



Parliament
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

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**Public Administration and
Appropriations Committee**

Public Hearing Summary

Thursday April 20, 2017

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present at the meeting:

- Dr. Lackram Bodoie - Vice-Chairman
- Mr. Maxie Cuffie - Member
- Mr. Wade Mark - Member
- Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy - Member
- Ms. Allyson Baksh - Member
- Ms. Nicole Olivierre - Member

Witnesses who appeared:

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

- Mrs. Marion Hayes - Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Ms. Danragie Mootoo - Director, Human Resource Management Division
- Ms. Nina Antoine - Senior Economist, Economic Research and Planning Unit
- Ms. Lydia Brown - Executive Officer, Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee
- Mr. Solomon Lamb - Accountant
- Mr. Brent Lyons - Managing Director, HDC
- Mr. Inskip Pollonais - Divisional Manager, Finance (Ag.), HDC

- Mr. Romel Ramarack - Divisional Manager, Construction Management and Operation, HDC
- Ms. Goomatee Rajkumarsingh-Maharaj - Auditor II

Key Issues Discussed:

- i. An overview of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development;
- ii. The Housing policies to treat with the needs of the population;
- iii. The current complement of the housing stock of throughout Trinidad and Tobago;
- iv. The status of the Ministry's outstanding Administrative Reports and Audited Financial Statements;
- v. The status of the outstanding Administrative Reports and Audited Financial Statements of the Agencies/State Enterprises under the purview of the Ministry;
- vi. The percentage of the Ministry's budgetary allocation that has been spent to date;
- vii. The status of the HDC's Public-Private partnerships;
- viii. The maintenance of the Inventory Register;
- ix. The causes for the delays in updating the Inventory Register;
- x. The training provided for staff responsible for maintaining the Inventory Register;
- xi. The status of the Ministry's implementation of an electronic system for the monitoring of inventory;
- xii. The frequency of checks conducted on the Inventory Register and vehicle Register;
- xiii. The ways in which the Ministry accounts for the inventory and vehicles kept by its Agencies/State Enterprises under its purview;
- xiv. The inadequacy of staffing of the Ministry's Internal Audit Unit;
- xv. The status of the Internal Audit Units in Agencies/State Enterprises under the purview of the Ministry;
- xvi. The inability of the Ministry to cover all areas of the Ministry's functions when carrying out internal audits;
- xvii. The level of Risk Management practiced by the Ministry;
- xviii. The absence of a Risk Register;

- xix. The level of the Ministry's compliance with the Operational Health and Safety Act (OSHA);
- xx. The absence of a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit at the HDC and the burden placed on the Economic and Planning Unit to engage in some aspects of monitoring and evaluation;
- xxi. The status of the HDC's Internal Audit Unit;
- xxii. The level of the HDC's compliance with the Operational Health and Safety Act (OSHA);
- xxiii. The status of the HDC's Risk Register;
- xxiv. The status of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee's (SILWC) Internal Audit Unit;
- xxv. The Accounting Officer's level of satisfaction with the present Internal Audit Function at the Ministry and in Agencies/State Enterprises under its purview;
- xxvi. The progress made in the restructuring exercise carried out by the Ministry;
- xxvii. The current complement of the HDC's housing stock;
- xxviii. The lack of Internal Audit Units at New City Mall and East Side Plaza;
- xxix. The absence of Internal Audits carried out by New City Mall and East Side Plaza;
- xxx. The instances of high-end vehicles being leased by the Ministry;
- xxxi. The lack of a policy to guide the acquisition of motor vehicles;
- xxxii. The status of the tagging of vehicles leased by the Ministry and the HDC;
- xxxiii. The level of project management practiced by the HDC;
- xxxiv. The process of following up on HDC projects;
- xxxv. The challenges faced by the HDC in its revenue collection and initiatives to reconcile same;
- xxxvi. The status of the HDC's Mortgage Conversion Caravan Drive;
- xxxvii. The strategies to encourage HDC renters to bring outstanding arrears up to date;
- xxxviii. The status of HDC's revenue collection over the current financial year;
- xxxix. The existence of a debt servicing programme provided by the HDC;
 - xl. The need for new arrangements/terms and conditions for HDC external debt collectors in 2017 to close gap between when debt is collected and remitted to HDC;
 - xli. The limitations in carrying out assessments for new incoming HDC home owners;
 - xl. The measures in place to treat with abandoned HDC homes;
 - xl. The total value of the abandoned housing stock;

- xliv. Measures put in place to monitor HDC housing stock;
- xlv. The plans to address applicant uncertainty for HDC applications;
- xlvi. The status of the Ministry's relocation plans;
- xlvii. The status of the sale of abandoned HDC units;
- xlviii. The need for the Ministry to implement a public education drive for prospective home applicants and current owners;
- xliv. The measures taken by the Ministry to reduce the occurrences of fraudulent home occupation;
 - 1. The measures for applicants to track their applications ;
 - li. The level of customer service received by HDC applicants;
 - lii. The deficiencies of the current point system for HDC applications which are in excess of 10 years;
 - liii. The Ministry's process to employ persons under 'short term employment';
 - liv. The number of HDC employees (1020);
 - lv. The reasons for the delayed preparation of HDC management accounts;
 - lvi. The status of outstanding HDC audited financial statements from 2004/2005;
 - lvii. The need for additional external auditors to expedite the auditing of outstanding HDC audited financial statements from 2005-2016;
 - lviii. The key findings of the 2004 HDC audited statements;
 - lix. The reasons for the delayed Board appointment of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee and the impact on infrastructural works;
 - lx. The projected revenue for the Victoria Keyes Housing Development and realized revenue to date;
 - lxi. The role of Regional Corporations to assist with providing maintenance for current housing projects for the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee;
 - lxii. The eligibility criteria for housing units of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee Board;
 - lxiii. The status of the 2,500 units under Accelerated Housing Programme;
 - lxiv. The status of the two abandoned HDC towers at Edinburgh 500;
 - lxv. The percentage of the Ministry's Development Programme implemented to date;
 - lxvi. The training and community services provided by the East Port of Spain Development Company;
 - lxvii. The timeliness of the release of funds from the Ministry of Finance to the East Port of Spain Development Company; and
 - lxviii. The recommendations to assist the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and its agencies in performing its duties and functions.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube Channel, Parlview via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVoIr1xydqU>

Next Meeting:

The next Public Hearing of the Committee will be held on Thursday April 27, 2017 at 2:30 p.m.

At this meeting, the Committee intends to commence its examination of the Tobago House of Assembly as it relates to Inventory Control, Internal Audit, Accountability and Transparency, Sub - Head 02 - Goods and Services and Sub - Head 03 - Minor Equipment Purchases for the Financial Year 2017.

PAAC Secretariat

April 24, 2017