



Joint Select Committee on Land and Physical Infrastructure (including Land, Agriculture, Marine Resources, Housing, Public Utilities, Transport and Works)

Summary of Proceedings Public Hearing held on Tuesday September 05, 2017

An Inquiry into the Trinidad and Tobago Inter-Island Ferry Service with specific focus on the procurement and the maintenance of ferries

1. Meeting

1.1 A public meeting was held on Tuesday September 05, 2017 from 11:05 a.m. to 8:10 p.m. at the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor, Office of the Parliament, Tower D, The Port of Spain International Waterfront Centre, #1A Wrightson Road, Port of Spain.

2. Attendance

2.1 The following Members of the Committee were present:

- Mr. Stephen Creese (Chairman)
- Mr. Rushton Paray, MP (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr. Darryl Smith, MP
- Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith, MP
- Dr. Lovell Francis, MP
- Mr. Franklin Khan
- Mr. Nigel De Frietas
- Mr. Wade Mark

3. Stakeholders

3.1 The following representatives of the current Board of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT) appeared before the Committee:

- Ms. Alison Lewis Chairman
- Mr. Adrian Beharry Deputy Chairman
- Mr. Ainsworth Mohammed Commissioner
- Mr. Tommy Elias Commissioner
- Mr. Dexter Jaggernauth Commissioner
- Ms. Suzette Baptiste Commissioner
- Mr. Leon Grant CEO TTIT (Ag.)

- Ms. Charmaine Lewis GM/CEO (Ag.)
- Ms. Michelle Scipio- Hosang Manager, Fast Ferries

3.2 The following representatives of the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) also appeared before the Committee:

- Mrs. Sonia Francis-Yearwood, Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Ms. Dhanmattee Ramdath, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Mr. Marvin Gonzales, Director, Legal Services Unit
- Mr. Duane Murray, Senior, Legal Officer
- Mr. Ronald Alfred Director, Maritime Services

3.3 The following representatives of the Trinidad & Tobago Inter-Island Transport Company (TTIT) also appeared before the Committee:

- Mr. Hafeez Mohammed, Divisional Manager, Operations and Ticketing
- Ms. Vilma Lewis-Cockburn, Manager, Marketing & Public Relations
- Nadine Pierre-Mc Kenzie, Accountant (Ag.)
- Mr. Michael Bahadoorsingh, Manager, HSE (Ag.)
- Ms. Michelle Scipio-Hosang, Manager, Fast Ferries
- Mr. George Ronalds, Team Lead, Operations and Safety
- Mr. Anil Ramdial, Manager, Strategic Planning

3.4 The following stakeholders appeared before the Committee:

- Mr. Michael Annisette President, Seamen & Waterfront Workers Trade Union (SWWTU)
- Mr. Andrew Purdey, Vice President Bridgeman's Services Group
- Mr. Lester Kenny, Managing Director, Ken Shipping & Marine Services Ltd.
- Ms. Nyree Alfonso, Attorney
- Mr. Alfred Mc Millan
- Ms. Natasha Clarke, Cook, T&T Express & Spirit
- Sen. the Hon. Rohan Sinanan, Minister of Works & Transport
- Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds, MP, Minister in the Ministry of the Attorney General & Legal Affairs and Former Minister of Works and Transport
- Mr. Stephen Cadiz, Former Minister of Works & Transport

4. Key Issues Discussed with the Board of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

- i) the irregularity of the sign off of the Charter Party agreement by the PATT and the subsequent forwarding of the agreement for the Cabinet's approval;
- ii) the tender process for the Atlantic Provider;
- iii) the results of the top three tenders in which the Atlantic Provider was selected;
- iv) the inspection of the Ocean Flower 2 by Lloyds Registry of the UK which included sea trials;

- v) the role of Ms. Nyree Alfonso and her in the process for the replacement of the MV Warrior Spirit;
- vi) the reason why Intercontinental Services Limited was allowed to tender;
- vii) The attendance of the representative of the Central Tenders Board at the Tenders Committee meetings for the procurement of the Ocean Flower 2;
- viii) the rating system used for selecting Tenders;
- ix) the documentation received by the MoWT from Bridgeman's Services Limited;
- x) the nature of the relationship between PATT's management and the current Board ;
- xi) the reason why the Port is losing money;
- xii) the lack of structure at the Port;
- xiii) PATT's lack of attention to the need to modernise the Port;
- xiv) the implications of the payment of contracts without actual contracts;
- xv) the need to change the governing legislation;
- xvi) the absence of a charter party agreement for the Super Fast Galicia;
- xvii) the MoWT is responsible for charter party agreements;
- xviii) the daily cost of the Atlantic Provider and the Trinity Transporter was \$14,000USD and \$18,000USD respectively;
- xix) the total cost of the Atlantic Provider and the Trinity Transporter were TT\$11.6Mn for the period April 23 to July 11, 2017 and TT\$6.3Mn for the period April 23 to July 16, 2017 respectively;
- xx) the main negotiators for the Cabo Star and the Ocean Flower 2;
- xxi) the members who constituted the Negotiating Team and the Evaluation Team for the Cabo Star and the Ocean Flower 2;
- xxii) the decision to search for a new cargo vessel, which will take approximately 3 years to build;
- xxiii) the strategies being implemented to avoid a repeat of the procurement emergency entails a multi-disciplinary team;
- xxiv) the engagement of an engineering firm to determine whether there were any damages to the seawall at HYATT;
- xxv) the five weaknesses outlined in the Report submitted by Mr. Leon Grant concerning the Super Fast Galicia;
- xxvi) the procedure used to evaluate the Ocean Flower 2 and the Cabo Star;
- xxvii) the issue with berthing arrangements for the Super Fast Galicia;
- xxviii) the long list of engineering and technical issues with the Ocean Flower 2;
- xxix) the response of the MoWT indicating that the contracts for the Ocean Flower 2 and the Cabo Star were done with all the necessary approvals;
- xxx) the contracts for the Ocean Flower 2 and Cabo Star were done on the basis of an emergency;
- xxxi) the power of the PATT to enter into contracts and to sign-off on contracts;
- xxxii) the role of the PATT as it pertains contracts includes engaging in negotiations with providers, drafting contracts, forwarding contracts for the approval of the MoWT and signing off letters of engagement; and
- xxxiii) the role of the MoWT in directing management of PATT to proceed to sign off contracts for example the Ocean Flower 2 and the Cabo Star.

5. Key Issues Discussed with Ministry of Works and Transport

- xxxiv) the relationship between the MoWT and PATT;
- xxxv) the internal procurement policies of the MoWT;
- xxxvi) the urgent request for the signing of a Board resolution for the Ocean Flower 2 and the Cabo Star;
- xxxvii);
- xxxviii) the implications regarding ICSL's termination;
- xxxix) the suggestion of a replacement vessel by ICSL for the Super Fast Galicia to avoid a breach in the contract;
- xl) the crisis at the PATT caused by the withdrawal of the Super Fast Galicia by the ICSL;
- xli) the insinuation that the hurried action of the ICSL is a possible breach of contract;
- xlii) the assertion that the Super Fast Galicia began sailing one month subsequent to being paid 18 million dollars;
- xliii) the reasons for the non-execution of the Charter Party Agreement by the Cabinet for the Super Fast Galicia even though meetings were held amongst stakeholders;
- xliv) the claim of no knowledge by the MoWT, of a Note being taken to Cabinet for the contract for the Super Fast Galicia;
- xlv) the claim of no record of a Cabinet Note at the MoWT that was submitted to the Cabinet;
- xlvi) the reason why a Note was not taken to the Cabinet concerning the contract for the Super Fast Galicia;
- xlvii) whether the MoWT has a procurement plan in place;
- xlviii) the implication of the maintenance of ferries under local management;
- xlix) the last assessment conducted on the sea bridge and the requirements for the sea bridge;
- l) the best ferries to service the sea bridge;
- li) the need for a cost benefit analysis to be conducted to obtain the most suited ferries;
- lii) the operations of the Port are guided by the 'Act';
- liii) the need for training to be offered to Senior Executive Officers will assist the PATT;
- liv) the absence of a strategic plan and business plan for the PATT;
- lv) the role of the Transport Board;
- lvi) the role of the Maritime Services Division of the MoWT; and
- lvii) the need for a drogher for ferries to operate in Trinidad and Tobago's waters.

Key Issues Discussed with Trinidad & Tobago Inter-Island Transport Company (TTIT)

- lviii) the core business of the TTIT involves the operation and management of the sea bridge of Trinidad and Tobago and all aspects for example the ferries, cargo, and ticketing;
- lix) the role of the TTIT in the acquisition of ferries;
- lx) the TTIT has no lead role in the issuance of contracts for ferries to ply the Scarborough to Port of Spain route particularly with reference to the Cabo Star and the Ocean Flower 2;

- lxi) the urgency of the need for replacement vessels allowed for unsolicited bids for the Cabo Star and the Ocean Flower instead of tenders;
- lxii) the report by Dun & Bradstreet on the Bridgeman's Service Group indicated that the company's financials were disastrous, they had no offices or vessels;
- lxiii) the implication that taxpayers should not be paying more than 14,000USD for the Cabo Star and the Ocean Flower 2 because they are aged vessels;
- lxiv) the claim that the TTIT was not privy to the Dun & Bradstreet Report, it was at the Audit Level;
- lxv) the measures implemented as a result of the end of Magellan's Maritime Services contract;
- lxvi) the measures in place at the TTIT to secure a certain level of security;
- lxvii) the need for the PATT to build the internal human capacity to manage and maintain ferries;
- lxviii) the challenge with taking vessels out of service for maintenance works;
- lxix) the conversation regarding dredging has been ongoing for several years;
- lxx) the claim that the former Chairman, PATT was making decisions 'behind the scenes' counter to management;
- lxxi) the reason why a charter agreement was not put in place for the Super Fast Galicia was as a result of its non-consideration at the level of the MoWT;
- lxxii) the absorption of some staff from the Super Fast Galicia on to the Cabo Star;

Key Issues Discussed with other stakeholders

Nyree Alfonso, Attorney at law

- lxxiii) the issues with the Warrior Spirit and its contract;
- lxxiv) the role of Mrs. Alfonso in the acquisition of the Super Fast Galicia;
- lxxv) the claim by Mrs. Alfonso that she was invited to tender by mistake; and
- lxxvi) the hand over of the tender from Mrs. Alfonso to ICSL, a company which did not receive an invitation to tender..
- lxxvii)

Mr. Andrew Purdey, Bridgeman's Service Group LP

- lxxviii) the first contact made by Bridgeman's Services Group as it concerns the Cabo Star and the Ocean Flower 2;
- lxxix) the company profile of Bridgeman's Services Group and whether they have received the required approvals to operate in Trinidad and Tobago;
- lxxx) the misinformation surrounding Bridgeman's Services Group; and
- lxxxi) the history of the company and its date of registration.

Ms. Natasha Clarke, Cook, T&T Express & Spirit

- lxxxii) The working conditions for hospitality staff on both fast ferry vessels currently in operation; and

lxxxiii) The drop in service as a result of the lack of proper training and the hiring of new employees.

Past, former and Current Ministers of Works and Transport

- lxxxiv) the issues with the Warrior Spirit and its contract;
- lxxxv) the factors contributing to the current crisis on the sea bridge;
- lxxxvi) the implication that the cost of maintaining the ferries can equate to the cost of purchasing a new ferry;
- lxxxvii) the Bay Ferries contract;
- lxxxviii) the inconsistency of the granting of tenders including in emergency conditions without having to go through the Central Tenders Board;
- lxxxix) the cost of the Cabo Star in comparison to the Super Fast Galicia;
- xc) the rationale for not purchasing new ferries when issues were first detected;
- xc i) the specifications of Cabo Star versus the Super Fast Galicia;
- xc ii) the issues with the Super Fast Galicia included berthing, cost of barge and additional staff;
- xc iii) the conduct of the former PATT Chairman;
- xc iv) the plans of the current Minister and the MoWT to rectify the issues at the Port;
- xc v) the possible discrepancy of Charter Agreements being signed before Cabinet Notes are approved; and
- xc vi) the lack of knowledge/record of a Cabinet note by the current Minister and the MoWT for the Charter of the Super Fast Galicia.

5. View the Hearing:

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

- Part 1 - <https://youtu.be/OszRzCo20c>
- Part 2 - <https://youtu.be/E36mGgzLhOE>

6. Contact Information:

You may contact the Committee's Secretary at jsclpi@tparliament.org or 624-7275 Ext. 2828/2284.

Committees Unit
Tuesday September 07, 2017