



## Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity

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### Public Hearing Summary

Friday March 02, 2018 at 10:40 a.m.

#### Topic:

Inquiry into the Examination of the Treatment of Detainees and Conditions at Holding Cells in Trinidad and Tobago Police Stations.

#### Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present for the public hearing:

- Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, MP Chairman
- Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith Vice- Chairman
- Mrs. Vidia Gayadeen-Gopeesingh Member
- Mr. Saddam Hosein Member
- Mr. Esmond Forde Member
- Mr. Kazim Hosein Member
- Mr. Dennis Moses Member

#### Witnesses who appeared:

##### Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS)

- Mr. Stephen Williams Commissioner of Police (Ag.)
- Mr. Deodat Dulachan Deputy Commissioner of Police (Ag.) Operations
- Mr. Garfield Moore Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ag.) Tobago
- Mr. Mc Donald Jacob Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ag.) North-East
- Mr. Harrikrishen Baldeo Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ag.) South
- Mrs. Patsy Joseph Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ag.) Central
- Mrs. Beverly Lewis Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ag.) North-West
- Mr. Irwin Hackshaw Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ag.) Anti-Crime

##### Police Complaints Authority (PCA)

- Mr. David West Director
- Ms. Michelle Solomon-Baksh Deputy Director
- Mr. Allan Meiguel Head of Investigations
- Ms. Anita Mangra Team Lead/Legal Counsel II

**Key Issues Discussed were:**

1. Detainees are usually charged or released in a ‘prompt’ manner by the TTPS which is usually between 24 to 48 hours, but there is no standard time limit for detention of persons;
2. Detainees may be held for more than 48 hours due to an ongoing investigation or awaiting evidence from another institution;
3. Detainees held for than 48 hours an officer would require the approval of the Senior Officers at the station;
4. A person who believes that they were wrongfully arrested can submit a complaint to the senior officers at the station and if the person is not satisfied, submit a writ of habeas corpus to the High Court for matters of unlawful imprisonment;
5. The need for the introduction of general standards on the length of time a person can be detained;
6. The Maracas/ St. Joseph Police Station and the Gasparillo Police Station are currently equipped with juvenile suites and the Maraval and Belmont Police Stations are scheduled to be renovated to include juvenile suites upon the release of funds by the Ministry of National Security;
7. There are supervising officers at each police station to provide in-service training and guidance at stations on regulations and guidelines on the custody and care of prisoners;
8. Detainees have access to shower facilities and family members are allowed to bring a change of clothes for detainees who in rare cases, are detained for more than one or two days;
9. The need for an independent body to inspect holding cells at the police stations in order to become compliant with Article 29 of the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any Form of Detention;
10. The position of CCTVs at police stations are not optimal in order to facilitate optimum supervision of detainees within a holding cells;
11. The refurbishing of holding cell doors in new police stations and retrofitting of holding cells at old police stations in order to prevent incidents of detainee suicide by hanging; and
12. The PCA indicated that the ideal staff required to ensure optimal functionality is 26 investigators and 11 Attorneys-at-Law.

**View the Hearing:**

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

<https://youtu.be/kOAPiSYzZLM>

**Contact Information:**

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at [jschumanrights@tparliament.org](mailto:jschumanrights@tparliament.org) or 624-7275 Ext. 2288/2627.

*Committees Unit*  
March 05, 2018