

# Head 75: Equal Opportunity Tribunal

A summary of the Tribunal's Expenditure, Divisions and Projects  
Financial Scrutiny Unit Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

# Table of Contents

About this Guide.....	2
Head 75: Equal Opportunity Tribunal.....	3
Department’s Overview.....	3
The Equal Opportunity Commission.....	3
Key Statement from 2016 Standing Finance Committee Debate.....	5
Where the Department spends its money .....	6
2017-2018 Estimates of Expenditure .....	6
Summary of Recurrent Expenditure for the period 2013-2018 .....	7
Staff and Pay .....	11
Analysis of Summary of Expenditure.....	12
The Tribunal’s total allocation as a percentage of the National Budget for the period 2013 to 2018 .....	13
General Useful Information .....	14

## About this Guide

This guide provides a summary of expenditure for the Equal Opportunity Tribunal for the period 2013-2018. It provides the Members of Parliament and stakeholders with an overview of the Department's responsibilities. The primary purpose of this guide is to not only consolidate the information contained within the various Budget Documents pertaining to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal, but also to provide readers with an analysis of same. This guide is based primarily on the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure.

# Head 75: Equal Opportunity Tribunal

## Department's Overview

The Equal Opportunity Tribunal (hereinafter referred to as “the Tribunal”) was established to be a superior Court of record and have in addition to the jurisdiction and powers, conferred on it by the Equal Opportunity Act, all the powers inherent in such a Court. The Tribunal consists of a Judge of status equal to that of a High Court Judge, who is the Chairman, and two lay-assessors as may be appointed under or in pursuance of section 42.<sup>1</sup>

## The Equal Opportunity Commission

The Equal Opportunity Commission was established in 2000. Commissioners are appointed by the President after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition<sup>2</sup>. The Commission is comprised of five Commissioners, including a Chairman and a Vice Chairman.<sup>3</sup> The Commission works in conjunction with the Equal Opportunity Tribunal to prohibit discrimination and promote equality within Trinidad and Tobago. The Commission frequently reviews complaints and forwards them to the Tribunal for assessment and judicial decision.

The functions of the Commission are to:

- Work towards the elimination of discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different ethnic and religious backgrounds;
- Receive, investigate and as far as possible, conciliate allegations of discrimination;

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<sup>1</sup> [http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical\\_list/lawspdfs/22.03.pdf](http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/22.03.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The first set of Commissioners were appointed in 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Equal Opportunity Commission, Accessed on September 26, 2017: <http://www.equalopportunity.gov.tt/about>

- Develop, conduct and foster research and education programmes and other programmes for the purpose of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different races, ethnicities, religions, geographical origins, marital status, gender or physical disabilities; and
- Prepare and publish appropriate guidelines for the avoidance of discrimination.<sup>4</sup>

## **Vision**

A society which is free from discrimination and prejudice, where human rights and diversity are respected, and where there is equality of opportunity for all.<sup>5</sup>

## **Mission**

The Equal Opportunity Commission works towards the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity through advocacy, public education, research and the conciliation of complaints.<sup>6</sup>

**Chairman** – Mrs. Lynette Seebaran-Suite

**Vice Chairman** - Dr. Beverly Beckles

**Registrar (Accounting Officer):** Mr. Narendra Lalbeharry

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<sup>4</sup> Equal Opportunity Commission website. Accessed on September 26, 2017. <http://www.equalopportunity.gov.tt/about>

<sup>5</sup> Equal Opportunity Commission, Vision. Assessed on September 26, 2017: <http://www.equalopportunity.gov.tt/vision-and-mission-statement>

<sup>6</sup> Equal Opportunity Commission, Vision. Assessed on September 26, 2017: <http://www.equalopportunity.gov.tt/vision-and-mission-statement>

## Key Statement from 2016 Standing Finance Committee Debate

During the Standing Finance Committee debate of 2016, the following statements were made in relation to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal for fiscal year 2016/2017<sup>7</sup>:

*“I have heard it bandied about within recent times in the society about discrimination on the basis of age. So I think this is an opportune moment to put on the record that the legislation as currently drafted and as currently in place does not provide for anything with respect to discrimination of age.”*

*“It is a body [Equal Opportunity Tribunal] that I suspect over time will begin to pick up and deal with a lot more issues. I am happy to report that I think there has been an increase over the last five years of claims before it and they are disposing of these claims in a most efficient manner in the last five years.”*

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<sup>7</sup> Minister in the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, Standing Finance Committee. Hansard of Equal Opportunity Tribunal, 14 October 2016. Accessed October 05, 2017

# Where the Department spends its money

## 2017-2018 Estimates of Expenditure

The budget allocation of \$4,740,200.00 for the Equal Opportunity Tribunal is comprised of:

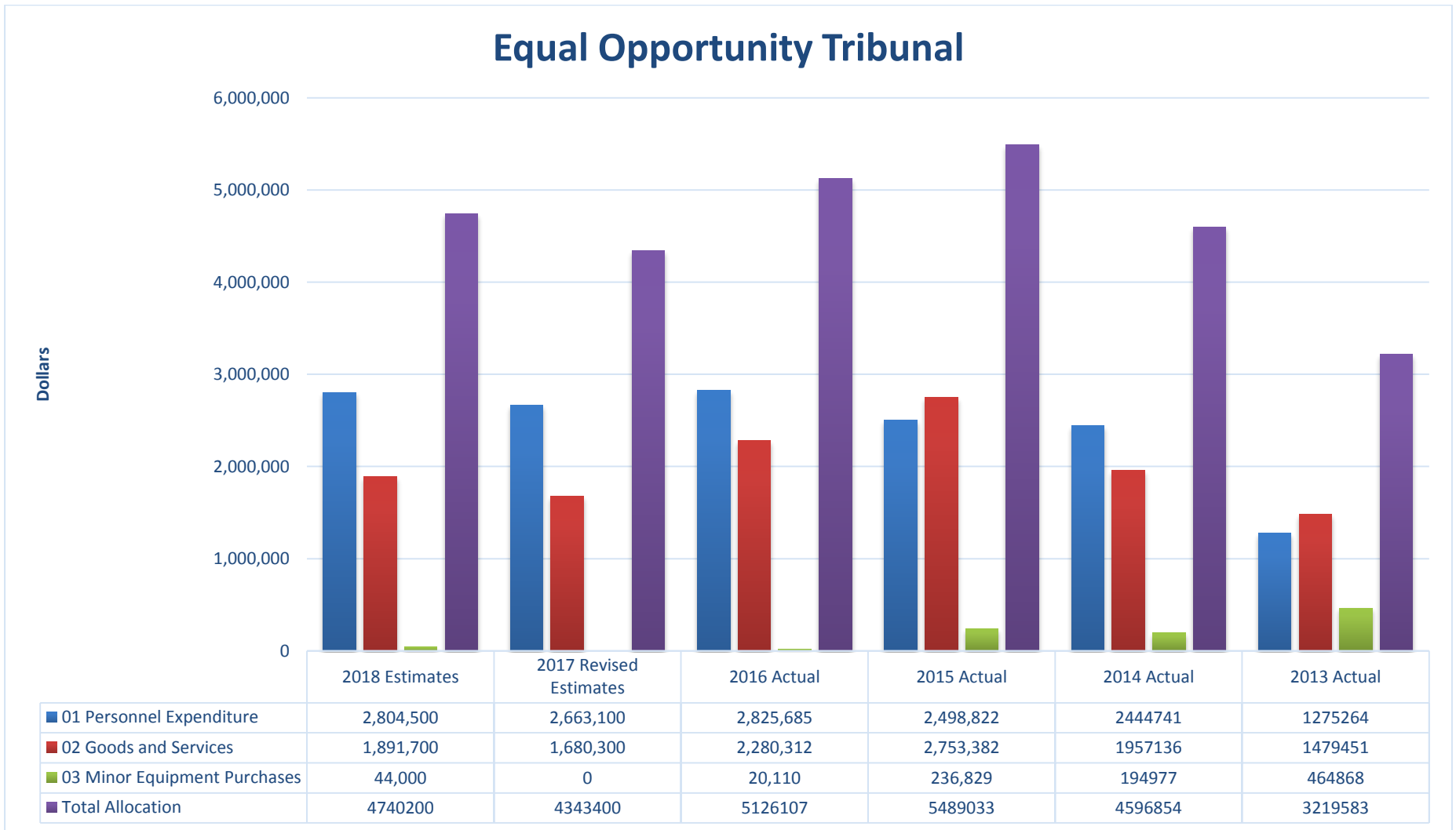
- The Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure in the sum of **\$4,740,200.00**.

The Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure include:

- 01 Personnel Expenditure **\$2,804,500.00**;
- 02 Goods and Services **\$1,891,700.00**; and
- 03 Minor Equipment Purchases **\$44,000.00**.

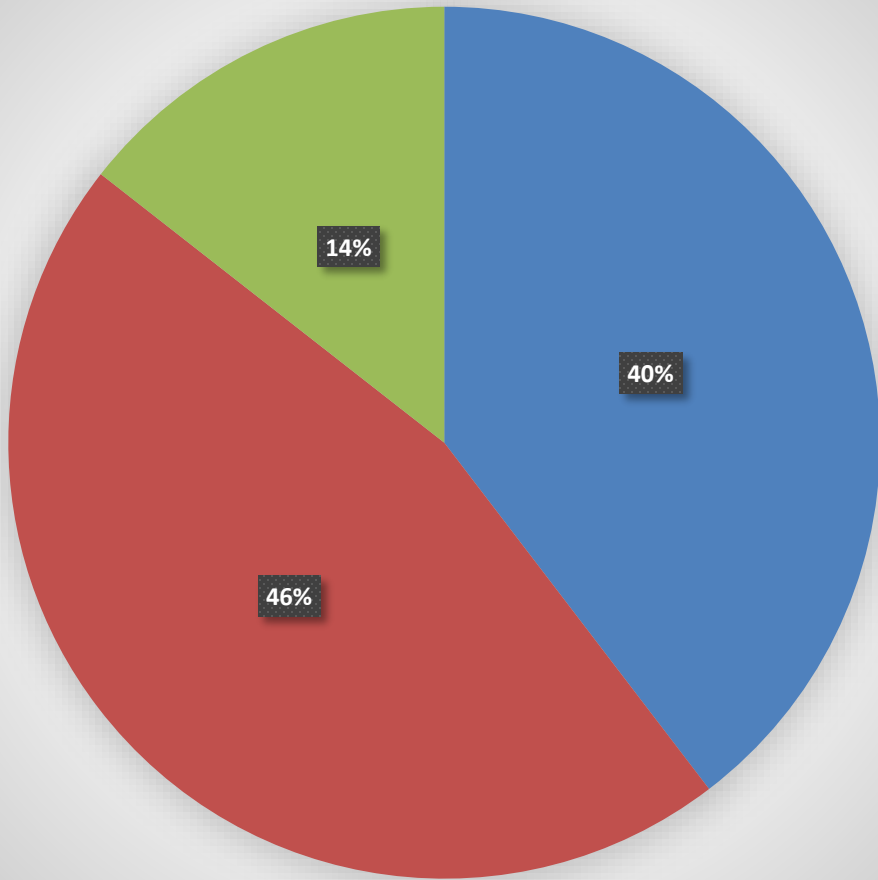
The Equal Opportunity Tribunal's total allocation as a percentage of the total Recurrent Expenditure budget allocation is **0.009%**.

# Summary of Recurrent Expenditure for the period 2013-2018



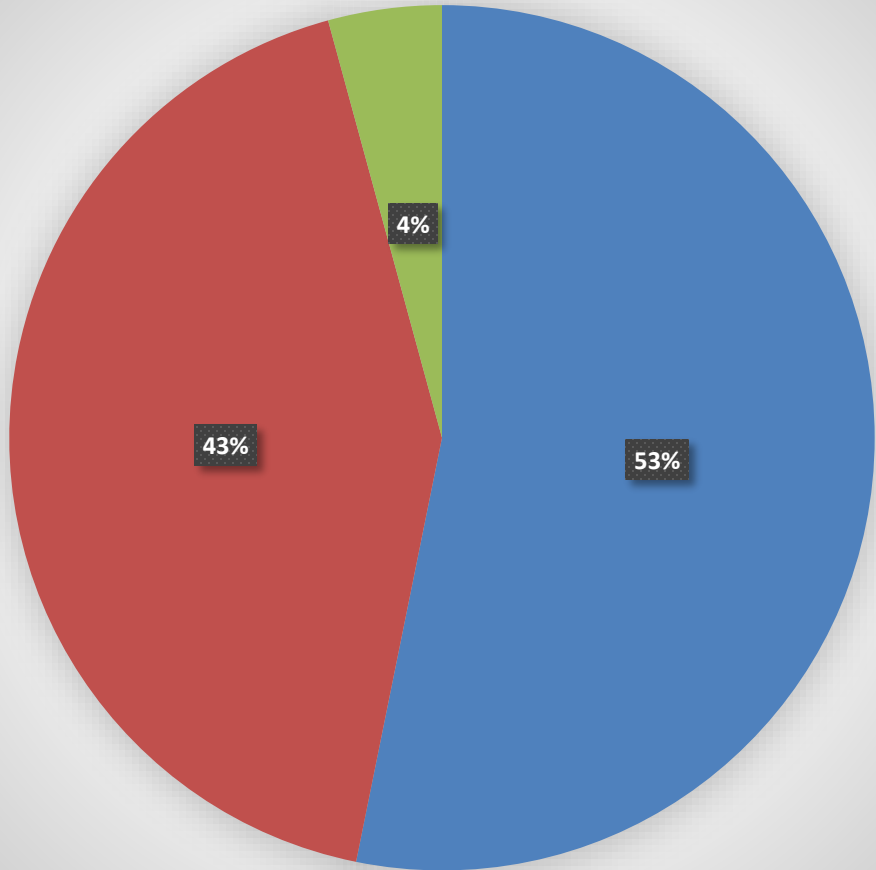


2013 Actual



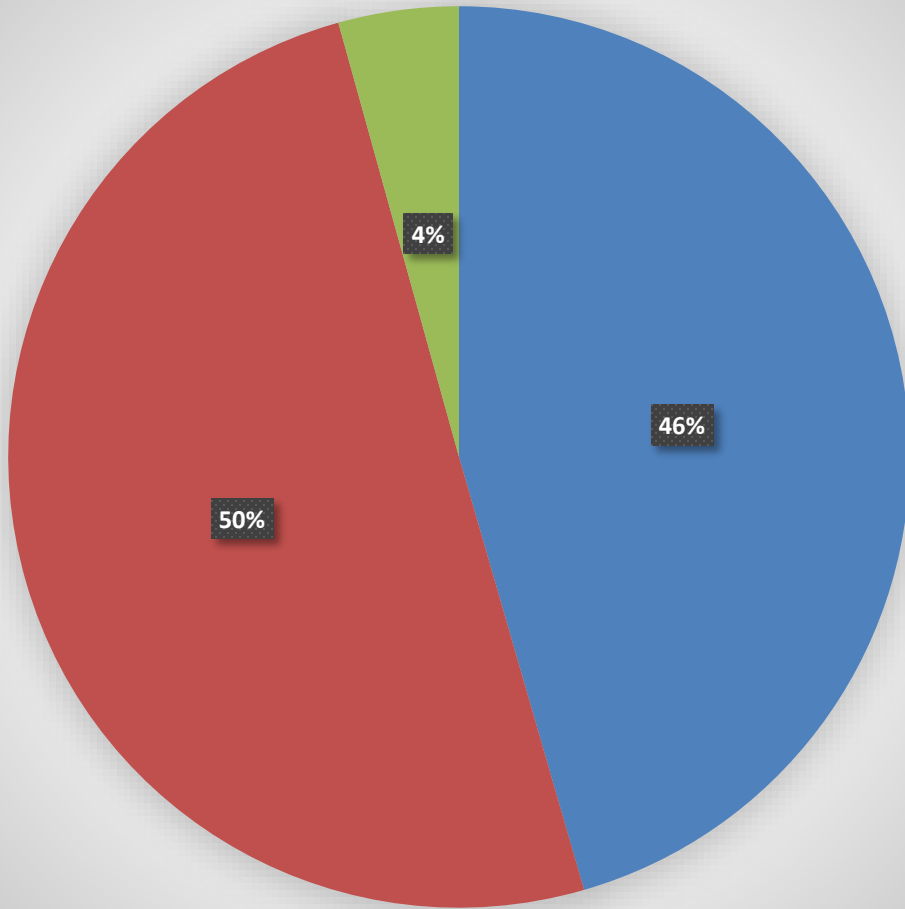
■ 01 Personnel Expenditure ■ 02 Goods and Services ■ 03 Minor Equipment

2014 Actual



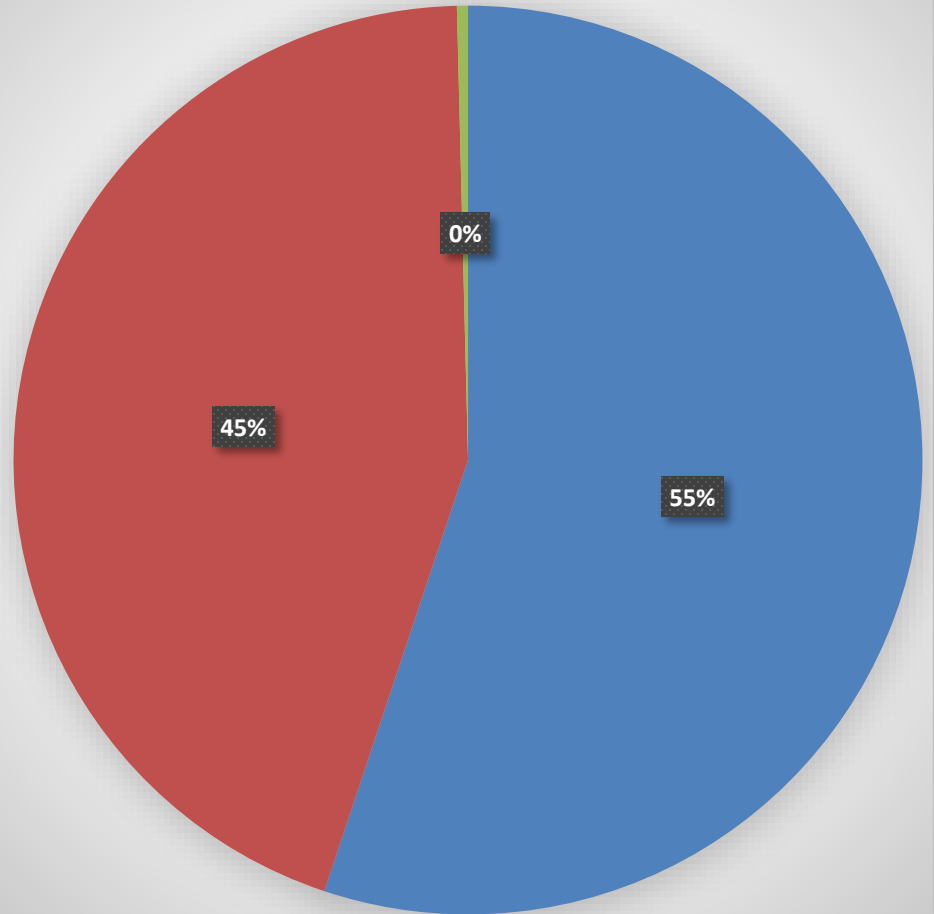
■ 01 Personnel Expenditure ■ 02 Goods and Services ■ 03 Minor Equipment

2015 Actual



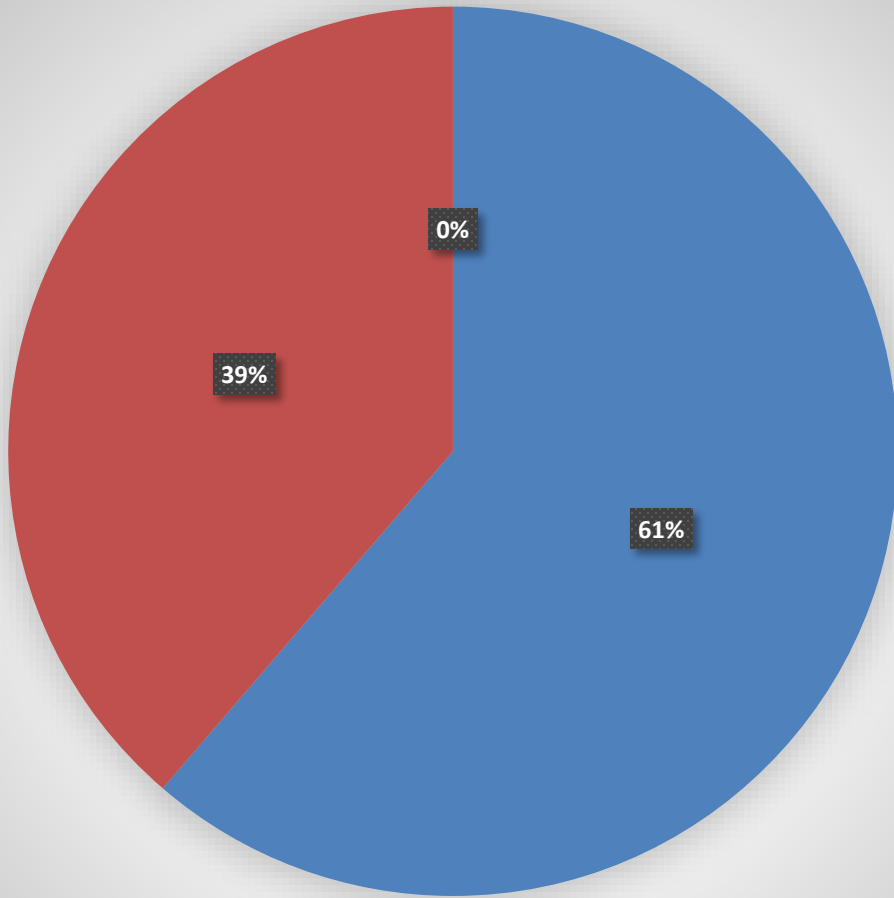
■ 01 Personnel Expenditure ■ 02 Goods and Services ■ 03 Minor Equipment

2016 Actual



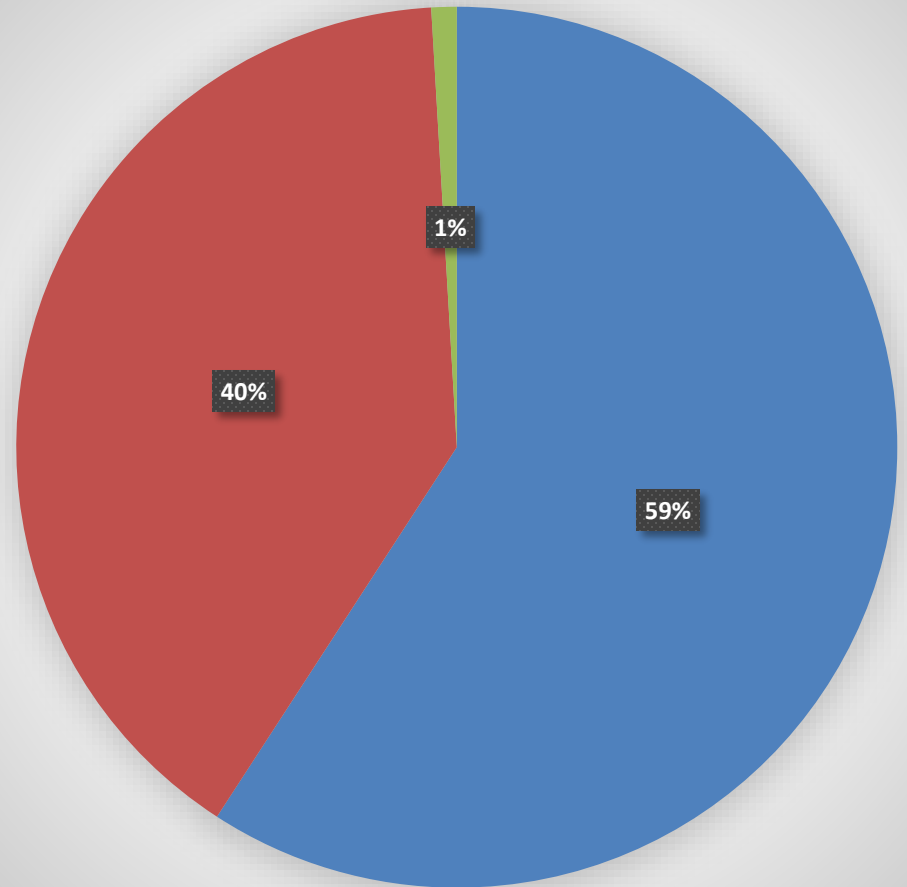
■ 01 Personnel Expenditure ■ 02 Goods and Services ■ 03 Minor Equipment

2017 Revised Estimates



■ 01 Personnel Expenditure ■ 02 Goods and Services ■ 03 Minor Equipment

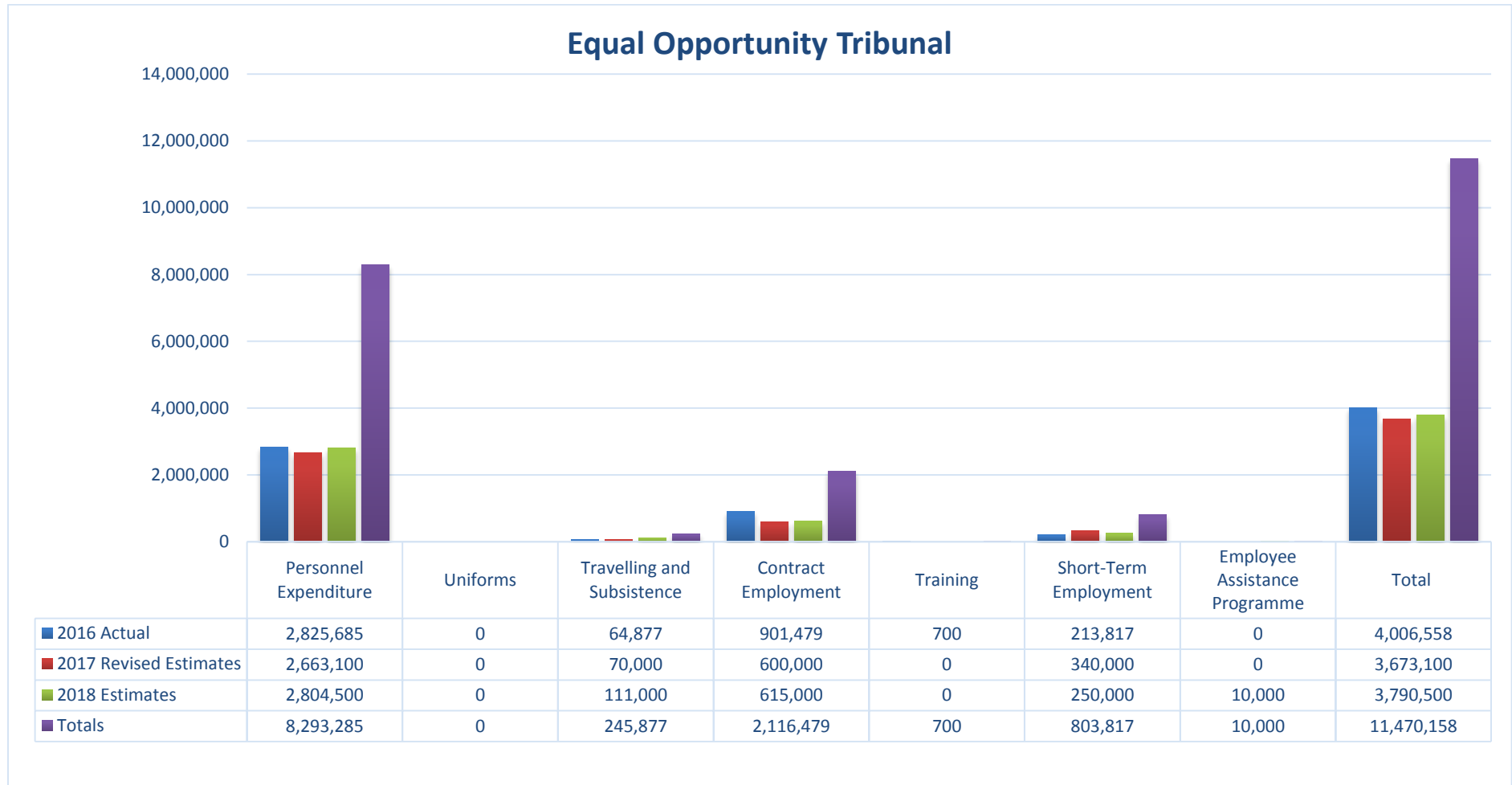
2018 Estimates



■ 01 Personnel Expenditure ■ 02 Goods and Services ■ 03 Minor Equipment

## Staff and Pay<sup>8</sup>

The allocation of staff expenditure for the year 2018 was **\$3,790,500.00** which represents an increase of approximately **3%** from the last fiscal year 2017. The diagram below provides a breakdown of all expenditure related to staff and pay for the period 2016-2018.



<sup>8</sup> Draft Estimates for Details of Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure for the Financial Year 2018 <http://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Numbered-Draft-Estimates-Recurrent-Expenditure-2018.pdf>

## Analysis of Summary of Expenditure

Recurrent Expenditure refers to the payments for expenses which are incurred during the day-to-day operations of the Equal Opportunity Tribunal for Personnel Expenditure, Goods and Services, and Minor Equipment Purchases.

- ✚ Recurrent Expenditure for Fiscal Year 2017/2018 is **\$4,740,400.00**.
- ✚ Recurrent Expenditure for Fiscal Year 2016/2017 was **\$4,343,400.00**. Comparing this figure with Fiscal Year 2017/2018, there is an increase of **\$396,800.00** or **9%**.
- ✚ The **largest portion** of the allocation has varied between Sub-Head 01 **Personnel Expenditure** and Sub-Head 02 **Goods and Services**. In 2013 and 2015 respectively, Goods and Services was allocated **6%** and **4%** more than Personnel Expenditure. Personnel Expenditure has received an average of **52%** of the total allocation during the period 2013 to 2018, while Goods and Services received an average of **44%** over the same period. In 2017 the Personnel Expenditure percentage was **61%** of the Tribunal's total recurrent allocation, the greatest share over the six year period.
- ✚ The smallest portion of the Tribunal's allocation has consistently gone to Sub-Head 03 **Minor Equipment Purchases** which has declined significantly over the years from **14%** in fiscal year in 2013, to **4%** in fiscal years 2014 and 2015, with a further decrease to less than 1% in 2016. There was no allocation for Minor Equipment Purchases in fiscal year 2017. In fiscal year 2018, Minor Equipment Purchases represents **1%** of the Tribunal's recurrent allocation.
- ✚ The actual/estimated expenditure for the **three (3) Sub-Heads** has been fluctuating over the six (6) year period, from a low of **\$3,219,583.00** in 2013 to a high of **\$5,489,033.00** in 2015.

## The Tribunal's total allocation as a percentage of the National Budget for the period 2013 to 2018

Year <sup>9</sup>	Total Allocation <sup>10</sup>	National Budget <sup>11</sup>	Percentage of National Budget
2013	\$3,219,583.00	\$59,174,226,196.00	0.005%
2014	\$4,596,854.00	\$65,020,886,424.00	0.007%
2015	\$5,489,033.00	\$61,966,922,675.00	0.009%
2016	\$5,126,107.00	\$56,573,913,053.00	0.009%
2017	\$4,343,400.00	\$55,598,436,912.00	0.008%
2018	\$4,740,200.00	\$54,955,041,591.00	0.009%

- Total allocation for the Tribunal as a percentage of the National Budget illustrated an increase in the allocation to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal by 0.001% between the period 2016/2017 and 2017/2018.

<sup>9</sup> For the Fiscal Years 2012-2016, actual figures were used to calculate the Board's total allocation. However, estimates were used to determine the Board's total allocation for the Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Total Allocation for the Equal Opportunity Tribunal = Recurrent Expenditure.

<sup>11</sup> The National Budget = Total Recurrent Expenditure + Total Development Programme Consolidated Fund.

## General Useful Information

- Courts Administration Authority of South Australia, Equal Opportunity Tribunal:  
<http://www.courts.sa.gov.au/OurCourts/DistrictCourt/Pages/Equal-Opportunity-Tribunal.aspx>
- Equality and Human Rights Commission, UK: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>