



Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity

Public Hearing Summary

Friday December 07, 2018 at 10:45 a.m.

Topic:

Inquiry into the status of the implementation of the recommendation of the third report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity into the treatment of child offenders.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the public hearing:

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| • Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, MP | Chairman |
| • Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith | Vice-Chairman |
| • Mr. Saddam Hosein | Member |
| • Mr. Kazim Hosein | Member |
| • Mr. Dennis Moses | Member |
| • Mr. Rushton Paray, MP | Member |

Witnesses who appeared:

Ministry of National Security

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| • Mr. Vel Lewis | Permanent Secretary |
| • Mr. Dane Clarke | Deputy Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.) |
| • Ms. Germaine De Graff | Superintendent of Prisons (Ag.) |
| • Mr. Elvin Scanterbury | Assistant Superintendent of Prisons |
| • Mr. Garvin Ferret | Legal Officer |
| • Dr. Jamal Mohammed | Prisons Medical Officer |
| • Mr. John Lopez | Chief Infantry Officer, Prisons Supervisor –
Medical Department |

Office of the Prime Minister

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| • Ms. Jacqueline Johnson | Permanent Secretary |
| • Mr. Ian Ramdahin | Permanent Secretary (Ag.) |
| • Mr. Bertrand Moses | Child Development Coordinator |
| • Ms. Safiya Noel | Director – Children’s Authority of Trinidad
and Tobago |
| • Ms. Sharlene Jaggernaut | Manager, Legal Services –Children’s
Authority of Trinidad and Tobago |

Statutory Authorities and Service Commissions (SASC)

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| • Mr. Christopher Thomas | Chairman |
| • Mr. Kenneth Parker | Deputy Chairman |
| • Mr. Glenn Wilson | Commission Member |
| • Ms. Gracelyn Bhola-Jordan | Acting Executive Officer |
| • Mr. Djallon Frederick | State Counsel II |

Key Issues Discussed were:

1. The level of education and the vocational skills provided at the Youth Training and Rehabilitation Centre (YTRC) are insufficient to allow for the transitioning of child offenders into mainstream society.
2. The challenges of the YTRC with external training provided by Non-Governmental Organizations include:
 - i. threats by male child offenders to staff when escorted for programmes;
 - ii. involvement of child offenders in the drug trade upon leaving the facility; and
 - iii. several child offenders were arrested for possession of marijuana after they left the facility for the programmes;
3. The decision of the YTRC to develop and restore buildings in the YTRC compound to provide the MIC skills training programmes.
4. YTEPP Vocational Training programmes for child offenders will commence in January 2019.
5. The human resource issues at the YTRC include:
 - i. Request for additional ten (10) psychologists and two (2) pharmacists was forwarded to the Property Management Consultancy Division in October, 2018;
 - ii. Need for additional Social Workers/Welfare Officers as the current complement of five (5) Welfare officers is insufficient; and
 - iii. Evaluation of the staffing needs of the YTRC to determine the number of additional position / staff needed.
6. The strategic plan for the YTRC was included as part of the Draft Strategic Plan for the Trinidad and Tobago Prisons Service (TTPrS) and is expected to be completed by February 2019.
7. The Ministry of National Security and the Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago have begun discussions into the monitoring of child offenders after they have transitioned into the mainstream society.

8. The renovation works at YTRC to meet legislative requirements is 85% complete.
9. YTRC received 10 complaints from child offenders of the YTRC over the past year and all complaints were investigated.
10. The National Child Policy will be completed in fiscal 2018/2019.
11. Individual care plans are being created for child offenders at the YTRC by the Welfare Officers in accordance with the Children's Community Residences (Rehabilitation Centres) Regulations, 2018.
12. The YTRC Advisory Board is scheduled to be appointed in 2019.
13. The tendering process for the design of the children's registry has begun and the implementation stage is expected during fiscal 2018/2019.
14. The design of the Children's Registry will be completed in fiscal 201/2019. The Registry will track all children from birth to adult as well as children in conflict with the law for an additional seven (7) years.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube page via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUgk4YjLzzE>

Contact Information:

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at jschumanrights@tpparliament.org or 624-7275 Ext. 2288/2627.

*Committees Unit
December 11, 2018*