

**MINISTERIAL RESPONSE
TO THE
NINTH REPORT OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE
OF PARLIAMENT ON MINISTRIES, STATUTORY
AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES (GROUP 2)**

ON

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO SOLID WASTE
MANAGEMENT COMPANY (SWMCOL)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECORDS MANAGEMENT:

Management is currently looking at a number of options to address the matter. Firstly, we acknowledge the need for a comprehensive system and as such have endorsed the recommendation.

We are currently performing a Gap Analysis on the current information system. Upon completion a proposal will be sent to the Board of Directors with TOR and RFP to hire the relevant expertise/consultant to develop such a system.

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES:

SWMCOL has completed an analysis of proposals from various Waste Management Companies from the International scene, and is awaiting directives from the BOD on the way forward. Concurrently the company has identified in its Strategic Plan for the five year period 2013-2018, one of the major goals of bringing on stream 8 new business lines within the next 6months to 2 years. Also included as an initiative is the establishment of a full fledge recycling facility to include; paper, plastics, tins, cardboard, tires and batteries. This project will take effect within (1-6 mths short) (6mths-2/3 years). The Strategic Plan also includes new rates for commercial use of the Landfills.

WASTE COLLECTION RATE:

SWMCOL, through its BOD is making representation to the line Ministry, the MOLG to drive the process of having an aggressive legislative agenda that addresses the problem of illegal dump sites and dumping of waste in the water streams. The new system envisaged will include Waste recover authority – Legislation, litter wardens, fines etc. Given that there exists an improved litter warden department at the MOLG, the company is taking measures to forge an alliance with that unit to bring some short term relief within the next six months.

SOLID WASTE MANGEMENT POLICES:

The MOLG had undertaken an exercise that engaged Garraway and Associates to develop a national policy on Solid Waste Management. Operationally it is at Board level to commission the development of a Policy in tandem with the National policy. However, The National Draft Policy on Solid Waste Management has been before Cabinet since August 2012.

WASTE ENERGY PROPOSALS:

SWMCOL is of the view that the Government is the one to take the lead in developing the policy direction (long term) alternative energy policy. In the recent past we have encountered a number of proposals from both local and international organizations expressing interest in Waste to energy projects. However, all of the initial data shows that the cost of production will be much higher than that which we currently produce energy.

CLOSURE OF GUANAPO LANDFILL:

One of the objectives stated in the Strategic Plan 2013-2018 is the closure of the Guanapo Landfill; this process should be carried out within the next six months. The planned action will include; Initiate Transfer Station. Maintain contractors for scavenging at East Regional Corporations (this will involve the re-negotiating of some contracts). Haulage of containers to Beetham and Forres Park Landfills.

CLOSURE OF FORRES PARK LANDFILL:

This recommendation will conflict with previous policy decisions undertaken by the company. Forres Park is the only scientifically constructed landfill in the country, and it has been part of a long term plan to have both the Guanapo and Beetham Landfills close and operate Forres Park as the only landfill in the country, while the other sites are rehabilitated. The process then would be the instituting of a Transfer Station System throughout the country at about 6-8 strategically located areas, operating simultaneously with an aggressive recycling facility.

LOW PRIORITY OF WASTE MANAGEMENT:

SWMCOL has already initiated a Community Youth Outreach Program (CYOP) aimed at targeting the rural communities to sensitise and raise the level of awareness of waste disposal. Other initiatives targeted to come on stream within the next three months are;

- Increase Municipal police
- Public awareness program expanding to full scale national event.
- Litter wardens

EVALUATION OF TENDERS:

A revised draft policy on tendering rules and procurement procedures has been laid before the Board at the last Board Meeting held April 2013. The criteria for awarding contracts are being reviewed.

DISPOSAL OF MEDICAL WASTE:

SWMCOL sees this as yet another opportunity to create a Waste Management Authority in the country. This Authority will have the legislative power and authority to demand this type of information from all operatives within the Health Sector and to inquire of their disposal methods. Further, it will be able to analyse the quantity and quality of waste that is being generated by the national community; residential and commercial. In the meanwhile SWMCOL continues the engagement of foreign partners in dealing with Medical and other Toxic Waste, as has been recently done (2012) with the DDT project for and on behalf of the Ministry of Health. The initiatives above are currently being pursued and are ongoing.

MONITORING PROGRAMME:

Approaches to be done - 1) Initiate discussions with Water Resource Ministry
2) Current Chairlady - to take lead
3) EMA -- What is required by testing
4) WASA

Assign official from SWMCOL to follow up.