Hearing based on the analysis of written submissions and the site visit (if required). If there is need for a public hearing, the relevant witnesses will be invited to attend and provide evidence. There is usually no need to examine the entity in public if:
 9. the Committee believes the issues have little public interest; or
 10. the Committee believes that the written responses provided are sufficient and no further explanation is necessary.
11. Issue of written request to the entity for further details should the Committee require any additional information after the public hearing.

12. Report Committee's findings and recommendations to Parliament upon conclusion of the inquiry.

APPENDIX V

Minutes of Meetings

**THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE –
FOURTH SESSION, ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT
MINUTES OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY MAY 29,
2019 AT 1:36 P.M.
IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS MEETING ROOM (EAST), LEVEL 6 AND THE J.
HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE FLOOR, TOWER D, OFFICE OF THE
PARLIAMENT,
INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE,
1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN.**

Present were:

Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George	-	Chairman
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	-	Member
Mr. Clarence Rambharat	-	Member
Mr. Daniel Dookie	-	Member
Ms. Nicole Olivierre	-	Member
Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ancil Antoine	-	Member
Ms. Keiba Jacob	-	Secretary
Ms. Sheranne Samuel	-	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Rachel Nunes	-	Graduate Research Assistant
Ms. Ashaki Alexis	-	Graduate Research Assistant
Ms. Vanna Jankiepersad	-	Procedural Officer Intern

Absent were:

Dr. Lackram Bodoe	-	Vice-Chairman (Excused)
Ms. Amrita Deonarine	-	Member (Excused)
Mr. Wade Mark	-	Member (Excused)
Mr. Garvin Simonette	-	Member (Excused)

COMMENCEMENT

- 1.1 At 1:36 p.m. the Chairman called the meeting to order.
- 1.2 The Chairman indicated that Dr Lackram Bodoe, Ms. Amrita Deonarine, Mr. Wade Mark and Mr. Garvin Simonette asked to be excused from the meeting.

**EXAMINATION OF MINUTES OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING HELD ON
MAY 22, 2019**

- 2.1 The examination and confirmation of the Minutes was deferred to later in the proceedings due to the absence of a Member who was present at the previous meeting.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING

- 3.1 As per item 3.4, the Chairman indicated that the response from the Ministry of Finance with regard to the inquiry into the expenditure and internal controls of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service was received on May 29, 2019. The response was made available to Members.
- 3.2 As per item 3.5(b), the Chairman reminded Members to review the THA submission and provide feedback electronically on whether there was need for a follow-up meeting or whether the response was sufficient.
- 3.3 As per item 10.2, Chairman informed Members that with regard to the follow-up inquiry to the Committee's 12th Report on the Administration of Disaster Relief, additional questions were sent to the following:
- Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management
 - Ministry of National Security;
 - Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries;
 - Ministry of Finance; and
 - Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government;

with a deadline of Thursday June 13, 2019 for response.

PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION: EXAMINATION INTO THE EXPENDITURE AND INTERNAL CONTROLS OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2018/2019

- 4.1 The Chairman indicated that the Issues Paper based on the written submission received from the Ministry of Communications, was circulated to Members.
- 4.2 The Chairman reminded Members that the focus of the meeting would be an examination of the expenditure and internal controls of the Ministry of Communications for the fiscal year 2018/2019.
- 4.3 The Chairman invited Members to raise any issues or questions on the examination of the Ministry of Communications. The Chairman also invited Members to identify any specific areas they wished to focus on. A discussion ensued.

EXAMINATION OF MINUTES OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING HELD ON MAY 22, 2019

- 5.1 The Chairman reverted to the examination of the Minutes of the Forty-Seventh (47th) Meeting held on Wednesday May 22, 2019.
- 5.2 There being no omissions or corrections, the Minutes were confirmed on a motion moved by Mr. Rambharat and seconded by Mr. Dookie.

SUSPENSION

- 6.1 There being no further business for discussion in camera, the Chairman suspended the meeting at 2:30 p.m., to be reconvened in public.

EXAMINATION INTO THE EXPENDITURE AND INTERNAL CONTROLS OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2018/2019

- 7.1 The Chairman called the public meeting to order at 2:38 p.m., in the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor.
- 7.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

Ministry of Communications

Mrs. Nataki Atiba-Dilchan	-	Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ms. Savitri Balkran	-	Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ms. Avril Belfon	-	Government Archivist
Mr. Rolly Parahoo	-	Government Printer
Ms. Enez Moore	-	Senior Human Resource Officer (Ag.)
Ms. Rachael Roberts	-	Account I (Ag.)
Mr. Shivanand Latchu	-	Auditor I (Ag.)

- 7.3 The Chairman welcomed the officials of the Ministry of Communications. The Chairman also welcomed members of the media and the viewing and listening audience.
- 7.4 The Chairman outlined the mandate of the Committee and the purpose of the meeting. Introductions were then exchanged.
- 7.5 The following issues arose from the examination of the Expenditure and Internal Controls of the Ministry of Communications for the fiscal year 2018/2019:

General Issues

1. The role of the Ministry in creating a more open Government by informing the population about the Government and its Ministries' activities;
2. The absence of the Ministry's vision and mission statement;
3. The status of the Ministry's Strategic Plan;
4. The establishment of an Evaluation Panel to review the Ministry's Strategic Plan;
5. The status of the completion of the Ministry's website-which is scheduled to be published by the end of May 2019;
6. Details on the challenges faced by the Ministry since its separation from the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA);
7. The challenges faced by the MOC in fulfilling its mandate owing to staff shortage;
8. The number of vacant positions on the establishment of the MOC;
9. The need for an evaluation of the current vacant positions in the MOC;
10. The Ministry's attempts to fill key vacant positions;
11. The absence of a Procurement Unit within the Ministry;
12. Details surrounding the Ministry's recent move to its new location;
13. The MPA's role in ensuring that the MOC's pension and leave records since the separation are accurate and up-to-date;
14. The Ministry's approved organizational structure currently being reviewed by the Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD);
15. The need to establish guidelines for Ministries/Departments when there is a separation of Ministries;
16. The absence of key administrative staff in the Human Resource Unit of the Ministry;
17. The Ministry engaging in month to month contracts; and
18. The review of the Treasury Division, Ministry of Finance (MOF) of the MOC's accounting system.

Accountability and Transparency

1. The absence of the following policies/ protocol:
 - Project Management Protocol;
 - Risk Management Policy;

- Internal Fraud Policy; and
 - Whistle-blower Policy.
2. The absence of a direct reporting relationship between MOC, State Enterprises and Statutory Boards under the Ministry's purview; and
 3. The submission of expenditure statements from external agencies to the Permanent Secretary on a monthly basis.

Non-compliance

1. Minor instances of non-compliance recorded by the Ministry.

Internal Audit

1. The inadequate staffing of the Internal Audit Unit;
2. Efforts made by the Ministry to fill vacant positions in the Internal Audit Unit;
3. The establishment of the Ministry's own Internal Audit function since its separation;
4. The annual work plan of the Internal Audit Unit; and
5. The implementation of an assets management system to track and monitor the Ministry's assets.

Recurrent Expenditure Allocation

09- Rent /Lease –Vehicles and Equipment

1. No rental/lease of vehicles by the Ministry,
2. All vehicles utilized by the Ministry is state-owned;
3. The use of fleet system as a mechanism to monitor the use of vehicles; and
4. The monthly rental of photocopier machines by the Ministry.

27- Official Overseas travel

1. The absence of a documented policy that governs official overseas travel of employees.

62- Promotions, Publicity, and Printing

1. The absence of guidelines to ensure that the message from the Ministry is consistent and reaches its target.

002- Government Printery

1. The role of the Government Printery in achieving the Ministry's mandate;
2. The number of vacant positions at the Government Printery;
3. The current staff complement of the Government Printery and the ideal complement of staff required; and
4. A report on the restructuring of the Government Printery submitted to PMCD for review.

004- Freedom of Information Unit

1. The inadequate staffing of the Freedom of Information Unit and its negative impact on its ability to carry out its responsibilities effectively; and
2. The absence of a Senior Freedom Administrator on the establishment of the Unit.

04- Office of the Information Commissioner

1. The status on the establishment of the Office of the Information Commissioner.

04 Current Transfers and Subsidies

001-Transfers to State Enterprises

1. The retention of unspent subvention funds and the basis of authority for such; and
2. Statements of expenditure of State Enterprises being submitted to MOF on a monthly basis.

Development Programme- Consolidated Fund

1. A status update on the NALIS' Distance Learning Scholarship Programme.

Infrastructure Development Fund

1. The present status of the construction of new Libraries under IDF projects;
2. A status update on the emergency works at National Archives and Records Center;
3. The role of NALIS and the University of the West Indies in the oversight of the restoration of the Heritage Library; and
4. Challenges faced by the MOC with regards to the completion of projects owing to outstanding payments.

[Please see the verbatim notes for the detailed oral submission of the witnesses]

- 7.6 The Chairman thanked the officials of the Ministry of Communications for attending and they were excused. The Chairman also thanked the media and the viewing and listening audience.

SUSPENSION

- 8.1 At 4:09 p.m., the Chairman suspended the *public* meeting to resume *in camera* for a post-hearing discussion with Members only.

RESUMPTION

- 9.1 At 4:12 p.m. the Chairman resumed the meeting *in camera*.

POST-HEARING DISCUSSION

- 10.1 The Committee engaged in discussion on the just concluded public hearing.
- 10.2 The Committee agreed that additional questions would be sent to the Ministry of Communications. **[Please see Appendix].**

ADJOURNMENT

- 11.1 The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and indicated that next meeting was scheduled for Thursday June 13, 2019, when the Committee would commence its inquiry into the expenditure of Ministries and Departments for fiscal 2018-2019.
- 11.2 The Chairman conveyed Indian Arrival Day and Eid-ul-Fitr wishes to Members and staff.
- 11.3 The adjournment was taken at 4:24 p.m.

We certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

June 04, 2019

APPENDIX VI
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
REQUESTED

Questions to the Ministry of Communications

Provide the following:

1. Details on the status of payments made to the contractors retained for the following projects under the Infrastructure Development Fund (giving details of the amount paid, the outstanding balance and the total estimated cost of the project):
 - a. Construction of the Couva Library;
 - b. Construction of the Mayaro Library;
 - c. Restoration of the Heritage Library; and
 - d. Construction of the Diego Martin Library.
2. Details on the status of completion of the following projects under the Infrastructure Development Fund):
 - a. Construction of the Couva Library;
 - b. Construction of the Mayaro Library;
 - c. Restoration of the Heritage Library; and
 - d. Construction of the Diego Martin Library.
3. Details on the time-frame to hire and contract terms between the MOC and the consultants to be recruited for the Evaluation Panel.
4. A copy of the following upon completion:
 - Approved Organisational Structure;
 - Project Management Protocol;
 - Risk Management Policy;
 - Fraud Policy; and
 - Whistle-blower Policy.

General Information

Record keeping

1. Provide a status update on the arrangement for image storage at an external location for the Information Division.

Management of public funds

1. Whether the deadlines for submission of monthly expenditure statements to the PS are met considering the current staff complement (of two persons as opposed to fourteen). When was the last monthly expenditure statement submitted to the PS?
2. Provide details on the external agencies under MOC.
3. Are monthly expenditure statements submitted to the Ministry in a timely manner by External agencies and officers with delegated authority for expenditure?
 - a. When was the last monthly expenditure statement submitted by External agencies and officers with delegated authority for expenditure?

Internal Audit

1. Provide a copy of the Charter of Internal Audit for 2019.
2. When does the Ministry expect to fill the Auditor II position?
3. Has the Ministry attempted to fill the two positions of Auditing Assistant?
4. Are key deliverables consistently met by the Unit?
 - a. What are the consequences for not meeting these deliverables?
5. Are the system mechanisms utilized by the Ministry effective in addressing the risk of misappropriation of assets, error and fraud?
6. Given the separation of the Ministry of Public Administration and Communication, is there a contingency plan to strengthen and restructure the Internal Audit Unit of the MOC?

Accountability and Transparency

Projects and programmes

1. When was the last monthly report on the progress of the projects and programmes submitted?
 - a. What were the findings of this report?
2. Provide a detailed breakdown of the current PSIP projects that are being undertaken by the Ministry for fiscal year 2018-2019.
3. Have there been any instances of fraud with projects or programmes undertaken by MOC?
4. Does the Ministry have a fraud policy?
5. Are there measures in place to record, track or respond to allegations or suspicions of fraud?

6. Are there any recorded projects or programmes that have failed or are underperforming?
Provide details.
7. What actions were taken by the Accounting Officer to address the failure of underperformance of these programmes or projects?
8. When was the last project/programme review conducted?
9. a. How often do these reviews take place?

Accountability, transparency and value for money

1. When was the last internal audit on any specific area/internal controls conducted?
 - a. What were the issues identified?
 - b. Have these issues been rectified?

Reduction in unnecessary expenditure

1. What cost savings have been realised from the measures outlined in your submission?
 - a. Provide an overall estimate of the cost savings to date.

Issues Arising from Recurrent Expenditure Allocation

Sub Head 02: Goods and Services

001 General Administration

Sub-Item: 09 Rent/Lease – Vehicles and Equipment

1. Provide the cost benefit analysis done for photocopiers.

Sub-Item: 16 Contract Employment

1. What is the expected date for filling the fifteen posts identified which are expected to be filled for fiscal 2019/ 2020?
2. When does the Ministry intend to fill the 65 remaining positions?
 - a. Are any of these posts critical positions?
3. How has the staffing constraint affected the daily operations of the General Administration Department of the MOC?
4. Has the Ministry engaged the relevant agencies in an effort to fill these vacant positions?

Sub-item: 22 Short Term Employment

1. State the two positions with specialised knowledge that are on short term employment in excess of six months.

Sub-item: 43 Security Services

1. Please state the period for which the sum of \$402, 498.00 is accounted?
2. What is the monthly cost attached to the contracting of this service?

003 National Archives**Sub-Item: 08 Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage**

1. Please provide an explanation for the MOC's failure to conduct an evaluation between renting/leasing and purchasing to assess value for money.
2. Has the Ministry considered renting/leasing accommodation at a cheaper cost?
3. What is the expiration date of the lease agreement for the NIPDEC Warehouse, Chaguaramas?
4. a. What is the renewal date of the lease?
5. Please indicate the date of commencement for the construction of the Record Centre at the Tamana Eteck Park, Wallerfield.
 - a. What is the estimated cost to construct this centre?
 - b. Have any contractors been procured for the construction of this centre?
 - c. What is the date of completion of this project?

Sub-Item: 16 Contract Employment

1. What is the expected timeframe for the five posts to be filled?
2. Please indicate the consequences of the staff constraints and its effects on NATT's capacity to deal with its day-to-day operations?
3. When is the Organization Restructuring Exercise expected to be completed?
4. How many established positions are expected to be created as part of the second phase of the Organization Restructuring Exercise?

Sub-Item: 43- Security Services

1. When will the tendering process for a new security provider begin?
2. When does the Ministry intend to meet its outstanding payments to SWAT for December 2018 to April 2019?
3. Provide a list of the Health and Safety team members and their areas of responsibility.
4. How often are reviews and quality checks conducted?

04 Current Transfers and Subsidies

011 Transfer to State Enterprises

03 Trinidad and Tobago Television Company Limited (TTT)

1. What is the timeframe for the approval and implementation of the Company's Strategic Plan?
2. When was the last meeting of the Board held?
 - a. Is the deadline for submission of Minutes by the Board (signed) to the Ministry met?
3. What is the status of the monthly expenditure statement for April 2019?
4. Does the Ministry intend to implement a mechanism to prevent, detect or investigate fraud at the Company?

06 Current Transfers to Statutory Boards & Similar Bodies

004 Statutory Boards

53 National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS)

1. Has the new Board of NALIS been appointed and received their instruments of appointment?
 - a. If yes, please provide the names of the Board members and their positions.
2. When was the last monthly financial report submitted to MOC?
 - a. What were the findings of this Report?
3. When was the last Board Tenders and Management Tenders Committee meeting held?
 - a. Does the MOC receive minutes from these meetings?
4. What is the staff complement of the Internal Audit Unit?
5. When was the last internal audit conducted and when was the report submitted to MOC?
 - a. What were the findings of this report?

09 Development Programme – Consolidated Fund

004 Social Infrastructure

04 Education

G. Education Services

001 Training of Librarians

1. Please indicate the duration of the training programme for which the one hundred and three (103) employees received through NALIS' Distance Learning Scholarship Programme?
2. Has the Ministry received any applications for the remaining seventy-five (75) undergraduate and six (6) postgraduate scholarships?

Infrastructure Development Fund

005 Multi Sectoral and Other Services

06 General Public Services

Public Buildings

Questions:

1. How many persons are employed in the Project Management Department?
2. When was the last accounting inspection and auditing of the State Enterprise's records of all project services conducted?
 - a. What were any findings of the investigation?
 - b. Were any discrepancies noted during the investigation?
3. When was the last meeting held to monitor the progress of projects?
4. Has there been any recorded instances of fraud as it concerns projects?
 - a. If yes, what were the corrective actions taken?
5. Is there a fraud policy?
6. Are anti-corruption clauses included in contract documents?
7. Are appropriate clauses for cost overruns breaches of contract?
 - a. If yes, please explain specifically what is provided for in the agreement as it relates to cost-overruns and a breach of contract.

Unspent Subventions

1. Please indicate the authority/ basis for keeping unspent subventions.

2. Is this same practice is also adopted by other State Enterprises? Please include the names of these State Enterprises.

Second Report of the Standing Finance Committee of the House of Representatives on the consideration of proposals for the supplementation of appropriation for the fiscal year 2019.

1. Provide details on the production and broadcast equipment which are expected to be purchased.
2. When does the Ministry intend to procure these equipment?
3. Provide a listing of the vendors to be contracted for the supply of the equipment.

Appendix VII

Verbatim

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH PUBLIC MEETING OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND APPROPRIATIONS (IN PUBLIC) IN THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE, MEZZANINE FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, PORT OF SPAIN INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE, #1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN, ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2019, AT 2.37 P.M.

PRESENT

Mrs. Bridgid Annisette-George	Chairman
Mr. Clarence Rambharat	Member
Brig. Gen. Ancil Antoine	Member
Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy	Member
Mr. Daniel Dookie	Member
Ms. Nicole Olivierre	Member
Ms. Keiba Jacob	Secretary
Ms. Sheranne Samuel	Assistant Secretary
Ms. Rachel Nunes	Graduate Research Officer
Ms. Ashaki Alexis	Graduate Research Officer
Ms. Vanna Jankipersad	Procedural Officer Intern

ABSENT

Ms. Amrita Deonarine	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	Member
Mr. Garvin Simonette	Member
Dr. Lackram Bodo	Vice-Chairman

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Nataki Atiba-Dilchan	Ag. Permanent Secretary
Ms. Savitri Balkaran	Ag. Deputy Permanent Secretary
Ms. Avril Belfon	Government Archivist
Mr. Rolly Parahoo	Government Printer
Ms. Enez Moore	Ag. Senior Human Resource Officer
Ms. Rachael Roberts	Ag. Accountant I
Mr. Shivanand Latchu	Ag. Auditor I

Madam Chairman: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to this public meeting of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee. Today we embark on an examination into the expenditure and internal controls of the Ministry of Communications for the fiscal year 2018/2019. My name is Bridgid Annisette-George and I am the Chairman of this Committee. I welcome the members and the officials of the Ministry of Communications. I welcome the members of the media and members of the listening public.

The Committee on Public Administration and Appropriations has a mandate to consider and report to the House on:

- (a) the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies to ensure that expenditures are embarked upon in accordance with parliamentary approval;
- (b) the budgetary expenditure of Government agencies as it occurs and to keep Parliament informed of how the budget allocation is being implemented; and
- (c) the administration of Government agencies to determine hindrances to their efficiency and to make recommendations to the Government for improvement of public administration.

The purpose of this public meeting of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee is to examine the expenditure and internal controls of the Ministry of Communications for fiscal year 2018/2019. The Committee is desirous of hearing from stakeholders to discover the challenges being faced and determine possible solutions to their challenges. The role of the Committee is to assist the Ministry of Communications in achieving the efficient delivery of services while ensuring that expenditure is embarked upon in accordance with parliamentary approval.

This meeting is being held in public and is broadcast live on Parliament's Channel 11, Radio 105.5 F.M. and Parliament's YouTube Channel *ParlView*. Viewers and listeners can send their comments related to today's enquiry via email parl101@ttparliament.org, facebook.com/ttparliament and Twitter [@ttparliament](https://twitter.com/ttparliament).

I will now invite the members and representatives of the Ministry of Communications to introduce themselves starting with their Acting Permanent Secretary with whom we at the Parliament are quite familiar.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Good afternoon, Madam Chairman and members. I am Nataki Atiba-Dilchan, Acting Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications. I will ask my team

members to introduce themselves as well.

[Introductions made]

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much and I will now invite the Members of the Committee to introduce themselves starting with from my extreme right.

[Introductions made]

Madam Chairman: The Committee this afternoon is assisted by its Secretary, Ms. Keiba Jacob, its Assistant Secretary, Ms. Samuel, its Procedural Officer, Ms. Jankipersad and its Research Officers, Ms. Nunes and Ms. Alexis. So to start off the conversation, let me invite you, Madam PS, to make an opening statement which will ground us in this conversation. Thank you.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Madam Chair, thank you. The Ministry of Communications is mandated in this current incarnation to create more open Government through the development and coordination of Government's communications policy and strategy, and it also provides for public information and communication services. Established again as the Ministry of Communications in June 2018, the key operational divisions or units of the Ministry are: the Government Communications Unit, the Government Information Services Division, the National Archives, the Government Printery Division and the Freedom of Information Unit. I would just like to say that the team is welcoming this opportunity to appear before the PAAC to discuss our current activities.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So thank you very much, Madam PS. In your opening statement, you pointed to in this new creation one of your mandates is to create a more open Government and I wanted to ask what that means in terms of your vision and your mission, particularly in light of that those two important statements have not yet been created and when are you going to be likely to complete that process?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, Madam Chair. When I assumed at the Ministry, I did learn about the difficulty that is experienced when the Ministry keeps being joined or disjoined from other Ministries and that has been its experience I think probably for the last 10 years. It has never been solidly a Ministry of Communications. So we are on the road once again to creating a strategic plan. The team is in effect. We have had two meetings so far. It is a very vibrant team. The fact that in 2015, the Ministry of Communications by itself had already started a strategic planning process, we have a draft document to work at. As well when it was joined with the Ministry of Public Administration, again it was subsumed, but they did go through a strategic planning process in which there is a communications component. So we already have a solid base from which to

work and we are working with the PMCD to guide us through this process, and we are thinking—how we estimate? Maybe by the end of this fiscal, we should have a solid strategic plan. We have already crafted vision and mission and core values. We need just to look now at setting our goals.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So give us—and for the benefit of the listening public—an idea of what is open Government?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Well, if we look probably at the divisions we have, the Government Communications Unit itself is that interface with a lot of the other Ministries. We support a lot of their work and the website *news.gov.tt* is one of the sites that is managed by the Ministry of Communications and it is there we put a lot of Government activities. Actually our mandate now from our Minister now is to try and celebrate the good news of Government, so we are trying as often as possible to update our pages, to work with social media, that sort of thing on that angle.

Secondly as well, the Government Information Division, that is what I call the production arm of the Ministry. They have the technocrats who do the broadcasting, who will do the filming. Again, through them, we amass material which again we can share with the citizenry so that they know what their Government is doing.

Thirdly, the Freedom of Information Unit is also under us. That is where people get to ask FOI questions and that is part of the open Government process. That unit has been very active. I think it was established since 2009 and they keep regular reporting on questions that are asked in terms of freedom of information. Part of their mandate is to do annual reports and they do quite a lot of training and a lot of outreach in encouraging citizens to be aware and able and to request information from the Government—well public authorities.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So in celebrating this good news and meeting your mandate, I want to ask specifically about your website. In your submission, you indicated that you are setting up a separate website. You spoke about publishing things on your Web pages and updating. Your website is supposed to be completed by May 31st which I believe is Friday. Is that still on track?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, it is still on track. We have had a series of meetings. We have done the draft. Actually, Friday morning is going to be the last look at it to decide, yes, we can publish. It was published sort of internally so certain staff could have looked at it and made recommendations about what to improve but hopefully yes, by Friday, we would finalize the look that we want, the feel and it will be made public.

Madam Chairman: Okay and could you give us an idea of what is the cost to establish your own

website?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Oh, internal project. A lot of the hosting is going to be done by iGovTT so then that is no cost. Our cost might just be in terms of getting a server. So we are looking at that service cost, I think about \$40,000 or \$50,000 but we are using what we have right now to put the website on it. As well—maybe I could get to some of my staffing challenges here. I have engaged, on short term, a Web Content Specialist so that is the person who is actually designing our page. So it is not externally done, it is a staff member who I have for the next three months.

Madam Chairman: Okay. And you know what you just said just led me to the question about your staff challenges. Okay. And in the submission, I see that you have a deficit of about 357 persons. Could you give us an idea of how that has impacted on this new Ministry getting up to speed to meet the challenges of its mandate and your plans to fill these vacancies?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It has impacted on what the Ministry could put out. On one side though, I would like to say because we have had with us divisions such as the Printery and Information Division, which have been around since 1965, a lot of the posts that are on their establishments are no longer relevant to what is needed in a modern Ministry of Communications. I am sure the Government Printer could tell you. We no longer have to crank up machines and that sort of thing so technology has moved and has changed. So a lot of the posts would not ever be filled because they are not necessary.

In terms of though some of my core staffing issues, when I got to the Ministry at the end of February, because of the split, the Ministry was established on paper but I would not say it was established with bodies. So when I got to the Ministry, I had no SHRO, I have no accounting executive, I have no legal officer, I had one communication specialist, I had no web designer. So in the time that I was there, it was really an effort for us and a hurry for us to try and get some short-term staff so that is what I am working with now. When I got to the Ministry as well, one of the things that was on track was the advertisement of a lot of our vacancies. We advertised, I think, about 30 contract vacancies and those were closed at the middle of March so what we are doing now is trying to fill those so at least it would be supported. I actually have a date planned, set out that I shared with my SHRO yesterday and our vision again is before the end of this financial year, all the key spots will be filled.

Could I also add that we have been trying? The Ministry of Public Administration from which we were severed has been very helpful. When I got there, that was my support for probably

the first two weeks before I got an SHRO. So prior to that, they were sharing services and now we are trying to sort of wean communications off. So we have been using them as we move forward as much as we could.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So maybe I could just look to the Government Printer a bit as we are talking about staffing and to deal with a very important point that you have made, because in looking at the vacancies, the 357, what I understand you to say is that, you know, I guess these posts sooner or later will have to be retired or I do not know what the word is. Okay. But of them, about 279 come out of the Government Printery and in terms of how many of these would be critical and the fact that you said you may not need most of them, if you could give us an idea of how the Printery now functions and to give us some satisfaction that these vacant posts are not in any way to the disadvantage or causing deficiencies in the Printery.

Mr. Parahoo: Okay, thank you, Madam Chair. The Government Printery was established somewhere in the 1950s. All right. I am just giving a little background so we can appreciate where we are right now. The establishment then and over the years would have been 530 employees. Now it was a mechanical-based system. Over the years, we know that ICT has impacted the environment to the extent that we are now doing a lot of online publishing. I am saying that to say that PMCD was mandated, I think it was 2008 to do a report on the Printery. There was a rationalization/restructuring plan in 2008. Cabinet Minute Number 1198 dated May 06, 2008, made mention of the rationalization/restructuring of the Government Printery. We had several incarnations of that trying to be implemented.

First, we had the Ministry of Public Utilities. They came up with an appropriate structure. That was in 2015. The appropriate structure would have been catering for something like 165 members of staff. They had a consultant on board and that went forward. Administration would have changed somewhere in September. Am I correct? September 2015 and we had to go back to the drawing board. So there was a Ministry of Communications established then. We went back to the Ministry of Communications and the plan was looked at again. It was then looked at again six months after by the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications when we were realigned again. And the PMCD came in. Minister Cuffie was the Minister then and at the first meeting, I told him, I said “Listen, this rationalization/restructuring plan, we need to have it moving forward” because we cannot be running an organization on a 1950s structure. We are now in 2016 you know, and it creates a lot of inefficiencies.

Well we started, PMCD came in. We had a lot of discussions with them, we had reports, we had consultation and they again came up with the 165 members of staff. So I am saying all that to say that at this time, as we speak, the appropriate number should be 165.

Madam Chairman: Okay. And how far are you from 165? What is your real deficiency?

Mr. Parahoo: Well right now, the total staff is about estimated about 111. However, the serious challenge or the chronic challenge that we face at the Government Printery currently is that in the three main production areas: you have the typesetting, you have the printing and the binding. We only have 32 members of staff. Based on the 111, we should have at least 50, I think 50 more members.

Madam Chairman: 50 more?

Mr. Parahoo: Technical staff.

Madam Chairman: So you should have 82?

Mr. Parahoo: Yes, 82. All right because the clerical staff is okay. We are fine with that. But to function with five typesetters and seven printers and 20 binders, it is virtually impossible at times to satisfy the demand. So therefore we had no choice but to go the short-term employment route. So we have been employing short-term employees over a period since 2015 and especially when we have jobs that require urge deadlines: the budget estimates, the printing of the ballot paper and also revenue books for the Comptroller of Accounts and similar items. All right. So we are “kinda” using that as a short-term measure or as a contingency for the past three years.

Madam Chairman: Okay. And I just have one question for the Senior Human Resource Officer. If I am correct, apart from you, your Unit will not have any other specialist?

Ms. Moore: No, not at this time.

Madam Chairman: All right. So I want to ask, you know, having regard to the fact that the Ministry was once separate then fused, then separate again, how does that affect the human resource function and particularly, I am concerned with respect to the pensions and pension and leave records in your Ministry.

Ms. Moore: Okay. Thank you. Presently, the Ministry of Public Administration, they are still handling those matters for us: pension and leave and increments, all of those. So we are still on shared services because I am supposed to have an HRO I, HRO II, within the Head Office and I do not have them at present. So Ministry of Public Administration is dealing with those matters for us.

Madam Chairman: Okay. And Madam PS, are there any plans to fill these two positions in the near future?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Madam Chair, the plans have been in train since last year October before I came. The DP has been written on multiple occasions. When I assumed, again, I got copies of all the old correspondence we have written. I have WhatsApp messaged. I have spoken when I have met the person. It seems as though they are trying on their end. There is also a challenge with public officers responding. I find this very interesting that people do not want to act in higher positions. For instance, with my AO II, I have none and I am asking around who might be interested and the first question I get asked is: Is travelling attached to the post? So there seems to be a challenge with people wanting to take the post up.

Also, I was told that given the varying movements of the Ministry of Communications, people do not want to leave the Ministry that they are in stably for the last three or four years because they do not know what is going to happen in the next three or four years. So it is a challenge. My SHRO calls probably every two weeks, she has staff calling as well, but we have not been able to get positive feedback. So it is not for a lack of trying.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much and therefore I will open up the conversation. Member Webster-Roy, I do not know if you would like to start off?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon. I wanted to go back to the idea of creating open Government and wanted to understand how is the mandate being fulfilled, the mandate of creating open Government and how are your current projects and programmes aligned to this mandate, please.

3.00 p.m.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I cannot honestly say at this time that we are achieving many targets in this area. It is because I am still trying to build our Government Communications Unit. In 2015, I was told—and I have seen a draft of a communications strategy for the entire Government—I was told that it went to the Cabinet but things have not progressed since. This would give the vision of exactly how the Ministry of Communications is going to work with all the other Ministries to promote open government. It is back on the drawing board again. I have it. I have raised with Minister that we would like to look at it, and if I can get my communications staff to put input, so at least it would be an established policy in the year going forward. Right now we are doing a lot of small things, in terms of yes, our website, yes our news, news publications. But I cannot say

that we have any major project that is going on right now, that I will say yes, for sure, this is being hit.

I would probably like to comment as well that the Ministry of Planning and Development did visit us, in terms of getting indicators for the national performance framework. So we are also working with them to try to identify certain key areas where the Ministry of Communications can be an area where indicators would be put, in terms of open government.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Thank you. Just one other question. I notice in the discussion before, you would have noted a heavy reliance on social media, right? For those persons or citizens who do not access social media, how is the Ministry getting the message out to them, sharing?—because you said the Minister gave a mandate to start sharing good news, Government good news. How are you getting it to those persons who may not be of the age of social media and not able to access Facebook or Twitter and Instagram, that sort of thing? How do you communicate with them?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Well, we still use the traditional media. The Government Communications Unit is more the younger people we have there, who would be pushing the social media. But the Government Information Division is the one that does TV programmes. They do radio programmes, and generally we also put things in the newspaper. So we are attacking both fronts, in terms of spreading good news and putting out the achievements of government.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: One more question. I notice in your submission that you would have indicated that the allocation for promotions was not adequate. How would you have come up to that?—based on the fact that I do not think that you have an established policy document.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: No.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: How would you have come up with the idea that is not adequate? What is it based on?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It is not adequate because right now I know the Vote is empty. But it would have been—again it is some of the history. A figure would have been put in there when it was Public Administration and Communications. In the middle of preparing financial estimates, I think the Ministry was split. So it was sort of, we just got some, because remember we had ceilings. So we just got some. And right now my Vote is empty.

Madam Chairman: Member Dookie?

Mr. Dookie: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and maybe to the PS or the Senior HR Officer. From the information we received, I am concluding that you were able to ensure that your records

regarding the administration of pension matters are up to date and accurate. Now, I see this as a success story in the public service. I would like to know how you would have gone about achieving this particular attainment.

Ms. Moore: Good afternoon. I would say that the success actually belongs to the Ministry of Public Administration, because they are the ones who are dealing with this right now. They are the ones with the systems and they are compiling all of the records and putting everything in place.

Mr. Dookie: Okay, but I pose the question in the context of what was stated that with the assistance of the Ministry of Public Administration. So I interpreted that to mean that there would have been involvement or partnering between the two Ministries.

Ms. Moore: Not at this time, no. It is entirely them.

Mr. Dookie: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Member Antoine.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: In your response, the approved organizational structure provided a line diagram on page 50, Appendix II. In this line diagram, I am not seeing any kind of a reporting relationship between NALIS, the Board of Film Censors, TTT Limited, or the Office of the Division of Information to the Permanent Secretary. Could you give me an explanation?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Sir, largely because these bodies, if you look at their Acts, NALIS is a body corporate. So the reporting relationship really would be from the Executive Director to the board, the board to the Minister. As well, same thing with TTT again being a state enterprise. That is the way the reporting relationship goes.

For the Ministry itself, we would, yes, keep financial records. And yes, we would get Minutes of meetings, financial statements. But in terms of direct reporting answerable to the PS, that is not how the relationship works, if you look at their Acts as well. Even the Board of Film Censors, the Minister appoints the members there and their reporting relationship is that way.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: But the Chairman of the Board reports to the Minister. But the CEOs “and them” have a relationship with the Permanent Secretary.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: No, they report to the board. If you check any of the Acts, there is no mention of a relationship with the Permanent Secretary.

When it comes as well to NALIS and TTT, the reporting relationship is often dual, because of the nature of the state enterprise relationship. So they report to the Ministry of Communications, as well as the Ministry of Finance, Investments Division. So again, they would look at, sort of the

corporate governance issues with them.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: But, in terms of the budget and the line Item, where would you find the line Item in terms of NALIS?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Subventions, where NALIS line Item is, they would be under “Subventions, Current Transfers and Subsidies”, TTT, as well. They are not in the main recurrent expenditure body.

Madam Chairman: Member Rambharat?

Mr. Rambharat: Could you bring us up to date on what is happening with the Freedom of Information Unit, in terms of staffing?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: The Freedom of Information Unit, it is just four members of staff in that unit. We have three. What we do not have is a Senior Freedom of Information Officer, but we have three others.

Mr. Rambharat: Is that adequate?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: At this time, yes. The way they do their work programmes, in terms of training and outreach, they balance it as such that they probably get around to most of the public authorities. One particular officer is focused on research. So he is the one who would compile a lot of the data and do a lot of the research related to the work that they do.

Mr. Rambharat: And do they all have current contracts, valid contracts?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, they do. Actually they need to be renewed in August, so we have started to do the Note to come to Cabinet to renew the post.

Mr. Rambharat: Okay, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member Webster-Roy?

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam PS, I know that you all would have indicated that you are still sharing some of the technical staff with the Ministry of Public Administration. In terms of the internal audit function, is that shared or you have your own internal audit?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: One thing I was happy to meet when I got to the Ministry was internal audit. So, yes, the auditor is here. At the beginning of the last three months, he did not have a full complement of staff. But I am happy to say that three new officers were appointed to the Ministry of Communications. They are junior officers but they had acted in higher positions in the Ministry of Public Administration. So as such, we just let them fall right back into the acting positions. So

what is missing right now, for the internal auditor is an Auditor II position. We are supposed to get one more staff, which we could add to that unit and then we will put him to act Auditor II.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Just one other question, in terms of internal audit. Is there a schedule that they would usually work?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Oh yes, definitely. He has an annual work programme, which, as soon as I got there, he shared with me. He would have prepared it before. But as I got there he shared it with me. So I am well aware. Every month, religiously, he reports because I have approved the work programme and every month he gives me an update on what he is going to do the other month and that has been approved and he works through and then reports to me. And any variances that we see or anything that needs to be addressed, well I am an email person, so I scan an email and send to the relevant units about what they have to fix. So that the next time he goes back, that should not be something that has to be addressed again.

Madam Chairman: Member Olivierre.

Ms. Olivierre: Thank you. There are a number of areas I see you have month-to-month arrangements. So, for example, in terms of leasing photocopiers, that is on a month-to-month arrangement. You have a lease of a complete storage solution on a month-to-month arrangement. Your security services is also on a month-to-month arrangement. Are you having any special challenges in being able to enter into longer-term arrangements to satisfy these requirements?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Member, I have actually now started on that road, because when I got there that is what I noticed as well. So now that I have a legal officer, she is working on that now, in terms of—well we would have inherited a lot of these services. The Amalgamated that does the security, for instance, I was told it was always with Information Division, even when they were not on that compound. So they just keep transferring the services. So now I am looking at: can we enter into something longer, until I have enough time to tender again. Because I know in the next, at least for the rest of this fiscal, I would not have time to do open tenders; at least not with the staff challenges that I have. So I want to at least get a contract in place with them. So we would not just be month-to-month and then probably for next fiscal we look at open tender for these services.

Ms. Olivierre: So, in terms of these longer-term arrangements that you are going into right now, you would have a cut-off date at what, September? I mean—

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes.

Ms. Olivierre: What is your thinking then, in terms of that interim period?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Legal was actually looking at a six-month period, if we do a six-month contract with them and in between there we will do the tenders, so we could probably get into, I do not know, same suppliers/new suppliers.

Madam Chairman: All right. So PS, you had indicated in the submission, the reliance on internal audit. And I have seen that you do not have in existence anything like a fraud policy or a risk management policy, and so on. But it appears that, through the monthly reporting of internal audit, you have tried to keep up with such issues in that way. Could you give us examples of any recent incidents where you would have had a report from internal audit that there has not been compliance with any of the reporting mechanisms, with any of the financial regulations?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Recently, there was a minor one. It is not coming to mind. But the other one that I remember most recently, it is our upkeep of our Asset Register. We are not compliant. Maybe I should start with, I use this phrase that we are occupiers/utilizers. We are at the TIC building, which was formerly owned by the Government Information Services Limited. So we are occupying the space, but the space does not really belong to or has not been handed over to the Ministry of Communications and we are occupying it fully furnished. So the desk, the chair, most things that we use, really do not belong to the Ministry.

What we do have on hand is a copy of the GISL Assets Register. But that is in one place. And then we are keeping a different record somewhere else of what we may have brought from MPA to the building itself in a different place. IT also has a third Asset Register. So I am happy to say that my DPS has recently started a project where we are going to be doing all of this in one. Probably I could give her a chance to talk about this.

Ms. Balkaran: Good afternoon. Okay, so recently we had discussions with some of the IT staff of the Ministry of Public Administration, together with the National Archives and the IT team and audit as well from the Ministry of Communications where we would have discussed the way forward with respect to implementing an asset management solution, an electronic one; one that worked well in National Archives—well, has just been implemented in National Archives, and the National Archives are very happy with it. Also, it has been implemented in the Ministry of Public Administration. So that we are well on the way to starting that project, so that we can have a system where we can track and monitor and account for the assets that we have at the Ministry.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Again PS, again looking at how you discharge this function you

have as accounting officer and not having all your major staff, I see that you place reliance on your Finance and Accounts Unit to do monthly expenditure statements, to give you an idea of how the allocations are being utilized and ensuring that there is an appropriate framework.

But when we look at your Finance and Accounts Unit, again there are significant shortfalls in senior positions. I think, other than your Accountant I, then you just rely on Accounting Assistants and Clerks, if I not mistaken. So, in terms of—I wanted to ask—in terms of the monthly reporting, when was the last monthly report submitted by the Finance and Accounts Unit?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It would have been done for April, because part of the accounting process is that they have to report similarly to the Ministry of Finance. So what I am getting copies of is often what is sent to Finance.

Yes, again, the deficit has been pointed out to the DPA to fill those senior posts and daily we check to see what is possible. There has been, actually, a slight improvement in terms of the staff complement for the accounting unit. Because previously we had to rely on the Accounting Assistant from Printery to come to the Head Office, because we were not able to separate the functions efficiently. So that has improved to the point where now I have a full complement of accounting staff, even though the most senior position is not filled.

I probably would like to say now as well, I had asked at the beginning of March for the Treasury to come take a look at the accounting system, because although we were sharing services up until—just before I came, the Accounting Unit was moved from NALIS in Port of Spain to Morvant where the office is. But the cheque-writing systems have not moved. We have no chequing facilities at TIC. So, therefore, the accountant and her staff have to come to Port of Spain to do the cheque printing and that does not really work very well, given the distance now.

So the Comptroller of Accounts had come in and has examined the systems. They also looked at our HR function and the way we do some of the general admin processes. So right now I am awaiting the report. My last update was probably about four weeks ago. They said that the report was with the Deputy Comptroller of Accounts and we would have a meeting subsequently.

One of the reasons why I have not pushed it is because we did not have the full complement of staff. But now that we have it, I think I will again liaise with the Comptroller of Accounts, so that we could move the process forward and to have a probably established accounting unit.

Madam Chairman: Okay, thank you. And in the submission you said external agencies also prepare their monthly expenditure. So these external agencies will be who?—TTT and NALIS

and—

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: TTT and NALIS. And those are the only two. Board of Film Censors, we do their expenditure and we do their revenue statements. So monthly, it would come from TTT and NALIS.

Madam Chairman: Okay and so, you also do archives, National Archives?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Well yes, but they are under the main body of the Ministry.

Madam Chairman: Okay.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: So they would not have separate things. What would come from them, I have delegated authority for expenditure to the Archivist and the Government Printer. So what I would get from them are statements of expenditure, so I could see exactly how they are spending the money that has been delegated.

Madam Chairman: Okay, and as far as the external agencies, the two that you have identified, when last you would have got, you know, the monthly expenditure statements from them?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I think TTT was March. NALIS is up to date?

Ms. Balkaran: Yes.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I think NALIS was April.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So that, in terms of what penalties or sanctions are there, or what do you do, whether it is moral suasion or otherwise, to ensure that the external agencies are up to date with the monthly statements?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I cannot say so far that they have been delinquent. NALIS is up to date. TTT sent me March. I just asked. The relationship so far has been cordial, so it is just a question of asking.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Member Webster-Roy. No? Member Dookie?

Mr. Dookie: And I should have asked this earlier on. It might lose some credence, Madam PS, because you alluded to the strategic plan and you seem to be very excited about that. So I would you an opportunity to tell us a few things. You told us about the vision, the visioning exercise being completed. So I take that to mean that there is a vision that has been documented for the Ministry. And you also highlighted the fact that the Ministry has crafted its core values. You want to tell me something more about that? What the core values are? And what the vision of the Ministry is, seeing that it is relatively new?—quote, unquote.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Sir, I did not work with the documentation on that one. But is it something

that I could supply later, please?

Mr. Dookie: Sure, sure.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Okay.

Mr. Dookie: Okay, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member Rambharat?

Mr. Rambharat: Nothing more at this time.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Member Antoine?

Brig. Gen. Antione: No.

Madam Chairman: Member Olivierre, do have anything to ask?

Ms. Olivierre: No, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Okay, so I really would like to take us to your IDF and to look at some of these projects. PS, I am really at your Appendix 11. Okay, so, I am bit interested in the construction of the Diego Martin library. And if I am not mistaken, you would have got an allocation of \$2 million in this current fiscal?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Yes? Okay so again, if I understand, nothing has been done and I wanted to ask if you all employ the project screening brief, which I believe is a tool that the Ministry of Planning and Development has introduced to ensure that there is a certain amount of readiness for the implementation of a project when there is an allocation and releases. So to find out if you all had employed this project screening brief for the construction of the Diego Martin library?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Madam Chair, I will not be able to answer authoritatively on this one, because these library projects are largely under NALIS and managed by NALIS on a daily basis. I know a lot of them would have been inherited and have been on the books for a while. Various reasons why they have been stalled. I know, as you said, it is a new system or framework that is being implemented by the Ministry of Planning and Development, and I know going forward that the brief will have to be used. Perhaps, I might have to supply further information on this one in writing because I do not have it in front of me.

Madam Chairman: All right. So let me ask then, in terms of, because all of these projects really precede you. So that again, I wanted to ask a little more on each of them—on Couva, Mayaro, the Heritage Library—so, you know, whether or not you are in a position to assist. So, like, I could not understand the position of the Couva library when I saw that the start date would have been

October 17, 2011. I guess the anticipated completion date was June 08, 2015. So I see that it is 100 per cent completed. So I wanted to find out if it was in this fiscal it was completed, or if this is just an error with this now occurring in the submission?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I think some of the issues, from what I am understanding with the libraries, might be outstanding payments. So before, even though the building and the structure is there 80 per cent/90 per cent complete, there are still issues to be solved with some of the contractors and until then they cannot really move forward or finalize the project to say it is handed over.

Madam Chairman: Okay. But with Couva, it is 100 per cent complete?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yeah.

Madam Chairman: You see, so, and you know, I was not certain whether there was a cost overrun in this, based on the information that is here. So I guess in the interest of time and in fairness to you, Madam PS, if it is that as far as these, the information is not at hand, then we could send the questions regarding these projects, because as you said, they are under NALIS, to you—

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, and I can get the answers.

Madam Chairman:—and then get a subsequent response.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, proper responses.

Madam Chairman: And therefore, it leads me to something else, and I think this is NALIS, if I could find the page, where they indicated that Unspent Balances, unspent subvention, is retained and this was TTT. And this is page 25 of the submission under 04/011/03—and this would be (h), right?—which would be, would the company be allowed to retain Unspent Balances at the end of the fiscal year? And they say: Yeah, the company keeps a bank accounts and retains unspent subvention funds. Okay so, one, I wanted to know what would be the authority for the retention of unspent subventions? Because our understanding is that at the end of the fiscal, they should be returned. And secondly, if there are unspent subventions being retained, what is the quantum?

And, therefore, following from that, seeing that that is the position of TTT, I wanted to know if that was the position of your other external agencies which in this case, if I recall well, would be NALIS.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It is my understanding that TTT, being a state enterprise and NALIS being a body corporate, they are both allowed to open bank accounts and they both have bank accounts with funds in it. So yes, when the subvention goes forward, they would use for their operations but additional funds are left in the account. I am not aware that they are taken away from the

account. What they are asked to provide often are bank statements showing the balances. So that would be in the records that come and I know that the Ministry of Finance Investments Division also asks them for that.

Madam Chairman: Okay, so that, I am not sure if that tells me, or if what you have said to me is that based in whatever would their constituent documents, whether it is incorporation as a company, whether that gives them the authorization to retain the unspent subvention. And really that is what I would like to be satisfied of, the authority for doing so.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: This is something that I would have check, Madam Chairman, because offhand, I do not know.

Madam Chairman: Okay, thank you. Member Rambharat?

Mr. Rambharat: PS, I think this is the most—these are the most vacancies I have ever seen in a Ministry. So you have 80 per cent of the public service establishment is vacant. You have some bodies acting in some of those positions but 60 per cent of the public service establishment, you have no bodies in them. How is this—how is the Ministry functioning with 40 per cent staff?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Sir, as I would have alluded to before, some of the vacancies definitely will not be filled because of—we do not need some of the posts. Otherwise, we are working on trying to fill. As I had said earlier, we have advertised about 30 contract posts. At least 15 of them I hope to have filled before the end of this fiscal and we are working with the DPA to fill the rest.

Thirdly, what is going on and probably more importantly is that PMCD has a Cabinet mandate for restructuring of several Ministries; and the Ministry of Communications is on their list. We have started preliminary meetings. We have had two. So we are working with them now, division by division, to do the flow charts and the material that they need. So we can then decide: “Is this structure really what we want? Can we work with less? How are we going to fix this?”

My own experience offhand from what I have seen is some of the posts really do not need to be filled, given the mandate that Communications has right now. I am seeing some duplications. For instance, there is a Policy and Research Unit but there is also a Project Management Division, and some of the things just cross each other. So I am thinking sometimes maybe if we can meld those—and I have one head officer and then two other people—then we will not have to fill some of the posts that I am seeing.

Mr. Rambharat: So, you said that they are on the public service establishment, where you have 587 establishment positions. You said there are some that need not be filled. So where are those

positions?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Some of them would be Printery, maybe; some of the older ones. As well, I have, I think a few in the Information Division. Because again they were separated into technical posts like Broadcast Equipment Operator and then Director/Producer. But the way technology is these days, you need one person who is a videographer who will do all. He will do the filming, the editing, and you have a complete production with one officer.

And, actually, some of the higher levels where I have short-term people doing some of that, they are asked to do that. So when we were looking at the restructuring, that is some of the things that I would like to look at.

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Rambharat: And so, what is the future of the Government Printery?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I do not know if you want the Government Printer to answer?

Mr. Rambharat: I prefer you answer, as the Permanent Secretary.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes.

Mr. Rambharat: What is the plan for the Government Printery?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Actually, the Government Printery is further along on that restructuring process than the rest of the Ministry is, because as the Government Printer alluded to, that has started since 2008, right. 2017, there was a PMCD report which I got hold of when I assumed, and it has been sent to them again with revisions, and last week they told me that they will have a document ready for me for what the new Government Printery is supposed to look like.

Mr. Rambharat: But should the Government, should the State be in the business of having a Government Printery?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Sir, I would like to think so, in terms of the services that we provide which we would have to outsource to private publications. When we look at the quantum that we print for *Hansard*, budget documents, all the different forms, even though we have the forms, yes, in “e”, there are many people who still like the hard copies. The Government Printer supplies all of these.

Mr. Rambharat: So the Government Printery must exist?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: As far as I am concerned, yes.

Mr. Rambharat: And what is the basic—what is the form that is contemplated for this Government Printery in terms of staffing and operations?

Madam Chairman: Is that not the PMCD report that would come? So, I think that might be a little premature.

Mr. Rambharat: So, you have not put forward a recommendation to PMCD for consideration?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: No, because when I came it was already in process. So the 2017 report which the Government Printer would have reviewed, his comments went forward to PMCD. We have not sat yet to see what they are coming back with as proposals.

Mr. Rambharat: Okay. Earlier I had asked about the staffing at FOI, and I see in this document you talk about challenges in terms of the phone and Internet:

Limited access to telephone and Internet due to infrastructural challenges.

This has reduced the number of clients that can reach the Unit. Further access to the Ministry's email has been affected negatively.

And then you go on further to say:

The change in location from NALIS building to Morvant has reduced the number of clients. So what is really happening with the FOI Unit?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: No, the Unit functions, you know, but the change of location has presented, I guess, a challenge for the people who they would deal with who would walk off the street. But again, we were setting up in that building and that compound. Only, like, two weeks ago we actually got the PBX working properly. It has been a lot of teething problems because staff were put in the building, now we have to make the building more suitable for staff. So, they have all their connections in place right now, actually we started a corporate plan, so they are on the corporate plan, so they have phone access to be doing work with all the clients. We have fixed the PBX so the landline is in. Last week we did set up a small desk area for walk-ins, but being where we are there on Lady Young Road, the walk-ins are going to be few and far between. I think since I have been there for the last few months, we probably had two.

Mr. Rambharat: So what is happening with the people who came in before, where are they getting service?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I would not be able to say offhand what was the influx when they were in Port of Spain. But again, FOI's mandate is a lot of training for public authorities, so they are out a lot of times at all the Ministries, at all the state enterprises. They have the phone contacts or the email contacts and they do outreach at the various malls and other public places. So that is where they would interact with probably the passersby or with established meeting times with various

entities.

Mr. Rambharat: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Madam PS, maybe you can tell us as we are talking about FOI, tell us about this Office of the Information Commissioner which we see has not been as yet operationalized and when is that likely to occur? And what is the plan for it?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Well, the Office of the Information Commissioner was established with the Data Protection Act and it has a role with actually FOI. A lot of the functions that were previously to be done in terms of appellate functions by the Ombudsman have now been transferred to the Information Commissioner. Within the last year, when I arrived I got a file a lot of the administrative processes have been put in place in terms of job description and salary and SRC approval for the Commissioner and for his Deputy. Personnel Department did call us last week just to finalize, given that the Ministry has now split, that the document we have is the document that we still want. So the administrative things in terms of hiring two people to head the Commissioner's office are in place. I think I am just waiting on a directive at a higher level to say go ahead and fill.

Madam Chairman: And, Mr. Dookie.

Mr. Dookie: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam PS, there seem to be some intervention either formal or informal in terms of rightsizing the Ministry and a while ago you referred to a particular finding regarding a duplication of effort in your Ministry. Is there a current examination? I am saying this in the context that your strategic planning exercise that will create your strategic plan is ongoing. Is there a current examination of the operations or the value chain of the Ministry where you would be able to determine where those duplications exist so that you can determine what is the rightsize for your organization?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: That is what we are hoping to achieve with the exercise that we are doing with PMCD. Their mandate is restructuring, so again, they are going to go unit by unit, division by division, look at the work flow, see exactly what is the quantum of work being done by each officer or each unit and then make recommendations to us.

Mr. Dookie: So there is an intervention?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, there is.

Mr. Dookie: Okay. One more question as it relates to staffing because in your submission you highlighted the role that the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development is playing in

terms of providing staffing at some level and given the realities regarding the process of staffing within the service, is there a reasonable opportunity for these persons who come through the support provided by the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development to gain more long-term-type employment in your operations?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Well, the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development is used largely because they have these employment placement programmes, but we only really know two sets: one is the OJTs, and so they would come for a year, but that is where Labour pays them and then they go, and the other one is the short-term. There is no option to hold people long term, no. What they would have to do is either apply through the general public service or then apply for the contract positions.

Madam Chairman: So, Madam PS, I just want to go back a bit to TTT. And in terms of, you know, their responses, for instance, you know, their key performance indicators for the company in terms of their success. What they have indicated is that that will be detailed in their strategic plan. So it seems that a lot with TTT is based on this strategic plan being completed. So I wanted to find out if there was any idea at this stage where the strategic plan is, when it is likely to be completed and approved by the board.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It was only quite recently, I think in the last probably two weeks and a half that I saw the RFP go out for a consultant for TTT's strategic plan. Can I have a moment there with the DPS please, because I think she is on the evaluation panel?

[Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan confers with Ms. Balkaran]

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Right, so their submissions are in and they are establishing an evaluation panel which is scheduled to meet next week and the DPS will be the representative from the Ministry on that panel to first get the consultant—

Madam Chairman: That is to get the consultant?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan:—before they get the plan.

Madam Chairman: And what is the time frame for the consultancy?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I do not have that information now.

Madam Chairman: You do not have that information?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: No. That we could get because—we would be able to.

Madam Chairman: So, where I am trying to lead is, whether by the beginning of the new fiscal year they are going to have a strategic plan in place.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I would hope so, Madam Chairman. But we would follow-up on it.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much. Is there any other member who wants to ask a question? Yes, member Webster-Roy.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: Thanks, Madam Chair. Madam PS, in your submission you would have noted that given economic circumstances, training is being done with the Public Service Academy in-house or via other no cost options. And I wanted to get an idea of the different types of training that would have been conducted thus far for the fiscal and the category of officers trained. Also, the other training plan for the rest of the fiscal year.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: We would have provided the appendix. It was not much training for the year, page 52, appendix 4, would have been the courses that we would have sent staff on so far. In terms of going forward with a training schedule we really are reliant on what is being offered by the Public Service Academy for the most part or any other kind of low cost training that we could get. We are actually speaking with iGovTT to see if we could get some training in some of the Microsoft. Another critically needed area is in the Adobe Suite that the production staff use, and right now I am actually asking for quotations on that to see if we would be able to send enough staff out. Apart from that we have no other really—we do not have a long-term training programme.

Mrs. Webster-Roy: I am seeing Spanish identified as one of the areas.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, I forgot. With the Ministry of Education with the Secretariat for the Implementation of Spanish we have started our Spanish courses this Tuesday, actually, and it runs for 20 sessions, and a lot of the staff are actually interested so we know we will be doing another set for them. That is it for training.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: A question to National Archives involving the expected construction of the records centre at Tamana, eTecK Park. When do you expect it to begin? And how long do you expect it for final completion?

Ms. Belfon: Okay, good afternoon, thank you. Actually, we are at the point where we still have to do the design for the building. It was estimated to have been done in this financial, we had the money that was allocated for that purpose. Unfortunately, we had an unfinished project from the previous year, so that money went towards that project. So we have not actually done the design for the building as yet because it is a purpose-built—it would be a purpose-built construction, so we had to get a specific design for it. So once—having an idea of a record centre would be mainly

like a warehousing-type building. So we do not expect it to be very long in terms of construction but I personally cannot say exactly how much it would be. But the first aspect of it, of course, is the design which has not yet been done. And we have put it in for the next fiscal, hopefully we will be able to have that done within the next fiscal. And then from there we would be able to estimate a time for how long it would take to construct.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: All right. On completion, would that end the rental of the NIPDEC warehouse?

Ms. Belfon: Yes.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: That would replace the—?

Ms. Belfon: That is the intention. It would replace the warehouse that is there and improve the services that we offer now. Because not only for us in terms of the records that are stored there, but a lot of the other Government Ministries and agencies are paying for housing records offsite and so it is supposed to assist with reducing that cost.

Madam Chairman: Just for my understanding, Ms. Belfon, it will replace just NIPDEC or it will replace NIPDEC, complete storage and bonded services?

Ms. Belfon: It would replace just NIPDEC.

Madam Chairman: Just NIPDEC.

Ms. Belfon: The stuff which is at—complete storage, that is specific to the administration of archives. So it is some of our stores, general stores and the items which are stored at bonded services are film. And that film—because the project, if we go back to the project, it is a purpose-built national archives and record centre. So the film aspect of it will be dealt under the purpose-built national archives.

The record centre would be for the items which are stored at Chaguaramas in the NIPDEC warehouse. And, well, the issue of the little overflow in terms of our stores, our compound right now, it should—we are dealing, we are trying to, you know, adjust in terms of space because a lot of what we purchase is overseas, we cannot buy a small amount because it would not make sense. So that, you know, there is always this kind of excess storage for our general stores for the work that is done especially under the conservation lab and the storage materials we need to house the records. So that is why we have that little extra space for the things which we buy and store in bulk.

We are hoping with the way that our space is managed currently, because there have been

some small projects for the upgrade of the current space, we should be able to address that. Because we actually had two storage facilities at Diego Martin, we were able to reduce it to one. So we are hoping that we will get rid of that one in the near future.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much. Member Olivierre.

Ms. Olivierre: Thank you very much. If you could just touch back on training a bit. Now, there is a Vote for training of librarians which is targeted to employees of NALIS. Indicated that 103 employees have become qualified librarians so far and there remains some 75 undergraduate and six post-graduate scholarships to be offered. Are you having challenges with employees taking up these offers, or what time frame do you anticipate then that all the eligible NALIS employees would take advantage of this opportunity?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Member, this is a question I would have to take back to NALIS. I do not have the details with me right now.

Madam Chairman: And, you know, PS, there is a question too I wanted to ask about NALIS. Coming off of that scholarship programme, where I cannot find the exact question and response, but basically if I summarize well, when we asked about the assessment and evaluation of persons who have gone and accessed these programmes, and the response was something to the effect that that lies with NALIS. You found where I am at? If you look at page 30. All right, so the assessment of the effectiveness of training and post-training evaluations under the purview of NALIS. I mean, I guess NALIS as you say is a separate entity, but the funds on external agency to use your terminology, but the funds for those programmes come under you as the accounting officer. So is there not any sort of reporting done to you, or should it not, under the heading of “accountability”, be some sort of reporting to you with respect to, okay, “all the scholarships we giving and this money we spending, is it effective”? Are we getting value for money?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I think when we put this here in terms of assessing how many people were trained and how effectively they were operating within—well, NALIS organization, because NALIS handles all the librarians. I think that that is what was meant by this response, that they are under the purview of NALIS. I have not thought about whether I should get reporting on this, but it is something that I can consider going forward.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Another thing I wanted to ask you about is, I have seen it under Publicity, Promotions and Printing, I might have it in the wrong order. We are going to page 18 of the submission, where in response to the question of if your allocation is sufficient, the answer

we get: No, the allocation is insufficient. But in response to another question, you know, what are your guidelines to ensure that you could meet the mandate of getting Government's message out there, consistent and so on; there are no guidelines. So, I was having a little challenge in marrying the response of "no guidelines", to the response of: "\$150,000 is insufficient". So, I wanted to find out on what basis we decided that \$150,000 is not sufficient if we do not have guidelines with respect to how we are getting out these messages in a consistent and effective manner.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: In responding to this particular part. I was looking at the fact that when I got there and I looked at the funds in the Vote, that the Vote was depleted. But, I mean, there are certain things that are just routine things that you do in communications. So even if we do not have a big project or a big strategy, we know that there are certain things that need to be put in the papers. We know that there are certain things that we have to advertise and that is how the spending goes. So far, it has proven to be inefficient because we have gotten to this juncture in the fiscal year and the funds have been depleted and now we have to try and look to see where we will be able to put more. Because we have been carrying certain things in the papers, we have been doing advertorials and I have had to stop that, because at this juncture we have bills that we need to clear off before we can spend more.

Madam Chairman: So, for instance, if you are to advertise for vacancies, to fill vacancies, it will come out of this Vote?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It comes out of this Vote, yes.

Madam Chairman: All right. So, I now appreciate why you could say a \$150,000 is insufficient, and the Vote is currently exhausted?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Okay. All right. And the other thing that I guess you can shed some light for me on, is in terms of Overseas Travel and, you know, the Vote for that and in terms of the Vote for conferences; Hosting of Conferences, seminars and other functions. Both of which in the response what you explained to us, "Look, because of the economic circumstances we cannot consider that". I took that to mean that you do not even have an allocation under that. The one with Hosting of Conferences is page 18, and the Overseas Travel, I am trying to remember where that is. But, you know, the response is a similar kind of response, page 15.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, both Votes have allocations, but the spending in them has been minimal. The Hosting of Conferences, I think, would actually have taken provisions out of that

Vote to use for other expenditure, and Overseas Travel though, has been sort of a ticklish one for us because actually, after we responded to this we did have some unforeseen overseas travel. It is because the Ministry of Communications through the Information Division provides a lot of support services to other Ministries. One place that we provide support is with the Office of the Prime Minister. So whenever there is need for some sort of travel, one of the staff from Information Division goes as a videographer to do all their postings and their videos and stuff and that is really how our overseas travel expenditure goes up. So sometimes it is not because the Ministry itself has planned, but because the officer belongs to another contingent from another Ministry, that is how we have to pick up the tab.

Madam Chairman: Okay. And therefore, is there a policy regarding this? If yes, provide a list. And there is no response, because that is what you are saying, because of your whole mandate, it may not be your own individual need, but the support you give. So that there is some kind of policy. Okay, and even if you did not have money, or your money—given the economic circumstances no overseas travel has been deemed critical during this period.

What I wanted to know is, if there is policy how then would you allocate that that Vote? And has your Ministry suffered in the discharge of its mandate by not being able to spend money under overseas travel, or under hosting of conferences and seminars and so on. So that your very response, I guess in hindsight shows me that there may be a need to relook the answers under these two critical areas, in which a lot of the questions have not been responded to, because of the blanket statement about the economic challenges. Okay, so we will send them back.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Member Antoine.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: I want to go back to the organizational structure and the Chairman can guide me if I am going overboard. The Prime Minister indicated that the public library would be converted to an Eric Williams Memorial Library. Given the fact that NALIS and the Archives are under the Ministry of Communications, would that fall under the remit of the Ministry of Communications, possibly as an external agency? And if so, in terms of the strategic plan, where would that be indicated in the strategic plan?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes. Previously, from what I am aware from the Cabinet Minutes, the restoration of that Heritage Library was under the purview of NALIS. With recent Cabinet decisions, I think there is some now conjoint relationship in terms of the management of the project

because with the change of name, I also know some input is being received now from the Office of the Prime Minister. But largely, any details on that, yes, would be in relation to NALIS as well, so it is going to be that sort of join effort to get the Heritage Library up and moving.

Brig. Gen. Antoine: So it will be part of the external agency, not so much—

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It would be under NALIS, yes, being a library, it would be NALIS and not Archives? Archivist would like to add?

[Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan confers with Ms. Belfon]

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I am just being informed it is also in collaboration with UWI as well, given that the collection is with them. So it is that kind of collaborative effort to get it done.

Madam Chairman: PS, what I wanted to ask is that having regard to your coming to this Ministry in its critical state of reemergence, would there be a sort of checklist that you could formulate of—almost as a template for a Ministry coming into being after it has been separated?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: A checklist with things that need to be done?

Madam Chairman: Yeah.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, I think I am going through the experience now and I am actually working myself with a checklist I think by the month. So I am setting—I realize because I have to learn as well what exists, what does not exist. I have to learn a lot of the history of the Ministry, and yes. So in terms of getting documentation on the history, in terms of getting files you need to talk to some of the people who were there. And then you start to make your list of where you think it is you want the Ministry to go, and yes you do your list of HR needs, IT needs, accommodation needs. There is not a written template, but it is possible to formulate one.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Thank you. In terms of this, I also wanted to know as far as the Janitorial Services, I see one of the contracts will come to an end in June, of this month, sub-item 37, page 16, right, this was for a six-month. So in terms of the plan going forward because I see a lot of your contract services are month to month. And I understood you earlier saying look, this is what you inherited and there needs to be—now that you have a legal officer there needs to be some consideration and I think we are looking then at equipment, things like your photocopying machine and so on. There needs to be some sort of reconsideration of whether longer term leases will reap certain benefits. What will be the plan for this particular janitorial contract?

4.00 p.m.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Madam Chair, it is all the same plan, because I asked her to go through the

list, and so it is janitorial, it is also waste disposal, it is security, and the things that we rent.

Madam Chairman: The whole gamut of things?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, all the things that we could do contracts for and keep a contracts register.

Madam Chairman: Okay, and the last thing I wanted to find out about is the vehicles. You all have no vehicles?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, we do.

Madam Chairman: You do?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Okay, so tell me about that. Maybe I misunderstood, I saw no leases, no rented, so I jumped to the conclusion, you see why it is bad to jump to conclusions.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: They are government vehicles, so they are neither leased nor rented.

Madam Chairman: Right.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: They are all state owned.

Madam Chairman: They are all state owned?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, so we have three at head office, three at Archives, and four at Printery.

Madam Chairman: And they are all marked? I am asking that now in terms of the Inventory Control and Asset Management.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: They are all very well marked.

Madam Chairman: They are all marked?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Marked and registered with files, yes.

Madam Chairman: Okay, and there is some mechanism for fuel utilization and so on?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: The fleet card system.

Madam Chairman: Yes?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes.

Madam Chairman: All of that is in place?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: In place yes.

Madam Chairman: Okay, and there is a policy for disposal? And you know that is a good thing we have come to because you do not have a procurement unit. Do you?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: No, Madam Chairman, we do not.

Madam Chairman: Tell us about that.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, it is one of the things that we have to miraculously work on in the next three months. Because even in my admin unit, my most senior officer is an admin assistant. I do not even have an administrative officer. So, we are working tentatively, I have tried to get them from the things that I have known, so plus to start doing pre-qualification of suppliers and those kinds of things, to start getting those in place. Again, now that I have a legal, that helps, and some prior experience from prior Ministries, we are really importing some of their documents and suiting the Ministry of Communications.

Madam Chairman: Now, let me ask you something. You do have Cabinet approval for a structure?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes we do. With the split, when PMCP rationalized everything we got a Senior Procurement Officer and a Procurement Officer. The difficulty is when you look at the JD of the post, we do not have staff that are suited. We have asked around the Ministry and nobody is studying that sort of logistical supply stuff, procurement to fill.

Madam Chairman: And I guess that is where your statement comes as—a statement I found very interesting. And I want to put it back in your words. It is something to the effect about the transition—the challenges in the transition that occurs with respect to—

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: It is contract employment, whether we could transition, and to some extent this comes from what I have observed, because when you look at the rate of pay that we would do for a contract officer, any equivalent in terms of the public service you are not going to get that salary. There is no way you are going to get that competency and that skill to stay if you want to transition. I have had that same conversation with staff. They would like something longer-term, but I have told them “Does a comms officer really want to come back and be a public relations officer?” There is just no way that the salaries would match, and you cannot ask them with the competencies they have now to do what is in the public service job description.

Madam Chairman: And I took that to also apply to the issue you would have with your procurement unit. In that, if looking internally you do not have those competencies that you could fill it with persons that you already have.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: I mean, the suggestion is being made that yes, we have staff who regularly do procurements where administrative officers could probably do it. But then their job description does not match with the Procurement Officer job description, or the competencies or qualifications. I do not know what exists in the wider service, given that procurement is new, it is probably there

we just have not like asked the DPO anything as yet, to see what we can find from outside.

Madam Chairman: So that is your next step then?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: That is my next step.

Madam Chairman: Okay, all right. Are there any other questions? Well, what I want to ask you Madam PS, is maybe you could tell us what we can do to help you. I think the template was the answer; how you could help us to help you.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Madam Chair, I do not know if it is a recommendation committees could make, but there is so much administrative stuff that has to go on when Ministries get split. Sometimes we need a little bit more stability, and to probably be able to transition the same people because as the Government Printer would have told you, they were under public utilities, and then they come to be communications, then they come to be NPAC, and now that they are back at communications. It is sometimes a little difficult to grow without the stability of being able to have the chance to grow.

Apart from that, I think my accountant is saying things like pension and leave. When it comes to the staff they are seriously challenged with that though having had the support from MPA as my SHRO had said, that is still stable there for now, but we are going to have to transition it to MOC as soon as I get a P & L officer, that is somebody else to be employed on the list. But the lack of administrative stability sometimes is a challenge.

Madam Chairman: But as we talk about pension and leave, and I know you are relying on MPA, but would you have now, a list of the persons who are to retire within this fiscal year or this calendar year?

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes definitely. That is part of what pension and leave units are doing all across the ministry now. So every month I do get the statement, and so, I know there are about four people who have not finished for 2018. I know who is on 2019, and I know who is on 2020, and sometimes I would follow up and ask “What is the hiccup with the people who retired in 2018?” And again, it would be one of these issues, a lot of them are Printery people. They cannot get their records from public admin, they cannot get it from public utilities.

Madam Chairman: So, have you been able then, for:

“...not less than three calendar months before the date on which the officers concerned are due to retire, in order to enable the computation and checking of pensions, retirement allowances and gratuities to be completed by the Comptroller and the Auditor General and

submitted for authorization before the date on which the officer's retirement from the Service is due to take effect."

I am reading from the Regulations.

Mrs. Atiba-Dilchan: Yes, Madam Chair, I would not say 100 per cent because as I have mentioned just now, on the monthly report I get I have seen at least about five people from 2018, but for the most part yes, because they are now keeping the records, they are on track.

Madam Chairman: Okay, thank you very much. I am sure those people to retire will feel a little comfortable. Okay, so that if there are no further questions, I know there are some we are going to send you in writing, particularly as relates to those external agencies. Okay, I want to personally congratulate you, in terms of I have got a sense from all that we have seen to be done, that you know there is some understanding that there are things to be done, and some plan to get it done. So, I really want to congratulate you. I am just sort of forecasting that the template design would be thrown out to you. Okay, so I got the impression that you started the homework.

So, I want to thank you and your team for coming and helping us get an appreciation of how you are dealing with the challenges of getting MOC in its new incarnation, you know back on its feet. I want to thank the members of the public, and the members of the media for remaining with us and being part of this conversation. I wish you well, you will be hearing from us with the follow up questions and the deadline for the responses, and hopefully we would have you back here very early in fiscal 2019/2020 to see how MOC has progressed, from what you are now to then. Okay, so I thank you all very much, and I wish you all a safe journey home. I now bring this meeting to an end. The public meeting is suspended.

4.09 p.m.: *Meeting suspended.*