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**Summary of Proceedings**

**Public Hearing**

**Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs**

Held on **Friday May 18, 2018**

**Subject matter:** An Inquiry into the Waste Management policies and initiatives of the state.

**Venue:** A public hearing was held on Friday May 18, 2018 from 10:36 a.m. to 12:11 p.m. in the J. Hamilton Maurice Meeting Room, Mezzanine Floor, Office of the Parliament, Tower D, The Port of Spain International Waterfront Centre, 1A Wrightson Road, Port-of-Spain.

**Committee Members**

The following Committee Members were present:

- Ms. Sophia Chote SC (Chairman)
- Mrs. Vidya Gayadeen-Gopeesingh, MP
- Mr. Taharqa Obika
- Dr. Lester Henry

**Witnesses who appeared**

The following officials of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) appeared:

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Mr. Raye Sandy          | Chief Administrator         |
| • Mr. Linford Beckles     | Director, Environment       |
| • Ms. Damika Marshall     | Environmental Officer II    |
| • Mrs. Dianne Baker-Henry | Administrator               |
| • Mr. Ricardo Bobb        | Public Health Inspector III |
| • Ms. Jasiyah Ibrahim     | Project Engineer            |

The following officials of the Ace Recycling Limited /Caribbean Batteries Recycling Limited appeared:

- Mr. Kevin Clarke                                      Director/Operations Manager
- Mrs. Tricia Clarke-DeFreitas                      Director, Finance

The following officials representing the Council of Presidents of the Environment and Green Engineering appeared:

- Ms. Kelli Danglad                                      Technical Manager, Green Engineering
- Mr. David Jacob                                         Technical Manager, Green Engineering

### **Key Issues Discussed**

The following are the main issues arising from discussions with the **Tobago House of Assembly**:

- i. The relationship between THA and the Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL);
- ii. The THA partnered with SWMCOL on a tyre shredding initiative;
- iii. The relationship between the THA's Division of Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment and the Environmental Management Authority (EMA);
- iv. The disposal of derelict vehicles at the Studley Park Waste Integrated Facility (SPWIF);
- v. Initiatives being taken to phase out styro-foam products in Tobago;
- vi. Biodegradable products are subject to taxation whereas styro-foam products are not under the present tariff structure;
- vii. The need for central government to review the tariff structure to address the price differential between biodegradable products and styro-foam products;
- viii. Alternatives to styro-foam products;
- ix. The relationship between the SPWIF and the Studley Park Quarry which allows for the adequate covering of at least 6 inches of dirt on top of compacted waste;
- x. SPWIF's utilisation of engineered cells to allow for the proper ventilation of methane gas;
- xi. Consideration of storing and monetising the methane gas which is currently not being conducted;
- xii. Methane gas emissions not being measured;
- xiii. Challenges faced by the THA in curbing coastal pollution;
- xiv. THA's consideration of initiatives geared towards separation of waste at households;
- xv. The disposal of car batteries at the SPWIF;
- xvi. Informal scavenging of car batteries;

- xvii. The THA's Divisions were free to use agricultural waste for compost provided that the waste was not contaminated; and
- xviii. Roving checkers being used to ensure that scavenger companies adhere to the agreed terms and conditions;
- xix. Measures taken by the THA to prevent habitation of the SPWIF;
- xx. The disposal of bio-medical waste via incineration at the Scarborough General Hospital;
- xxi. The initiatives being taken by the THA to raise public awareness regarding proper waste management at Primary and Secondary Schools;
- xxii. Research into using carbonisation to dispose of bio-medical waste; and
- xxiii. The need for a more structured approach to waste collection.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Ace Recycling Limited/Caribbean Batteries Recycling Limited:**

- i. The company recycling approximately 14 million pounds of paper annually;
- ii. Recycled paper being shipped to Latin American countries and some Asian countries with India being the main importer of recycled paper;
- iii. The cost per metric ton of recycled paper ranging from \$50 to \$300 USD depending on the grade of paper;
- iv. The proper means for the disposal of car batteries;
- v. Used car batteries being bought for \$25 to \$80 whereas in bulk, it may cost between \$4000 to \$5000 per metric ton of the used car batteries;
- vi. The types of batteries recycled;
- vii. Funding being sourced to establish a first world recycling facility.

The following are the main issues highlighted during discussions with the **Council of Presidents of the Environment represented by Green Engineering:**

- i. The role and functions of the Council of Presidents of the Environment;
- ii. The lack of proper waste disposal in Trinidad;
- iii. Hazardous and non-hazardous waste being disposed of at the same location in Trinidad;
- iv. Lead being the main contaminant of soil in Trinidad due to the improper and informal disposal of car batteries;
- v. The cost to treat contaminated land ranging from \$500 per cubic yard (non-hazardous) to \$5000 per cubic yard (hazardous eg. lead)
- vi. A preliminary study on contaminated land completed in 2015;
- vii. The process by which Green Engineering remediates contaminated land;
- viii. Recommendation for a dismantling facility for end of life vehicles to provide a formal and controlled process for disposing of derelict vehicles;
- ix. Proposal for a centralised waste management facility;
- x. The manner in which waste is managed in the paint industry;

- xi. The means by which infectious bio-medical waste should be disposed; and
  - xii. The need for institutional strengthening, upgrading of facilities and proper legislation/regulations to allow for adequate waste management.
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This public hearing can be viewed on demand via our YouTube Channel.

<https://youtu.be/slebmePHJlw>

**Contact the Committee's Secretary**

[jscfla@tparliament.org](mailto:jscfla@tparliament.org) or 624-7275 Ext. 2282/2277/2284

*Committees Unit*

May 21, 2018.