

**VERBATIM NOTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES, SERVICE COMMISSIONS STATUTORY AUTHORITIES (INCLUDING THE THA), HELD IN THE A.N.R. ROBINSON ROOM (EAST) MEETING ROOM, 9<sup>TH</sup> TOWER D, INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE, #1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN, ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 08, 2017**

**PRESENT**

Miss Ramona Ramdial	Vice-Chairman
Mrs. Jennifer Baptiste-Primus	Member
Mr. Nigel De Freitas	Member
Mr. Darryl Smith	Member
Mr. Julien Ogilvie	Secretary
Ms. Khisha Peterkin	Assistant Secretary
Miss Ashaki Alexis	Parliamentary Intern

**10.26 a.m.:** *Meeting resumed.*

**POLICE SERVICE COMMISSION**

Dr. Maria Therese Gomes	Chairman, PSC
Mr. Dinanath Ramkissoon	Member, PSC
Mr. Martin George	Member, PSC
Ms. Anastasius Creed	Director of Personnel Administration
Ms. Natasha Seecharan	Legal Adviser
Ms. Margaret Morales	Executive Director, HR, Management
Mrs. Caminee Baboolal	Senior Human Resource Adviser
Mr. Alfred Gray	Asst. Director, Research & Evaluation

**Vice Chairman:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Let me first take this pleasure to welcome the Police Service Commission to the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities, (Including the THA). I would now invite Dr. Maria Therese Gomes, Chairman of the Police Service Commission, to—before I do that, this is a public hearing of the Police Service Commission. This hearing is being convened further to the Committee’s current inquiry into the efficiency and effectiveness of the Police Service Commission. I will now ask the chairman to introduce herself and invite members of the Committee to do the same.

**Dr. Gomes:** Good morning, hon. Chairman and other esteemed members of the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and the Statutory Authorities (Including the THA). As Chairman of the Police Service Commission, I consider this meeting a timely privilege, as the PSC has the opportunity to account for its effectiveness and efficiency in undertaking its constitutional mandate. Timely, because on February 1<sup>st</sup> last week the commission became duly constituted and if I may now introduce some of our team.

*[Introductions made]*

**Dr. Gomes:** Unfortunately Mr. George is not here with us today, and just to continue a little bit, if I may.

**Madam Chairman:** Sure.

**Dr. Gomes:** Thank you. We would like to note that the commission is at an important juncture in its evolution since it was established in 2007 in accordance with Act 6 of 2006, and Act 12 of 2007 of the Trinidad and Tobago Constitution. We, in this room, are all acutely aware of the escalating crime situation and the increased anxiety, fear and scrutiny that exist in the public domain. We therefore appreciate the importance of this meeting and the obligations to report to the public.

The commission plays an integral role in facilitating and accelerating transformation of the TTPS and ultimately in improving public trust and confidence in the police service. We are all here because we care about our beloved Trinidad and Tobago and its people. So, on behalf of the commission, let me take this opportunity to thank you for having us here.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much, Chair. Let me also take this opportunity to once more welcome you and to also have my members introduce themselves, of this particular Joint Select Committee.

*[Introductions made]*

**Madam Chairman:** All right. So before we begin the questioning let me first identify and highlight the objectives of this inquiry: one, to evaluate the performance of the commission in executing its mandate; two, to determine whether the resources, systems and procedures of the Police Service Commission are sufficient to allow it to operate efficiently; three, to determine the challenges affecting the operations of the commission and the possible solutions for alleviating these challenges.

So what we would do now is, we would begin the inquiry and I would like to start off the questioning and I would like to ask—my first question being that—and, you know, it has been in the public domain for quite some time—have you ever undertaken an audit into the manpower resources and its deployment within the police service? And if yes, what has been the findings? And if no, why not?

**Dr. Gomes:** Madam Chair, to answer your question about the manpower audit of the TTPS, I would have to answer in the negative, that we have not carried out a manpower audit in the TTPS—of the TTPS. And why we cannot carry out one is because we do not have the staffing to do that. Our complement of staffing right now, we have 20 persons—20 bodies—out of 44, which is on the establishment on the organizational chart. So that just gives you a sense of where our limitations are.

While we have limited resources, we try to be resourceful, but that would have been a tough call.

**Madam Chairman:** In line of what you are saying, is there any move to fill these vacancies in the quickest time possible?

**Dr. Gomes:** Yes. Maybe at this point I could pass to Ms. Creed to respond to this since the Service Commissions Department deals with staffing, and if I need to add anything after I will.

**Madam Chairman:** Sure.

**Ms. Creed:** Good morning, Chair, again. In 2015 there was an interim review of the structure by the Public Management Consulting Division of the Ministry of Public Administration and that matter was taken to Cabinet. One of the directives that Cabinet gave is that—two actions occurred. Where there were similar offices in the public service, the secretariat, when it was initially set up, all offices were contract offices. In that initial review where there were similar offices in the public service, the Public Management Consulting Division recommended, and Cabinet agreed, to not have those contract positions and have the existing public service positions. Also, where there were no similar offices, there were contract positions that were created and Cabinet mandated that these offices be advertised. We did advertisement for the offices and we are in the process right now—we have started interviews and we are in the process of completing the fillings and we anticipate by the end of February that the offices—or into March—that the offices should all be filled.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you kindly, Madam Chair, and a warm welcome to the chairman of the Police Service Commission and the other persons who have already identified themselves. The question to you, Madam Chair, of the Police Service Commission, when were you appointed to the position?

**Dr. Gomes:** I was appointed to the position of Chairman of the Police Service Commission on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you very much. Just to continue, Madam Chair of the PSC—which is different to Madam Chair of the JSC—with regard to—and I am going straight into the meat of the matter and it has to do with the evaluation of the Police Commissioner. In your submission, a list of criteria used by the Police Service Commission to evaluate the leadership of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service in 2015 was provided and based on the information submitted I would be very grateful if clarification could be conveyed to the following questions: The criteria that has been used, has it been revised within the last 10 years? And with regard to the maintenance of law and order, public trust and confidence, strategic leadership, management and communication, the various performance criteria, could you give a little bit more on those issues?

And I would indicate, for example, in measuring the performance of the Police Commissioner we have identified, for example, under “Maintenance of law and order”, the performance indicators, one is reduction in serious crime except murders, and the target is 15 per cent year on year. Could you advise us with regard to two performance indicators, that is, “Reduction in serious crime except murder” and “Increase in the detection rate, 10 per cent year on year”? How can you have such performance indicators with an escalating crime rate in the country? Therefore, the question could be asked: is the commission satisfied with the performance of the Police Commissioner, given the performance indicators?

**Dr. Gomes:** Okay. You have asked several things so I have noted it down and, Mr. Gray, at some point I will ask you to join in with the indicators. All right? But maybe I could start at the end. In terms of the question of maintenance of law and order and the 15 per cent year on year, and the question of the detection of crime,

one of the things that we have to bear in mind, while to the public and the layman we can say, well, we are not holding the Commissioner to a higher percentage, but one of the things that I want to share is that the indicator is not something directly that he is responsible for, if it is an indirect responsibility then—because remember he is the head. All right? So he is not going out there and actually—he may be going out there and actually fighting some crime in that sense, but it is indirect and so because it is indirect it is a lower percentage than if he were directly responsible. All right? So that would be why the question of the 15 per cent is there. These are agreed targets. All right? When we have to do the performance appraisal in terms of best HR practices, it is that we must consult with the TTPS in arriving at what the targets are, and meeting with their team as well, and we have done that over the time.

Now, you asked about if the criteria has been revised during the last 10 years, and definitely so, from the point of view that contextually, the socioeconomic and political climate has changed and the composition and iteration of the Police Service Commission has changed as well. So that one of the things that we have done since I came on board—since you asked me about my tenure—one of the things that I indicated when I was interviewed by the press at my swearing in was that I would look at institutional strengthening, and that, I want to say, is where some of my focus has been, because I recognized very early in doing my own needs assessment of the organization when I came in, that we had serious deficiencies in how we were operating. All right?

And so, to that end, in 2015 we hired a monitoring and evaluation consultant for two months in 2015. So she came in, did some basic work to assess things and started a process of changing the performance evaluation and appraisal methodology. She was trying to do a 360° approach where it would be consulting peers, et cetera, and evaluating. You would have to do a self-evaluation and so.

So that is a process that we—we re-engaged her last year and because of the situation with the staffing where we had—we have had people on month-to-month from 2014, some of the contract staff. That is very precarious and does not foster high motivation, et cetera. But I must say that the staff has worked through it all. And as such, bringing her back when that situation was going on where people are leaving and new people are coming in, we have held off in terms of the month of December and she is coming back on board and will be with us in terms of working through, then, a whole revised system. So it has been revised before her coming and then since her coming in, we have looked at the internal surveys, the external surveys. She has done some training and coaching of the staff because you will notice from the questions that you have posed to us—the 22 questions, you would notice that training in terms of technical training has been very limited and you will see there where I have included the M&E Consultant's training.

One of the issues that came up when I first came on board—because I must say, this is a very instrumental exercise because it forced me to look at my own performance appraisal then. All right? And in looking back, I think I hit the ground running in 2015.

**10.45 a.m.**

So that what I tried to do then was find various courses, or whatever, you know. You are looking for sources to improve and beef up your resourcefulness so that we could do a more robust kind of appraisal. And in doing that, what I was informed is that the contract staff do not receive training because they are supposed to come already trained. I do not hold to that position, but hence the limitation in having the technical staff trained. Let me pass on to Mr. Gray to add on to the question of the indicators.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** But before you do so, Madam Chair of the PSC, I have been

looking at your performance indicators and I am not seeing any of the indicators embracing, waiting for the display of strategic leadership by the Commissioner of Police. Could you share with us why? Why there is not appointed attention in that direction? Because if the Police Commissioner is in charge of the Police Service, therefore strategic leadership becomes critical.

**Dr. Gomes:** Yes, strategic leadership does become critical and that is one of the areas that the M&E consultant has raised in terms of the leadership piece. That and the financial management are two areas that we recognize because in terms of just by way of saying this, we do not have a financial analyst anymore. That person left and we have not been able to fill the position. We had advertisements and interviews and we have had nobody able to fill the position.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Why, is that because of poor remuneration package, or other factors?

**Dr. Gomes:** I want to think that the question of even applying for—because, you know, when the ad is out and apparently when people see terms and conditions will be negotiated, sometimes that is a deterrent. That is what I have been told but maybe Ms. Creed could answer that piece, but in terms of the indicators, I certainly would still like to have Mr. Gray elaborate on that since he is the Assistant Director for Research and Evaluation.

**Mr. Gray:** Thank you, Chair. If we throw our minds back—I know that some of the members were not here at that time—the 2014 and 2013 appraisal that we did over that period, we identified the different categories that the member spoke about. During that period we had the following categories:

- maintenance of law and order;
- public trust and confidence;
- human resource management;



- strategic initiatives;
- financial administration; and
- documents and information submitted to the PSC.

That last criteria, or dimension, that was related only to the Commissioner of Police. So as Chair for the PSC spoke on improvement, we hired a consultant and we improved on those dimensions or categories by identifying the following areas:

- maintenance of law and order;
- public trust and confidence;
- financial administration;
- human resource management; and
- strategic leadership management and communication.

So those are the new criteria or dimensions that we are using to evaluate the performance of the Commissioner and the three Deputy Commissioners.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair, could you permit me? Are those performance criteria to be used for appraising the performance of the Police Commissioner for the year 2015, or the year 2016, or both 2015 and 2016?

**Mr. Gray:** Both 2015 and 2016. So this is what was agreed to by the Commission.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Just to extend from member Baptiste-Primus questioning, what is the time frame within which those appraisals are done? How long does it take then to do those appraisals?

**Mr. Gray:** The appraisal is done for the period under review. 2015, that period, we will—the information, it is a long drawn-out process in that you have to get information from different sources. You have external survey, internal survey; you have audit information; media reports; document submitted by the police service; periodic reports. Those are different sources, so they come at different times. For instance, the periodic report is a biannual report. So that report comes in around July

and the other one comes in December. So the period for the evaluation is that year, that particular year, and the report will be completed by February, if everything goes as plan, the following year.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** The following year?

**Mr. Gray:** Yes.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Okay.

**Mr. Gray:** We have a situation here where because of the consultant coming on board that has thrown things out of norm.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** So it would take longer for this particular appraisal?

**Mr. Gray:** Yes.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** For 2015, 2016 appraisals.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair, permit me, but I know that perhaps a lot of effort is being put into the exercise by the Commission, but the essence of appraising someone's performance, it should be done, one, on a timely basis as and when the weaknesses of that person or that officer are identified, in keeping with the whole focus of sympathetic consideration in persons operating at a higher level. As and when the weaknesses are identified, you take steps to correct it.

So we are in 2017 and if the performance of the Commissioner of Police for the year 2015 has not been done, in the event that he is performing certain functions in the wrong capacity, or not in the correct way, he is continuing. Nobody is telling him, "Hello, pull brakes". So that I would strongly recommend that the Commission take steps to engage in timely performance appraisal exercises of the Commissioner of Police because we will be spinning top in mud. If someone is performing a job and not performing that job satisfactorily, in order to be fair to that person you have to draw that person's weaknesses to that person's attention within a timely framework so as to afford that person the opportunity to improve.

**Dr. Gomes:** Let me answer that question, or at least make a comment. Hon. member, I do want to agree fully with what you are saying and this is what the M&E consultant—this is one of the reasons she has been brought on board because monitoring and evaluation really has to be a continuous assessment, and as well letting the person know. So setting targets and objectives for their particular growth within the organization and then holding them to that. So I agree fully with you in terms of meeting them in a timely basis. So in terms of her new framework, that is how it is supposed to be.

So meeting quarterly with the TTPS Executive, they are to meet as well as peers, then the 360 approach, and it is now to implement it. But given the constraints that we have had between staff and then getting everything together and bringing back the consultant, being able to bring her back on board to implement it—because it was done during her first period in terms of doing that assessment and her proposed method of operationalizing what she suggested, but it took a while to bring her back on board, and then we have been constraint as well with the budget deficits, et cetera.

So all those factors, when you add in all those factors, I want to say that is the reason we have all those delays.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Thank you, Chairman. Just one last question before I go to member Smith. Your last appraisal would have been in 2014 as you have indicated, right? So what has been the findings from that appraisal on the Commissioner of Police and his Deputies?

**Mr. Gray:** In terms of the findings, the office holders then were given a finding of good, and one officer, that is the officer—

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Could you identify the office holders, please, starting with the Commissioner of Police?

**Mr. Gray:** The Commissioner of Police, the Deputy Commissioner—

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Can you give us the names, Mr. Gray?

**Mr. Gray:** The Deputy Commissioner, Crime, Mr. Hackett; the Deputy Commissioner, Administration, Miss Ann Marie Alleyne; and the Deputy Commissioner, Operations, Harold Phillip. Harold Phillip was given a satisfactory grade and the other two got “Good” along with the Commissioner. Sorry, the Deputy Commissioner, Crime was given “Very Good”; Commissioner, “Good”—

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Who is Deputy Commissioner, Crime?

**Mr. Gray:** Hackett at the time.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** At the time, yes. Very good. Continue.

**Mr. Gray:** Commissioner was given “Very Good”; and Operations, “Good”—sorry, not Operations, Administration.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Who is Administration?

**Mr. Gray:** Ann Marie Alleyne.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** And Operations?

**Mr. Gray:** Harold Phillip.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Harold Phillip was given “Satisfactory”.

**Mr. Gray:** Yes.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** And what about the Commissioner of Police?

**Mr. Gray:** “Very good”.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Very good. So what is the distinguishing or the differences between “Satisfactory” and “Good”? What are the elements? Could you clarify a bit? What qualifies for satisfactory; what qualifies as good; what qualifies as very good?

**Mr. Gray:** In terms of the in-depth report, it is not available presently and I can get that unto you in due course. But in terms of the grade that was given, that I can give you now and—

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Sure, give us the grades please.

**Mr. Gray:** When I said the grade, I mean the grade “Very Good” that the Commissioner got.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Okay. That is what you told us before. Alright. So can we get an assurance to have the clarification that we are seeking in writing to the JSC?

**Mr. Gray:** Definitely.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair, is it that Mr. Gray does not have the statistics, for example, what the Commissioner of Police received for “maintenance of law and order”, you do not have the weighting marks for that area; “public trust and confidence”, “human resource management”? You do not have what the weighting that was afforded, or accorded to the Commissioner of Police? You do not have that information?

**Mr. Gray:** Not here, but I can get that on to the Committee as soon as possible.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Okay. Thank you. Member Smith.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Chair. Well I had to scratch off three or four of my questions because they went, but it was a leading off from what was asked from member Baptiste-Primus and the Chairman. With reference to the benchmarking, the performance of the acting top cop and his Deputies, if the performance targets are met is there any incentives or are any incentives put in place for that if the targets are met; and if they are not met are there any consequences or sanctions that are laid down?

**Dr. Gomes:** Good morning, again, Mr. Smith. There are not any incentives. Maybe that is something we need to look at as a Government. And in terms of sanctions, the Commission then points out to the Commissioner, or any of his Deputies, the areas of limitation and weaknesses and ask for corrective measures, but there is no

punitive sanctions.

**Mr. De Freitas:** Good morning again. I just wanted to focus on the appraisal of the Commissioner of Police, and the question I really want to ask firstly coming from what member Smith would have been saying in regard to benchmarking, this appraisal form, the criteria and the targets, is it benchmarked against anything internationally? I know you guys said that you had a consultant on board, and just give me an example, is this benchmarked against, let us say, the Canadian Commissioner of Police and the appraisal done for that individual? Could you answer that question first and then I would have others leading off from that.

**Mr. Gray:** Yes, we can say that it is benchmarked in terms of the discussion that we have with the Commissioner of Police. These targets are not thrown out by the Commissioner of Police and left like that. Based on discussion with the Commission, there is agreement on the indicators—

**Mr. De Freitas:** One second. The question that I was asking was the criteria here on the appraisal form, as well as the targets that come with it, do you a comparison with other police commissioners in other jurisdictions? So in other words, when we look at “public trust and confidence” is that something that is also looked at for, let us say, as an example, the Canadian Police Commissioner? You also were talking about discussions with the Commissioner of Police which now leads me to ask: is it the Commissioner of Police the one setting the targets; is that individual the one saying, on his own appraisal form, that 10 per cent increase in terms of response time to calls is good enough from year to year?

How could he be in a discussion to say that 10 per cent increase from, let us say, 2014 to 2015 is enough, or a target that he is setting, and then the Police Service Commission in conversation with him or her—whoever holds the position—are agreeing to that. Should it not be that the Police Service Commission sets the targets

based on either international standards or standards with a consultant and say that we expect to see a 5 per cent increase, 10 per cent, or 15 per cent, and therefore, the Police Commissioner, being the leader of the police service, meets that target, and therefore, you can appraise him or her based on that target.

**Dr. Gomes:** Okay, I will answer the question. In terms of the international standards, yes, international standards are looked at and our Secretariat members in the past—not recently because we do not have money—have liaised as well with international policing organizations like Interpol and so. I believed Mr. Gray has actually gone to one of those conferences. So in terms of international standards, yes, we—Mr. Gray, for instance, is the Assistant Director of Research and Evaluation. So in terms of doing research and international standards, yes, we have international standards, but in terms of HR practice and best practice it would really be a challenge to try to hold the Commissioner and his Executive to standards that are international when it is we would then have to provide the resources so that he can be supported.

So in terms of one of the strategic initiatives that we were looking at, one would be him lobbying to get legislation passed. If we do not look at it in a holistic way and we do not have legislation, let us say to support cybercrime, or anti-gang Act and all of those sorts of things, if we lag back in one area, or even in the Judiciary, it makes the work more difficult. So that putting him in abstract, we cannot just put him in a bubble and say, “All right, we want this target. You meet it.” It has to be agreed. That is best practice. It has to be agreed to by the parties.

What has happened in the past, in meeting with him and trying to discuss—because we are discussing the targets—one of the things that has come up is that the Commissioner will talk about stretch targets, and stretch targets, meaning that he does not know if he could really get the detection up, or the solvability up, or

reduction in crime in that way, and he would then put a stretch target to motivate. He said it is to motivate his personnel. So if you have a high expectation of a child, or of an employee—so the expectation is high, but in terms of reaching it, he is not sure if he could reach it.

In that regard, he has said to us when we have met with him that we grade him on the stretch target and so his grade is not reachable then. So he wants to change that to one that is more realistic, but if you challenge as you say, you push the envelope, then I think you may have more results. But definitely we do look at international standards, but we have to recognize that in terms of the crime situation in this country, because we have technology we have galloped in crime. Crime, we are almost a barbaric society in the nature of crime, whether it is through technology, or the domestic violence crimes, or the murders, or whatever. But the thing about it is that while we are a developing country, we have a gap in terms of wanting to have developed country standards.

So let us say our personal benchmarks—and nothing is wrong with that, but we have to be realistic. We will have what people look at on television and solve a crime very quickly. There is so much that needs to be done in a holistic way for things to happen, for that benchmarking then, for that target. So in terms of, let us say, a forensic ability and all the other things that goes with it, in terms of training for police officers, all those things have to be beefed up. The academy, for instance, they are looking at accreditation, but when we have asked this past year to look at their syllabi and the cost outlines, all of those things need to be redone. We are working with limited staff, but those are areas that we go into.

Unfortunately, none of us have a magic wand, either on your side or this side, but it is stuff that we need to do consistently and with the help of all the parties involved.



**Mr. De Freitas:** Understandably so and I fully agree with what you are saying, however, it cannot be in my mind that as you rightly said, the Police Commissioner is working in a vacuum per se. I believe that the Police Commissioner meets either the National Security Council with the Minister of National Security, and therefore, that Council is working together to get a handle on crime in Trinidad and Tobago. What I am basically saying is that with all of the little moving parts that need to be beefed up, there should be some sort of a timeline, either coming from the Police Commissioner, working along with the Minister of National Security, to say that these are the things that we need to get done, this is the assessment that needs to happen and once we do that assessment, these are the things that need to get done, and therefore, put forward a target, or a stretch target as to get that done.

So if it is you need to train all of your—retrain, as an example, all of your police officers, it cannot be that you are saying that in a report every single year for 10 years. But you must be able to say we need to retrain the police officers and we are going to do that in a five-year period, or a four-year period. Therefore, at the end of that four-year period—because these assessments are done year-on-year—you as a Police Service Commission can then say, in 2010 you said you were going to train the police officers, we are now in four years, in 2014, that has not been done, and therefore, the appraisal should reflect that. It cannot be done with this sort of ideology that it needs to fix, it needs to fix and there is no deadline or timeline to say when it needs to fix. Otherwise, we would just be going on with infinity in this and you will never fix anything and crime will just keep getting worse.

So I think the Police Commissioner, again, not being in a vacuum, does have some responsibility in knowing how the operations of the police service works and what are the things that needs to fix that within his jurisdiction, and what is under his control that he could try to sort put a timeline on that.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Thank you, member. I just have a question also. Since we are taking about the Commissioner of Police, what is the current status of the recruitment of a permanent COP?

**Dr. Gomes:** Madam Chair, may I just respond briefly and then I will deal with the selection? Mr. De Freitas, I want to agree with you completely from the point of view that the way how things are done right now, everything is still compartmentalized. So what you are talking there about, the Ministry of National Security for instance, the Ministry of National Security, the national council, the Police Service Commission, there is no forum that we meet, and you have this triangle here and the Police Commissioner is in the middle, and the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. Now the thing about it is that if you have looked at the historical nature of Service Commissions and the genesis, we are supposed to be very insular and independent so you have no political interference, et cetera.

I understand that, but we live in an interdependent world, and whereas the genesis of the Service Commissions and so came about when we had a Governor General, and after that coming down to our independence and everything else, we have to move with the times, but not move with the times just recklessly. We have to have interdependence. We must know what is happening throughout because the Ministry of National Security or the Minister of National Security is the employer for the TTPS. We are not the employer. We are the oversight body.

But as I say, if we compartmentalize things that way and left hand does not know what right hand is doing, what we need to have though is boundaries. We have to understand that we can work together, but we have boundaries and we know our domains. I just want to answer that for you because I agree with you, and if you think of the triangle, we need to be more involved. So I think that is going to change

after this. I hope so. To answer the question on the selection process, you wanted to know where we have gotten.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** So far, yes.

**Dr. Gomes:** All right. Now I am hoping that you have seen the supplemental report.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Yes.

**Dr. Gomes:** Right. So the supplemental report then will give you a clearer indication because we have done more detail in that document. We try to put the two questions of what is the status of the process of recruitment and selection for a Commissioner of Police, alongside with the reason for the delay because the entire country wants to know why we have not selected a Commissioner of Police.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** So just to summarize quickly.

**Dr. Gomes:** All right. So essentially we are at the point where we now have a duly constituted Commission as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of February. And so the Commissioner held its first statutory meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, and at that meeting we took a decision to send a notification to the firm that was successful in the evaluation. Out of the four firms that submitted proposals in response to the RFP that was sent out in November, we have taken a decision to notify the firm that they are being considered favourably and we have notified the DPA here to start negotiations in terms of the terms and conditions and the budget, et cetera, of the contract. Does that—

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Yes.

**Dr. Gomes:** Okay.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am just trying to understand how the Commissioner—because the Commissioner of Police is a very, very important officer in the maintenance of law and order in this country, and under that performance category I just need to be advised. I am seeing here a performance indicator “reduction in serious crime”, may I enquire, Madam Chair of the PSC, how

is “serious crime” defined; what is serious crime because I am seeing in brackets except murders? So what is serious crimes? So once I get that answer I then have two follow-up questions in that regard.

**Dr. Gomes:** Let me turn to my colleague here, Mr. Ramkissoon.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Certainly.

**Mr. Ramkissoon:** Thank you very much, Chair, and members. Morning again, or morning for the first time. To answer your question on murder, murder is a category of serious crime. The police service have their own categorization of serious crimes. My understanding is that serious crimes would be those that carry penalty for five years and more. So murder would be one, you have rape, robberies, kidnapping for ransom; before that we have, starting with the highest being as what occurred in 1990 and then next, murder. So it is a wide range from larceny go right up to murder.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you kindly. So having said that, Madam Chair of the PSC, what is the detection rate for serious crimes; and what is the detection rate for murders with regard to the Commissioner of Police? And could we get some substance, not only 10 per cent. If you are saying it is 10 per cent, what does 10 per cent represent, 25, 30, 40? So that the public will have a general understanding for the Police Commissioner. The detection rate for serious crimes is 10 per cent, and for the year 2014 it meant 30, or 40, or 50, so that the public itself can have some information to rate the Commissioner of Police.

**Dr. Gomes:** Unfortunately, I do not have those figures to give you something tangible, but the percentage—

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Can we get that in writing, Madam Chair, through you?

**Dr. Gomes:** Yes, yes. Definitely.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Can we receive that information in writing if it is not available at the moment? And while I am at that, Madam Chair, may I request the

information regarding whether or not each Division is ascribed a detection rate target because crime is galloping away in the country. So if the Commissioner is an octopus, straggling the police service, then what are the detection rates for all the geographic Divisions that would see the reduction of crime in the country?

**Mr. Ramkissoon:** Member, we do have detection rate for different Divisions—I am not sure we have it here—and we have probed the Commissioner recently on those very issues that you have raised. We have also asked him to identify, as you asked, murder by itself and also the different types of other offences, and also the various Divisions. To this end, the Commissioner of Police, last week we were invited to a reward ceremony in which he identified those different Divisions and the rate of detection in each Division separately. So that information can be provided to you.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Okay. Member Smith.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Chairman. We all know that things are changing and improvement enhancing all the time with technology, our criminals as well. So training staff, Commissioners, Deputies and so on is key. Last year we saw a significant reduction in the amount of training that occurred in last year's budget. If you could let us know why, what happened there, and if that is going to be fixed this year 2016/2017 that we could have the staff trained so we could be up to mark with regard to the technology and what is going on out there?

**Ms. Creed:** Chair, if I may? You are referring to the Service Commission's staff? I just want to be clear.

**Mr. Ramkissoon:** Both, the Service Commission and, of course, the police service as well, the training with regard to that.

**Ms. Creed:** The TTPS?

**Mr. Smith:** TTPS as well.

**Ms. Creed:** With regard to the Service Commission's staff, because we were in a transition mode to do recruitment, at that point in time it did not make much sense to do any heavy training for the staff. However, I must point out that in the training vote provided for us for 2017, we had a decrease and we have been allocated only \$40,000 for the entire Service Commissions Department of which the Police Service Commission Secretariat is part of.

One of the things we have had a discussion about is as soon the staff come on board we have to see where we can identify funds, whether we have to transfer funds or what, so that training can be conducted for the staff because this Commission operates differently to the other Commissions. So requirement in the legislation has different requirement for them. And to get persons out in the field, right now in Trinidad to bring all the skills on board, you are not getting persons, be it contract or public officers with all the skills and the competencies that you need. So we do have to prepare them. So we are looking for funds and when we get all staff on board, by March/April, we want to start training and preparing the staff in the different areas where we have identified, to be able to proceed with this recruitment process.

With regard to the TTPS, the Chair will address.

**Dr. Gomes:** Before I answer the question with regard to the TTPS, I just want to mention because Ms. Creed would not know of this, we have been meeting—she knows that there is a project team meeting with PMCD—looking at doing process mapping then of all our systems to assist us then in terms of how we operate. In a sense, this should have happened before the hiring, but that is not how it ended up. But we have had four meetings with PMCD and I have been the representative of the Commission at those meetings, and in looking at the organization and looking at our strategic plan which we did at the ending of 2015, how we operationalize the

plan, we have been talking about training.

So while we do not have resources in terms of the finance, we certainly can be resourceful. So that one of the efforts by PMCD is looking at the Public Service Academy, and we as well in terms of the Commission are trying to source individuals and non-profit organizations, or pro bono—which is how we have done some of our activity—to assist us with training, because the training that we need is not just in terms of technology and the technical pieces. We need that definitely, but one of the things that PMCD has pointed out is that the Secretariat and the Commission has to work more closely together. And so orientation then for the staff would be internal in terms of relational, and communication and all of that, because the way that Service Commission operates is that the Commission is here and the Secretariat is here. There needs to more interdependency and collaboration.

So by way of saying that, I want to say that in our strategic plan we came up with three core values that we are trying to implement on a day-to-day basis, which is collaboration, transparency and efficiency, and if we are able to get those three going in all our areas things will improve.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Just to extend from what you have been saying and to ask, since you are talking about transparency and efficiency, the recruitment process for the Commissioner of Police as we have here in our information is costing \$2.5 million, and given the prevailing economic condition should this costly recruitment exercise be revamped in favour for a more cost-effective process?

**Dr. Gomes:** Well, to answer that question it means that there will have to legislative change again. There was one of the questions that you sent to us, out of the 22 in terms of asking how we could be more cost efficient, and we responded by saying, okay, we are hiring a project manager. But in looking at the question more fully, we recognized that you are talking about, okay, if this very costly exercise could be done

differently, whether it is at this point or at a another point in time, and I would say at this point in time we need to continue how we are going because we are getting there. But I would say that one of the things that we can look at collectively is the question of having then the Commission actually do the exercise. That is something that we could look at.

Now it may need beefing up the staff a little more, et cetera, maybe having a project team, but doing the advertisements, maybe we would have to outsource something. But instead of us hiring a firm to do it and before this legislation, it was a firm hiring a firm to do it. So you would cut out all of that and the Commission then will be more equipped to assist in that way. That will be the cost effective way.

**Mr. Smith:** So the project manager was hired? Was that person hired?

**Ms. Creed:** He was given a letter of favourable consideration. So we have not entered into contract as yet.

**Dr. Gomes:** May I just add to that, to clarify that? Because time is money, we could not hire the project manager while we were waiting to have a duly constituted Commission. We did not know how fast that would happen. Things have to happen in tandem. So if we had hired the project manager and he has nothing to do while he is waiting, so in terms of cost effectiveness—you following me?—so that is just why.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair of the PSC, I have noted in your—oh, I am sorry. Madam Chair of the PSC, I have noted one of the recommendations is that the PAC holds the view that the Commission should be given its own separate vote for funds in the national budgetary process and have your own dedicated accounting officer because the current arrangements with the DPA are inefficient and outmoded. Can you share with this Committee some of the challenges the Commission is experiencing in that regard?



**Dr. Gomes:** In terms of the challenges that the Commission is experiencing because we do not have our own budget, et cetera, happens, for instance, one that came up already, the training of staff. Anything that we need we have to refer to our accounting officer, and in that regard it has been very challenging because simple things—okay, let us say, for instance, when I came on board we had maybe three or four televisions in the office, and again if we are doing monitoring of crime, et cetera, they need to be working.

It took, I do not know if it was almost a year to be able to get Flow and this is not because of the DPA and money. But just the logistics to get Flow in with, I do not know if it is a corporate account, or whatever, but it took us a long time to get Flow in. We do not have a VCR, we do not have anything to record what is happening to be able to have our public head and media people look back at things. When I came on board I asked if we had any camera facilities, things like that. We really do not have a lot of things that we should have.

If I could go down to as miniscule as last year when we had the budget cuts, our lunch was cheese sandwiches for a whole day. What we have done as a Commission is ask then for some money to be moved from some place so we could have a decent meal if we are going to go for a whole long day because sometimes the Commission meeting ends as late as 6.00. So that is just to kind of give you a broad sense, but in terms of being able to manage as the Commission sees fit then, it will augur well if we were able to manage our own funds, whether it is for training of staff, whether it is for the Commission's training as well, so that we can direct the Secretariat in that way as to what we want. So those are just some of the things.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** And permit, Madam Chair. If that is the view of the Commission, has the Commission reduced its views into a position paper to start the discussion in that regard to make a case?

**Dr. Gomes:** No, we have not done that as yet, but that would be done shortly. That is one of the things that we are doing with PMCD. With this whole process mapping, et cetera, they are assisting the Commission and the Secretariat in terms of coming up, but the position paper will be done by the Chair. So I will be doing the position paper, of course, having consensus with the Commission members, but definitely we need to do that because we need change. And while you are on that, I would want to say that one of the recommendations that we have here is that the role of the Commission is too important and vital for a part-time Commission.

All of us are part-time members, and so to do this work, if you have another job it means that you are working seven days a week and into the night. So if we have to give it the kind of attention it needs, we definitely would need to have a full-time position for chair and a deputy chair because as it is, if there is no chairman then meetings cannot go on.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** So that you are saying for the Commission to become more effective, one of the recommendations is to make the Commission, at least the chair and deputy chair full-time. Would you say, therefore, that you would recommend the same for the appeals tribunal?

**Dr. Gomes:** Well in terms of the appeals tribunal, what we recommended, and it is on the organizational chart I believe, is a full-time retired judge. I do not know if Ms. Creed could elaborate on that because you mentioned just now that we would have the full complement by March. So I am not sure. Can you answer that? Thank you.

**Ms. Creed:** The recruitment for the judge, that process was started previously and there was a little difficulty in the package that was being offered—the compensation package—because, of course, it is a contract position. So we would be going back again through that process with the CPO and whoever is the incumbent, the person

who has been successful.

**Mr. De Freitas:** I just wanted to change direction a bit and speak about complaints coming from police officers and members of the public, and in your submission you indicated that these complaints, both from police officers and the members of the public is forwarded on to the Commissioner of Police and my question is: in the last seven years how many of these complaints were taking place; and what action was taken by the Commissioner of Police in regard to these complaints in order to address them?

**Ms. Morales:** Good morning, Madam Chair. Member, can you please repeat the question?

**Mr. De Freitas:** I was asking how many complaints have been forwarded to the Commissioner of Police that the PSC has received over the last seven years; and what was the action taken by the Commissioner of Police to address these complaints? This is complaints from police officers, as well as members of the public.

**Ms. Morales:** I am sorry, I do not have the number here with me and, therefore, I would not be able to provide the response as to what action has been taken, but it is information that we can provide you with. Subsequent to this meeting, we can provide the Committee with everything

**Mr. De Freitas:** In writing, yes, that would be good. Thank you.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Any other member, question?

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Yes. Madam Chair of the PSC, in your submission you outlined the major challenges faced by the Police Service Commission. What is the reason for the delay in the implementation of the amendments to the Police Service Commission regulations; how many tribunals currently hear appeals, or matters referred to the Commission; what is the size or composition of these tribunals? And

lastly, please provide this Committee with details of the current salaries and allowances associated with the employees, permanent and contract, assigned to the Commission.

**Dr. Gomes:** I would like to ask Ms. Seecharan to address the issue of the regulations because I know that we are in the process. Is that okay? And then I will continue.

**Ms. Seecharan:** Good morning, the current Police Service Commission Regulations have not been revoked. So they are still in force. The difficulty we have is that the functions of the Commissions have changed, so that the Regulations could only be applied to the old functions that were retained with respect to the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioners. So that we need to amend the Regulations to cater for these new functions which is the monitoring and oversight, and hearing of appeals.

We are currently in the process of setting up a committee to do this. Our previous Commission had done some work and they had prepared a draft, but you know the membership of the Commissions changed so it never went forward and it was not approved. So we are setting up a committee and asking for assistance from the CPC to be on the committee with legal officers from Service Commission and to work alongside the Commission, to start that process now of having this Commission look at what the previous Commission did and determine whether they are in agreement or what changes they will want.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Follow-up. So let me play devil's advocate here. In the event that this Commission assigns an unsatisfactory rating to the Commissioner of Police, then is it my understanding that based on the fact that the Regulations have not been amended to embrace the performance indicators, that the Police Commissioner may have an arguable case before the courts of this land?

**Ms. Seecharan:** No, not really because the constitutional provisions have conferred

the power unto the Commission, so that they have the power to do it. So no, I do not think he has an arguable case.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** So then why then amend the Regulations to include the performance indicators?

**Ms. Secharan:** Because the Regulations do not reflect the full functions that the Commission now has. They are the old body of Regulations since the 1960s where they just had appoint, promote, transfer, discipline and remove, and now they have a wider scope.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** And that is the point that I am making. If a Commissioner of Police chooses to challenge the Police Service Commission on those grounds in the absence of the amendments—

**Ms. Secharan:** They can also regulate their procedure and take policy decisions. So, no, I do not think there will be too much strength in such a challenge because the Constitution has conferred them with the power, the extended powers.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** There were two other questions, Madam Chair of the PSC.

**Dr. Gomes:** Okay. I did not forget the two questions. You asked about the current salaries and the appeals tribunal.

**Ms. Creed:** The current salaries for the contract positions for the officers in the Secretariat, now because—I will be able to give you the salaries that they received prior. With the new contracts, those matters have to go to the CPO for them to set the salaries. So, for instance, the Assistant Director, Research and Evaluation received a monthly salary, which is a salary including transport of \$16,100; the Assistant Director, Public Education, \$15,600 including salary and transportation; Performance Evaluator, \$12,700; Audit Analyst, \$28,000—sorry. That is an error, sorry. That is \$14,000. That was a typo error—Transcription Specialist, \$7,900; and there are Biz Op positions which is the normal Biz Op contract positions that

are provided in the public service, they get the same salaries of Biz Op which is \$7,500. We have a Biz Op II and a Biz Op I, \$7,500, \$7,000. Do you want me to go through the balance, Chair? Did I misunderstand—

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** I am just taken aback. You do have staff, Madam Chair at the PSC?

**Dr. Gomes:** Yes.

**Ms. Creed:** We have officers, and as I indicated, Cabinet had decided that all the offices had to be advertised. So all were advertised based on Cabinet's decision coming to the end of last year and the beginning of this year. We started interviews the end of last year, the beginning of this year.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** I see you still have some interviews to be conducted on the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month?

**Ms. Creed:** We still have interviews. So the staff, prior to the expiration of their contract, this is what they were receiving. When the contracts came to an end in the interim period while we were awaiting the Cabinet's decision and the PMCD finalization, we kept the persons on short-term.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** How long have they been on short-term?

**Ms. Creed:** It varied because everybody's contract started at different times. There were persons who were on short-term for about two years, there were people on short-term about one. But now that we have the Cabinet's approval and we are doing the interviews—the interview process has started—we have brought on some persons and some persons have assumed in an interim salary pending the finalization by the CPO. So the recruitment process is ongoing right now for the other offices.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Let me just interject here. You also stated in your submissions that you needed the services of four state counsels, can you clarify please? What would be their role and function—four state counsels.

**Ms. Creed:** In reviewing the structure for the Police Service Commission, the Public Management Consultant Division had recommended that in view of the tribunal's advice to the Commission, they had recommended four state counsels. The Legal Advisor of Service Commissions Department could give you more details if you want more details than that.

**Ms. Seetharan:** It is different functions. For instance, two of the state counsels are supposed to work with the appeals body because remember they are going to need persons to do their research and help in preparation of the judgments, those kind of things. And then two are also supposed to work with the Commission, so when they sit and they have their meetings what we do now is provide them with oral advice, written advice, guidance, to assist in their decision-making process. So it is not all four just within the Secretariat, it is different functions.

**Madam Vice-Chairman:** Different functions?

**Ms. Seetharan:** Yes.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair, there are two questions than remain outstanding. How many tribunals currently hear appeals; and what is the size or composition of these tribunals?

**Dr. Gomes:** I am not sure if I am understanding the first part of the question.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** So, for example, how many tribunals do you have operating simultaneously? Just one tribunal?

**Ms. Seetharan:** The current provisions within the Constitution provide for the Commission to sit and hear appeals. So that it is three members from the Commission that would constitute the appeal's body and that is what has been happening since the new legislation. They have actually been sitting, three members, and hearing appeals.

Now you would have heard the Chair allude to the fact that she only just got

a quorum this month, so she now has three members. That is what you need for a quorum. So that they do not have two other members. In fact, they have announced it would just be the three members to be doing everything. Previously, they would have allowed three members to sit and hear the appeals, so it did not burden the whole membership of the Commission and they could be doing other things. But now you need three members to sit on the appeals body, so it is just one body comprised of three person.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** And for the period 2013 to present, how many matters have been referred to the appeals tribunal?

**Ms. Secharan:** Approximately 200.

**11.45 a.m.**

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** My final statement. I mean, Madam Chair of this Joint Select Committee and Madam Chair of the Police Service Commission, the case is made for the commission to be full time and I would want to strongly recommend that the commission “mash gas” with regard to getting the proposals documented because if strong and positive action is not in that regard, next 20 years, we would be here discussing the same issues.

**Madam Chairman:** Let me just clarify for the public. Five commissioners sit on this appeal tribunal.

**Ms. Secharan:** Three out of the five because now there are only three.

**Madam Chairman:** There are only three, right, so there are two more commissioners to be appointed. Do you have any idea how soon this is going to happen?

**Dr. Gomes:** No, but I hope it is sooner than later. You know, the commission is always in the public’s eye and so, it is for courageous people to step forward and take up the call when asked to join the commission. Because I want you all to bear



in mind, just as Minister Baptiste-Primus was saying, we are a part-time commission. So when you think of all the different tasks, getting things done, you know, you cannot do them as fast as you could.

But thank you very much for that reminder and strong recommendation because definitely we will do a proposal with that in mind, especially to SRC, especially as we are meeting with the PMCD who is assisting us with that process mapping. So it means we will not just look at the full-time commission but in terms of recommendations for the entire body, the commission being made up of the secretariat as well.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** In my former incarnation which is several years ago, such recommendations were made for all the commissions to be full time.

**Dr. Gomes:** Okay, I am glad to know that. Thank you very much.

**Madam Chairman:** Just one last question. As recent as yesterday morning, you had the police service association criticizing you, saying that, you know, you are slow and you are not responding in a timely manner and all of that. What would be your response to the police service association?

**Dr. Gomes:** I think the Police Service Social and Welfare Association, they have their job to do and we have ours and they are well aware of the challenges that we have, maybe not all but quite a number, because we have invited them to meet with us and they actually did a presentation at our office, because that is one of the ways that we want to collaborate with different partners and so we will meet with them again but everybody has their role to play.

**Madam Chairman:** Any further questions, members?

**Mr. Ramkissoon:** Chair, might I address the Chair? Thank you very much. To answer your last question, we cannot prevent criticism, definitely we cannot prevent but we can show, if called upon, that those criticisms are unfounded.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. We have one more question.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Madam Chair of the PSC, what are the plans of the commission for lessening the dependence on contract employment?

**Dr. Gomes:** While the question is directed to me, I will ask Ms. Creed but I believe I can answer a little bit. Because the notion is to have more permanent staff rather than the contract staff. My personal position on it is that we must have a right fit. So in terms of even having established staff come in because, right now, we have technical staff in Mr. Gray's unit who are going to be replaced by, for instance, a Statistician II and an HR officer and so.

The commission has not had the opportunity to interface or interview anybody because it is that they are coming, as far as I am aware, on promotion. What the commission has done with the other positions—because we met with PMCD in April last year when we realized that, you know, it was afoot to restructure the organization and this commission was not party to that decision, and so, we asked, then, to be included more in the process. So that the commission members, some commission members, have sat on interviews, et cetera.

So that in terms of the plans of the commission to get more permanent staff, it is that if they are permanent, it has to be—from the commission's perspective, you must have a right fit, they must have the technical knowledge, et cetera, to do the job and then to recognize—and we did this in the interviews—that you are talking long hours, you must be willing to travel to town meetings, et cetera. It is not just coming and sitting in that office. So, Ms. Creed, if you want to follow up? Thank you.

**Ms. Creed:** Discussions were held in 2016 with PMCD so that an interim arrangement could be done for a review of the staffing for the Police Service Commission Secretariat. And coming out of that meeting and Cabinet's approval,

that is how we were able to get, for the Audit Unit, a Human Resource Advisor which is a public service position; a Senior Research Officer for the Research and Evaluation Unit and the Statistician to which the Chair made reference.

What PMCD advised, at that point in time, was that the duties of the persons who were doing the job on contract were the same duties for those as public service offices and that is why at that time, they had recommended that we have public service offices in those areas. Even before the contract office, there was a contract legal officer and that is why PMCD, in going with the structure, went with legal officers under the Judicial and Legal Service Commission.

So the committee, the project team to which the Chair has referred, that Cabinet established, a project team with Public Admin, the commission and the representatives of the Service Commissions Department, these are the discussions taking place on, not only the process, but the kind of staffing that would be required for the way forward, what types of staff, et cetera, and that report has to be sent to Cabinet in April.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Is there a silo approach here or is there collaboration? Because if staff is being contemplated for the commission, I would expect that there is close collaboration between the office of the DPA and the commission in terms of ensuring the kind of fit that the commission expects from the staff establishment.

**Ms. Creed:** I think what the Chair was alluding to, for instance, some of these offices that have been made public service offices are generic offices in the public service and fall under the Public Service Commission and therefore, the filling of those offices is done by the Public Service Commission and in filling those offices, as you would know, member, when they are filling generic office, we fill. We fill in accordance with regulation. We do the promotions in accordance with the regulation. So right now, for instance, if you have to send someone to the

Ombudsman, you are required to send for the Ombudsman to screen, et cetera. That is in legislation. So the approach taken by the Public Service Commission has been general filling of the offices in Service Commissions like as any other Ministry and Department.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Irrespective to the peculiarities that may exist?

**Ms. Creed:** Yes, but when the offices were put, they were put into—the offices identified are the same, it is the same job spec as the other offices. It is the same range, it is the same name of the office, so they are treated the same way from a recruitment point of view.

**Mrs. Baptiste-Primus:** Well, all I can say is that the commission has its work cut out for it.

**Madam Chairman:** All right, so we would conclude this hearing at this point in time, but before we do so, let me invite the Chairman to make some closing remarks.

**Dr. Gomes:** Hon. members of the Joint Select Committee, on behalf of the commission and members of the secretariat of the Police Service Commission, I would like to sincerely thank you for this opportunity. As I said earlier, it is very timely because we needed to have this dialogue, and I am hopeful that with your input and around this table here, we can carry through with our values that we came up with, the values of the commission, particularly in terms of collaborative efforts. Because if we have to see a reduction in crime in this country and get the culture of fear decreased—it is very real—we have to work together.

So I want to thank you very much for this opportunity and to wish you well for the balance of the year because it is still a new year. Be safe as well.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much.

**11.56 a.m.:** *Meeting adjourned.*

